



Emerald Coast VFW Post 10555 **ALL-AMERICAN POST JOURNAL**

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Veterans of Foreign Wars
Emerald Coast Post 10555
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VFW Post 10555 News: Ken Waringa, Commander (kcwaringa@yahoo.com)

SUMMER HOURS OF OPERATION
SUN 1-6 PM MON 1-8 PM
TUES/WED 1-6 PM
THURS/FRI 1-9 PM SAT 12-8 PM

This past month Christine and I spent 3 weeks in Europe, we had a great vacation, but now it's back to work. Things around the post are pretty quiet this time of year. We have a very busy Labor Day weekend coming up. Friday, August 29th, Saturday August 30th and Sunday August 31st a number of us are volunteering at the Gulf Coast Jam. We will be manning a beer tent, hopefully collecting tips, and helping at the front gate. In addition to this Harley Davidson Panama City Beach contacted us about selling beer at their store on Saturday and Sunday from 12 – 4 of Labor Day weekend, so we will have 2 beer tents there as well. The American Legion is pitching in to help us man one of the booths at Harley Davidson. Then on Monday we will have our traditional Labor Day Picnic, so it's going to be a busy weekend. If you are interested in helping us sell beer at Harley Davidson or you can help put on the Labor Day picnic please let me or SVC Tom Randall (850-703-7636) know. On a sad note, we lost a Life Member, Phillip Hunt, while I was away. I appreciate the Comrades (and VFWLA President Kitty Dye) that went to Saint Bernadette's to say Aloha to Phil and expressed our sympathies to his widow, Jean, and their family on behalf of the Post. **See you there, Thank You for your continued support of our events and programs.**

KEN WARINGA, Post Commander 10555 phone me @ 850-460-9345

[PS CLICK HERE FOR THE LATEST STATE BULLETIN](#)

VFW Ladies Auxiliary Status: Kitty Dye, President (kdye8918@yahoo.com)

July had been a pretty busy month. We served about 40 at the Fish Fry, and a great Potluck Dinner on Sunday the 20th. As I said last month, we received All-State Honors from the Department President at the State Convention in June. We were awarded the Platinum Award Trophy for Cancer Aid and Research, A Gold Award Trophy for the President's Special Project and third place in our division Trophy for Americanism. We received a Healthy Auxiliary Certificate and a National Military Services Certificate of Recognition. We initiated 2 new sisters into the Auxiliary. One of our sisters, Jean Hunt, lost her husband Phil, in his battle in the fight of cancer. Please remember her in your prayers.

School will be starting soon and we will be putting our Dick and Jane in the Canteen to accept donations of school supplies. There are a lot of needy children here on the Beach, so hopefully, you will be as generous as you were last year. In August there will be a fish fry on the 8th and another potluck on the 17th. Anyone wishing to go T. Wayne Markham's Homecoming Dinner at Edgewater on September the 20th should call 850-381-9243 by August 1, to get your name on the list. This is a free dinner. Need a ride to meetings? Please call me at 234-8918 if you do!

Until next time, be Safe & Cool Kitty Dye, President Ladies Auxiliary 10555



American Legion Update: Post 402 Commander, Jim Bowers (scootin1923@yahoo.com)

The American Legion has its Monthly Meeting on August 4th with the Officers Meeting at 5:30PM and Regular Meeting at 6PM. We will also be having Legion Bingo and Hotdogs at 1:00 on Saturday, August 9th. Don't Forget! Our Legion BBQ AND Bingo on the Friday August 15th. The Legion still has Shirts available in the hall be sure to get yours today. The Legion has been invited to help with the Labor Day Event at the Harley Davidson Panama City Beach shop. We will be pleased to help with this detail.

Thank you all and God Bless America!!! Jim Bowers

VFW Post 10555 Quartermaster's Corner, Rob Smith (baltorob@comcast.net)

Hello All! Well, we are in the dog days of summer now. The heat has ramped up and business at the Post has slowed down some. But that doesn't mean the bills have slowed down. We are trying to have events that bring folks out to enjoy the Post and this past Sunday we held a Pot Luck Dinner with Karaoke that was very well attended. I was happy that so many folks showed up with food to share. Kudos to Chaplain Larry Striblin for bringing up the idea and many thanks to all those that attended.

We are now in a new membership year and in order to get our continuous members (myself included) to renew early, we are having a membership contest. Simply renew your membership between now and 30 September, and you will be entered into a drawing for a life membership! I know I will be renewing early. One little caveat, you must be present at the October general membership meeting to be eligible to win. It is easy to renew, just bring your dues (\$36 cash or check made payable to VFW Post 10555) to the post and put it in an envelope. Write on the envelope your name, membership # (if known) and Dues - Quartermaster. Please leave it at the Canteen if I am not there. If you choose to renew online using the Online Membership System at vfw.org, just bring in a printed receipt in an envelope addressed to the Quartermaster and I'll make sure you are entered into the drawing.

See you at the Post! Rob Smith

A Message from Canteen Manager: Billie Jones (vfw10555@knology.net)

Another month has passed and it is time again for the monthly newsletter. Our new summer hours seem to be working out – members are still coming out to support their post and I “thank them.” All events have stayed the same check out your monthly calendar for upcoming dates, time and etc. A new event, Pot Luck Meal was held on a Sunday last month and was a real hit, good food and fellowship for all. They are planning on this event to be held each month as long as there is interest.

Reminder to all we have t-shirts, hats and koozies for sale at a very reasonable prices. Stop by have a cold beverage and do some shopping.

I would like to thank our bartenders Gail, Cindy and Shannon for a job well done. The post would not survive without them – tipping is appreciated. A big thanks goes out to Jacii, my hardworking assistant!!

Best Regards. Billie Jones Canteen Manager

STATE COMMANDER HOMECOMING (vfw10555@knology.net)



On September 19th we are hosting a Steak Night for those attending the State Commander's Homecoming 19-20 September. On September 20th, the LAVFW is providing lunch for the Golf Tournament. For both events at the Triple Nickel, we need your help serving, clearing, cleaning up after each event. Please add your name to the list of and direct your questions to Committee Chairs Tom Randall, VFW SVC and Kitty Dye, President LAVFW. This is our chance to shine!

How 'Choice Card' and \$15 Billion Will Help Vets Get Care

By Tom Philpott, 31 July 2014

Veterans reading only headlines, hearing only sound bites, might have a few misconceptions about how Congress and the VA plan to use non-VA healthcare providers to ensure more timely and convenient access to care. A magical sounding item called a "Veteran's Choice Card," for example, won't be a limitless credit card given qualified veterans to cover whatever health services they receive from whatever physician they use. And veterans not already enrolled in VA health care won't gain accelerated access to outside care as promised by the legislation — unless they serve in areas of combat operations within five years of enrollment. The centerpiece of the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act (HR 3230) is a special \$10 billion Veterans Choice Fund. Over the next three years, VA is to use the fund as needed to buy care from non-VA care providers for veterans if they face long waits for VA care — defined initially as more than 30 days — or if they reside more than 40 miles from VA care.

The intent is to eliminate VA patient wait lists that some VA health administrators and staff conspired to hide in recent years, thus compromising the integrity of performance reports and putting patients' health at risk. VA leaders and veteran service organizations prefer to attack wait times through improved resourcing. They want VA spending raised to meet actual patient demand from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, from the expansion of diseases presumed caused by defoliants used in Vietnam, and from higher costs of caring for aging veterans. So HR 3230 also authorizes VA to spend \$5 billion more to expand its own capacity to deliver care, by hiring more medical and support staff and also building and leasing more space.

House-Senate conferees, in shaping the final bill, categorized the Choice Fund as emergency money so the \$10 billion gets added to the nation's debt but not to VA budgets. The \$5 billion for more VA-delivered care is to be paid through cuts elsewhere in VA, including executive bonuses and by deferring planned rate cuts for some types of VA home loans. The legislation mandates use of a new Veteran's Choice Card but it isn't a golden key to private sector care. It will be more like an informational insurance card to be presented to non-VA health care providers to identify the veteran and to verify eligibility for episodes of care that, sometime earlier, were arranged through and approved by a VA care coordinator.

The administrative challenges ahead for VA in coordinating a vast expansion of private sector care, monitoring outside care quality and integrating those medical records back into VA health care will be profound. But the bill is said to set aside only \$300 million for these added tasks. Indeed, in reviewing the new law's requirements, VA officials are weighing whether current Veteran Identification Cards (VICs), which are issued when veterans enroll in VA health care, might be modified to serve as the "choice card" that the new law mandates.

Other details in the reform package will disappoint reformers who seek to fully "privatize" VA care. The bill is a series of compromises between near-term action to address the patient wait-time scandal and steps to shore up the integrated VA health care system so prized by many veterans and their service organizations. Here's more on how non-VA care will grow:

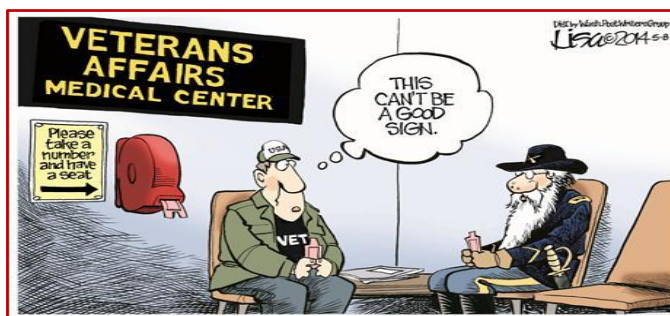
ELIGIBILITY – The hurdles to gain easy access to non-VA care go beyond how far veterans reside from a VA clinic or how long their wait for care. To be eligible, veterans must have enrolled in VA health care by Aug. 1, 2014 or, if they enroll later, they must have served on active duty in a theater of combat operations within five years of enrolling. These restrictions address cost concerns fiscal conservatives had after the Congressional Budget Office projected that up to two million more veterans would drop current health insurance and enroll with VA if given the chance to use current doctors and have VA foot the bill.

NO FIRM 30-DAY GOAL – Architects of HR 3230, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Jeff Miller (R-Fla.), would like non-VA care offered to any vet who can't get a VA appointment within 30 days. But their legislation allows VA to set a different wait-time goal if they can defend it. What VA finally decides will be part of interim rules for implementing the law, to be published within 90 days of President Obama signing the bill into law. The bill would require that if VA can't offer a timely appointment then it must inform the veteran electronically or, if the veteran chooses, by mail, and explain that outside care is authorized. Last year, VA spent \$4.8 billion on non-VA health care but half of that involved emergency services.

40 MILES AS CROW FLIES — Veterans who reside more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility or who must travel by air, boat or ferry to access VA care are to be offered non-VA care instead. VA is to use "geodesic distance" or the shortest route between two points on Earth, or, if you like, "as the crow flies." VA's early estimate is that 500,000 vets will qualify.

However, House-Senate conferees in their explanatory report on HR 3230, say they do not intend the 40-mile criteria "to preclude veterans who reside closer" to a VA facility "from accessing care through non-VA providers, particularly if the VA facility...provides limited services." So VA will have to clarify in regulation what 40 miles really means.

CHOICE OF PROVIDER – Not all veterans who become eligible for non-VA care will get to choose their outside provider, and not every non-VA care provider will opt to treat veterans through the VA coordinated care program, even if the vets are existing patients. One issue for physicians will be the level of reimbursement and another the timeliness of VA payments. VA has existing contracts with individual physicians and with pools of private sector providers. Many more such arrangements are expected. But VA cannot pay rates higher than Medicare allows, with exceptions possible if care is delivered in very rural areas. Timeliness of VA payments to non-VA care providers has been a significant concern for years. The reform bill has language urging VA officials to improve their payment procedures.



Send comments to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, 20120, email milupdate@aol.com or twitter: Tom Philpott @Military_Update

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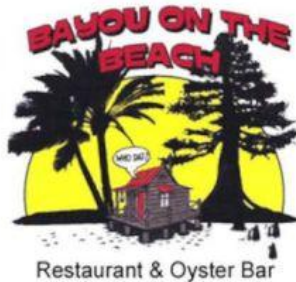
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