



The American Legion

The Valdosta Post Number Thirteen, Inc. of The American Legion Valdosta, Georgia

June 2021

Commander
Rod Pedersen

**Sr. Vice
Commander**
Steve Blanton

**Jr. Vice
Commander**
David Guest

**Jr. Vice
Commander**
Dan
McSwords

**Finance
Officer**
R D Martin

**Service
Officer**
Ed Kent

Chaplain
Bill
MacLaughlin

Sgt at Arms
Raymond
Meeks

Historian
Henrietta
Traynor

**Judge
Advocate**
Phil
Youngblood

Adjutant

**A/Sgt at
Arms**
Jimmy
Traynor

**PEC Mbr. at
Large**
Greg Rothfuss

From the Commander:

As most know, we conducted Post 13's Memorial Day Ceremony at Sunset Memorial Cemetery. The Post, Moody AFB, various Groups of the Community helped place American Flags on Veterans' gravesites on the preceding Saturday and Sunday. A special thanks to the Dignitaries, Veterans and Community Citizenry that attended and honored in remembrance of American Fallen of all American Conflicts.

Most of our Post 13 Executive Committee will be on Staff at Georgia Boys State, June 12th through June 19th, and then again we will be at Department of Georgia Convention, June 24th through 27th. Traditionally and Constitutionally this is why Post 13 does not have a June Membership Meeting.

Many of you have been asking, "WHEN is Post 13 going to reopen?" well here it is.....

At our May 24th Post Executive Committee Meeting we decided to reopen Post 13 to the Membership and its Programs. The House Committee and I are currently in the process of reopening the Lounge to Members and Guests as well as commit to serving meals at the 2nd Tuesday General Membership meetings. As of July 1st all meetings of the Programs, Activities and entities of Post 13 may reconvene.

This will not be an easy process and I ask the members of Post 13 to be patient with our endeavors. Volunteers and ideas are encouraged. I would like to see Post 13 come back as strong as we were in previous times and we can do this if we try.

For God and Country

**Commander Rod Pedersen
(229) 630-8315 (please leave a voicemail)**

PEC Mbr. at
Large
Timothy Oliver

PEC Mbr. at
Large
Bill Dimsdale

Sr. Vice Commander – Squadron 13 Commander

Fellow Legionnaires and Post 13 Family:

We are nearing the end of a trying Legion year. Covid-19 had stopped many activities and on July 1st , 2021 we are going open the Post Home to resume activities that are for the good for the American Legion.

This is the start of a new year and opportunity to restore Post 13 to be a valuable asset to our community and be a source of support for Veterans and Children in need. We all need to serve our 4 Pillars of Service.

The PEC needs ideas for Fund Raisers and we need volunteers willing to invest time and effort to enact these ideas. The PEC has decided to resume Post Meeting meals and “will not require a donation”.

Officers were elected by paper ballot via mail or personal drop off. We Honor Vet program has resumed as of June 1st. Memorial Day ceremony shall have accompanied the placing of flags at Sunset Hills Cemetery.

Please support the Post and serve in any capacity you are able. Masks are not required at the Post but are a personal choice.

Do not wait till July 1st to ask yourself, “What have I done to help a Veteran today?”

**For God and Country,
Stephen Blanton Sr. Vice Cmdr.
(864) 680-3865
sabusn6976@gmail.com**

Fellow SAL Members

It is time to rebuild the Sons of the American Legion so I am calling for SAL members to gather for the first meeting of the new year on Monday July 5th, 2021 at 6:00 pm. I ask all members and officers to attend so we have quorum and can hold a meeting. If we lack quorum and have some present we will have an information exchange and camaraderie, so please take an hour or two out your month and be an active member. We also made a donation to GA Boys State to allow payment for a High School graduating Junior attendee.

For God and Country

***Stephen Blanton* Sr. Vice Cmdr., Squadron 13 Commander
(864) 680-3865
sabusn6976@gmail.com**

Post 13 Veterans Service Officer

Other than Honorable Discharge: New Review Board Offers One Last Chance at Appeal:

Recently separated service members who believe they were unjustly or erroneously discharged or dismissed from the military, or want to upgrade how their discharge was characterized, now have one new last chance at appeal. The Pentagon on 7 APR announced it has created a new route for service members who separated on or after Dec. 20, 2019, to appeal their separation. The new Discharge Appeal Review Board will allow those service members a final review of their requests to upgrade their discharge or dismissal characterization after they have exhausted all other available administrative options, the Defense Department's release said. Congress ordered the board created in the fiscal 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. Once a service member has exhausted all appeals with the appropriate service Discharge Review Board and Board of Correction of Military or Naval Records, they now can apply to the new appeal board for a final review. These boards of appeal also make corrections to a veteran's discharge, such as fixing dates or misspellings on the DD-214 or adding missing decorations or campaign medals to a veteran's record. But the new board will take a very tightly defined look at each case. It will review only records from the service Board of Correction of Military/Naval Records' case file, the release said, and will not see people personally. Anyone who wants to present new evidence first has to ask their Board of Correction to reconsider that evidence before it can be considered by the new appeal board. It's not yet clear who will sit on the board, how many members it will have or how many cases it's likely to review. If the appeals board recommends that service member's discharge or dismissal characterization be upgraded, it then will be sent to the secretary of the relevant military department for a final decision, the release said. It is the final level of review anyone can seek. If the former service member has died or is incapacitated, that person's surviving spouse, next of kin or legal representative can apply on their behalf, the release said. Veterans who receive a discharge from the military that is characterized as anything other than "honorable" may be ineligible for state and federal benefits, including health care, education, property tax exclusions, employment preferences and even burial benefits. As society has changed throughout the years, many actions that were once a guarantee of a dishonorable discharge now are often not applicable reasons for involuntary termination from military service. Therefore, veterans who appeal a less-than honorable discharge often are successful in having it upgraded. The formation of a new board of appeals for discharges was designed to ensure all previous decisions on appeals were made according to the law and DoD policy. *The Air Force has been put in charge of the appeal review board process, the Pentagon said.* Anyone who believes there's a problem with their discharge or dismissal, as of Dec. 20, 2019, is encouraged to apply for review, the Pentagon said. They can find more information at the Air Force Review Board Agency Portal. April 7, 2021

VA Copay: American Recovery Plan Impact

VA co-payments received between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021, will be waived, refunded, or forgiven under the American Recovery Plan. The VA is canceling and refunding copayments for the following benefits:

- All medical care received through VA between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021**
- All prescription medications received through VA between Apr 6, 2020, and Sep 30, 2021**

It is hoped that this will help Veterans and their families during this challenging time. If you're a Veteran who receives care through VA, here's what this means for you:

- If you received a statement with copayments for services or medications received on April 6, 2020, or later, we'll remove these copayments from your account. You won't have to pay these copayments.**
- If you already paid any copayments for services or medications received on April 6, 2020, or later, we'll send you a refund.**
- If you have unpaid copayments for services or medications received before April 6, 2020, we won't require or expect you to make payments on your account until October 1, 2021. We won't add any interest or fees to your accounts. And we won't take any collection actions on these specific copayments. If you'd like to voluntarily make payments during this time, you can. But we won't require or expect payments until October 1, 2021. Find out how to pay your VA copay bill VA doesn't need anything from you at this time to process your refund. They ask for your patience as they adjust statements and process refunds. Updates will be provided on when to expect refunds to start.**

[Source: VHA Co-Pay Recovery Act | <https://www.va.gov/health-care/copay-rates> | April 1, 2021 ++]

Geriatrics & Extended Care: Advance Care Planning | Making Health Care Decisions

There is no one way to get started with Advance Care Planning, which is a process of making decisions about:

- What treatments you would or would not want if you were ill or injured and were not able to make those decisions for yourself**
- Who you want to make those decisions for you**

In any case, the information you need to get started can be found at www.va.gov/Geriatrics:

- What are Advance Directives?**
- How do I go about Choosing a Person to Make Decisions?**
- How do I begin Talking with Loved Ones?**
- Where can I get Help Setting Health Care Goals?**
- Can I do this with other Veterans and caregivers through Group Visits?**
- Are there Other Types of Advance Care Planning I should think about?**
- Where can I find More Resources?**

Veterans and their caregivers must think about many factors when making care and treatment decisions– choices that meet needs and honor Veteran preferences. These resources can help you identify your priorities. They can also help you prepare to talk with your providers or loved ones about your preferences and make decisions about health care or planning for long term care.

☐ Conversation Guide for Patients and Caregivers for Identifying their Health Priorities

☐ Tips for Patients to Communicate with Clinicians

☐ Veteran Decision Aid for Care at Home or in the Community– Helps Veterans think about what matters most when considering long term care choices

☐ Caregiver Self-Assessment– Helps caregivers review their roles and responsibilities and evaluate their stress

Visit www.va.gov/Geriatrics to learn more about services and resources for Veterans and their caregivers.

Ed Kent

Post 13 Veterans Service Officer

We Honor Vets Program Chairman

The WHV program is now in person with only the restrictions that the honoree’s family may request or the current hospice protocols.

On Thursday, June 1st Commander Pedersen, Sr Vice Commander Blanton and Finance Officer R D Martin conducted a “person-limited” WHV in Nashville at the SGMC Fellowship Home for Willie Head Jr., USAF- Vietnam

Keith Knowlton

Jr. Vice Commander

To all Members, come to the Post meeting in July and help get things started back up. Bring any ideas you have to help get the post moving forward. I look forward to seeing all my fellow Legionnaires.

Contact: ph# 229-292-5188

email: guestfam@gmail.com

David Guest Jr. Vice Commander

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 13

Greetings to Members of Unit 13

We are at the close of a trying old year and I welcome you to the start of a new year. Elections for 2021-2022 were held and I thank all for the participation. The results are:

**President Sheila Blanton
Secretary Liv Tatum**

**2nd Vice Sandra De Pietro
Treasurer Pat Morgan**

Thank you to everyone that voted. Our first meeting will be July 13, 2021 at 7:pm. Hope to see everyone there. A Post meal be served and no donation is required. I hope to see everyone there.

Happy Birthday Wishes to May and June members.

Sheila Blanton
Unit 13 Auxiliary President