



American Legion Post 13 April 2022 Newsletter

2021-2022

Officers

Commander:	Stephen Blanton	Sr Vice:	Dan McSwords	Adjutant:	Clayton Roberts
Jr Vice:	Bill Dimsdale	Jr Vice:	RD Martin	Fin. Off.:	Richard Brown
Judge Adv:	Phil Youngblood	Serv. Off:	Ed Kent	Historian:	Henrietta Traynor
Sgt @ Arms:	Ray Meeks	Asst Sgt @ Arms	Jimmy Traynor		
Chaplain	Bill McLaughlin	Members @ Large:	Don Van Pelt; David Guest and Tim Oliver		

COMMANDER'S CORNER:

Salutations to the Post 13 Family

We are in the last quarter of the Legion Year 2021-2022. We are not at 100% membership so please pay your dues if you have not done so. Membership is everyone's responsibility so if you have friends that are veterans and are not Legionnaire's please encourage them to join our organization. Dept. of Georgia Spring Conference was attended by 8 of our Legion family to represent the Post and to learn of changes from National, to Department, to District 12 and to our Post 13. Membership increases are key to the American Legion to remain viable and be able to support Veterans under our 4 Pillars of service. I. Americanism II. Children and Youth. III. National Security. IV Veterans Affairs and Rehab. An important area stressed at the Spring Conference was Buddy Checks. We all are aging and that subjects us to medical and even mental issues so it is important for each of to check on our fellow Legionnaires and friends to assure them they are not alone and forgotten. If you can render assistance to a fellow Veteran, please do so and if further assistance is needed please call or email me to help find the assistance needed. I would like to see Veteran camaraderie grow on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings 5 pm to 9 pm when our Lounge is open to members and their guests. Got an idea for a Fund Raiser or Post Activity, bring it to the attention of the Post Executive Committee by coming to our membership meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of the month and even by mail sent to American Legion Post 13, PO Box 1005, Valdosta Ga. 31603. Attn. Commander. Remember we need the ideas but also would like a suggested course of action. I thank each member for their Service to Country and for being a member of the

largest Veterans Organization in the world. sabusn6976@gmail.com 864 680-3865 leave message

For God and Country

Stephen Blanton Cmdr.

Senior Vice

Our 2022 Membership Goal is currently about 74% with 308 Paid Members. When you are around your Post 13 friends, ask them if they have renewed? It may take just a friendly reminder.

Adjutant

Clayton Roberts croberts22@hotmail.com

There have been a few renewals that have trickled in recently but we still have many members that have not renewed their membership for 2022 with the Legion. If you are one of those, please do so as soon as possible to maintain your membership in good standing, please stay with us and help keep our Post 13 family strong!

Service Officer

Ed Kent kentj2@bellsouth.net

VA Presumptive Cancer Diseases: Proposed Expansion

The Department of Veterans Affairs will propose adding certain rare respiratory cancers to the list of presumed service-connected disabilities in relation to military environmental exposure to particulate matter. When the proposal becomes final, dependents, survivors, and Veterans who had claims previously denied for any of the below respiratory cancers would be encouraged to file a supplemental claim for benefits.

- Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) of the larynx;
- SCC of the trachea;
- Adenocarcinoma of the trachea;
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea;
- Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung;

- Large cell carcinoma of the lung;
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung;
- Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung; and
- Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung.

Any Veteran who had one of these cancers manifest to a degree of 0% or more at any time during or after separation would become eligible for service-connection. VA intends to focus its rule on the rare respiratory cancers above in Veterans who served any amount of time in the Southwest Asia Theater of operations and other locations. VA will invite and consider public comments as part of this process. The publication date of the federal register will occur in the coming weeks. Once rulemaking is complete, VA will conduct outreach to impacted veterans and survivors to inform them about potential eligibility. The Southwest Asia Theater of operations refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations. If you are a Veteran who has been diagnosed with one of these conditions, but have not filed a claim, please notify VA of your intent to file a claim. [Source: VBA Message | March 1, 2022]

DoD Vaccination Program: Separations, Lawsuits, and Exemptions

As of 10 March the U.S. Naval Institute reported 1,712 active duty service personnel have now been separated due to refusal to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The breakdown by service is:

- The Marine Corps separated 165 Marines over the past week. At 1,038, the Marine Corps leads the military branches for the most separations.
- The Navy comes in second with a total of 469 separations, which includes 50 this past week. Of the separations this week, 24 had served for more than six years, while 26 served for less than six years. The highest rank was chief petty officer, said Lt. Travis Callaghan, spokesperson for chief of naval personnel, in an email.
- The Air Force has separated 205 active-duty airmen, according to its weekly update.
- The Army has not yet separated a soldier. The Navy, as well as the other branches, potentially could have more sailors that it would separate for refusal to get vaccinated against COVID-19, but there are currently lawsuits preventing punitive action against a handful of service members who have refused to get vaccinated due to religious objections.
- One lawsuit focuses on the Navy special warfare community and involves 26 Navy SEALs. The attorneys are currently aiming to make it a class action, which would apply to all members of the Navy. The case was heard by the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which upheld a preliminary injunction preventing the SEALs from being punished for not being vaccinated.

- Another lawsuit includes plaintiffs across the military branches, notably a Navy commanding officer of a guided-missile destroyer. The overseeing judge has also prevented the services from taking adverse action against the plaintiffs. Liberty Counsel, the legal ministry representing the plaintiffs, is also seeking to turn the case into a class-action lawsuit. If the class-action lawsuit were to prevail, the Navy could have 4,000 sailors unvaccinated against COVID-19, which naval leaders have said is a risk to force health. In a declaration associated with the navy commander lawsuit, Adm. Derek Caudle, commander of Fleet Forces Command, wrote that having 4,000 unvaccinated sailors “will create an unacceptable risk to

readiness and could result in unnecessary deaths, ”Currently, 4,593 active-duty sailors are not fully vaccinated, which could mean they are in the process of getting vaccinated, have an exemption or are waiting for a waiver request to be adjudicated. Sailors with an exemption are given non-operational billets. Another 3,241 members of the reserve are not fully vaccinated, according to the weekly COVID-19 updated. The Marine Corps currently has 96 percent of its active-duty force fully vaccinated, with another 2 percent partially vaccinated. Its reserve force is 89 percent fully vaccinated with another 1 percent partially vaccinated. When compared to the size of the force, the number of unvaccinated sailors and Marines is not a large percentage, Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro told reporters 9 MAR. The Marine Corps has separated about 0.56 percent of its force due to vaccine refusal. The Navy about 0.13 percent. The percentage of the active-duty sailors currently undeployable due to lack of vaccination is approximately 1.3 percent. “And it’s incredibly important for all our sailors and our Marines to be properly vaccinated because this is an issue of combat readiness,” Del Toro said. “We simply

cannot put the lives of our other sailors who are vaccinated at risk.” The Navy granted 12 permanent medical, 212 temporary medical and 28 administrative exemptions for

active-duty sailors. The sea service granted one permanent, 10 temporary and 31 administrative exemptions to reservists. Although there have been 3,476 requests from active-duty sailors and 875 from reservists, the Navy has not granted a religious exemption. It did grant one to a member of the individual ready reserve on the condition that the sailor be vaccinated if called up to active-duty or reserve status. The Marines Corps does not break down exemptions, but it has granted 992 medical or administrative exemptions. The Marine Corps received 3,653 requests for religious waivers, with six approved. The Air Force approved 19 religious exemptions, with the Army approving none.

Intent to File Notification: Why Do It & How to Do It

If you plan to file or refile a claim for disability, pension, or DIC benefits and you notify VA of your intent to file, it sets a potential start date (or effective date) for your benefits. When you do this, you may be able to get retroactive payments (compensation that starts at a point in the past). This is because your start date for benefits will be earlier than the date you file your claim. Note that if you start filling out a claim form online for disability benefits, this will reserve a potential start date for your benefits and you don’t need to separately call VA or submit a separate intent to file form. Go to

<https://www.va.gov/disability/file-disabilityclaim-form-21-526ez/introduction> to start an online claim. If you are not ready to file an online claim, but do plan to eventually file a claim within the next year, it is to your benefit to notify VA of that intention. The notification procedure requires you to either call the VA or submit a separate form. You can call them at 1-800-827-1000 Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET. Or submit an Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors Pension and/or DIC (VA Form 21-0966) available at <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0966-ARE.pdf>. It can be filled out online and downloaded for mailing to Department of Veterans Affairs, Claims Intake Center, PO Box 4444, Janesville, WI 53547-4444. You can also turn in your form in one of these ways:

- Bring it to a VA regional office near you which can be located at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=benefits>

- Work with a trained professional called an accredited representative.

(<https://www.va.gov/disability/get-help-filing-claim>)

[Source: <https://www.va.gov/resources/your-intent-to-file-a-va-claim> | March 2022 ++]

NOTE: Although this is presented on the VA Website, remember, you have an experienced, qualified and accredited Representative at your local Veterans Service Office. Ours in Valdosta is located at the VA Out-Patient Clinic. Call for an appointment, but heed the purpose of the "Intent to File" info above. It's important to your claim date!

Auxiliary Scoop

Hello Auxiliary Members

The end of the Legion year is almost here. New Officers will soon be elected. I have just returned from the Spring Conference and Dee Dee Harrell, the Director of Girls State is looking for counselors if anyone in Unit 13 would like work with Girls State that will be held at VSU contact Pat Morgan. Thanks to Pat, Judy and Lenora for their efforts at the fund raiser held during the time of the Azalea Festival. Thanks to the assistance given by the Post family with set up.

There will be changes coming from National that will be revealed and the Department of GA Convention in June and that information will be brought to the Unit 13 membership meeting that follows. Our next membership meeting is April 12, 2022 at 7:00 pm with Post meal at 6:00 pm. Hope to see you then.

Sheila Blanton

President Aux. Unit 13

Salutations SAL Squad 13

We have had a slow start and have not had many productive meetings this Legion Year. It is time we make an effort to put Covid-19 in the past and start the rebuild of SAL Squad 13. We need for SAL Officers and members to make an effort to attend meetings and to bring ideas of how to assist Post 13 and find new avenues to serve Children and Youth as well as Veterans. We have more financial assets available than I have ever seen in the short time I have been in the SAL. We need to put this money to good use for the benefit of veterans and children in our community. There is a desire for cooking and sharing a meal before a SAL meeting. We will discuss and plan a fish fry at the March meeting for the meal at the April meeting. There are Posts and Aux. Units that are turning in Charters in Dist. 12 and other Districts across the State of Georgia. We need to work together to keep SAL Squad 13 from being just a memory. We have opportunity to renew our efforts and rebuild SAL Squad 13.

For God and Country Stephen Blanton Cmdr. SAL Squad 13

*****SPECIAL ATTENTION*****

Sunset Cemetery where Post 13 conducts our annual Memorial Day Ceremony will be hosting a clean-up day a couple weeks prior to the May ceremony. Date(s) have not been published at this time but volunteers are needed to assist in cleaning of head stones and area. We will publish the dates as soon as we receive them so please stay tuned and make it a point to be part of the effort!