



# Hollis VFW

## January 2024 Newsletter

Vol. 34 Issue: 1

Serving Hollis and Brookline

January 2024

The Hollis VFW meets the third Sunday of each month at 7 PM. Meetings are at the American Legion Hall, 38 Main Street, Brookline, NH.

You can also attend via Zoom at: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/86999020485?pwd=blA2NlZlNmFo5cFhwVHlKUKVWtXMXZz09; Meeting ID = 86999020485; Passcode: q47TDf>, or, by Phone = (646) 558-8656; Meeting ID = 86999020485#.

If you wish to join or have questions about the VFW, please call one of the Post Officers.

### Next Meeting: 21 January

### December Meeting Minutes

Meeting Open Time: 7:00 PM at the Brookline American Legion Hall and via Zoom. 8 members were present and no guests.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Bruce Moran to dispense with the verbal reading of the Minutes since they were published in the newsletter; seconded by Chris Lussier and unanimously approved.

**Quartermaster's Report:** The Quartermaster's Report was read. The Post received a \$50 donation from Robert Glover; deposited \$784.68 from Poppy donations; received credit from Lowe's for a return in the amount of \$90.66; wreath donation of \$100. A 46-cent credit for opening the Venmo account (which will come out later); a donation of \$1,000 for the shed, a donation of \$300 (\$200 for the Gun Raffle and \$100 for the wreaths); a donation from the Riddle family of \$450; a donation from Mark Andrews of \$199.87 for wreaths; a donation through Venmo of \$4.81; and \$2.40 in interest from the bank. There were two disbursements: \$51.94 to Chris Lussier for reimbursement; \$500 to Al Fulchino for wreaths; \$711.52 to Greg

d'Arbonne for reimbursement for building supplies for shed; \$500 for the Gun Raffle ticket sales; \$31.38 to Lowe's for supplies; and 46-cents to Venmo for transaction fees. Bruce Moran made a motion that the Quartermaster's report be accepted as read, pending audit; seconded by Greg d'Arbonne and unanimously approved. Chris stated he would send a letter to the casino wishing them a happy holiday and thanking them for their support of the Post. Chris will also send a letter to Rev. Rassmussen to thank her and the Congregation for their support to the Post; to Ms. Walker of the DAR for their support to the Post; and to the Riddle's for their generous donation to the Post.

**Committee Reports:** Nothing to report.

**Membership:** Nothing to report.

#### **Old Business:**

- The Post still needs to do an After-Action Review about Memorial Day.
- On 19 December starting at 7 PM, Troop 12 will conduct Caroling at the Hollis Senior

Residence. The Post will participate with the Troop.

- Wreaths Across Hollis: The Post participated and put a wreath at the Soifert Memorial stone at the High School. They also stopped by Alan Soifert's grave and paid their respects. It was decided the Post will put new flags on the graves at the Jewish Cemetery in Nashua since many were in disrepair.
- Venmo: Chris Lussier explained how the Venmo account works and how there is a small transaction fee if we use it to purchase items, and a small fee kept by Venmo for any donations made to the Post. All agreed this was worth doing to garner more donations in an increasingly cashless society. Greg d'Arbonne made a motion that the primary use of the Venmo account will be for collecting donations, and other than donations, Venmo will be used with a surcharge to cover the cost of using Venmo; seconded by Bruce Moran and unanimously approved.

Remember National Home: Prayer was said for the National Home and residents.

General Orders: As distributed by the Department and District and posted on the Department website.

**Correspondence:** Nothing received.

**New Business:**

- Everyone is reminded the Post needs a new Adjutant by the end of June 2024.
- Bruce Moran asked which version of "Old Glory" everyone prefers he use; the one at Memorial Day or the one at Veterans Day. All agreed both versions are good so say each at different event.

**Comrade in Distress:**

- Bruce Moran stated his wife is gaining strength each day thanks to new therapies she is receiving. He said she was able to attend the Brookline Seniors Luncheon without using a wheelchair.

- Mark Andrews stated a friend and veteran, Bob Byrd, was going through some family problems and asked that we keep him in our prayers.
- The members discussed how we all need support from time to time when the effects of PTS hit us. We are reminded that we are not alone and that our fellow Veterans are here to help.
- Jim Bellanger reported he was in the Emergency room after an all day stay. He has been battling ear infections so bad that he had no balance and needed to use a walker and could not drive and was dizzy all the time. He was on medication and is getting better. He is also scheduled for cataract surgery in both eyes and can't drive at night until that's done sometime in March.

**For the Good of the Order:**

- Bob Smith spoke about the issues facing our Nation.
- Everyone who attended the Wreaths Across Hollis said it was a magnificent event and thanked Al Fulchino for organizing this event.
- The Post members participated in two funerals in the past two weeks. The families of the Veterans were very appreciative of our participation.
- Chris Lussier stated the shed for the Holiday Cards was coming along very well, with electricity recently installed through a donation from Wilson Technologies for all the labor and material for the shed. Chris asked the members to sign a thank you letter to Wilson Technologies for their generous donation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM. The next meeting is 7:00 PM, Sunday, 21 January at the Brookline American Legion Hall, Brookline, NH and by Zoom.

## **News For & From Members**

### **Passing of Post Member Leo B. Ballou on 25 December**

Leo B. Ballou of Hollis, died peacefully at his home late Christmas Day, Monday, December 25, 2023. Leo was born in Arlington, Massachusetts on March 14, 1927, a son of the late Leo B. and Marguerite (McKinnon) Ballou and grew up on a farm in Belmont Hill, Massachusetts. During World War II, he served as a gunner's mate in the Armed Guard on the North Atlantic Convoys. Leo was predeceased by his wife, Iola (Norton) Ballou. He is survived by his seven sons, Jerry, Mike, Dave, Pete, Matt, Deane, and Ben; their significant others, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren; and a huge extended family. There are no services planned at this time. To leave an online message of condolence, please visit [www.farwellfuneralservice.com](http://www.farwellfuneralservice.com)

### **Passing of Post Member Andy Seremeth's Daughter**

The Post sends their sincerest condolences to Post member Andy Seremeth and his family at the passing of his daughter. She had been diagnosed with stage 4 uterine cancer in September. She lived in the Atlanta area with her family. We send our prayers to Andy and his family.

### **Calendar of Events**

Added/Changed events are highlighted in yellow.

#### January

- 21 January: Hollis VFW Monthly Meeting, 7 PM, Brookline Legion Hall.
- 25 January: Brookline American Legion Monthly Meeting.

#### February

- 18 February: Hollis VFW Monthly Meeting, 7 PM, Brookline Legion Hall.
- 22 February: Brookline American Legion Monthly Meeting.

#### March

- 17 March: Hollis VFW Monthly Meeting, 7:00 PM, Brookline Legion Hall.
- 27 March: Veterans in the Classroom with the 8<sup>th</sup> Graders at the Middle School
- 28 March: Brookline American Legion Monthly Meeting

#### April

- 21 April: Hollis VFW Monthly Meeting, 7:00 PM, Brookline Legion Hall.
- 25 April: Brookline American Legion Monthly Meeting

## May

- 19 May: Hollis VFW Monthly Meeting, 7:00 PM, Brookline Legion Hall
- 23 May: Brookline American Legion Monthly Meeting
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- 25 May: VFW and American Legion Poppy distribution at each Transfer Station, 8 AM to 4 PM
- 25 May: Replace all US flags in the Brookline cemeteries, 9 to 11 AM
- 27 May, 9:00 AM Coffee with a Vet, then 9:30 AM, Memorial Day Ceremony. All in front of the Brookline Town Hall
- 27 May, 4:30 PM, wreath laying at Memorial Park, then march to Hollis Common for the Memorial Day Ceremony on the Hollis Town Common

### **Please Make Sure You Renew ASAP**

If you pay annually for your membership, we ask that you renew as soon as possible so we can meet our numbers for the year now and not have to rush at the end of the year (which is June). You can renew at a meeting, or you can renew online (<https://www.vfw.org/OMS/QuickRenew.aspx>), but please renew!!

### **News of Interest to Veterans**

#### **Help Build the Veteran Database at the NH Veterans Heritage Learning Center**

At the NH State Veterans Cemetery is the "Veterans Heritage Learning Center" to help people learn about NH's rich military history. One of the active displays is the Remembrance Station where veterans or family/friends can enter an entry of their military history and other information - as much or little as they want. Photos of people and items can also be added to the entry.

Please take a few minutes to enter your name and military, etc. bio info (whatever you'd like to share). OR enter a family member who is/was a veteran or a friend. Here's the link to Veteran Bio Input Form: <https://www.vhlc.org/stories-of-service-station/veteran-bio-form>.

## Shifting Military Demographics

By 1Lt Kevin Keegan, Source: [As America Celebrates Its Veterans, the Population Is Younger, More Diverse and Shrinking | Military.com](#)



**Majority  
are Gulf  
War Vets**

A recent [report from the Pew Research Center](#) notes that those who have served since the first Persian Gulf War now make up 43% of America's 18 million veterans, or 7.8 million people. The group eclipsed veterans from the Vietnam era in 2016; Vietnam vets today make up just 30%, or 5.6 million, of the veteran population. Fewer than 4% are from the Korean War era, and 119,550 remain from World War II, shy of 1% of the population.

With the shifting demographics, more women, Hispanic and Black adults, as well as those under age 50, will make up larger portions of the population in the coming years. The share of female veterans is expected to be about 18% of veterans by 2048, while Hispanic and Black persons each will be about 15% of the population, up from 9% and 13% respectively. About 28% of today's veterans are younger than 50. In 25 years, those in that age bracket are expected to make up 34% of the veteran population, according to the report.

The changes come as the Defense Department and the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) have made commitments to broaden diversity and better serve veterans across all demographics in an effort to better serve their populations and retain service members.

Earlier this year, the White House ordered the Cabinet departments to establish teams to ensure that agencies adhere to equity initiatives and outcomes that benefit all employees and customers. The VA's equity team is aimed specifically at working to ensure that minority veterans who receive health care or apply for benefits receive equal treatment under the law.

The focus was based in part as a result of a lawsuit by a Black Marine veteran, Conley Monk Jr., who alleges the agency denied claims from Black veterans at higher rates than whites.

The Pentagon launched a number of initiatives this year to accommodate its changing force in efforts to retain personnel and adapt to a new demographic of active-duty personnel who are largely younger, married and female.

The Defense Department has lengthened parental leave, instituted and expanded child care programs to make it easier for families to serve, increased pay, and adopted new programs to provide for lower-income personnel.

The VA [announced a number of initiatives recently to improve health care and services for veterans](#), including a new ad campaign aimed at attracting more veterans to VA health care services and encouraging them to apply for benefits.

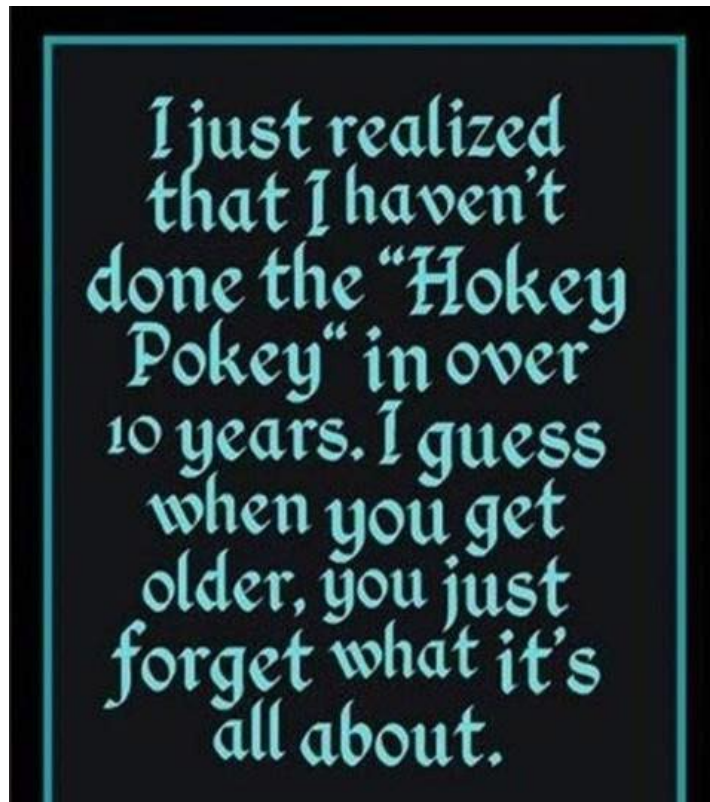
As part of the announcements, the VA extended free health care and nursing care to all World War II veterans who aren't already receiving services from the VA, about 10,000 former troops.

The VA also announced that it would cover the cost of medical care for family members diagnosed with Parkinson's disease who lived at [Camp Lejeune](#), North Carolina, from August 1, 1953, to December 31, 1987. The risk of Parkinson's is 70% higher for veterans who were stationed at Camp Lejeune during that period.

### **Points To Ponder**

*The views expressed in the following articles are deemed interesting enough by me to include in the newsletter. I take full responsibility and the content does not reflect the opinion of the members of the Post. Please contact me if these articles offend you. – Greg d'Arbonne*

Being popular on  
Facebook is like  
sitting at the cool  
table in the cafeteria  
of a mental hospital.



### Post Officers

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