



### CHENEY-ARMSTRONG POST # 5 NH

Wayne E. Thomas, Commander

Robert A. Benoit, Chaplain

Bernard F. Wynn, Children & Youth Officer

John Franklin, Historian and Liaison for US Naval Sea Cadets  
Henry Emery, Jr. Vice Commander and Committee Chairman of Veteran Affairs

John H. Franklin, Sr. Vice Commander39

Cles V. Staples, Service Officer

Alan J. Zeller, Sergeant-at-Arms

Dear Post 5 Members,

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** Post meeting at the Peterborough Community Center on Grove Street at 2pm.

**May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** Armed Forces Day on Saturday- **Poppies** are to be given out. **We need Volunteers**

☺**December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017:** Christmas Potluck Dinner



**In Memory: Victor G. Hyman**, of Frankestown, died on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017. He served in the Coast Guard during Vietnam on an ice breaker called the Eastwind in Antarctica. A \$25.00 donation was given in his name to Frankestown Land Trust. Elizabeth “Betty” Dort Austermann died on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. She was married to member **George Austermann** for 62 years and felt her greatest achievement was her three sons. A \$25.00 donation was given in her name to the Monadnock Adult Care Center in Jaffrey. Carol Brassard of Keene died on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the age of 77. She was **Wilfred Brassard’s** *younger* sister and a native of Peterborough.

**New Members: John C. Clark Jr.**, of Rindge, Army, Vietnam and **Bernard C. Gale**, of Hancock, Army, WWII. We currently have 187 members in the Post and 38 Auxiliary members.

**Thank you** to those who helped with the Christmas dinner at the Historical Society in December. Jane and **Ron Bowman** cooked the third turkey in their convection oven in four hours. Kitchen workers were Sue and **Paul Sturges, Leon St Cyr, and Arthur Hixson. Andy Benoit** gave the blessing and organized the seating. There were 65 members and guests who enjoyed a delightful meal.

**Thank you:** to Judith Baker of Ansonia CT who donated money in memory of **Lee LaFleur**. Thank you to **Jerry Allen, Andy Benoit** and Carmen DuHaine for their donations to the Post. Check out the winter wreaths on the Peterborough Memorial Gates which were donated by someone in the Auxiliary.

*We have received your gift in memory of Albert Roy. We thank you and will notify the family. Sincerely,  
Divine Mercy Parish*

Dear The American Legion Friends, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 On behalf of the Board of Directors at Monadnock Family Services, we are very grateful for your contribution of \$25.00 that we received on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in memory of Betty Austermann. Your gift will help the Monadnock Adult Care Center meet its mission improve the quality of life for members, families and caregivers while supporting the member's efforts to remain independent. Making a contribution in memory of another person represents a special kind of caring. Your thoughtfulness is heartwarming and I greatly appreciate your honoring Betty in this very meaningful way.  
Sincerely, Philip F. Wyzik, CEO

South Meadow School would like to thank the Post very much for your generous donation of \$50.00 for the SMS Food Pantry. Sincerely, Anne O'Bryant Principal

*May the good times and treasures of the present become the golden memories of tomorrow. Wishing you lots of love, joy and happiness. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Honor Flight New England, PO Box 16287, Hooksett, NH 03106, 603-518-5368*

*December's drill was shortened by a day as a snowstorm forced us to cancel Saturday's events. On Sunday, cadets got a chance to practice building winter shelters in a snowbank while enduring the warmth and rain. Also, we held our annual Christmas party and Yankee swap. We are close to promoting another cadet to chief; more info to follow. Also, our annual inspection is scheduled for Sunday, February 19. Again, more details later. We have three cadets staffing winter trainings. Chief LaRoche and Petty Officer Harling are staffing Petty Officer Leadership Academy at Naval Station Newport. Petty Officer LaFreniere and Ensign LaFreniere are staffing a medical training at Ft. Drum, NY. Petty Officer Jack Taylor is a student at POLA in Newport as well. Our cadets continue to step up for this program. Respectfully submitted, LTJG John Franklin. **Mark your calendar for Feb. 19:** There will be a triple-header event at that Sunday's Sea Cadet drill. Commencing at 1300 sharp, our Regional Director will conduct his annual personnel inspection. Immediately following the inspection, there will be awards presentations, and last — but certainly not least — we will hold a pinning ceremony for our newest (and ninth!) chief petty officer, Austin LaFreniere of Marlow, who will be sworn in by the Regional Director. All this will be followed by light refreshments. Attendees are requested to park in the front of South Meadow School and enter by the front doors. The ceremonies will be held in the center atrium (second left after the inner doors), with the informal face-stuffing in the north atrium. All veterans and their significant others are cordially invited; uniforms are not required. On to the rest of the news: Cadets spent the Jan. 21 (Saturday) drill at Vertical Dreams in Manchester. The wall-climbing facility was used as a team-building exercise — and very successfully, I might add — with several cadets scaling the "elevator shaft": a 70-foot vertical wall. See our Facebook page for many pictures of the event. And last, but certainly not least, our CO, Jane LaRoche, has been selected for promotion to lieutenant, provided we can increase our membership to 25 Sea Cadets. In that vein, all hands have been made aware of the situation and urged to recruit as many new people as possible. Respectfully submitted, LTJG John Franklin, XO*

**Congratulations to Rob Koch**, of Peterborough, for receiving the NH Theatre Awards' Francis Grover Cleveland Award for Lifetime Achievement. Rob has been an actor, director, and provided technical support in both professional and community theatres for more than 50 years. He is the founding

member of Actors' Circle Theatre of Peterborough and serves as its managing director. He also serves on the Board of Trustees of The Peterborough Players.



This is an exact copy of the Christmas Card MSGT **Leonard Myhaver** USAF sent to his Mother Maude in Peterborough in 1952 while he was in Korea. (We apologize for it being on its side.)

**Mid-Winter NH Joint Session** held in Rochester, Post 7 on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Wayne and Dee represented the Post and Auxiliary. The Auxiliary took three Membership Awards, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016: Making a difference in your community- 35%; Showing Patriotism for our Veterans- 45% on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016- Veterans' Day; and Sharing your Military History- 60% on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. The Auxiliary is currently at 82 %. The Post received the Gold Star Membership Award for coming in 7<sup>th</sup> with 100 %. They also received a gold ribbon streamer for our American Legion Flag.

On Sunday July 16<sup>th</sup>, the Fisher Cats will play the Portland Sea Dogs at 1:35pm. Tickets are for sale from the Department for \$12. The Department will get \$4 back. Also some proceeds of the 50/50 raffle will go to the Department of NH. This game is dedicated to Veterans.

Joe Caouette who is the editor of the NH Legionaire gave us some history of it. In 1986-1988 the idea of the paper came about and the person to be the first editor immediately had to be replaced because he had cancer so Joe became the editor. He has done it for almost 30 years. \$3 from your state dues funds the paper and they now have the copy write to the Masthead on page 1. He said everything was done with a handshake. He also said two women were responsible for the majority of it Sylvia Donah, who was a former Girls State and her Father was a former Commander of a Post, and Rose Anderson. They put it together and laid it out and then it went to the Concord Monitor to be printed.

The two girls from Girls' State Katelyn Bean from Auburn and Jenna Hartwick from Rochester represented the Girls at Girls Nation in Washington DC.

The Commandant of the NH Veterans Home spoke eloquently to the Veterans. She told us that there were currently 200 Veterans in the home and the importance of treating them with dignity and respect. She said the youngest there was 58 and the oldest was a WAC who was 100. The average age is 88. There are currently 45 Vietnam Veterans which includes one from Dublin who is in our Post. She also explained the importance of getting a new Bingo Board (which the Post and Auxiliary already contributed too ☺). At the moment they are about \$1500 short. Rochester Post is going to hold a meat raffle to benefit it.

Girls' State is June 25-30<sup>th</sup> at St Anslem's and Boys' State is June 25- 30<sup>th</sup> at Rivier. The price of Boys' State went up to \$325. *2014 Post 5 Girls State Representative Genna Weidner of Dublin has been accepted to the Oxford University Summer Program in England to study history and political science. She is a member of the Commonwealth Honors College at UMass/Amherst and the Alpha Sigma Iota-Lambda Chi International Music Chapter. She is also a musician (trumpet) and on the administrative*

*staff of the UMass marching band.* The IRS is currently investigating Hudson who is in our District. Hudson's problem which is also in other Posts is that they have more than 25% SAL (Sons of American Legion) in a ratio to the Veterans. The IRS is imposing \$10,000 fines which they are fighting right now. Senator Auyotte got the fines reduced. 75 % of the Post membership has to be Veterans! This is also happening in Wisconsin, Ohio and Pennsylvania. The 99<sup>th</sup> National Convention will be held in Reno Nevada, August 18–24, 2017.

**All veterans may be eligible for property tax credit** CONCORD — All veterans may soon become eligible to receive property tax credits for their military service regardless of when or where they served, under new legislation recently signed into law by the governor. A Seacoast state representative said. Under current law, RSA 72:28, the Standard Veterans Tax Credit is awarded to anyone who served a minimum of 90 days on active duty, was honorably discharged, and served during certain specified "wartime" periods. The newly enacted law (RSA 72:28b) is exactly the same as the old one, but without the time periods. "Individuals can volunteer to enter the military, but they have little or no say as to where or when they will actually serve," said outgoing state representative Fred Rice of Hampton, the prime sponsor of the bill that created the new law. "All veterans should all be recognized for their service, and not be deprived of a benefit because of something they had no control over," Rice said. Each municipality in the state must formally adopt the All Veterans Tax Credit by a vote of town meeting or equivalent in order for it to take effect in that town. Rice said hopes that it will be done this year. At present, every municipality in the state awards the Standard Veterans Tax Credit. Twenty percent of all municipalities, mostly smaller towns in the North Country, award the mandatory minimum of \$50, while 60 percent are at or near the \$500 maximum award. Others are scattered at rates in between. If the All Veterans Credit is adopted, it will replace the current Standard Tax Credit in that town, Rice said. The same tax credit must be awarded to, and be the same for, all veterans in each town. The time periods that will be eliminated under the new option are those that fall between "periods of conflict," such as from the end of World War II to the start of the Korean War, from the end of Korea to the start of Vietnam, and from the end of Vietnam to the invasion of Grenada. Almost all of the time since Grenada has been covered under a single blanket authority for anyone who was deployed outside the United States. Not everyone who was deployed was necessarily in combat, however. Only 10 percent of those in uniform ever see combat, according to government statistics. Naval crews at sea, support troops at logistics installations or air bases, and administrative, legal and medical personnel are examples of those who may have served "in country" and are eligible for the current tax credit, but were never in danger of enemy action. "The exact number of veterans who would be added to the tax credit rolls cannot be known, since there is no way to have counted them," Rice said, "but it is not expected that the numbers will be very large, since these peacetime periods coincided with the most significant reductions in the size of the armed forces." In addition, many who served in those periods also overlapped into eligible periods. Veterans should check to confirm that their town has the All Veterans Property Tax Credit question on this year's ballot. If not, they should file a petitioned warrant article for its adoption. If there is a concern about the potential budgetary impact of providing tax credits to more veterans, towns could take the option of first sending a questionnaire with the next tax bills to determine how many would apply, and then holding the vote next year. "This is a matter of treating all those who served in the military on a fair and equal basis," said state Rep. John Martin, R-Bow, a retired U.S. Army first sergeant with 29 years of active-duty service, and a co-sponsor of the bill. "You wouldn't ask a veteran when and where they served before saying, 'Thank you for your service,' and

you shouldn't put down a veteran's peacetime service by denying them the same benefit as their comrades-in-arms," said Martin. "They all earned it, and all were ready to fight." Individuals or municipalities wishing to learn more about the All Veterans Property Tax Credit should contact Rice at [frice@comcast.net](mailto:frice@comcast.net). "Individuals can volunteer to enter the military, but they have little or no say as to where or when they will actually serve." FRED RICE prime sponsor of bill that created the new law

**The American Legion** is the country's largest wartime veterans service organization and is committed assisting veterans in need, mentoring youth, sponsorship of wholesome programs in our communities, advocating patriotism, honor, promoting strong national security as well as continued devotion to our fellow service members.

### **Manchester VA scores 4 out of 5 Rankings:**

Top official had resisted releasing numbers, saying it might discourage veterans from getting care.

**By KEVIN LANDRIGAN** New Hampshire Union Leader

The Manchester VA Medical Center isn't a full-blown hospital, but it got better than a passing grade in the latest ranking of the 146 health centers for veterans across the country.

For the second straight year, Manchester was given a "4" ranking out of a possible "5" in a report from the Department of Veterans Affairs on quality of care.

There were 17 centers in the country that got a top score, including three in Massachusetts: the VA hospital in Boston; the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VA in Bedford, Mass.; and the Central-Western Massachusetts VA in Leeds, Mass. Pennsylvania was the state with the most centers — four — that got the best score. These were the scores for other New England states: • Vermont-White River Junction VA, 3; Maine-Togus VA in Augusta, 2; • Rhode Island-Providence VA, 4 and, Connecticut-West Haven VA, 4 Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert McDonald had fought against the release of the information, saying that the ratings could cause "unwarranted distress" to veterans and discourage them from getting treatment. The report's release followed a USA Today story last month that revealed the scores for all the VA hospitals.

U.S. Rep. Annie Kuster, D-NH, said she was pleased to see the results issued.

"As the lead Democrat on the U.S. House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations, I've pushed for greater transparency at the Department of Veterans Affairs and this step is an important move by the VA," Kuster said.

The VA announced in an internal memo last week that it was now posting updated ratings on its website, including indicators of whether hospitals were improving.

**Key Manchester findings** The quality of care data measures the average wait times for patients to receive medical care, a surgical procedure or a mental health care visit, along with the time it takes to finish the most common VA cases such as pneumonia, hypertension and diabetes control.

Here are some of the key findings with regards to the Manchester VA for the year ending on Dec. 1, 2016.

- Total Cases: 22,216 • Scheduled within 30 days: 21,387 • Percentage w/in 30 days: 96.3 percent.
- Cases beyond 120 days: 20 • Percentage after 4 months: .09 percent.
- Average Wait Time Patient Care: 3.4 days • Average Wait Time Surgical Care: 4.2 days • Average Wait Time Mental Health: 5.7 days.

Though the number of cases in satellite clinics is much smaller, the wait times are longer in some of those sites. For example, it took an average of 22 days to get a scheduled surgery at the Portsmouth clinic and nearly 20 days in Somersworth, the report found.

Kuster said she hosted field hearings on wait times. Some were much longer in other VA hospitals across the country, with tragic results for veterans in Phoenix, Ariz., for example.

“For a department that has been rocked by scandal and mismanagement, increasing access to information about how veterans are receiving care is critical,” Kuster said.

“The men and women who have served our nation in uniform deserve nothing less than the best, and we must use this data to improve health care for veterans in New Hampshire and across the country.”

**Call for investigation** In September, Kuster called on federal prosecutors to probe whether VA construction chief Glenn Haggstrom and other VA officials had lied under oath to the House panel about a VA facility in Aurora, CO.

“The reports of mismanagement and severe cost overruns at the VA facility in Colorado are incredibly serious and must be thoroughly investigated,” Kuster wrote to Attorney General Loretta Lynch. “If VA officials misrepresented the situation in Colorado to Congress or attempted to mislead the Veterans Affairs Committee, they must be held responsible.”

The FBI recently confirmed it was looking into such an investigation.

Federal law requires the VA to provide data on wait times, death and readmission rates, and surveys of patient experiences at veterans’ hospitals to Hospital Compare, a website run by the Department of Health and Human Services. But the VA stopped sending that data on July 1. “VA’s lack of transparency is infuriating, but it’s not at all surprising, as this isn’t the first time VA has chosen to ignore a law designed to improve VA’s performance and help veterans and taxpayers,” Rep. Jeff Miller, chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, said at the time.

“But the key question in all of this is, what is the VA trying to hide by refusing to make this info public?”

For years, the VA has secretly assigned star ratings for each of its medical centers based on measures of their quality of care, but it had refused to release the ratings, saying they are not meant for public consumption.

The internal ratings are based on dozens of factors, including death and infection rates, instances of avoidable complications and wait times, much of which comes out of the VA’s Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning, or SAIL, database. To this day, the precise formula for setting star ratings is unknown. [landrigan@unionleader.com](mailto:landrigan@unionleader.com)

*Respectfully Submitted,* **Wayne E. Thomas**, 16 Lower Jaffrey Road, Dublin NH 03444  
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