



CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FALL 2025



CARLO ARCUTIS

THE FIRST MILLENNIAL SAINT

A Sculpture depicts the newest Saint kneeling at the foot of the cross, with a laptop featuring the sacred vessels for Holy Communion to which he devoted.

He used digital media to create a website documenting miracles and Marian apparitions. Diagnosed with leukemia, he died at age 15.

CELEBRATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THIS CALENDAR DEPICTS FLAGS OF THE 13 ORIGINAL COLONIES,
THE 37 ADDITIONAL STATES ADMITTED TO THE UNION SINCE JULY 4, 1776,
PHOTOS AND TIDBITS OF INFORMATION.



\$22,225 TOTAL CASH PRIZES



Calendars are \$25.00 each.

You can win more than once.

There are 365 chances of winning a prize.

Drawings will be made and prizes awarded on a monthly basis.

Winning Numbers will also be posted to our website on a monthly basis.

Visit thecwv.org - click on Cash Calendar Winners under Quick Links.

Prize money will be retained by CWV National Headquarters if the randomly drawn winning calendar number was not sold.
Net profits to be used to benefit Catholic War Veterans and Auxiliary of the USA.



New Years Day - \$500	Independence Day - \$500	US Navy Birthday - \$150	US Space Force Birthday - \$150
MOH Recipients Day - \$500	Coast Guard Birthday - \$150	US Marine Corps Birthday - \$150	Christmas Eve - \$500
Memorial Day - \$500	CWV Charter Day - \$500	Veteran's Day - \$500	Christmas Day - \$1000
US Army Birthday - \$150	US Air Force Birthday - \$150	Thanksgiving Day - \$500	Daily - \$25.00
			Saturdays & Sundays - \$100



Do you need a Christmas holiday gift for that special someone in your life, the person who has everything or the Secret Santa? Or maybe a gift for your child, grandchild, niece or nephew which provides information about the fifty states, its date of statehood, its capital, and its flag?



You cannot go wrong by purchasing the 2026 Cash Calendar which is a fundraising effort for C.W.V. National HQ and lower echelons.



The calendar has beautiful pictures which will brighten the room where its hung, and it will keep your spirit of patriotism alive all year long as the country celebrates the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.



Each day features a cash prize for the randomly drawn stub number on your calendar. With only 3,000 calendars being sold, your chances of winning might be higher than a lottery ticket! The cost is only \$25, and your stub number is included in every drawing!



Echelons remit \$20 to HQ for each calendar sold and retain the remaining \$5 for their support of this fundraising effort.



You may also purchase a calendar by mailing \$25 (check or money order) to C.W.V. Headquarters 237-20 92nd Road – Bellerose, NY 11426 and it will be mailed to you. More than one can be purchased while the supply lasts.

Thank You.





NEXT YEAR IN CLEVELAND!

Next year's Convention Chairmen PDC Joe Illencik promises a fun-filled 5 days from August 1st to 6th 2026. We will meet at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South at 6001 Rockside Road in Independence, Ohio. Plans call for an Ice Breaker Party on Saturday, August 1st, with a live band, The Zolkas. Sunday, August 2nd will feature a Mass, and joint session opening of the convention. Monday will begin with Mass, then meetings, Commander/President's Luncheon and, later that evening, transportation to JACKS Casino, Flats entertainment area and famous 4th Street restaurants. Tuesday will see Mass, meetings a Memorial Service and MEATO. It will wrap up on Wednesday, August 5th, with meetings, the Memorial Mass and Closing Banquet.

The room rate will be \$180.00 per night with free parking on site. There will be a daytime hospitality room with light snacks and an evening hospitality room with nightly dinner provided at no charge. There are many things to do in the area: Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Christmas Story House, Playhouse square, Cleveland Zoo, Little Italy, Top Golf, Pro Football Hall of Fame (50 miles) and Cedar Point Amusement Park (65 miles). The area hosts many fast food and full dining restaurants. We hope to see everyone there!



Past Ohio Department Commander Joe Illencik provides an overview to members attending this year's New York Convention of plans for next year's convention to take place in Cleveland.



WE REMEMBER FORMER CWV NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BRIAN F. TOOHEY

Brian Toohey, age 80, was born and raised in upstate Lewiston, New York. After graduating from Lewiston Porter High School, he attended Niagara University, followed by Cornell Law School where he was named Editor-In-Chief of the Law Review.

He served in the JAG Corps of the United States Navy. Later he became a partner at Jones Day, where he worked for 30 years. He served on the local, state and national levels of the Catholic War Veterans, as well as a mentor for the Veterans Treatment Court. His funeral was held at St. Dominic Church in Shaker Heights, Ohio.



CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS & AUXILIARY

2025 NATIONAL CONVENTION



Fr. Tony Mensah, Bishop Joesph Coffey, Fr. Bill McLaughlin concelebrate Mass.



Louisiana State Veterans Secy Charlton Meginley



National Commander Larry Wulf opens the convention with his report of Progress and the state of the organization over the past year.



Bishop Coffey performs ceremonial swearing of slate of officers for the coming year.



Past Aux President Marylyn, and Past Cmdr Dave Crum man memorial table.



The New Hampshire Delegation surrounds its favorite son, 58-year member Ray Bellemore.



Veterans and Auxiliary members assemble for a joint session for Mass and presentation of individual and post National Awards.



Ray Bellemore (NH) received one of this year's St. Sebastian Awards.



Mike Kasinskas (Post 1562 CT) is presented the Veteran of the Year Award by CDR Wulf.



Dawn Petruzzello (NH) is pleased to accept the Auxiliary Outstanding Service Award.



New Yorkers Jim Kiernan and Lenny Gonsalves.

IN A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND!



His extended family, who came from Ohio for the convention, congratulate Mike Strainic on receiving the St. Sebastian Award.



Leading the cheers from the Catholic War Veterans at the Mets vs Cleveland game is Philadelphia resident Bishop Coffey and Fr. Tony Mensah from the nation of Ghana!



Lets Go Mets! Reporting live from the game is John Peterson of Oregon!



Texas State Commander Keith Thomas accepts St. Agnes Award for Amparo Longoria due to illness.



It's party time on the bow as the boat approaches the Statue of Liberty at dusk.



After a long day of convention meetings, members set sail on the Skyline Princess around Manhattan.



The Memorial Mass provides a solemn conclusion to the annual convention.



NY State Commander Bob Gluszek and Wife Alice take in the sights.



The Memorial Service is highlighted by the playing of Taps by Anthony Cipriani.



Epilogue: Mary Ann Janning and husband Ron stayed for some NY sightseeing!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S ST. AGNES AWARDEES!

Photos and text courtesy of PNP Lupita Martinez



MARYLYN CRUM, PNP
ST. AGNES RECIPIENT—2025

Marylyn Crum, a member of CWV Auxiliary Unit 1, Astoria, New York since 2012, was selected to receive the prestigious Honor Legion of the Order of St. Agnes Award. As secretary of the Unit, she attended National Conventions in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Cincinnati and Las Vegas. During the Maine Convention in 2016, Marylyn was elected to serve as National Ritual Officer. In 2018, at the Pittsburgh National Convention, Marylyn was elected as National 3rd Vice President.

In that office, she initiated major revisions to the scholarship application process, making it a joint CWV/CVWA program, which was adopted by the Veterans. In 2020, she was elected as National 1st Vice President. She set about updating the Memorial Service program. She was elected National President in 2021. In conjunction with PNP Susan Ranno, she instituted Zoom meetings with Unit and Department Presidents during the COVID pandemic.

Her focus, as National President, was to reach out to local Units welcoming them to become a greater part of the CWVA. At the National Convention in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Marylyn was elected National President for a 3rd term bringing to light how proper elections should be held. At last year's New Orleans Convention, she presented a proposal to amend the by-laws regarding membership.

A lifetime member of Immaculate Conception Parish in Astoria, NY she remains very involved as Director of Religious Education since 1988. Marylyn and her husband, PNC Dave Crum have been the backbone of the founding parish's renewal in the Catholic War Veterans organization. Pastor Msgr. Fernando Ferrarese extended his support for her nomination.



AMPARO LONGORIA
ST. AGNES RECIPIENT—2025

Amparo Longoria has been a member of San Jose Auxiliary Unit 1805 in Austin, Texas since 1976, and is a Lifetime Member of the organization. She has served on the Board of Officers in various capacities, as well as serving as Unit President.

As Welfare Officer, she was instrumental in getting the Unit involved in adopting a nursing home and joining in the residents' activities. She participates in every Auxiliary fundraising project, starting with Bingo at the Post, where she started to cook and bake items to sell. At Post Bar-B-Que fundraisers, she sold tickets, cooked and delivered plates. She helped place flags at the cemetery for Memorial Day.

She helps the 3rd Vice President with the Children's Christmas Party, wrapping gifts, decorating the Christmas tree and hall and serving refreshments. When the CWV Hall closed, she offered her home for Auxiliary meetings.

Amparo has served as Department Officer in various capacities and President of the Department of Texas. Always reliably in uniform, she attends all Unit, Department and National board meetings. She has been an active parishioner of San Jose Catholic Church for the past 65 years. She participates in church bingos, fish fry events and helps count money from church collections after Mass. She can also be found baking cakes for a cake walk and selling raffle tickets.

Amparo's care for others is shown by her praying a daily rosary for family, sick members, the Pope and all who need prayers. Her compassion for others is shown by being caregiver for her elderly neighbor and assisting others in nursing home care.



CATHERINE FLEMING

ST. AGNES RECIPIENT—2025

Catherine Fleming is a member of St. Sebastian Catholic War Veterans Auxiliary Unit 870 in Woodside, Queens, New York since 2013. She quickly became an invaluable member helping to plan and host parties and fundraisers for both the Auxiliary and the Post. She helped to write Christmas cards as well as prepare boxes of hygiene, entertainment and food products to be distributed to our troops overseas. She helped sell poppies for Memorial Day after Masses and at other community events. She also participates in outings to the St. Albans Veterans Home.

Catherine has served as Ritual Officer, 3rd Vice President and 1st Vice President prior to being elected President. She currently serves as Liaison Officer between the Auxiliary and Post. She works closely with post board members to plan events such as marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade for the past 10 years.

She has attended various functions at the parish school and local Knights of Columbus representing the Auxiliary and the Post. She enjoys presenting CWV/A awards to students for various contests they have participated in at the National level.

According to St. Sebastian Parish Pastor, Fr. Patrick West, Catherine is a valued, active member of the Church. In addition, continuing a tradition started by long-time President Helen Olt, the Unit contributes to various organizations supporting Veterans such as the Gary Sinise Foundation, Wreaths Across America, Bridge to Life, Wounded Warrior Homes and Operation Gratitude.





CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S ST. SEBASTIAN AWARDEES



RAYMOND P. BELLEMORE POST 1624 NEW HAMPSHIRE ST. SEBASTIAN RECIPIENT—2025

Raymond Bellemore is a native of Grasmere, New Hampshire. He enlisted in the New Hampshire Air National Guard in 1960. After basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, he was called to active duty in 1961 as an Air freight Specialist before his honorable discharge in 1962.

After discharge, he married Jeanne in 1967 and started a family. They raised four children and now have seven grandchildren. He went to work as a consultant for a property services company. He would later become president of a heating oil company and an energy consultant company. He received the Legend of Oil Heat Award from the Oil Heat Industry of New England. He served on the Board of Directors of the New England Fuel Institute for 20 years. He also served as Vice President of the Northeast Petroleum Marketers Association of America for 8 years.

Ray joined Sacred Heart Post 1403 of the Catholic War Veterans in 1966. He immediately became active in his post and soon became a life member. When his post was disbanded, he transferred to Rev. Louis A. Ramsey Post 1624 in Manchester, NH. He currently serves as First Vice Commander of his post. He is also Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Department of New Hampshire. At the annual State Convention in 2024, Raymond received the Hall of Fame Award, the Department's highest award.

He is currently a member of St. Elizabeth Seton Parish and a Past President of the Bedford Lions Club joining in 1982 to the present. He served previously as Chairman of the Sacred Heart School Board in 1967, as well as President of the Parish Council. He has been involved with the Daniel Webster Council Boy Scouts of America for 36 years. He promotes and guides scouts to develop a fully Christian way of life by having them earn the Catholic Scouts Award, Ad Altare Dei Award and the Pope Pius Award. He was presented the "Quilt of Valor" Award by the Bedford Friendship Quilt Guild. He also received the St. George Award in 1969, and the Distinguished Citizen Award of the Daniel Webster Council. In 1993, Troop 135 received the "National Unit Recognition" from Pope Paul VI.

Possessing a great sense of humor and vibrant personality, he puts the interests of his family, friends, comrades and clients ahead of his own. In his work with the State Board of Directors, he is dedicated to the mission of our organization. In his past 58 years of active membership, Raymond Bellemore has contributed significantly to the betterment of the Catholic War Veterans.



DENNIS KOESTERER
POST 370 ILLINOIS
ST. SEBASTIAN RECIPIENT—2025

Dennis Koesterer, of Smithton, Illinois and Butz-Jobe Post 370, was enthusiastically nominated by the Commander and members of his post for this honor. He is a Veteran of the U.S. Army and is currently the Post Welfare Officer. He is described as embodying the values of faith, selflessness, honor, commitment and dedication to the post, the Catholic War Veterans and the community. The hours and hard work he gives back to Post 370 is exemplary.

CWV is a way of life for the Koesterer Family. Denny's wife Sue is currently 1st Vice Commander of Post 370 Auxiliary. Daughter Kelsey is an active Auxiliary member. Son-in-Law Andrew is an active-duty service member in the Air Force and a post member.

Dennis participates in post maintenance projects and landscaping. He also guides the restaurant staff. He and a small team took a building vacated by a kitchen tenant and revived it into a full-functioning restaurant. He volunteers to set up and serve a luncheon at the post for the aged and sick in the community. This has become an annual event. He also sets up and serves luncheons for Veterans and first responders on Veterans Day at the post.

He can be seen providing support early in the morning on Memorial Day and Veterans Day at the local cemetery placing American Flags along the roadside at the post home for all who pass to see. He then joins other members at the cemetery to place Flags on graves.

Denny and other post members provided long hours to improve the Belleville Diocese home for retired priests. His commitment to service is truly extraordinary for others to emulate. He inspires volunteerism, good citizenship and leadership. His countless hours and energy go above and beyond to ensure the well-being of the Butz-Jobe Post and the Catholic War Veterans Department of Illinois. He is setting the example for future generations.

His service and dedication also extend to his home parish of St. John the Baptist. He is an exemplary practicing Catholic and model of patriotism. The awards committee obviously agreed!



MICHAEL G. STRAINIC, SR.
POST 613 OHIO
ST. SEBASTIAN RECIPIENT—2025

Mike Strainic joined the newly formed John Paul II Post 1959 in 2011, and immediately got involved in the growth of the post. He helped establish the post's monthly Poppy/Membership Drives at local parishes. He also manned recruiting booths, often for an entire weekend, at parish summer festivals. Post 1959 grew to be the largest CWV Post in Ohio at the time.

Mike was also active in CWV programs, specifically youth contests, and forming and serving on the Post Honor Guard to attend wakes and funeral masses and march in local parades. He was often asked to be a keynote speaker at Memorial and Veterans Day programs at schools and community observances.

Fundraising is of particular interest to Mike. He spent countless hours working on the Post Reverse Raffle's Silent Auction to secure donations from area businesses, raising \$15,000 for distribution to needy Veterans every year he was involved.

At the Post level, he has served as Welfare Officer, 3rd and 1st Vice Commander, newsletter editor and Post Commander. He has received the John J. Martin Award, the Department of Ohio's highest award. Mike subsequently transferred to St. George Post 613 and is now the Post Treasurer.

Moving on to the Department level, Mike has held the positions of Officer of the Day, Adjutant, Treasurer and Department Commander. He is currently on the Ohio CWV Board of Directors. He has also held the title of National Historian and National 2nd Vice Commander. Mike is a member of the National Youth Committee, where he has refined, streamlined and simplified the combined CWV and Auxiliary youth programs. He has also represented the CWV at Arlington National Cemetery on Veterans Day.

Over the last 14 years, Mike Strainic has demonstrated that he truly lives and breathes the Catholic War Veterans. He exemplifies the best qualities of a St. Sebastian Award recipient.

Welcome!

CWV Pop-Up Welcome Sign in Hotel Lobby Attracts an Unexpected Guest to the National Convention in New York!

As his cause for sainthood winds its way through the Vatican, a bit of divine intervention occurred at our 90th Annual Convention in New York. A gentleman coincidentally staying at the same hotel encountered the Welcome Catholic War Veterans pop-up stand in the lobby and took it upon himself to investigate. Finding the assembled Veterans in a meeting room, he entered and introduced himself.

He was Ray Emil Kapaun, a blood relative of the Venerable U.S. Army Chaplain, Father Emil Kapaun, who died while in captivity in a Korean Prisoner of War camp. Mr. Kapaun was in New York to attend the interment at West Point of an Army soldier that Fr. Kapaun saved during the Korean War. He agreed that Divine Providence brought him to that lobby. He addressed the meeting for a few minutes, explaining the procedure for being named "Blessed." The next level, after the verification of two miracles attributed to Father Kapaun, would be Sainthood.

We might note that Fr. Kapaun is mentioned in our ritual closing prayer: *"Lord Jesus, in the midst of the folly of war, your servant Emil gave himself in total service to you through his service and care of his fellow soldiers. We now ask you, Lord Jesus, to manifest to the world the glory of his sacrifices by signs of miracles and peace. In your name, Lord, we ask for you are the source of our peace, the strength of our service to others, and our final hope. In your name, Lord Jesus, we ask. Amen."* Mr. Kapaun then immediately left for LaGuardia Airport to catch his flight home to Seattle, but not before becoming a new member of the Catholic War Veterans Auxiliary.

Thanx and a tip of the hat to Mike Straininc for the text and photo.



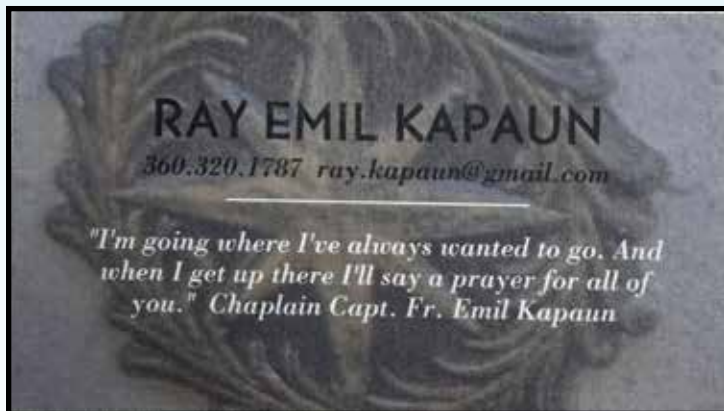
A surprise guest speaker is introduced by CDR Wulf.



Members of the Auxiliary welcome their new member!



National 2nd V/C Mike Straininc meets Mr. Kapaun.



Emil Kapaun was ordained in 1940 and entered the U.S. Army Chaplain School in 1944, after which he served in the Burma Theater in World War II before being released from active duty in 1946. In 1950, he became the Chaplain of the 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, which sailed to Korea and would make the first amphibious landing in the Korean War.

In the field, Fr. Kapaun bravely rescued the wounded and dead, performed baptisms, heard confessions, offered Holy Communion, and celebrated Mass on an improvised altar on the front end of a jeep. During the battle of Unsan, facing overwhelming forces, the men of his unit were taken prisoner and marched to a POW camp, where he later died of dysentery and pneumonia. He would receive the Medal of Honor posthumously from President Obama, and declared "Servant of God" by Pope St. John Paul II, the first step on the road to sainthood.



The remains of a New Hampshire native who died in captivity in Korea in 1951 are returned to American soil and a dignified transfer to his home town of Laconia.

Remains of Korean War POW returned to New Hampshire After 70 Years

After more than seven decades listed as missing in action, the remains of PFC George A. Curley were positively identified on March 3, 2025. An only child, he grew up in Laconia, New Hampshire, was a Boy Scout and loved winter sports. He enjoyed ice fishing, was an accomplished skier and ski jumper. He worked alongside his father and learned to operate the heavy earth moving equipment of the family business.

With his father's consent, he enlisted in the New Hampshire National Guard in June 1948 and was later assigned to Headquarters and Service Company, 2nd Engineer Combat Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division. He was just 18 years old when he was captured. He died in captivity at POW Camp 5 near Pyoktong, Korea. His parents passed away never knowing the fate of their son's remains. His name is inscribed on the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.



PFC GEORGE ARMAND CURLEY, JR



Neighbors file into St. Andre Bessette Parish in Laconia, NH for the funeral mass for PFC Curley.



After services with military honors, he was laid to rest with his parents and grandparents.



CWV National Historian and Past New Hampshire State Commander Denise DeBlois performed a brief wake service representing the Catholic War Veterans. PFC Curley's remains were not initially identified by the Central Identification Laboratory at Kokura, Japan and he was interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. In July 2018, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency disinterred 652 Korean War Unknowns. Updated analysis techniques established the remains as those of PFC Curley.

Photos and story courtesy of Denise DeBlois.



News from the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

All WWII Veterans Are Now Eligible for VA Health Care

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently announced all World War II Veterans are now eligible for No-Cost VA Inpatient and Outpatient Health Care. Under this expansion, all Veterans who served between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946 are eligible for care regardless of their financial status or length of service. These Veterans won't have to pay inpatient or outpatient copays, enrollment fees or monthly premiums. The VA is reaching out by phone and mail to encourage them to apply today if they are not currently enrolled in the VA HealthCare System. Veterans who enroll can also keep their private providers, Medicare and most other insurance to meet healthcare needs.

Veterans who were not approved in the past for VA health care because of income limits **MUST** apply again. The VA cannot enroll these Veterans in healthcare automatically. While these Veterans will no longer have to pay inpatient or outpatient copays, they may still have to pay modest medication, urgent care, or Long-Term Care copayments in some cases, depending on Service Connection and Eligibility.

You can apply for VA Health Care by visiting the VA's health care enrollment website. You can also call 1-800-MyVA411, or visit your nearest VA Medical Center or Clinic. Nursing Home Care is free with no copays for **ALMOST ALL** WWII Veterans who are eligible for nursing home services at the VA. This is anyone who needs who needs this care for a Service-Connected Disability or anyone who needs such care and also has a Service-Connected Disability Rating at 70% or more.

VETERANS ALERT! **False Reporting in The Guardian!**

**The
Guardian**

A recent news story published by The Guardian newspaper has misled Veterans, VA employees and everyone in the Veterans community, due to the article being recklessly and maliciously false. It claimed that recent changes to the Veterans Health Administration by-laws would allow the Department of Veterans Affairs to discriminate against Veterans and facility staff based on political affiliation and marital status.

To be clear, the VA does not tolerate discrimination on any grounds, including political affiliation, marital status, sexual preference, or chosen gender. After investigation, the Veterans Administration public affairs staff asked The Guardian to retract its harmful and defamatory story, but the publication refused.

To make matters worse, other media outlets and some politicians irresponsibly amplified the article's disinformation. While some news reporters, media outlets and politicians have questionable standards, the Department of Veterans Affairs does scrupulously protect its standards, and provides care for all of their Veterans and patients without any thought to discrimination of any kind.

Under no circumstances whatsoever would the VA ever deny appropriate care to any eligible Veteran, survivor or beneficiary or appropriate employment to any qualified, potential employee. The VA requests that Veterans help convey this information to all interested parties who may be concerned about disinformation propagated by media outlets like The Guardian. Thank you for your service to our Nation and to America's Veterans.

VA Launches Ad Campaign to Sign Up New Veterans for VA Health Care and Benefits

The VA recently announced a new national campaign to encourage Veterans to sign up for earned health care and benefits. The campaign, called “What you Earned,” will cost more than \$5 million and it aims to educate Veterans and their families about some of the cost-saving benefits of using the VA. These benefits include low-cost or no-cost health care, debt-free education, \$0Down payments on Home Loans, No-Cost Memorial Services and Burial, and more.

The goal is to encourage Veterans not enrolled in VA health care or receiving VA benefits to apply for the first time. It's the next phase of VA efforts to bring in new Veterans and the newest generation of Veterans. The VA hopes to reach them with compelling reasons to sign up to save thousands of dollars.

Introducing CWV's Veterans Service Officer (VSO), RICK GALES



The cavalry has arrived at the CWV National Headquarters! As a service for our members (though not exclusively), Rick Gales has been added to the Headquarters staff. Rick has been a fully accredited Veterans Service Officer by the Department of Veterans Affairs since 2007.

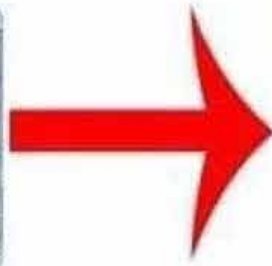
He began his career of service as a National Service Officer with the Military Order of the Purple Heart in its New York regional Office, serving there for five years. He was appointed as Town of Hempstead (Long Island) Veterans Service Officer in 2012, from which he retired in October 2024, and offered his services as a National Services

Officer at the Head-quarters. Rick is ready to assist all Veterans, their families and survivors with information and advice regarding Department of Veterans Affairs benefits regarding Compensation Claims, Pension Claims and Burial Benefits, along with any questions regarding Medical and other Health Care System information.

Rick is a U.S. Navy Veteran of 12 years, serving as a Radioman 2nd Class and Teletype Repairman on three ships and while stationed in Naples, Italy for three years on shore duty. He has been assisting Veterans, even while on active duty, since 1980. While assigned to USS SURIBACI (AE-21), homeported at Naval Weapons Station, Earle NY, he became involved with the local VFW Post in Middletown, New Jersey and various post functions, including monthly visits to the VA Hospital in Menlo Park, NJ. During his first visit, while in uniform, he met an old Veteran and started a conversation. The old-timer mentioned and cursed out the Cuban that shot his finger off in the Spanish-American War in 1899. He can say with pride that he has been assisting Veterans who served our great country for the last three centuries! Very few can say that!

“The best feeling is after a day of service, I can go home, look at myself in the mirror, and say ‘I helped another Veteran today.’” He comes from a long family history of service to his community. His father worked 26 years as a volunteer firefighter. In addition, two of his uncles were firefighters, one with 35 years, and his Godfather with 65 years! His brother fought fires for 18 years, and his mother was an active member of the auxiliary for 49 years. He has held several elected offices with various Veterans organizations, but is most proud to hold the title of Veterans Service Officer.

Rick Gales, VSO (516) 451-7058 • Richard.Gales@VA.gov



IMPORTANT!!! BE SURE TO GET THE NEXT-GENERATION USID CARD BEFORE THE DECEMBER 31st DEADLINE!!!

Military retirees are required to update their Uniformed Services Identification (USID) cards to the new Next Generation USID card by **December 31, 2025**. The paper-based USID cards with indefinite expiration dates will no longer be accepted after this date. The new cards are more secure and durable, incorporating features like plastic cardstock and enhanced security measures.

According to the DOD Common Access Card website, USID cards are issued to retired military and Reserve members, dependent family members of uniformed service members, and other eligible individuals in accordance with DOD policy. It is important for military retirees/dependents/surviving spouses to know these old forms of ID **will not** be valid to access a military installation, and you will **need** issuance of the NextGen ID card. This will be true even if your old ID card has an INDEF expiration date on it—the ID will still be **invalid**. The deadline is **31 December 2025**.

There are several ways to make an appointment to get a new ID card. (1). You can visit the RAPIDS ID Card Office Locator website to find the closest office and either call them to make an appointment, or (2). schedule your own appointment using the website <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/> To make an appointment using this site, select the "ID Card Office Locator & Appointments" block. **DO IT NOW!!!** Thanks to Keith Thomas, Texas State Commander



A Meeting of the Minds!

Several National Officers took advantage of a planned visit by Pennsylvania Department Commander Mike Rang to National Headquarters for an impromptu follow-up meeting to the recent national convention. Pictured (from left): National Service Officer Rick Gales, Mike Rang, New York State Commander Bob Gluszak and National Treasurer Andy Veiga.



St. Anne's Post Hosts A Flag Retirement Ceremony

St. Anne's Post 1979 in Glen Oaks, New York hosted a dignified U.S. Flag Retirement Ceremony at their Post. Post Commander Bob Gluszak noted it was planned in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus Commodore John Barry Assembly 712 of the 4th Degree. In the photo, a K of C Color Corpsman stands Honor Guard as a CWV member places a Flag on a roaring fire.



31st Annual Pilgrimage

MILITARY MASS AT THE NATIONAL BASILICA

Story and photos courtesy of Clara Pakula

“What a profoundly inspiring experience!”

Baltimore's St. Casimir CWV Post 1764 and CWVA Unit 766 had the privilege of attending the deeply moving 31st Annual Military Memorial Mass at the National Basilica in Washington, D.C.

Representing our organization were Maryland Department Commander Bill Boulay and Mary McGlasson who were honored to present the gifts at the altar. The Mass was celebrated by The Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, JCD, Archbishop for the Military Archdiocese of the USA.

The majestic Presentation of the Colors was a powerful tribute to each branch of our armed forces. Each year's Mass is a deeply emotional and awe-inspiring celebration that reminds all present to strive for a brighter future. It was a truly unforgettable day that will stay with everyone there forever.



Maryland Department Commander Bill Boulay and Mary McGlasson represented the CWV/A.





CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
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BELLEROSE, NY 11426
703-549-3622
WWW.THECWV.ORG



Rick Beatty and Ken Kirchner man a table during a Membership Poppy Drive at St. John Vianney parish in Lake County, Ohio. They greeted prospective members for John Paul II Post 1959 in Willoughby, Ohio, as well as informed parishioners about the purpose and mission of the Catholic War Veterans.