



**YINGLING-RIDGLEY POST 7472
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES
DISTRICT SEVEN, 4225 VFW LANE
ELLCOTT CITY, MARYLAND
21043. <http://vfw7472.org/> .**



SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021

**YINGLING-RIDGLEY POST 7472
 VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF
 THE UNITED STATES
 DISTRICT 7, 4225 VFW Lane
 Ellicott City, Maryland 21043
 (410) 465-4240 www.vfw7472.org**



**YINGLING-RIDGLEY VFW POST 7472
 OFFICERS FOR 2021-2022**

Commander William A. Milner, Jr.
 Senior-Vice Commander Lawrence J. Buehler
 Junior-Vice Commander Walter "Buddy" Dukes
 Quartermaster Tim P. Ruland
 Adjutant Christian J. Buehler
 Judge Advocate Leonard Lee
 Surgeon Shelby L. Rogers
 Chaplain Howard A. Clark
 1 Year Trustee Robert A. Berlett, Sr.
 2 Year Trustee Michael Zanski
 3 Year Trustee Robert C. Showalter
 Service Officer Albert A. Hernandez
 Officer Of The Day Joseph G. Dunigan
 Guard..... W.H. Krizmanich

POST CANTEEN HOURS OF OPERATION

OPEN

**Monday - Wednesday 1600 hours
 Thursday - Sunday 1200 hours**

CLOSE

**2000 hours or before
 2000 hours or before**

REMEMBER: The speed limit driving through the adjoining neighborhood is 25 mph; 09 mph in our parking lot and on Post property. The Canteen is closed on most holidays, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Hours-of-Operation are subject to change. If you plan to arrive at the Post after 1800 hours; especially in cases of inclement weather (prior to, during and afterwards), please call the Canteen to confirm our Hours-of-Operation, 410-465-4240. The bartender on duty has prior approval to close the Canteen early if situations like those above warrant such actions.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

**OFFICERS MEETING: 1st Thursday of each month, 1900 Hours.
 MEMBERSHIP MEETING: 2nd Thursday of each month, 1900 Hours**

SUBMISSION DATE FOR NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION: UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED, THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF NEWSPORTHY ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION IN THE POST NEWSLETTER IS THE 3rd SATURDAY OF THE MONTH PRECEDING THE MONTH THAT THE NEWSLETTER IS DUE FOR PUBLICATION

**COMMANDER'S MESSAGE — VFW POST 7472
SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021**

Greetings Comrades,

Comrades here we are and the end of summer is already upon us. Summer 2021 was a lot better than the Summer of 2020 but we are still not out of the hold of the Covid-19 pandemic yet. Follow the CDC recommendations and we should all benefit from them and stay healthy.

The Post earned second place in the State for Hospital reports the past year and was presented a plaque at the last District 7 Meeting, great job Surgeon Shelby Rogers. Our Quartermaster, Comrade Tim Ruland has been working overtime getting the Post to the digital age and he relayed to me that he can see a light at the end of the tunnel. Great job Tim.

Our Webmaster, Comrade Chris Farrier has been working on our website between moving his parents from Ohio to Pennsylvania. What he has gotten done so far looks good. Check it out! Comrade John Spain Co-ordinated with the VSOs of Howard County and secured a booth for us at the Howard County Fair on opening day. It was manned by Comrade Rogers and myself. It was great to be with the other Veterans Organizations' Leaders; and share ideas on what we can do for other Veterans. Comrade Spain is also our Post Committee Chairman for Flag Retirements. I know he would like some help with this, so this is a good way to volunteer your services. Our next Flag Retirement is October 23rd. We will be working with all other VSOs of Howard County on this now, so let's make Post 7472 proud.

Our next meeting is September 9th. 22I hope see some new and fresh faces.

Yours in Service,

Bill Milner, Commander, Post 7472

QUEEN OF HEARTS

The Queen Of Hearts game is still alive but is presently on hiatus at Post 7472. This is a Post Fund Raiser for our Veterans Relief Fund. Drawings take place at the Post each Monday at 1700 hours. Our most recent jackpot reached a total of \$800. You do not have to be present, when each drawing takes place to win, but you should come to the Post to play; or you can have one of your Post Comrades purchase a ticket in your name. The rules for playing the game are listed at the Post. Be on the lookout for more details regarding updates and/or any changes, e.g., ticket prices, drawing dates, payouts, prize amounts, etc.

POST CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Notify the CHAPLAIN OR THE COMMANDER if you know of the death, illness or any distressful condition of any Post Comrade or family member, who is either at home, in the hospital or other medical treatment facility. The Post Chaplain may be contacted by calling the Post at 410-465-4240 and leave a message. He/She will return your call.

SICK CALL

RAY TRAHAN — Ray is a Post 7472 Life Member and is a resident in the Lorien Nursing and Rehabilitation Center at 7615 Washington Blvd, Elkridge, MD 21075. He welcomes visitors and loves Reeses Peanut Butter Cups. Prior to planning a visit, please call the Center at (410) 579-2626 before visiting to ascertain the visiting procedures during this COVID-19 pandemic.

DON KYLE — Don is a Post 7472 Life Member and a VA Volunteer member of the Post Hospital Committee. He is at home still recovering from a medical procedure.

BILL BRAID — Bill is a Post 7472 Life Member and is still recovering from a medical procedure.

JOE DUNIGAN — Just recently, Joe was involved in a serious motorcycle accident and suffered six broken ribs as a result. He is a Post 7472 Life Member and is our recently appointed Post Judge Advocate and is recovering at home.

TAPS

ROBERT (BOB) KIMMERLE — Prior to his death on 7 July 2021, Comrade Kimmerle was a Post 7472 Life Member and was a resident in the Encore at Turf Valley Rehabilitation Center, 11150 Resort Rd Ellicott City, MD.

Post Surgeon's Message

Greetings Comrades,

I am sure that most of you are paying strict attention to the news regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. How can any of us hell it; it is broadcasted to us almost 24/7. Most of the news outlets tell us that the pandemic is over or just about over. Let me remind you that the battle continues.

During the past 18+ months, many variants of COVID-19 have been introduced into the mix. It seems that a new variant has been introduced on, just about, a monthly basis, but, on 22 June 2021, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said during a White House briefing that the Delta variant is the "greatest threat" in the world's efforts to contain COVID-19. That greatest threat is that it is about 50-60 percent more transmissible than "regular" COVID-19 and the symptoms and after effects are greater and it is more likely to leave you (if you survive) with the "long hauler" syndrome.

Comrades, it looks like the COVID-19 pandemic will be with us for a while longer and, because of the number of variants and variants within variants that are developing, no one can tell us how long that will be. But, just as the scientists and doctors predicted, I think that our conditions will improve when the weather — of spring and summer — comes and stays awhile. Yeah Right!! I believed that too when I first heard or read it. Since, most of us have received our vaccinations, many of them are still determined to continue to shoot themselves in the foot and try to take a lot of us with them. If you are one of those people, what more proof do you need? It has been stated by many scientific and medical experts that about 99%+ of the COVID-19 hospitalizations in recent months are the direct result of being infected by the COVID-19 Delta variant. I guess that they are waiting for the "herd immunity" to take effect. So, if you are the one of remaining 25, or so, percent who do not plan to "take" the vaccine because of your — and their — vaccine hesitancy, that is an irrational reason not to get your "shot(s)." You will not only be protecting yourself, but also protecting your family as well as those around you. Now, let this sink in for a moment. Recently, I saw and heard on the news that we (in the U.S.) are now averaging over 1,500 deaths a day from the COVID-19 Delta variant. As I said above, what more proof do those who are still vaccine hesitant need that the COVID-19 vaccinations prevent hospitalizations and deaths??

A virus cannot survive without a living host and humans are just one of the hosts that it needs to survive. It doesn't care who you are, old or young, male or female. It doesn't care about your race or gender; it only has the instinct to survive. It is up to us to listen to the experts and follow their advice and wear a mask or other face covering when it is dictated by local businesses, hospitals, clinics or other local, State or national government directives. Remember, stay safe during the summer, wear your mask when participating in large-crowd events/situations because when the weather becomes cooler and colder during the fall and winter, COVID-19 survives better in that type of weather.

Stay Healthy, yours in service,

Shelby L. Rogers, Post Surgeon

NOTICE - COMING SOON - EMAILS TO YOU
FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER
VFW Post 7472 Fundraising with EZ Green Home



VFW POST 7472 receives a \$25 donation at ABSOLUTELY NO COST TO YOU!

Our VFW Post 7472 of Ellicott City, MD is partnering with EZ Green Home of Ellicott City, MD to give to our Members, Families and Friends at NO ADDITIONAL COST the BGE , PEPCO , DELMARVA POWER or POTOMAC EDISON Quick Home Energy Check-up (QHEC).

For all eligible QHEC completed, EZ Green Home donates \$25 to our VFW Post 7472.

All of our Post Members, Families and Friends can request to receive your **No Cost Quick Home Energy Checkup** by contacting EZ Green Home to confirm your eligibility and schedule your QHEC appointment.

There are 4 EZ ways to contact EZ Green Home to START the donation process.

- 1) **Respond to our emails** we will be sending to all Post Members. Just fill in the Appointment Request Form you see right in your email and Press the "SUBMIT" or "SEND" button.
- 2) **Call EZ Green Home directly at (410) 995-8556** and be sure to mention the VFW POST 7472 FUNDRAISER to make certain we receive the \$25 donation.
- 3) **Share with Family and Friends** by simply forwarding your email from us to your Family and Friends and they can fill in the same Appointment Request Form you already finished filling in.
- 4) **START Donation Process Right Now.** CLICK on this link <https://forms.gle/immuhexM2HqxiMih6> or **SCAN** below **QR Code** to immediately open your Appointment Request Form. Please fill in the information and Press the "SUBMIT" or "SEND" button to be contacted by EZ Green Home to confirm your eligibility and schedule your QHEC appointment.

QR CODE



**THIS OFFICIAL FUNDRAISER HAS BEEN APPROVED AND AUTHORIZED BY:
VFW POST 7472 OFFICERS AND MEMBERSHIP
FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER -- PLEASE PARTICIPATE -- THANK YOU !!!**

CALENDAR OF POST EVENTS: SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTIFIED, ALL MONTHLY OFFICER AND MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE POST HOME AT 1900 HOURS ON THE 1st & 2nd THURSDAY, RESPECTIVELY, OF EACH MONTH

- 1. 09 Sep (Thu): Post Monthly Membership Meeting, 1900 hours.**
- 2. 11 Sep (Sat): Remembrance Day Ceremony, VFW Post 467, 519 Poole Road, Westminster, MD, 1100 hours.**
- 3. 12 Sep (Sun): VFW Department of Maryland, C of A Meeting, VFW Post 2652, 11316 Fern Street, Silver Spring, MD 1200 hours.**
- 4. 18 Sep (Sat): HoCo Garden Club, Blue Star Mothers' Memorial Dedication, Miller Branch Library, 1000 hours, 9421 Frederick Road, Ellicott City, MD.**
- 5. 07 Oct (Thu): Post Monthly Officers Meeting, 1900 hours.**
- 6. 09 Oct (Sat): District Seven Meeting, VFW Post 10076, 111 S. Main Street, 1000 hours.**
- 7. 14 Oct (Thu): Post Monthly Membership Meeting, 1900 hours.**
- 8. 20 Oct (Wed): Finance & Investment Committee Meeting, Post 7472, 1300 hours.**

Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training (MCVET)

Comrades, Post 7472 is a repository to accept usable and serviceable clothing to be donated to the homeless Veterans who are overcoming homelessness and undergoing job training at the MCVET Organization located in Baltimore. Many times the Veteran will show up with only the clothes they are wearing. If you have men's or women's clothing or shoes to donate, just bring them to the Post and give them to Comrade Rogers or the bartender on duty. Please do not donate overly-used, ripped, torn, dirty or otherwise unserviceable items of clothing.

Due to the advent of COVID-19 collections have slowed, but we are still in business. Our homeless veterans need us, now, more than ever. After a suitable number of articles have been donated, they will be taken to the MCVET Organization and donated in the name of the VFW and Post 7472.

“This flag and under is the emblem, our purpose as a other character which we eration to choices are majestic sites that hosts that choices, or in war.



which we honor, which we serve, blem of our pow-thoughts and nation. It has no acter than that give it from generation. The ours. It floats in lence above the execute those whether in peace And yet, through

silence, it speaks to us -- speaks of the past, of the men and women who went before us, and of the records they wrote upon us”.

PROPER FLAG DISPOSAL

If you, or anyone that you know, have old flags that are in need of disposal, we have an old U.S.P.S. mailbox at the Post that is here for the sole purpose of receiving those flags that have outlived their useful lives. Just deposit it/them into the mailbox that is sitting on our front porch; and that is all there is to it. If the mailbox is full and is overflowing, just come inside the Post and give it/the to the bartender on duty. If you are unable to drop off the flag(s) yourself, just call the Post Canteen at 410-465-4240 and someone will come to you, within a reasonable distance, and pick up the flag(s) for disposal.

LISTED BELOW ARE FIVE LOCAL BUSINESSES WITH SPECIAL TIES TO POST 7472. THEY ARE:

1. **WARFIELD'S BARBER STYLING.** This barber shop is located at 4882 Montgomery Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043, PHONE NUMBER 410-750-6205. They are open Mon-Fri 0900 - 1900 hours; Sat 0830 - 1730 hours; Sun 1030 - 1600 hours. They cut the hair of men, women and children; and they are "Howard County's First Choice" and is open 7 days a week. **ALL VFW, AUXILIARY MEMBERS. AND MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MEMBERS WHO PRESENT THEIR I.D. CARDS WILL RECEIVE A \$1.00 DISCOUNT OFF HAIRCUTS.**
2. **KELLY'S LIQUORS - FINE WINE, SPIRITS AND MICRO BREWS. THEY SPECIALIZE IN CATERING, WEDDINGS AND PARTIES.** They are located at 4882 Montgomery Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043. Phone Numbers are: 410-750-0330/0331. Fax 443-325-0562. Cell 443-677-5091. **ALL VFW, AUXILIARY MEMBERS. AND MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MEMBERS WHO PRESENT THEIR I.D. CARDS WILL RECEIVE A 10 PERCENT DISCOUNT OFF ALL WINE PURCHASES.**
3. **KENDALL HARDWARE STORE, 12260 Clarksville Pike, Clarksville, MD 21029. 410-531-2111.** **ALL VFW, AUXILIARY, MARINE CORPS LEAGUE and AMERICAN LEGION MEMBERS WHO PRESENT THEIR I.D. CARDS WILL RECEIVE A 10 PERCENT DISCOUNT OFF ALL PURCHASES.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE ABOVE: Contact Post 7472 Service Officer, Al Hernandez, U.S.M.C. (410) 465-1801: al.hernandez127@gmail.com

4. **VETERANS' REAL ESTATE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM:** The Bob & Ronna Group Berkshire Hathaway Home Services PenFed Realty Veteran Owned and Operated. As a dynamic and energetic married couple, Bob & Ronna (in addition to their entire Real Estate Group) work full-time establishing clients for life by providing superior service and extensive knowledge in the Maryland Real Estate market. Bob graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland and recognized a need for better opportunities to Veterans in Real Estate. In response, The Bob & Ronna Group created a unique program that not only helps raise money for the USO-Metro and Howard County Veterans' Organizations (American Legion Posts 156 and 300, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7472, and the Marine Corps League Detachment 1084), but also provides Veterans and their family members with Cash-Back and other benefits at settlement when you buy or sell with The Bob & Ronna Group. For every Real Estate transaction in our Veterans' Real Estate Advantage Program, The Bob & Ronna Group will proudly donate to the above organizations. Our cash-back credit **EXCEEDS** the amounts offered by the USAA and NFCU Real Estate Programs! Learn more about The Bob & Ronna Group's great service and how much you could save by visiting our website: www.bobandronna.com/veterans/ or call us at (410) 465-4440.

(See page eleven)

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS, ADDRESSES & WEB SITES FOR VETS

1. **National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), 1 Archive Drive, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100 or you may visit the website at: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans>. If you are an Army Veteran or the next-of-kin (un-remarried widow, eldest child, parent, eldest sibling, eldest grandchild) of an Army Veteran, you may request a set of authorized medals and decorations by sending a written request along with a copy of the veteran's DD Form 214 (or other discharge if available) and death certificate (if applicable) to the address above. If you are a veteran and you have never received a set of your medals, your request will be processed free-of-charge. If this is a replacement set, there will be a nominal fee. If you are the primary next-of-kin, only one request for medals will be honored. After the NPRC processes your request, they will send you a list of the medals you are authorized. You can check on the status of your request, as well as view some general information about medals and decorations at: www.veteranmedals.army.mil. The Veteran Medals Unit is located on the U.S. Naval Support Activity Philadelphia at U.S. Army Clothing and Heraldry, Product Support Integration Directorate, Veteran Medals Unit, Building 6B, North Room 328, 700 Robbins Avenue, P.O. Box 57997, Philadelphia, PA 19111, 877-827-9026, OP #4 or go to the website listed above.**
2. **Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office (National Call Center): 800-827-1000.**
3. **Department of Veterans Affairs Voc. Rehab. Office, Baltimore, MD: 410-230-4500.**
4. **To reach the nearest VA Regional Office to your desired location, contact: VA Home Loan Guaranty, Atlanta Regional Office Loan Center, U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, 1700 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA. 30033 or call 888-768-2132. Hours of operations 0800 to 1630 hours EST.**
5. **To reach the nearest VA Regional Office for the District of Columbia, KY, MD, VA, & W.VA. Write to The Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Loan Center, 210 Franklin Road S.W., Roanoke, VA 24011 or call: 800-933-5499.**
6. **Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Care Enrollment Center: 877-222-8387.**
7. **Department of Veterans Affairs, Gulf War Era Benefits (Direct Deposit): 800-749-8387.**
8. **VA Benefit Payment Option, (Direct Deposit) 877-838-2778.**
9. **Arlington National Cemetery: the final resting place of many who gave their lives in service to the country. Two US, Hours: Open, 8:00 am - 7:00 pm, Website: <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil> Phone: (877) 907-8585, Address: Memorial Dr, Fort Myer, VA 22211.**
10. **American Battle Monuments Commission: 703-696-6897.**
11. **Memorial Headstones or Marker status: 800-697-6947.**
12. **Military Headstone Honors (Maryland National Guard): 410-576-6133.**
13. **Maryland Center for Veterans Education & Training (MCVETS), 301 N. High St., Baltimore, MD 21202: 410-576-9626, Fax - 410-576-9628.**
14. **www.va.gov/vaforms.**
15. **www.va.gov/healtheligibility.**
16. **www.va.gov/directory (for a current telephone list of VA facilities) Or: call the VA Health Benefits Service Center (HBSC) at 1-877-222-VETS to get the telephone number of your local health care facility.**
17. **<http://www.va.gov/health/aca/>.**
18. **Below is the link for the online copy of *The Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents & Survivors handbook for 2018*. This is the latest edition and has many pages of new information. The book can be found at the website at https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp**

LAW OFFICES OF

**Skeen & Kauffman, L.L.P., Stephen P. Kauffman, Attorney/CPA
9256 Bendix Road, Unit 102, Columbia, Maryland 21045
(410) 625-2228 (voice)
(410) 382-9606 (mobile)
(410) 625-2292 (facsimile)**

I am the co-founder of the law firm, Skeen & Kauffman and an accounting firm, Kauffman Kim; both of which are located right here in Howard County. While our primary focus is helping small-to-medium-sized businesses with tax, business and litigation challenges, we and our affiliates also offer a wide range of reasonably-priced professional services of interest to individuals and families; such as tax return preparations, simple wills; including durable powers of attorney and advanced medical directives, bankruptcies and family law.

Most importantly, we strongly support our Veterans and first responders, and offer free initial consultations and twenty percent discounts for these American heroes.

All of your VFW Post 7472 Comrades and Auxiliary members; as well as other Veteran Service Organizations that are affiliated with your Post, are free to contact me anytime at (410) 382-9606 or better yet, via e-mail to skauffman@skaufflaw.com or by telephone.

Sincerely,

Stephen P. Kauffman

My HealtheVet

The Department of Veterans Affairs [My HealtheVet website](#) is designed to allow veterans enrolled in VA health care to check their health records, make and/or cancel appointments; or refill prescriptions from a computer or tablet. Veterans can send secure e-mails back and forth to their doctors about available treatments without having to go in for an appointment or wait for a phone call. The VA hopes to expand the program and other benefits under one specific app for Android or iPhones. For more veterans benefits info and updates, visit the [Military Advantage blog](#).

Retirees and Disabled Vets Due for Record Raise Next Year, 17 Aug 2021, Military.com | By [Jim Absher](#)

Military retirees and disabled veterans could see their monthly checks jump by hundreds of dollars each month in 2022, the largest increase since 1983. The annual inflation-based Cost of Living Adjustment, or COLA, soon will be determined by the government, and all the figures point to an increase of at least 6%, and maybe more, beginning in 2022. That means that next year, military retirees will see their monthly retirement check increase, with the average monthly check going up by around \$160. Veterans receiving disability compensation from the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) also will see their monthly [disability payments](#) increase, with the average monthly amount increasing by nearly \$100.

According to the [Defense Department](#), there are around 1.87 million military retirees, with an annual average retirement payment of \$30,265. The [VA says](#) nearly 5.1 million veterans receive disability compensation, with an annual benefit of \$18,549. The annual COLA increase is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is measured by the Department of Labor. That agency measures the costs of a select group of goods and services and compares those costs to the previous year. If there is an increase, retirees and many others receiving government benefits see an increase in their monthly payments for the upcoming year. If those costs go down, the government payments will remain the same in the upcoming year.

In 2021, costs for most goods and services have gone up much faster than they have in the past. The [most recent data from the Department of Labor](#) is showing a 5.4% increase from last year, and there are two more months left in the current fiscal year, which ends on Sept. 30. So, unless there is a major turnaround of the economy, with prices dropping dramatically in the next month or so, next year's government payments should see a hefty increase. The CPI also is used to determine federal employee retirement and social security COLA adjustments as well as other federal benefit programs, so the CPI increase will affect over 50 million Americans. Next year's COLA is scheduled to be announced in early October. When it is, Military.com will have the latest information, including [disability pay rates](#) available to you.

NOTICE — NOTICE — NOTICE — NOTICE — NOTICE

Attention Post 7472 Comrades: The Post is in possession of a Zinger, personal mobility chair. If you are in need of a personal mobility chair, the Zinger just might be the chair for you. When in use as you are sitting in it, it is a chair on wheels. It is fully transportable and when not in use, it folds down to a height of just ten inches. It has no parts to put together or take apart. There is no assembly required. It weighs just 47 pounds, including the battery and is light enough for you or a helper to put it in your back seat or trunk. When folded, it even rolls like a suitcase. Now for the great news! If you have a need for a Zinger Chair, the Post has one that it is ready to be put out on loan. For more information, please contact the Post Commander or Post QM at 410-465-4240.

Final Troops Withdraw from Afghanistan, Ending Evacuation -- and the War, 30 Aug 2021, Military.com | By Stephen Losey and Steve Beynon

The U.S. military's evacuation from the main airport in Kabul has ended -- along with the nearly 20-year war in Afghanistan. U.S. Central Command head Gen. Frank McKenzie said Monday the last [C-17 Globemaster III](#) took off minutes before midnight Kabul time -- the beginning of Aug. 31, which was the United States' deadline for withdrawal. For the first time since late 2001, weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks, there are now no U.S. service members in Afghanistan. "There's a lot of heartbreak associated with this departure," McKenzie said. "We did not get everybody out that we wanted to get out, but I think if we'd stayed another 10 days, we wouldn't have gotten everybody out that we wanted to get out." Reports of celebratory gunfire from the Taliban surfaced online after the final C-17 took off from Kabul.

The final weeks of the war were among the military's hardest, as thousands of troops rushed in to hold Hamid Karzai International Airport as the U.S.-backed Afghan government collapsed with shocking speed and the Taliban rapidly filled the void. The unprecedented airlift effort to rush to safety Americans and Afghan allies -- the largest noncombatant evacuation operation in U.S. military history -- saw some 123,000 people evacuated in all. Since Aug. 14, more than 79,000 civilians were ferried out by the U.S. military on one flight after another -- primarily C-17s, their massive cargo bays at times packed with hundreds of refugees.

The evacuation effort saw the last flag-draped coffins from the war arrive at [Dover Air Force Base](#) in Delaware. The final U.S. casualties came Aug. 26, when a suicide bomber struck at the airport's Abbey Gate, packed with U.S. troops and many Afghans trying to get through. The bomber [killed 13 troops](#) -- 11 Marines, a sailor and a soldier, wounded more than 20 other troops, and killed or wounded hundreds of Afghans. It marked one of the deadliest days of the war for the U.S., with less than a week to go, and brought the final toll of service members killed there to 2,461. There were also more than 20,000 troops wounded in Afghanistan. "My heart is broken over the losses we sustained three days ago," McKenzie said. The Islamic State's Afghanistan branch, ISIS-Khorasan, or ISIS-K, claimed responsibility for the attack. The U.S. responded with two drone strikes: one on Friday that killed two people the military claimed were ISIS organizers, and one on Sunday it said targeted a car in Kabul carrying explosive material intended for another attack.

The latter airstrike may have resulted in up to 10 civilian casualties, according to reporting by [The New York Times](#) that was not immediately disputed by the Pentagon. ISIS-K and the Taliban are in the midst of their own war, prompting a pseudo-alliance between the U.S. and the Taliban, who have been killing one another for 20 years. McKenzie described the Taliban as "pragmatic," saying the terror group had a vested interest in the U.S. leaving quickly, thus motivating it to try and facilitate a smooth withdrawal by securing areas outside of the airport. He added that diplomatic efforts to help remaining U.S. citizens and eligible Afghans who want to leave will continue,

See **FINAL WITHDRAWAL** on page 20

VA Offers Pre-Approval Process for Burials, 28 Jul 2021, By J. J. Montanaro, USAA Certified Financial Planner

If your family is anything like mine, the holiday season is a time of gatherings. Usually, there's a heck of a lot of food and fun, but also some serious discussions about what's happening with everyone and our plans. Last year, we tackled the implications of Alzheimer's and the year before that, my son shared his decision to join the Army with the extended family. Good or bad, exciting or frightening, at our house the holi-days provide an opportunity to dive into some deep issues.

As a financial planner, I think that's a good thing. Discussions (and accompanying action!) about wishes, wills, powers of attorney, care plans and the like can all help create clarity and provide peace of mind across generations. The VA recently announced a new Pre-Need Eligibility Determination Program. Whether you're 24 or 74, this could be just what you need to do to make things easy on your family when you pass away. I remember when my Dad died we had to scrounge through his records to find a DD 214 and then make numerous phone calls, send faxes and do a lot of grunt work that this program has the potential to eliminate for those who take advantage of it. Even if it's not a fun or exciting topic, signing up is a great example of doing the legwork necessary to take care of your family.

Remember, VA burial benefits include burial in any open VA national cemetery (there are 135 national cemeteries in 40 states and Puerto Rico), a grave liner, perpetual care of the gravesite, a headstone, a burial flag and a Presidential Memorial certificate. In addition to peace of mind of getting all the details ironed out to smooth the process during a difficult time, all of that can translate into significant financial savings for your family. The eligibility requirements are outlined at www.cem.va.gov, but include being discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. After your death, your family will need to contact the VA's National Cemetery scheduling office to request burial benefits. I've submitted my application and expect to receive it in 60-90 days. I'll have a nice, clean letter and instructions ready for my wife and kids to bust out in —I hope— about 50 years

Message from the Post Senior Vice Commander

- 1. When you are standing for a prayer being given by the Post Chaplain; and you are holding your service cap over your heart in your hand, hold it with the Cross Of Malta facing forward with the fingers of your hand inside the cap and and the palm flat against your body.**
- 2. When you are addressing the members/group/assembly, the correct position is to stand and position yourself close enough to address the Commanding Officer so as to be heard by all you are addressing.**

Honor Flight Set to Restart Trips for WWII, Korean War Vets to Nation's Capital, 25 Jun 2021, Military.com | By Oriana Pawlyk

More than a year after the pandemic forced the Honor Flight Network to halt trips to Washington, D.C., the group is ready to once again fly veterans to the nation's capital to visit memorials and share their stories with fellow vets. The organization announced it will resume full operations Aug. 16. Participants must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide negative test results taken within 72 hours of departure, according to Honor Flight spokeswoman Carol Harlow. With no trips taking place, Honor Flight had to get creative over the last year to honor veterans across the country through their local chapters.



Honor Flight North East Indiana treats military veterans with a trip to the District of Columbia, May 23, 2018, at the 122nd Fighter Wing, Fort Wayne, Indiana. (U.S. Air National Guard/Tech. Sgt. William Hopper)

Athletes, journalists, actors and even World War II veteran and former Sen. Bob Dole issued video messages of support through what the organization calls "[Operation Reassurance](#)" to vets who were [awaiting their turn](#) to fly to D.C. but were instead stuck at home.

Honor Flight began drive-by celebration parades for veterans' birthdays; hosted drive-through "salute to Veterans" events; and even sponsored a skydiving outing for a vet who turned See HONOR FLIGHTS on next page

HONOR FLIGHTS from preceding page

100 years old [earlier this year](#). For Military Appreciation Month this past May, T-Mobile and Helium, a virtual human performance channel, partnered to issue virtual reality goggles and headsets so vets could tour each war memorial and the National Mall from the comfort of their own “homes.” It's been kind of a continuous effort throughout the country to try to do something, to continue to say, 'Thank you,'" said David Smith, chairman of Honor Flight's board of directors, in a recent interview. The Honor Flight Network has more than 125 independent hubs across the country. "We're working with all the hubs to make sure they understand what the guidelines are," said Smith, who founded the San Diego, California, chapter in 2010. Participants also include "guardians," who travel with veterans to make sure they get safely from place to place. Local hubs have been asked not to take any flights on their own for health and safety reasons.

As the program restarts, the organization predicts demand from vets will be higher than before because of the long delay. In 2020, only one flight from St. Louis made it to D.C. in March for a three-day trip before the country began shutting down. During 2019, 22,764 veterans and 18,072 guardians made the trip, with another 42,355 on the waitlist. The majority of them were Vietnam War vets, according to statistics provided by the organization.

World War II vets are usually bumped to the top of the travel list, Smith said. However, they tend to make up 20% or less of each Honor Flight. In 2019, fewer than 2,000 WWII vets made it the trip, compared to 6,135 Korean War vets and 12,880 Vietnam vets. Trips can take anywhere from five to 200 vets at a time. "That population is shrinking, [and] our effort has always been to honor our most senior veterans," Smith said.

One of the longstanding struggles has been to find eligible veterans, he added. The program currently serves veterans from the WWII, Korean War and Vietnam War eras, and terminally ill vets who served in any conflict. "[All our hubs](#) are chomping at the bit to get up and get flying," Smith said, "but one of our biggest issues is ... letting more people know about our flight mission and to



The combined VFW, American Legion & MCL Color Guard consisting of members from VFW Post 7472, MCL Detachment 1084 and Legion Posts 156 and 300, all the VSOs from Howard County participated in the opening ceremony of the HoCo Fair on 8 August 2021

find veterans.” Even as group organizers try to find more WWII vets to bring along, Smith said COVID-19 has given Honor Flight a new perspective. "Safety is always No. 1," he said. "If we're going to honor somebody, we want it to be safe.”

Budget Request for Arlington Cemetery Nearly Triples Amid Plans for Major Expansion, 3 Jun 2021, Military.com | By [Patricia Kime](#)



Arlington National Cemetery would see its budget nearly triple in fiscal 2022 for a planned expansion that would connect it to the Air Force Memorial. The [Army's](#) budget proposal calls for Arlington to receive \$228 million, up from \$81.8 million last year, for its southern expansion project -- an effort that would add 80,000 burial and inurnment sites to the historic cemetery.

The project has been in the works for nearly a decade. In 2012, the original plan proposed a land swap between Arlington County and the federal government for a road that runs between the cemetery and the memorial, as well as surrounding acreage needed for the realignment of a major county thoroughfare. The area involved is near the Air Force Memorial, including the former site of the Naval Annex, between the Pentagon and Gate 1 of [Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall](#)

Marine Corporal Discharged over Refusal to Wear a Mask, 31 Aug 2021, Military.com | By Steve Beynon

Marine Cpl. Whitney McHaffie refused to comply with a mask mandate and doesn't want to be vaccinated against COVID-19. A month after the Defense Department's mask mandate for unvaccinated troops went into effect, she was booted from the military, possibly making her the first service member to be forced out of the service for violating COVID-related rules.

McHaffie, who served at [Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point](#), North Carolina, went viral on social media after appearing [in a video](#) with Josh Mandel, a former Ohio state treasurer who is currently in his second run for the Senate. The video, in which she tells her story of being swiftly booted from the Corps for disobeying the mask mandate, had more than 400,000 views as of Tuesday morning. Vaccines are now mandatory for troops, but were not at the time of McHaffie's discharge. Despite that, the amateur MMA fighter and fifth-grade teacher in Ohio sought a religious exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine that had not been resolved by the time of her discharge. An indoor mask mandate for unvaccinated troops was in effect at the time.

[More than 600,000 Americans have died](#) from COVID-19, and [another 100,000 are projected to die](#) by the end of the year. The rampant spread of the more contagious Delta variant has been linked largely to parts of the U.S. with low vaccination rates. [Multiple studies](#) have shown that masks [help prevent the spread](#) of the coronavirus, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continues to recommend the use of masks in areas with a high number of COVID-19 cases. In an interview with Military.com, McHaffie said the mask mandate violated her religious liberties. She said that she doesn't believe masks are effective and wearing them would be to bear false witness, a violation of the ninth commandment in Judaism and Christianity. The [Journal of the American Medical Association](#) concluded that wearing a cloth mask can reduce transmission of droplets from infected wearers into the air by 50% to 70%. Masks also were shown to help prevent uninfected wearers from inhaling large droplets.

McHaffie believes she was singled out and that officers sought to make an example of her. She estimates only about half the Marines in her unit were vaccinated and most did not comply with the mask mandate. A spokesperson for the Corps said the policies related to mask wearing and vaccinations apply to all Marines, adding that "failure to adhere [to] policies, orders and regulations may result in corrective, disciplinary or administrative action, when appropriate." Another area of concern raised by McHaffie is the use of fetal tissue in COVID-19 vaccine research. While researchers [did use cell lines](#) derived from elective abortion tissue originally created decades ago, that tissue was used to produce proteins and wasn't put directly into the vaccine. McHaffie said that she cannot morally take a vaccine because they are derivatives of aborted fetal tissue. "It's against my religion because it's associated with aborted fetal tissue, I'm catholic," she said. "I'm not against vaccines, for me it's about religious freedom, choice and health concerns."

"Aborted tissue" is a concern among some evangelical Christians, though most major religious leaders and institutions, including the Vatican, support vaccinations to save lives. None of the COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in the U.S. are made with tissues taken directly from aborted fetuses. The Defense Department allows troops to seek religious exemptions, and it also will excuse service members from getting the coronavirus vaccines, including potential booster shots, if they have legitimate health concerns or were a part of a tiny minority of those who suffered

See MASK MANDATE on next page

MASK MANDATE from preceding page

from [rare vaccine side effects such as myocarditis](#). Military.com was the first American news outlet to [report on the link](#) between COVID-19 vaccines and heart inflammation.

McHaffie said that she objects to any mandates on health care. Yet troops must abide by a large roster of Defense Department health standards when they join the armed services, given mandates for other vaccines. Aside from COVID-19 shots, troops are mandated to receive more than a dozen vaccines against diseases such as smallpox and influenza. McHaffie did not have an explanation as to why she accepted the other mandatory vaccines as part of her service, but rejected the COVID-19 vaccine, when asked by Military.com. She described the events leading to her separation from the Marine Corps as being triggered by a coughing fit. "I went into my [officer in charge's] office to talk about something else, and I was coughing and he asked me if I thought I had COVID," McHaffie said. "At that point, I told him I don't believe in the panic behind COVID and I'm entirely fine. From that point, he kept pushing the COVID topic and told me when it was mandated he was going to push paperwork if I don't comply."

[That was exactly a month after the Pentagon issued an indoor mask mandate](#) for unvaccinated troops on June 22. The policy has [since been updated](#) to include all troops in parts of the country where the virus is spreading quickly. McHaffie added that a senior member of her chain of command even called her mother, asking her to urge her daughter to fall in line with the rules. The next day, July 23, her chain of command issued a formal warning to McHaffie that they would move ahead with a discharge, according to documents reviewed by

Her commander said she "willfully" disobeyed two superior officers by "refusing to wear a face covering despite not meeting the requirement to be exempt." The officers who acted to remove her from the [Marine Corps](#) did not reply to multiple requests for comment from Military.com when reached by text and phone calls. Less than a week later, on July 29, McHaffie received a general discharge under honorable conditions, according to a copy of her DD-214, which summarizes a service member's time in the military. It was a lightning-fast dismissal; it is unusual for a service member to be kicked out in less than a week even for serious criminal offenses. But her chain of command acted within the realm of their power and [followed guidance from the Pentagon](#). Richard Mast, an attorney with Liberty Counsel, an evangelical religious organization, told Military.com that the speed of the discharge was shocking and that "she barely had time to seek counsel." Six months after a discharge, troops are allowed to appeal for an upgrade. Mast says he is seeking to have McHaffie's discharge upgraded to honorable. While her current discharge status entitles her to most benefits through the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#), she isn't eligible for the [Post-9/11 GI Bill](#).

-- *Steve Beynon can be reached at Steve.Beynon@military.com. Follow him on Twitter @Steven-Beynon.*

though the military's role in the evacuation process is done.

Just as the evacuation began, the desperation of some Afghans hoping to escape impending Taliban rule caused an accident that pushed the White House to send in more troops to secure the airfield. On Aug. 16, many desperate Afghans ran onto the airport's grounds and surrounded a C-17 that had just landed to unload equipment. The C-17's crew, concerned about the crowd of people approaching the aircraft, opted to take off again. Afghans ran alongside the plane and clung to its sides, some [falling to their deaths](#), and the body of one Afghan was later found in the aircraft's landing gear.

Maj. Gen. Chris Donahue, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, and U.S. Ambassador Ross Wilson were among the last U.S. officials to leave Afghanistan. They departed on the final C-17 flight, covered by what McKenzie described as "overwhelming U.S. airpower overhead, should there have been any challenge to our departure." At the peak of the airlift last week, C-17s were taking off roughly every 45 minutes, and more than 19,000 people were flown out on a single day. On average, the military evacuated more than 7,500 civilians per day, McKenzie said.

The U.S. military evacuated more than 6,000 American civilians, which the Pentagon said represented the majority of those who wanted to leave. The military estimated that only a few hundred wishing to leave remain. McKenzie said the civilian evacuation ended about 12 hours before the final withdrawal. Some equipment was brought out on the final flights, but other equipment -- such as the counter rocket artillery and mortar, or C-RAM, system and various aircraft and vehicles -- was left behind permanently disabled. The sudden collapse of Afghanistan's American-backed government, and the emergency evacuation triggered by the deteriorating security situation, have drawn both political attacks for opponents of the Biden administration, and fingerpointing within. Roughly 2,500 U.S. troops had remained in Afghanistan when the Trump administration left office, a number the Biden administration reduced to about 650 before the Taliban easily conquered Afghanistan.

President Joe Biden quickly mobilized 6,000 troops, including the 10th Mountain and 82nd Airborne Divisions, to secure the airport and aid in the evacuation that followed. "No words from me could possibly capture the full measure of sacrifices and accomplishments of those who serve, nor the emotions they're feeling at this moment," McKenzie said. "But I will say that I'm proud that both my son and I have been a part of it."

-- *Stephen Losey can be reached at stephen.losey@military.com. Follow him on Twitter @StephenLosey.*

-- *Steve Beynon can be reached at Steve.Beynon@military.com. Follow him on Twitter @StevenBeynon.*

Quartermaster's Corner

For those whom I haven't had a chance to meet in person, my name is Tim Ruland and I am the new Quartermaster for Post 7472. I hope to provide all of you information on what I am doing and how the Post itself is doing in general from the Quartermaster's perspective. I plan on using the newsletter, but also email to keep you informed, provide support and answer your questions. So let's get started.

1. The Department of Maryland is again offering to pay 50% of a life membership for members who have been in good standing for a year. I can provide details of how to do that if anyone is interested. You can send the packet directly to the Department or I can send it for you. Basically it is a form to convert (I can provide), a check for your 50%, and a copy of your DD-214 to verify eligibility. I have been asked about the DD-214 since you are already members. The Department doesn't have a copy so they want to see it for their records as they are paying 50%. If you applied initially through Post 7472 we would have a copy I can provide, but if you are a transfer or you joined online through the VFW website neither Post 7472 nor the Department of Maryland would have a copy. In any case it is a good deal and I would recommend members look into it. Then no more annual dues and no Quartermaster reminding you to renew.

2. A major piece of the Post going digital is to improve communication. During COVID we started using Zoom for our meetings, and the Auxiliary still uses it. What I need to do is compile a good list of email addresses, so you may be hearing from me if I get returns when I send out emails.

3. We are doing really well financially. I give a financial report at every General Meeting and this is a good reason to attend if you are able, beyond the camaraderie and keeping up with what we are doing. I am available however, to any member who would like to have a briefing on the finances; just contact me and we can set up a time to meet at the Post.

4. Almost 99 percent of our bills are now paid electronically, this is much more efficient and allows me to monitor our bank accounts on a daily basis.

5. We are working on a lot of things to improve the Post and they are initiated and approved by the membership at the monthly meetings. Once

Continued on next page

Continued from preceding page

Once approved, I will be providing an update at each meeting, yet another reason to attend, hint hint.

6. The Commander is looking for some people to help manage the Hall and the Bar. These positions are not difficult, especially if we have a couple of people working together, but are critical to the continued improvement and success of Post 7472.

That's it for now, but I will be keeping you informed and will be available to answer questions, help on membership questions, or just to have a beer and chat.

Tim

NOTICE — NOTICE — NOTICE — NOTICE — NOTICE

This will be my next to the last formal newsletter. I have published the Post 7472 bi-monthly newsletter for well over 10 years now and it is about time that I turned over the reins of this responsibility to someone else. So, if any Post 7472 Comrade(s) would like to take on this awesome responsibility, talk to me or Post Commander, Bill Milner.

However, I will continue to provide newsworthy and timely information to the Comrades of Post 7472, but on a random basis; not necessarily monthly or bi-monthly.

Sincerely,

Shelby L. Rogers, Newsletter Publisher and Editor