



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS®

Post 10630

2023
A Year in Review



January

We started out the year in grand style. Our Auxiliary was recognized at the District 8 meeting for achieving 100% membership for the 2022/23 Operational Year.

February

We were very fortunate to receive some grant money to make improvements to our Post. Our first project was to install a new fence around our backyard. This greatly improved the security of Post property as well as enhanced the curb appeal.



March



Aidan O'Connor of our Boy Scout Troop 742 received his Eagle Scout award. For his Eagle Scout project, Aidan built and installed the Flag retirement box located in the front of our Post.

Thanks to our Auxiliary, we had a wonderful Saint Patrick's Day membership dinner.



Also in March, we initiated the second project using the grant money we received. New windows and blinds were installed improving the appearance and insulation of the Post. The change was immediately noticeable, helping us to save money on our heating and cooling expenses.

We also upgraded our lighting and replaced all fans to include those in our pavilion. Finally, we purchased a PA system, shelving for storage and a new refrigerator.





Finishing off the month of March, we held our most successful Buddy Poppy event since well before the pandemic. Thanks to the generosity of Lowe's store #2906 in Hope Mills, NC. Over \$600 was raised to support our Relief programs.

April

Auxiliary made Easter baskets for the VA home.



Our Community Supports event at the Crown
Adopted Venturing Crew 32

May

Installed new Post Officers – Commander – Jim Morris; Senior Vice Commander – Mike Vazquez; Junior Vice Commander – Dave Miller; Quartermaster – Doug Willis; Chaplain – Larry Jenkins; Surgeon – John Gobrick; and Trustee's – Wes McKelvey, Mike Noble & Bill Greene

Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament at the Gates Four Country Club



Supporting National Teacher Appreciation week, our Auxiliary wrote thank you cards for teachers at Cumberland Mills and Gallberry Farms elementary schools recognizing their commitment to excellence in educating and developing our community's children.



Our Post supported the Hope Mills Police Department Bike Safety event.

Our Post achieved 100% membership.

Boy Scout Troop 742 cleaned Hope Mills park as part of the annual VFW Day of Service.



Lowe's store #2906 in Hope Mills generously donated flowers for Boy Scout 742 to plant around our flagpole in time for Memorial Day.

Memorial Day Ceremony

June



FTCC Veterans Information Fair

July

Fourth of July Parade



August

With Kiwanis of Hope Mills, we supported the Hope Mills Police Department during their annual “National Night Out”. We passed out a lot of great information regarding youth programs and opportunities available from both organizations.



Getting ready to pass out school supplies during the Hope Mills Back-to-School Bash. The spinning wheel proved to be a great success in attracting people to our table.

Bingo at the North Carolina State Veterans Home in Fayetteville

Installed new security cameras on our Post.

September

Cumberland County Fair



Town of Hope Mills Cleanup

Bingo at the State Veterans Home

Partnered with the Kiwanis of Hope Mills BBQ Fundraiser



October



On National Habitat for Humanity day, Marky Mark, mascot of the Fayetteville Marksman Ice Hockey team, came out to help us cook hamburgers and hotdogs at the ReStore.



Bingo at the State Veterans Home

With the Kiwanis of Hope Mills, we passed out a lot of candy at the Hope Mills Trunk or Treat



November

Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year

The staff from Congressman David Rouzer's office setup in our Post hosting their "Badges of Honor" event. Four local Veterans were able to successfully get the military records updated to receive awards they earned and never received.

Veterans Day Parade



Veterans Day Ceremony

Bingo at the State Veterans Home

Auxiliary Spaghetti Dinner

December



Taking part in the Hope Mills Christmas Parade. With speakers playing Christmas songs and Mike Vazquez in a Santa Suit, it was a great start to the holiday season.



Venturing Crew 32 assisting our Auxiliary in putting together Chemo kits for patients at the Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation Cancer Center.



Our Annual Christmas Dinner was another great success. Thanks to our Auxiliary for decorating the Post. We were able to award a prize to our Voice of Democracy winner; Christina Velez, from Jack Britt High School and, swore in our new Junior Vice Commander, John Gobrick.



As part of the National Wreaths Across America observance, we placed wreaths on the graves of our town's Veterans buried in Adcock cemetery.



Bingo at the State Veterans Home (This was our last session as the Home closed)

Santa Claus at the Hope
Mills Shrine Club



Recognizing our Middle School Teacher of the Year, David Gilchrist II, a 6th Grade Social Studies Teacher at John Griffin Middle School. Mr. Gilchrist is also the District 8 Middle School Teacher of the Year and his nomination is pending judging at the Department level.

2023-2024 Voice of Democracy Theme: “What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?”

Christina Velez
10th Grade, Jack Britt High School
1st Place – VFW Post 10630
2d Place – VFW District 8

“What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?”

America. What sets us apart? The consistent mockery from Europeans? Our obsession with bald eagles and hamburgers? Or perhaps in more serious matters: democracy? Why is our democracy considered to be so great? What makes it work?

Before asking what sets us apart, we should first ask ourselves what we are. We are interwoven currents of disloyal Brits, opportunity-seeking Japanese, hopeful Colombians, stargazed French, studious Africans, and much more. But there is more to a person than just their background or lifestyle. Their most important contribution to our country is their ideas.

Democracy allows anyone in the nation to voice themselves; to speak their concerns, dreams, and views. Inspired by the ideas of the enlightenment, the United States was the first nation to allow freedom of speech to such an extent that they not only drizzled it into their government, they let it flow wildly. Seeking success, our government adopted and promoted diversity of thought. Different cultures and backgrounds cause different experiences, leading to different knowledge. It seemed preposterous to European leaders during the nation’s early years but letting everyone partake in the government, no matter titles or immigrant status, led to quick growth and a thriving, flowing society. Our nation continues to evolve and refine itself as time goes on based on the knowledge and lessons learned.

Because of the voices, democracy is forever changing. A firm, rigid government that the people conformed to was not what the founding fathers wanted. They designed it to be like a river willing to contort itself and bend its path to better cater to the people’s needs. Afterall, the goal was not a perfect union but “a more perfect union.” These democratic waters reflect our changing society. Everyone can agree that we have different needs that the 17 & 1800s generations where most men weren’t educated beyond 6th grade and over half of the population died before 60.

Our democracy also ensures equality in the eyes of the government. It allows us to be who we are and spares us from unfair judgment based on external factors and characteristics. For example, the Bill of Rights ensures 10 undeniable rights to every citizen of this country. Although these rights were initially meant only for white men, the dam that blockaded democracy from certain groups has since been torn down. Taking after the Pennsylvania colony, we aren’t prosecuted for our religion. The government can’t throw you in jail for praying in a temple instead of a chapel. Learning from British censorship, we aren’t automatically silenced just for criticizing the government. Integrating the suffrage and civil rights movements, black men and women can vote, a privilege previously set aside only for white males.

American democracy’s natural flowing beauty and success is like a transforming river, shaped by the varied, yet equal, voices of its people.

2023-2024 Patriot's Pen Theme: "How Are You Inspired by America?"

Nathan White
7th Grade, Saint Patrick's Catholic School
1st Place – VFW Post 10630
1st Place – VFW District 8

How Does America Inspire You?

America, the "Land of Opportunity", has always inspired me since I was young. This vast, diverse nation has always been a sign of hope, freedom, and endless opportunities. While it's difficult to say everything inspiring, I can highlight some key points.

First and foremost, America's freedom and democracy is an amazing source of inspiration. The Founding Fathers, through the Declaration of Independence and constitution, made a government that gives individuals rights, promotes liberty, and encourages people to participate in the democratic process. The concept that citizens have the power to choose their government is inspiring. It gives a reminder that through dedication and perseverance, any individual can make a meaningful impact on society.

Moreover, the American dream is a compelling narrative that inspires me, and countless others around the globe. The idea that anyone, regardless of their background or status, can achieve success, prosperity, and happiness through hard work and determination is a lasting source of hope. It encourages people to strive for self-improvement, a culture of innovation and entrepreneurs.

America's cultural diversity is another aspect that deeply inspires me. This nation is a melting port of cultures and backgrounds, where people come from all over the world to create a rich mix of traditions, ideas, and experiences. The cultural exchange makes creativity, tolerance, and a wider perspective on the world. The opportunity to learn from and interact with people from different cultures is very inspiring.

The United States' commitment to advancements in technology and scientific innovation is another reason that fuels my inspiration. America has been at the front of numerous groundbreaking discoveries and advances, from the moon landing, leading to the development of the internet. These achievements highlight the nation's dedication to progress and its relentless pursuit of knowledge.

Furthermore, the spirit of volunteering and community involvement in America is another compelling source of inspiration. Americans are known for their willingness to give back to their communities and support those in need. The sense of responsibility to one's fellow community and the desire to make an impact on society are values that resonate with me.

In conclusion, America inspires me through its dedication to freedom, the American dream, cultural diversity, technological advances, and a strong sense of community and volunteerism. It is a beacon of hope and possibilities, reminding me that I can do absolutely anything through hard work and perseverance. This is why America inspires me.

In Memoriam

Richard L. Ford, 81 – March 19, 1942 – January 23, 2023

Daniel N. Buczkowski, 67 – August 24, 1955 – February 16, 2023