

VETERAN OF THE MONTH

Tellico Village VFW Post 12135



Peter Kraslawsky was born in New York City. As a U.S. Air Force military brat, he traveled the world and finished high school in New Hampshire. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and served from 1962 thru 1965. As an enlistee, he chose as his MOS a career in Finance. He served mostly at Eighth Army Headquarters in Korea, supporting disbursement offices in Vietnam, Thailand, and Japan. His job included sensitive traveling (TDY) and exchanging U.S. Coins and Currency for colored paper currency called Military Payment Certificates (MPC's). This was to keep real American "greenbacks" out of the hands of local black marketeers.

After his discharge, his Finance and Accounting training led to a forty-year career in banking in Southern California. After retiring he and his wife, Laurel Hughes, arrived in Tennessee fifteen years ago. They have one grown son and two grown granddaughters who all live in Knoxville and are graduates of the University of Tennessee and Pellissippi State.

Peter is a lifetime member of the Veteran of Foreign Wars (VFW) and supports VFW Post #12135 in Tellico Village. He is constantly involved within the community. Some examples of his volunteer work are: He has helped build a bridge over a creek for a veteran, assisted in delivering "Meals on Wheels" for a local church, delivered cakes to the "Ladies Club Fashion Show," supported fund raising effort for the VFW during the Poppy Campaigns, and working the tables at the local Chick-Fil-A in Lenoir City; where he is best known for dressing as a cow and entertaining guests. He also supports the Annual VFW Golf Tournament, U.S. Flag Retirement Ceremony, and his favorite activity is using his pontoon boat in support of the "Boat Rides 4 Vets Day" pulling families on tubes and delivering life jackets to the younger participants.

As a U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliarist, he is the Flotilla Staff Officer responsible for Materials. As a Program Visitor, he delivers safety pamphlets to marinas and boat dealers and to locations in Tellico Village. He also serves as a Vessel Examiner and he conducts Free Vessel Safety Exams for boat owners to ensure they have the proper equipment on their boats. As an Operational Crew member, he patrols events like "Rockin-The-Docks" and the "Dragon Boat Races." Peter also works "Coastie the Tugboat" and wears the PFD Panda costume at the Knoxville Boat Shows, reminding children to always wear a life jacket when boating.

Peter also serves as a Dock Captain at Tugaloo Beach, where he attends the Marina Advisory Committee meetings that advise the PA Board of Directors on issues that affect the 900 slips in Tellico Village. As a T-Bart member, he is on the Operations Team as the coordinator for the Free Life Jacket Loaner Program. He supports the annual "Bratfest" Fund raising event held at the Yacht Club every first Monday in May. He is also a member of a group within T-BART called "NSS." This special qualified group does night support when requested by the local and state officials to participate in special missions.

As a Proton Ambassador, he relates his experience to others as a ten-year prostate cancer survivor having been treated with Proton Radiation as one of the many cancer treatments a patient can choose. At one time he was locally "famous" for a number of years as the "P" in a TV advertisement on local television, on billboards along Interstates 40 and 75 in Knoxville, and on the reader boards over baggage claim locations at the Knoxville airport.

As "Puppy Volunteers" for Smoky Mountain Service Dogs, Peter and Laurel helped raise and train three puppies, Hooligan, Vanner, and Pearl. After keeping them for sometimes up to a year, they are returned to the main training facility for final qualifying before being given to a disabled veteran. Peter and Laurel then went on a quest for a dog of their own, who now has titles and ribbons in more than a dozen AKC events.

The Tellico Village VFW Post #12135 General meeting is held at 7:00 p.m. in the Tellico Village Yacht Club every third Wednesday of the month. Further information can be found on the Post website at <https://www.tellicovillagevfwpost.org/>.