

## Dates to Remember

**VFW Post # 8393 Meets on the Fourth Monday of Every Month at the Emma Ramsey Center, Route 125, Milton, NH Meeting at 7:00 PM, Snacks 6:30**

1 Feb: National Freedom Day  
2 Feb: Groundhog Day  
8 Feb: Boy Scouts of America /Founded (1910)  
12 Feb: Lincoln's Birthday  
14 Feb: St. Valentine's Day  
20 Feb: George Washington's Birthday Observed (Presidents Day)  
22 Feb: Washington's Birthday  
27 Feb: Post #8393 Monthly Meeting



**Milton Memorial Post # 8393  
P.O. Box 575  
Milton, NH 03851**

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**Milton Memorial Post # 8393  
P.O. Box 575, Milton, NH 03851**

**Adjutant  
Robert Graham**

**Commander  
Peter Hayward**

**Quartermaster  
Robert Graham**

## **Monthly Communication FEBRUARY 2012**





### Rochester District Visiting Nurse Association

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**National Freedom Day** is a United States observance on February 1 honoring the signing by Abraham Lincoln of a joint House and Senate resolution that later became the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. President Lincoln signed the Amendment outlawing slavery on February 1, 1865, although it was not ratified by the states until later.

Major Richard Robert Wright Sr., a former slave, believed that there should be a day when freedom for all Americans is celebrated. While living in Philadelphia towards the end of his life, he invited local and national leaders to meet to organize a movement for a national holiday to commemorate Lincoln's signing of the 13th Amendment. The resulting National Freedom Association proposed having a memorial date to call attention to the continuing struggle for freedom for African-Americans. Since President Lincoln had signed the 13th Amendment on the first day of February, that date was chosen to celebrate National Freedom Day. The first commemoration took place on February 1, 1942, at Independence Hall. As it has every year since, the remembrance included laying a wreath at the Liberty Bell.

On June 30, 1948, President Harry Truman signed a bill proclaiming February 1 as National Freedom Day.

According to americaslibrary.gov National Freedom Day is defined as:

"[t]he purpose of this holiday is to promote good feelings, harmony, and equal opportunity among all citizens and to remember that the United States is a nation dedicated to the ideal of freedom. Major Richard Robert Wright Sr., a former slave, fought to have a day when freedom for all Americans is celebrated. When Wright got his freedom, he went on to become a successful businessman and community leader in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Major Wright chose February 1 as National Freedom Day because it was the day in 1865 that President Lincoln signed the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.... The 13th Amendment outlawed slavery in the United States. Wright gathered national and local leaders together to write a bill declaring February 1 "National Freedom Day" and President Harry Truman signed the bill in 1948 making it official."

**Groundhog Day is a holiday celebrated on February 2** in the United States and Canada. According to folklore, if it is cloudy when a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day then spring will come early. If it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly see its shadow and retreat back into its burrow, and the winter weather will continue for six more weeks.

Modern customs of the holiday involve celebrations where early morning festivals are held to watch the groundhog emerging from its burrow. In southeastern Pennsylvania, Groundhog Lodges (*Grundsow Lodges*) celebrate the holiday with *fersommlinge*, **social events in which food is served, speeches are made, and one or more g'spiel** (plays or skits) are performed for entertainment. The Pennsylvania German dialect is the only language spoken at the event, and those who speak English pay a penalty, usually in the form of a nickel, dime or quarter, per word spoken, put into a bowl in the center of the table.

The largest Groundhog Day celebration is held in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. Groundhog Day, already a widely recognized and popular tradition, **received widespread attention as a result of the eponymous 1993 film *Groundhog Day***, which was set in Punxsutawney and portrayed Punxsutawney Phil.

**The Boy Scouts of America (BSA)** is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, with over 4.5 million youth members in its age-related divisions. Since its founding in 1910 as part of the international Scout movement more than 110 million Americans have been members of the BSA. The BSA goal is to train youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of outdoor activities, educational programs, and, at older age levels, career-oriented programs in partnership with community organizations.

(continued on page 6)

### **The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) (continued from page 3)**

For younger members, the Scout method is part of the program to inculcate typical Scouting values such as trustworthiness, good citizenship, and outdoors skills, through a variety of activities such as camping, aquatics, and hiking.

The BSA is a constituent member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement. The traditional Scouting divisions are *Cub Scouting* for boys ages 7 to 10½ years, *Boy Scouting* for boys ages 10 1/2 to 18 and *Venturing* for young men and women ages 14 (or 13 and have completed the 8th grade) through 21. Learning for Life is a non-traditional subsidiary that provides in-school and career education. The BSA operates traditional Scouting locally through units sponsored and operated by churches, clubs, civic associations, educational organizations and the like. Units are led entirely by volunteers who are supported by local councils using both paid professionals and volunteers.

The influence of Scouting on American society is frequently cited by both its advocates and critics. Critics have called the BSA's membership obligations unfair, resulting in litigation in various state and federal courts. However, the Supreme Court has affirmed that, as a private, expressive association, the BSA can set its own membership standards under the Constitutional right to freedom of association.

**Lincoln's Birthday** is a legal holiday in some U.S. states including California, Connecticut, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, New York and Indiana. It is observed on the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth on February 12, 1809. The earliest known observance of Lincoln's birthday occurred in Buffalo, New York, in 1874. Julius Francis (d. 1881), a Buffalo druggist, made it his life's mission to honor the slain President. He repeatedly petitioned Congress to establish Lincoln's birthday as a legal holiday. The day is marked by traditional wreath-laying ceremonies at Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace National Historic Site in Hodgenville, Kentucky, and at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. The latter has been the site of a ceremony ever since the Memorial was dedicated. Since that event in 1922, observances continue to be organized by the Lincoln Birthday National Commemorative Committee and by the Military Order of Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS). A wreath is laid on behalf of the President of the United States, a custom also carried out at the grave sites of all US presidents on their birthdays. Lincoln's Tomb is in Springfield, Illinois.

**Saint Valentine's Day**, commonly shortened to Valentine's Day, is observed on February 14 honoring one or more early Christian martyrs named Saint Valentine. It is traditionally a day on which lovers express their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards (known as "*valentines*"). The day first became associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. It was first established by Pope Gelasius in 496 AD, and was later deleted from the General Roman of saints in 1969 by Pope Paul VI.

Modern Valentine's Day symbols include the heart shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have given way to mass-produced greeting cards.

Washington's Birthday is a United States federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday of February in honor of George Washington, the first President of the United States. It is also commonly known as Presidents Day. As Washington's Birthday or Presidents Day, it is also the official name of a concurrent state holiday celebrated on the same day in a number of states.

Titled *Washington's Birthday*, a federal holiday honoring George Washington was originally implemented by an Act of Congress in 1880 for government offices in the District of Columbia and expanded in 1885 to include all federal offices. As the first federal holiday to honor an American citizen, the holiday was celebrated on Washington's actual birthday, February 22. On January 1, 1971, the federal holiday was shifted to the third Monday in February by the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. This date places it between February 15 and 21, which makes the name "Washington's Birthday" in some sense a misnomer, since it never lands on Washington's actual birthday, February 22. The first attempt to create a Presidents Day occurred in 1951 when the "President's Day National Committee" was formed by Harold Stonebridge of Compton, California, who became its National Executive Director for the next two decades. The purpose was not to honor any particular President, but to honor the office of the Presidency. It was first thought that March 4, the original inauguration day, should be deemed Presidents Day. However, the bill recognizing the March 4th date was stalled in the Senate Judiciary Committee (which had authority over national holidays). That committee felt that, because of its proximity to Lincoln's and Washington Birthdays, three holidays so close together would be unduly burdensome. During this time, however, the Governors of a majority of the individual states issued proclamations declaring March 4 to be Presidents' Day in their respective jurisdictions. An early draft of the Uniform Monday Holiday Act would have renamed the holiday to "Presidents' Day" to honor the birthdays of both Washington and Lincoln, which would explain why the chosen date falls between the two, but this proposal failed in committee and the bill as voted on and signed into law on 28 June 1968, kept the name Washington's Birthday. By the mid-1980s, with a push from advertisers, the term "Presidents' Day" began its public appearance. Although Lincoln's Birthday, February 12, was never a federal holiday, approximately a dozen state governments have officially renamed their Washington's Birthday observances as "Presidents' Day", "Washington and Lincoln Day", or other such designations. However, "Presidents' Day" is not always an all-inclusive term.

## **Veterans Administration Budget**

### **House Committee Holds Hearing on FY 2013 VA Budget Request**

**Feb. 15 at 10 a.m. EST.** On Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 10 a.m. EST, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs will hold a hearing to review the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)'s budget request for the upcoming fiscal year, FY 2013. This hearing will be held at 334 Cannon House Office Building in Washington, D.C. Advocates and homeless veteran service providers are encouraged to attend this hearing in order to demonstrate solidarity in support of measures that will advance the Five-Year Plan to End Homelessness among Veterans. This hearing has been moved back in correlation with the President's FY 2013 Budget Proposal, which is now expected to be released on Monday, Feb. 13. For more information, [visit the Committee's website.](#)

## **From The Commander:**

### **Milton VFW Officers 2010-2011:**

#### **Commander**

Peter Hayward  
4 Gold Street  
Milton, NH 03851  
755-2901

#### **Sr. Vice Commander**

Leonard Arkerson  
155 New Durham Road  
Middleton, NH 03887

#### **Jr. Vice Commander**

Richard Bowden  
13 Route 153  
Middleton, NH 03887

#### **Quartermaster**

Robert Graham  
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Milton, NH 03851  
652-0912

#### **Chaplain**

Paul Carlson  
389 Jug Hill Rd  
Milton Mills, NH 03852

#### **Service Officer**

#### **Editor**

Robert Graham  
58 Boland Road  
Milton, NH 03851  
652-0912

**MEMBERSHIP DUES for 2011-2012** are now due, you have the option of sending your dues to VFW National Hq, or to the Post 8393 Quartermaster. Dues are \$20.00.

**COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING:** The next Council of Administration Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 31, 2012 at VFW Post 1772 Rochester, N.H. beginning at 9:00 AM. All members are welcome to attend. **Finance and Veterans Service Committee meetings at 8:00 AM.**

### **STATE COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT:**

#### **New Hampshire National Guard**

#### **Chaplain Emergency Relief Fund**

State Commander Paul Lloyd has chosen the **New Hampshire National Guard**

**Chaplain Emergency Relief Fund** as his special project. It is the Commander's goal to Raise as much money as possible this year in support of New Hampshire active duty and their families. Please help the Commander honor and support our military and their families. **Please send all donations to State Quartermaster Bill Champagne if you wish to get credit.**

**STATE COMMANDER/PRESIDENT'S TESTIMONIAL:** We will be honoring our State Commander and State President on March 31, 2012 with a gala event at the American Legion Post 7 in Rochester, NH. If you would like to show your appreciation for our Commander and Presidents leadership, you may send your monetary gifts for Beth Kimball to Department Sr. Vice President Ann Pawlik, 41 Old Auburn Road, Derry, NH 03038 (Please make checks payable to Beth Kimball) and for Paul Lloyd send monetary gifts to Department Sr. Vice Commander Greg Lynch at 1 Dulcie's Point Rd., Kingston, NH 03848. (Please make checks payable to Paul Lloyd).

**HOTEL FOR TESTIMONIAL:** The hotel of choice for the State Commander/President's Testimonial is Holiday Inn Express on Route 11 in Rochester, NH. The rate is \$89.00 plus tax just call 603-994-1175 and say you are with the VFW.

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