



MAIL CALL



June 2026

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

State Convention

June 18-21, 2026
Hotel Bentley Alexandria

REMINDERS:

January—March Trustee
Report of Audit is due by April
30th

"One Team, One Fight"

MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE WINNER:

The top recruiter for the month of **May** is **Dennis Hart** from **Post 9903!** Congratulations

CHALLENGE COIN

We invite all of our Post to join us in honoring our local law enforcement officers, EMTs, and firefighters by purchasing Challenge Coins to show our appreciation to them.

Cost \$10.00 each + shipping

All Posts should check with their District to see if they have placed an order to distribute to Post!

Click the link below to order yours today!

<https://form.jotform.com/242673672339162>

LINK FOR POST TO REPORT THEIR RECRUITING EVENT FOR ALL STATE INCLUSION

[https://form.jotform.com/253275025727054?](https://form.jotform.com/253275025727054?fbclid=IwY2xjawOakFRleHRuA2FlbQlxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeH4MvMRd92PraG2q3pe-vSpjRw73tRYv-lmC4I27DMUI_uQ0SPetQX3pd3A_aem_tKURUJ5BnPaowM0Z3doxAA)

[fbclid=IwY2xjawOakFRleHRuA2FlbQlxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeH4MvMRd92PraG2q3pe-vSpjRw73tRYv-lmC4I27DMUI_uQ0SPetQX3pd3A_aem_tKURUJ5BnPaowM0Z3doxAA](https://form.jotform.com/253275025727054?fbclid=IwY2xjawOakFRleHRuA2FlbQlxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeH4MvMRd92PraG2q3pe-vSpjRw73tRYv-lmC4I27DMUI_uQ0SPetQX3pd3A_aem_tKURUJ5BnPaowM0Z3doxAA)

Ramifications of a Post being "not in good standing" within the VFW.

Based on national and departmental bylaws, maintaining good standing is critical for the continued operation and representation of your Post.

When a Post is **not in good standing**, the primary consequences include the loss of voting rights at District, Department, and National Conventions, effectively silencing your voice in organizational decisions.

Additionally, the Post may be barred from participating in VFW programs, receiving certain grants, or being eligible for community service awards.

Further administrative actions may include the suspension of the Post charter, the removal of elected officers, or the appointment of a trustee to oversee operations. In severe cases, a Post may face permanent charter revocation and the loss of tax exemption.

It is essential that you address any outstanding audits, reports, or per capita requirements immediately to restore your status and ensure you continue serving our veterans effectively.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025 / 2026 ALL STATE DISTRICTS & POST

ALL STATE POST

1736, 1809, 3619, 3665, 3693, 3750, 4158, 4588, 4752, 4858, 6640, 7017, 7755, 8538, 8971, 8973, 9822, 12182, 12203

ALL STATE DISTRICT

2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10

Not seeing your District or Post? It is not to late to make it!! Go to VFWDEPTLA.ORG, Sign in under members only section then click on ALL STAT CHECKLIST. See what is missing, get it done and submit your application for all state



STATE COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT



PROJECT 4 HOPE

Project 4 Hope is a Veterans tiny house community in
Arcadia, LA.

**GOAL: RAISE \$10,000 TO BUILD A TINY
HOME FOR VETERANS NAMED AFTER
VFW DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA**

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE USING THE QR CODE OR
BY MAILING A CHECK TO VFW DEPT OF LOUISIANA
HEADQUARTERS: 10185 MAMMOTH AVE., BATON
ROUGE, LA 70814



EVENT FLYERS:

Any District/Post that has upcoming events and would like to include a flyer in our monthly Mail Call, please send the information to adj@vfwla.net

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORTING:

All reports should be submitted **MONTHLY** by logging onto the Department's Website - Members Only Section. It's very important that Community Service Activities are reported in the month that they take place!

Future National Convention Dates:

July 24-30, 2026

Reno, NV

July 31-Aug 4, 2027

Milwaukee, WI

Aug 5-10, 2028

San Antonio, TX

Department Conference/ Convention Dates:

State Convention

June 18-21, 2026

2026-2027

CoA/Officer Training

August 28-30, 2026

Mid - Winter

January 28-31, 2027

State Convention

June 17-20, 2027

VFW Department of Louisiana Headquarters CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office- 225-928-5025 | www.vfwdeptla.org

***Please note the Department NO longer has a Fax Number!**

State Quartermaster

Elvin R. Bass

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State Adjutant

Carl Karnish

Email: adj@vfwla.net

State Administrative Assistant:

Tori LeBlanc

Email: admin@vfwla.net

State Commander:

James Prestenback

Email: jprestenback302@gmail.com

From the desk of the State Commander...

As we approach the end of another successful year for the Department of Louisiana, I want to personally thank every Post, District, Auxiliary member, and Department leader for your hard work, dedication, and commitment to our mission of serving veterans, service members, and their families.

This year has been a tremendous display of teamwork across our Department. Because of your efforts, Louisiana once again demonstrated what can be accomplished when we work together with purpose and pride. From membership growth and community service to veteran outreach and program participation, our Posts continued to make a positive impact in communities across the state.

I am especially proud of our achievement in surpassing the Commander-in-Chief's membership goal. That accomplishment belongs to every recruiter, every Post officer, and every member who took the time to encourage another veteran to join or renew their membership. Your efforts strengthened our organization and ensured that the voice of veterans remains strong in Louisiana.

As we close out the administrative year, I encourage every Post and District to remain focused on maintaining good standing by ensuring all required reports, elections, and obligations are completed. Finishing strong is just as important as starting strong.

I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to our Department Officers, District Commanders, Post Commanders, Quartermasters, Adjutants, Chairmen, and the Auxiliary for your countless hours of service and sacrifice throughout the year. Your leadership and dedication have made this a successful and productive year for the Department of Louisiana.

Now we look forward to gathering together at our upcoming Department Convention. Convention is an opportunity to celebrate our accomplishments, recognize outstanding leaders and Posts, conduct the important business of our organization, and prepare for the future of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Louisiana. I encourage everyone to attend, participate, and enjoy the fellowship that makes our organization so special.

Thank you again for allowing me the honor and privilege to serve as your Department Commander. Serving alongside each of you has been one of the greatest honors of my life. I am proud of what we have accomplished together, and I know the Department of Louisiana will continue to move forward with strength, unity, and dedication to veterans.

Yours in Comradeship,



**State Commander
James Prestenback**

A message from our State Sr. Vice Commander....

Comrades,

As we enter June, we also enter a season of transition, renewed energy, and continued commitment to our mission. Across the Department, Posts and Districts are wrapping up one year while preparing for the next. This is an important time to reflect on what we have accomplished together and where we are headed moving forward.

First and foremost, I want to sincerely thank each of you for your encouragement, support, and confidence as I prepare for the upcoming Department Convention and the opportunity to serve as you Department Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The support shown from Posts, Districts, Auxiliaries, and individual Comrades throughout the state has meant more to me than words can properly express.

This organization has never been about one individual—it is about all of us standing shoulder to shoulder for veterans, their families, and our communities. I am proud to stand alongside men and women who continue to live the meaning of service long after taking off the uniform.

As we prepare for the new VFW year, I ask every Post to remain focused on the fundamentals:

- Ensuring all administrative records, reports, and documents are properly completed, maintained, and filed in a timely manner.
- Continue pushing membership efforts through recruitment, retention, and reinstatement.
- Ensure your community service and program reporting are completed and submitted.
- Begin preparing early for youth programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teacher of the Year.
- Mentor incoming officers and train future leaders.
- Stay active and visible within your communities.

Summer months often slow organizations down—but our mission does not take a season off. Veterans still need advocacy. Communities still need support. Fellow veterans still need camaraderie and outreach.

June is also a reminder that leadership is not about titles; it is about service. The strongest Posts are not always the largest—they are the ones that show up consistently, work together, communicate effectively, and keep veterans first in every decision they make.

Thank you again for your trust, support, and dedication to this great organization. I look forward to working alongside each of you in the months ahead.

Yours in Comradeship,
Sharee' Arends (Lady Legacy)
VFW, Department of Louisiana
Sr. Vice Commander



**Sr. Vice Commander
Sharee' Arends**

A message from our State Jr. Vice Commander....

Comrades,

Congratulations to all the newly elected District Officers who were elected this past month. Congratulations to State Commander James Prestenback on a great year! We as a Department met and exceeded the membership goal, the State Commander's Special Project goal, and many other challenges. Even though Mid-Winter was cut short due to weather you showed up and not only made it a successful conference, but you exceed the goal I set for the National Home Lunch fundraiser. With your help, the Department of Louisiana donated \$1,700.00 to the National Home. These are true testaments to the teamwork in our great department.

This type of can-do attitude truly shows the Department of Louisiana can not only meet a challenge head on but succeed! This shows the membership's drive to serve and help others. It has truly been an honor and a privilege to serve along side you as your Department Jr. Vice Commander. I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming state convention in Alexandria.

Lastly, I am seeking higher office and running for State Sr. Vice Commander. I look forward to supporting our State Commander and having another successful year. I also look forward to the opportunity to serve along side you as your State Sr. Vice Commander. I humbly ask for your support and vote for State Sr. Vice Commander.

James Bourque
State Junior Vice Commander



Jr. Vice Commander

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 26.001

Submitted by: PSC Ray Bass (current Department Quartermaster)

Description from Submitter: Amend Article X, *Miscellaneous*: Clarifies certain organizational and financial issues in the relationship between the Department and Posts within the Department. This proposal would create a new Section 4 and is essentially identical to Section 709 of the National Headquarters Manual of Procedure, with revisions only to make the provisions apply directly to the Department of Louisiana.

Current Bylaws Content: Not applicable

Proposed Amended Bylaws Content:

Sec. 4 - Control of Units

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is a federally chartered membership corporation created by an Act of Congress. In accordance with that legislation, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has issued charters to the Auxiliary, Departments, and other units, including Posts. Pursuant to their charters, those units are bound to pursue the purposes set forth in the Congressional Charter and abide by the Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and the laws and usages of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. However, each organization is a separate unincorporated association or corporation under the laws of the jurisdiction in which each is located.

The Department of Louisiana of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States does not own an interest in any clubroom, canteen, facility or any fundraising activity operated by any such chartered unit, nor are clubrooms, canteens, facilities or other fundraising activities operated for or on behalf of the Department of Louisiana of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The Department of Louisiana of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States does not derive any profit from such facilities or activities. Clubrooms, canteens, facilities, and other fundraising activities of chartered units are executed by such units in furtherance of the fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational purposes set forth by Congress.

The Department of Louisiana of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States does not lend money or extend credit to any chartered unit. It is in no manner responsible for the debts or any other liability incurred by any chartered unit or any clubroom, canteen, facility, or other fundraising activity operated by it. As unincorporated associations or corporations, they are responsible for their own debts and liabilities. To the extent that The Department of Louisiana of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is threatened with or sustains damage arising from a debt or liability incurred by a chartered unit, the Department of Louisiana of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States may seek to recover such damages and any costs and expenses incurred from such chartered unit or persons responsible for such debt or liability.

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 26.002

Submitted by: PSC Ray Bass (current Department Quartermaster)

Description from Submitter: Amend Article XI, Section 1: *Amendments*: Change the due dates for submission to the Department Adjutant and subsequent publishing of the proposed amendments in the Department Monthly Mail Call.

Current Bylaws Content:

These Bylaws shall be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates at the Annual Department Convention if the amendment is submitted by a Post, District Convention, Department Chair Officer or Past Department Commander, and copies of the proposed amendment was submitted to the Department Adjutant not less than forty-five days prior to the convening of the Department Convention. The Department Adjutant shall at least thirty (30) days prior to the convention of the Department Convention publish notice of all proposed Bylaw amendments in either the Department Monthly Mail Call or the Combat Veteran. Amendments to these Bylaws will take effect immediately following approval of the changes by the Commander-in-Chief.

Proposed Amended Bylaws Content:

These Bylaws shall be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates at the Annual Department Convention if the amendment is submitted by a Post, District Convention, Department Chair Officer or Past Department Commander and **the text of the proposed amendment is submitted to the Department Adjutant by April 15 of the current year prior to the convening of the Department Convention. The Department Adjutant shall publish notice of all proposed Bylaw amendments in the May 1 edition of the Department Monthly Mail Call. Amendments to these Bylaws will take effect immediately following approval of the changes by the Commander-in-Chief.**

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 26.003

Submitted by: PSC Ray Bass (current Department Quartermaster)

Description from Submitter: Upon Convention approval of Proposed Bylaws Amendment 26.002, Amend Article XI, Section 1: *Amendments*: Renumber previous Section 1 content as Section 1, subparagraph A. Add subparagraph B to authorize the Department Adjutant to make minor changes to the Bylaws not involving new policy or content.

Current Bylaws Content: Not applicable

Proposed Amended Bylaws Content:

B. The Department Adjutant, with the concurrence of the Department Commander and the Department Bylaws Chairperson, shall be authorized to correct article and section designations, punctuation, and cross references and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the intent of the Department Convention in connection with these Bylaws.

COMMITTEEMAN'S CORNER

Congrats to Commander James Prestenback and all the members of the Department of Louisiana for a tremendous year in membership, programs, community service and involvement. All of this could not have been accomplished without a Commander who motivated and inspired the membership to get involved and work to achieve the goals set. Congrats to Commander James Prestenback on a successful year and welcome to the All American Department Commanders Club. Looking forward to what the future has in store for you.

As we move to the end of the 2025-2026 VFW Year and prepare to elect the Officers for the 2026-2027 Year, I ask each of you to take a look at each candidate and understand the job that each of them are running for. Are they running just to gain another hat? Are they running to make a real difference in our organization? Are they running just so they can be in the spotlight? All Department Officers will be elected as my replacement on the National Council of Administration. Since becoming a member of the Council I have witnessed a change in the direction of the Council, this Council is now looking towards the future, to bring new ideas, challenge the elected National Leaders on the direction we are going. Maintaining a strong oversight on the budget, below you will find a rundown of the duties of the person you will elect to represent Louisiana for the next 4 years on the Council. Look at the candidates closely and ask yourself, can these individuals continue the work that has been done thus far in reshaping the VFW and make decisions that will continue to move our organization forward. It is time for new ideas to get our younger veterans involved and ready to take over the reins. I look forward to working with the new Council member over the next 4 years as they will be part of the Council when I become Commander in Chief. Council duties are listed below and I hope our Department makes the wise choice when electing for this position.

Powers and Duties: (1) Administration of Affairs Between Conventions: The National Council of Administration shall be responsible for administering the affairs and transacting the business of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States in the intervals between conventions. The Council shall be governed in its duties by the mandates of the National Convention and by the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure, Ritual and laws and usages of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. (2) Budget: The National Council of Administration shall, at a regular meeting not more than ninety (90) days following the National Convention, approve and adopt an annual budget. The National Council of Administration shall have full power to fix salaries of all officers and employees of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. (3) Audits—Accounts: The National Council of Administration shall have the power to audit the accounts of the National officers and/or employees and require that the records and accounts of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General be audited at least once annually by a Certified Public Accountant (firm).

I look forward to seeing all of you soon and remember if you have donations to support the Louisiana. We Can Do It Hospitality Room at the National Convention, please let Sharee or myself know. Thanks to everyone who has already bought tickets for the raffle we will be concluding in July and if you still need to purchase them send Max Arends a message.

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Department of Louisiana

Legislative Report May 2026

These are the key Topics from this month. Please read through these and let me know your thoughts on how we can continue to show Louisiana, that our Elected Officials are committed to our Veterans.

May 4th:

VFW Advocates for Written Informed Consent: The VFW joined forces at a press conference on Capitol Hill with Grunt Style Foundation and 34 organizations representing the military and veteran communities to urge Congress to pass H.R.4837 / S.3314, Written Informed Consent Act. This legislation would expand requirements so veterans receive easily understood written information to discuss with their VA health care providers regarding the long-term use of psychiatric medications. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Meggan Coleman stated, “The Written Informed Consent Act addresses this by ensuring veterans have clear conversations about risks, benefits and medication interactions. It does not restrict care, it strengthens understanding.”

Senate Committee Pending Legislation Hearing: VFW National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan submitted testimony for the record for a Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs pending legislation hearing covering 25 bills that would directly impact veterans and their families. She stated VFW support on a wide range of legislation that is aligned with our top priorities including reducing fraud in VA disability claims and modernizing the appeals process. She urged Congress to expand and improve benefits for survivors of veterans who succumb to rapidly progressing terminal illnesses, health care programs for women veterans and access to cutting-edge medical treatments and technologies for veterans living with spinal cord, brain, bowel and bladder injuries. She also highlighted the need to remove barriers that limit access to key economic opportunity programs. Read the testimony or watch the hearing, which starts at the 9:20 mark.

VFW Holds Accredited Service Officer Training: The VFW’s National Veterans Service recently hosted its annual Proficiency Training Conference in Annapolis, Md., bringing together more than 120 accredited representatives in person and over 100 participants virtually. This event serves as an important forum for sharing updates from VA leadership while also delivering a wide range of training sessions to our accredited representatives. Attendees engaged in meaningful discussions, explored evolving policies and sharpened their ability to navigate the VA claims process with confidence. We were honored to welcome VFW National Senior Vice Commander Cory Geisler and keynote speaker retired Maj. Joel Del Rosario, whose remarks highlighted the importance of staying informed, prepared and committed to serving veterans.

VFW Podcast on Location at Service Officer Training: In this episode of Still Serving: The VFW Podcast, host Rob Couture reports from Annapolis, Md., during the VFW National Veterans Service Proficiency Training Conference. Joined by VFW National Senior Vice Commander Cory Geisler and VFW Washington Office leadership, the group highlights how the VFW trains accredited representatives to better assist veterans with VA claims. They discuss the rigorous training required to stay current on laws and policies and how that expertise improves access to earned benefits. The team also clarifies common misconceptions about VA disability claims, including “VA math,” the BDD program and the claims backlog, while examining key policy updates affecting veterans and VA’s Federal Electronic Health Record rollout. Listen to episode 63, “Is the VA Math Mathing?,” on your favorite podcast platform or watch it on YouTube.

May 11th:

VFW Engages Troops and Veterans Across Asia: VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore traveled to Taiwan, South Korea and Japan to engage with senior military leaders, service members, veterans and VFW Posts across the Indo-Pacific region. The delegation met with officials from Taiwan’s Veterans Affairs Council, U.S. Army and Air Force leadership and service members stationed overseas. Discussions focused on force readiness, transition support, housing, childcare, transportation and other quality-of-life issues affecting military families assigned abroad. The delegation also visited VFW Posts supporting veterans and military communities in Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. Insights gathered

during the trip will help inform the VFW's ongoing advocacy efforts related to service member readiness, transition and family support programs.

VFW Speaks on Written Informed Consent Act: VFW staff attended the Mental Health and Overmedicalization Summit hosted by the MAHA Institute. VFW member and Grunt Style Veteran Fellow Derek Blumke spoke on a panel regarding informed choice as it relates to psychiatric drugs. Blumke stressed the need for veterans using VA health care to have more information about medications they are prescribed before starting long-term mental health treatment plans. He advocated for the passage of VFW-supported H.R.4837 / S.3314, Written Informed Consent Act, to expand written informed consent requirements to ensure veterans receive clear written information about the benefits, risks, alternatives and expectations associated with long-term use of psychiatric medications. This legislation is a key VFW priority and is part of the organization's efforts to reduce veteran suicide. [Read more.](#)

School Loan Repayment Program Open: Applications are open for the VA Specialty Education Loan Repayment Program (SELRP), which allows recent graduates of accredited medical and osteopathic schools to work at VA in exchange for \$40,000 per year in loan repayment with a maximum of \$160,000 throughout their time in the program. Meant as a way for VA to increase medical staff in fields with shortages, SELRP applicants must be matched to or enrolled in residencies in fields such as psychiatry, anesthesiology, emergency medicine and others. Participants must serve in the SELRP for at least 24 months to be eligible for loan repayment. Applications must be received by May 31, 2026. [Read more.](#)

May 18th:

VFW to Testify Before House Full Committee: On Wednesday, May 20, VFW National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan will testify before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on pending legislation focused on reauthorizing key VA programs and authorities. The hearing will examine the proposals' impact on VA operations, oversight and continuity of services veterans rely on nationwide. Keenan will deliver the VFW's positions and advocate for policies that strengthen VA's ability to fulfill its mission to veterans, service members, families and survivors. [Watch the hearing.](#)

Pleas to Pass Major Richard Star Act Heard in Missouri: Veteran Zach Micklon shared his story with KY3 News Springfield, Mo., to highlight the importance of passing the VFW-supported Major Richard Star Act. Micklon is an Army combat veteran who survived a sniper attack in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom but was medically retired after suffering catastrophic injuries. Under current law, combat-injured veterans with fewer than 20 years of service must forfeit a portion of their military retirement pay in order to receive VA disability compensation. The Major Richard Star Act would correct this inequity for more than 50,000 combat-injured veterans. In an interview for the newscast, VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Gabby Kubinyi emphasized the bill's broad bipartisan support, noting it currently has 326 House and 79 Senate cosponsors. "This has wide bipartisan support, which is exactly what it should have," said Kubinyi. [Watch the story.](#)

VFW Speaks on Suicide Prevention Legislation: VFW National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan spoke on a panel at a legislative forum hosted by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. One of the bills its members are promoting on Capitol Hill is VFW-supported H.R.2878, Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act. This legislation would provide information on mental health risk factors and available VA resources for service members as they transition to civilian life. The VFW supported this bill in a statement for the record for a House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity hearing in January. [Read the testimony.](#)

VFW Podcast Debriefs Asia Troop Visits: VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Joy Craig joins co-hosts and Washington Office leaders to expand on her recent mission to Asia with VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore. Throughout their travels, they met with troops stationed in South Korea and Japan where they learned about the growing needs of service members and families as U.S. forces expand their presence in the theater. Additional topics included VFW's ongoing diplomatic engagements with Taiwan, a recent development with the Major Richard Star Act, and VFW's Day of Service. Listen to episode 64, "Over There! Recapping the Far East Outreach Mission," on your favorite podcast platform or watch it on YouTube.

May 26th:

VFW Testifies on Pending Legislation: VFW National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs during a pending legislation hearing. She spotlighted H.R. 6843, Establishing the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration Act of 2025, which would create a fourth administration within VA dedicated to economic opportunity and transition programs. Keenan explained that the VFW believes this specified leadership and resources would help veterans successfully transition to civilian life and allow VA to focus on disability claims and appeals. She also stated support for H.R. 4114, Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition (EVEST) Act, which would automatically enroll eligible transitioning service members in VA health care within 60 days of receiving necessary information from DOD, while preserving a veteran's ability to opt out. The VFW strongly supports efforts to create a seamless transition from DOD to VA to spare veterans from navigating unnecessary bureaucracy simply to access the health care they earned through their service. Read the testimony or watch the hearing.

Federal Court Issues Major Victory in Fight Against Claim Sharks: The U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina recently issued a major victory for veterans in Ford v. Veterans Guardian VA Claim Consulting, LLC. The court ruled that Veterans Guardian acted as an unaccredited VA claims agent by preparing and presenting VA disability claims for compensation without the accreditation required under federal law. Importantly, this was a merits ruling, not a procedural decision. This means the court established as a matter of law that Veterans Guardian violated federal law by acting as an unaccredited agent while charging veterans for claims assistance. Veterans who paid fees to Veterans Guardian may have remedies available; however, state law damages questions remain pending before the court and will be addressed in a later order. This decision reinforces important protections for veterans and highlights the value of seeking help from VA accredited representatives and veterans service organizations that provide free claims assistance. Read the opinion.

VFW Joins TAPS on Capitol Hill: VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Gabriella Kubinyi joined Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) survivors and advocates on Capitol Hill in support of TAPS' annual advocacy efforts. Participants met with congressional offices to discuss shared legislative priorities between TAPS and the VFW that impact surviving military families, including the Caring for Survivors Act of 2025 (H.R. 2055 / S. 611), which would improve and expand dependency and indemnity compensation eligibility for survivors.

President's Budget Proposes Military Pay Raise: The U.S. government budget for fiscal year 2027 proposes tiered military pay raises ranging from 5% to 7% depending on rank. Service members ranked E-5 and below would receive a 7% pay increase, those in grades E-6 through O-3 would receive 6%, and officers ranked O-4 and above would receive 5%. The proposal reflects ongoing concerns about recruitment, retention and quality of life across the all-volunteer force, particularly for families of junior enlisted personnel facing rising living costs. Congress will now review the administration's request as lawmakers begin drafting the annual defense authorization and appropriations bills that will determine final military compensation levels for fiscal year 2027. Read the budget.

Respectfully,

Matthew J. West

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

National Legislative Committee Member 2020-2026



*Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary
Department of Louisiana*

Tax ID: 51-0205791 (non-profit)

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting a live auction as part of our upcoming fundraising event at our State Convention, June 20, 2026 in Alexandria, LA. This auction is a cornerstone of our efforts to raise vital funds that directly support our programs and initiatives for Veterans and their families. We sincerely hope you will join us in making this event a success by contributing an item for auction.

Donated items can include, but are not limited to:

- Gift baskets
- Event tickets (concerts, theater, sports, etc.)
- Artwork and collectibles
- Gift certificates to local restaurants or businesses
- Unique experiences (tours, lessons, workshops)
- Vacation packages or weekend getaways
- Handcrafted goods or specialty items

Your generous donation will not only help us reach our fundraising goals but will also provide your business or family with valuable recognition during our event and in all related promotional materials. Every donation, big or small, makes a difference and is greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in donating, please contact President Ann Barnett or Auction Chairman Lorna Mills by May 1, 2026. We are happy to arrange for item pick-up if needed.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and commitment to supporting the VFW Auxiliary Programs for Veterans and their families. Together, we can make a significant impact!

Sincerely,

Ann Barnett, President
6652 Bienvenue St.
Mansura, LA 71350
Email: ann-is-a@doglover.com

Lorna Mills, Auction Chairman
1976 Bushville Hwy.
Arnaudeville, LA 70512
Email: patrioticgranny@cox.net

UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™



Department of Louisiana VFW Desert Storm War Memorial Fundraiser 2025

As the construction of this Memorial has begun with an anticipated completion date in 2026, let's step up once again and do our part to help honor those who served during this War.

The goal is to raise another \$5000.00 from the Department to bring our total to \$20,000.00. To accomplish this the Challenge is for each Post in the Department to donate a minimum of \$75.00 earmarked for this fundraiser, Auxiliaries are also welcome to donate as well. Send all donations to the Department Quartermaster earmarked for the Memorial.

We are also going to issue a challenge to all the other Departments to match or beat our donation to help the VFW be recognized as a Million Dollar donor on the memorial.



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

Louisiana

FISHING TRIP FUNDRAISER

TO CONTINUE FUNDING VITAL PROGRAMS AND OFFSET DEPARTMENT EXPENSES, WE'RE HOSTING A FUNDRAISER IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUTCAST FISHING CHARTERS

GRAND PRIZE: A FULL-DAY GUIDED FISHING TRIP FOR TWO PEOPLE

- INCLUDES ALL NECESSARY FISHING EQUIPMENT
- LODGING ACCOMMODATIONS
- A MEMORABLE LOUISIANA FISHING EXPERIENCE WITH PROFESSIONAL CAPTAINS

**TICKETS
ONLY \$5.00
EACH**

PURCHASE YOUR TICKET TODAY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A GUIDED FISHING TRIP AND SUPPORT OUR VETERANS!

For tickets, contact a local VFW Post or Department Headquarters at 225-928-5025

✓
Vote

James Bourque

for

DEPT OF LOUISIANA
SR VICE COMMANDER
2026-2027



Gold Legacy Life Member



VOTE



For

David B. Fields

State Junior Vice Commander 2026-2027

- A proven Leader with over 26+ years of Military Service
- Two-time Cootie All-Star Grand Commander
- Six-term State Chaplain
- Two term District 12 Commander & All-State / All-American Post Commander
- Dedicates countless hours each month to his post, church, and his community
- Life member DAV and National Infantry Association
- Silver Legacy lifetime member VFW post 5951



Lawrence “Larry” Koons Announces Candidacy for Department of Louisiana Junior Vice Commander (2026–2027)

Lawrence “Larry” Koons, a 24-year veteran of the United States Air Force and a committed leader within the Veterans of Foreign Wars, has announced his candidacy for Junior Vice Commander for the Department of Louisiana for the 2026–2027 term.

A VFW Life Member, Larry currently serves as District 5 Commander and has previously served as Post Commander and State Surgeon. His continued dedication to the organization is evident through his active involvement with the VFW Riders, where he has served as Post President and now serves as Department Chairman. He is also a member of the Military Order of the Cootie.

Larry brings a leadership approach grounded in service, accountability, and results. His vision focuses on strengthening the Department by ensuring that every veteran’s voice is heard, every Post is supported, and every member is valued.

He is committed to continued advocacy at the Congressional level, working to ensure that all veterans receive the care and support they have earned—not just members of the VFW.

Understanding that the strength of the organization begins at the Post level, Larry emphasizes the importance of empowering Posts with the tools, leadership, and Department support necessary to meet and exceed expectations. He believes that when Posts succeed, the entire Department succeeds.

Larry also recognizes that membership is the lifeblood of the VFW. He is dedicated to fostering a culture of respect and accountability, where every member is treated with dignity and where standards are upheld in accordance with VFW bylaws.

“With your support, we will continue to build a stronger, more unified Department—one that honors our traditions while moving forward with purpose,” Larry said.

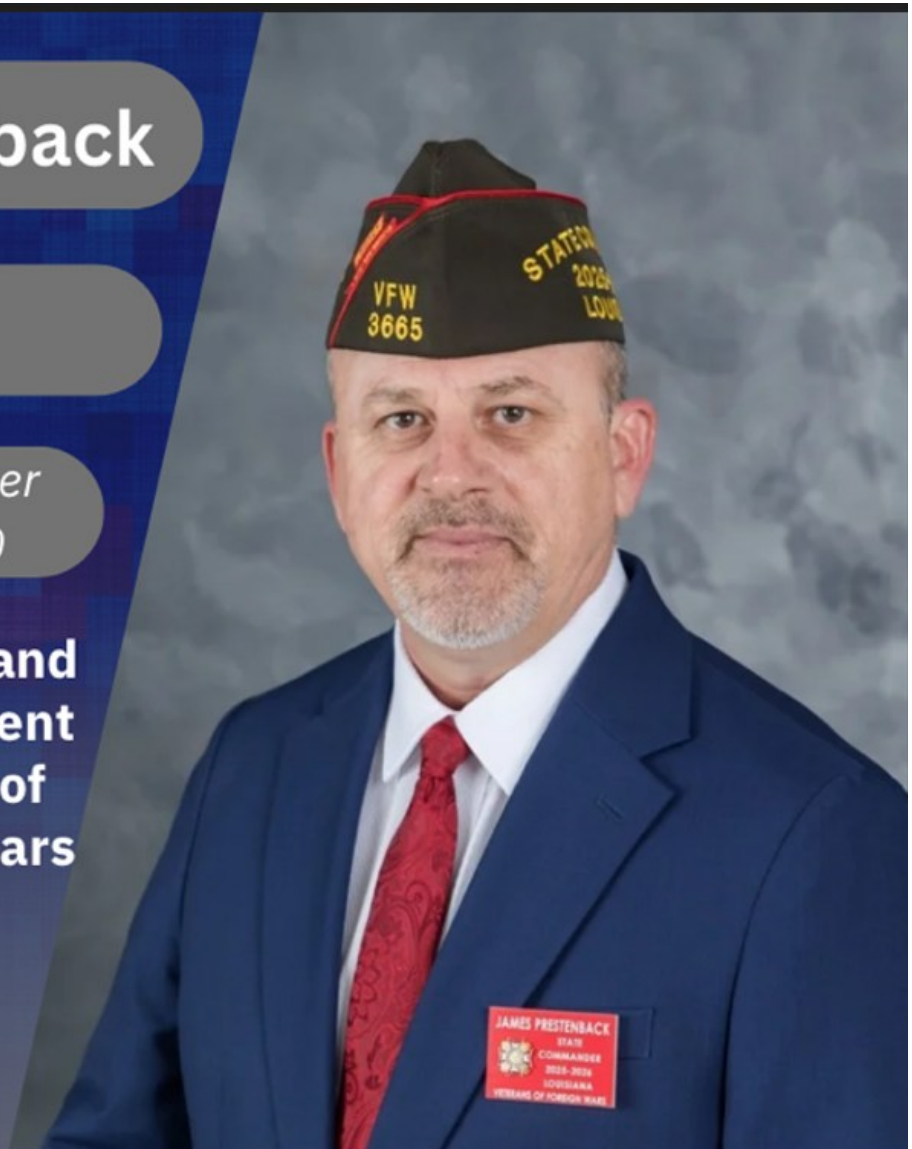
Larry respectfully asks for your consideration and your vote for Junior Vice Commander for the Department of Louisiana.

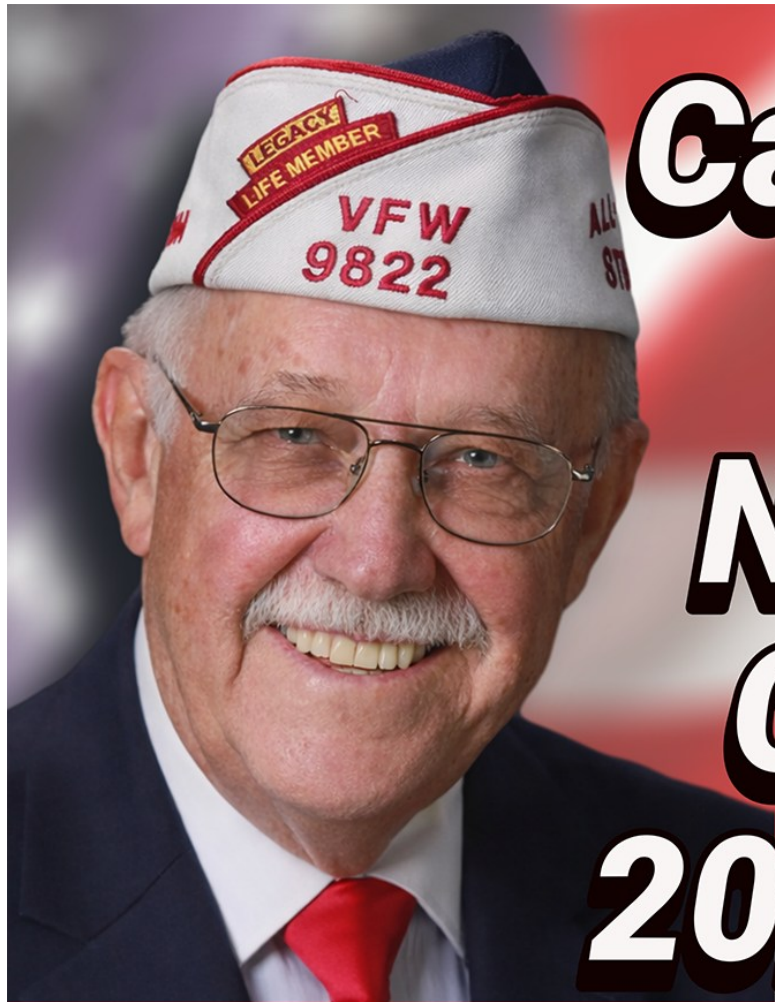
James Prestenback

Candidate for

*National Council Member
Louisiana 2026-2030*

**Leadership, Integrity and
Unwavering commitment
to mission and values of
Veterans of Foreign Wars**





**Candidate
for
National
Council
2026-2030**

DON REBER

Triple Crown Past State Commander

A proven leader with more than 40 years of executive experience, committed to service and results.

With a lifetime dedicated to leadership and advocacy, I stand ready to continue serving the veterans of Louisiana—with integrity, experience, and vision.

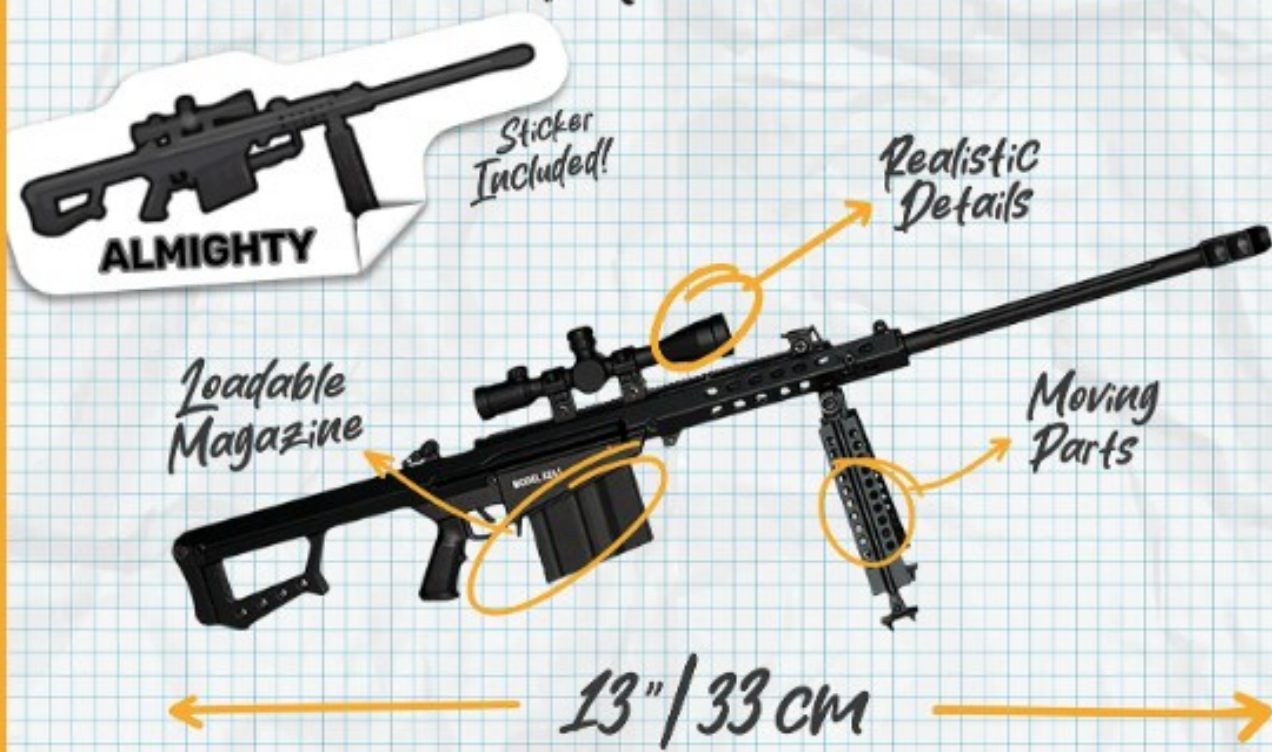
Vote June 21, 2026

Louisiana State Convention

JUNE TOP RECRUITER

"ALMIGHTY"

MINIATURE .50 CAL
MODEL



The Barrett M82A1, is a powerful anti-materiel and sniper rifle designed by Ronnie Barrett. Introduced in the 1980s, it is chambered for the .50 BMG (Browning Machine Gun) cartridge. This semi-automatic rifle is renowned for its long-range precision and formidable firepower, capable of engaging targets at extreme distances. It is used by various military and law enforcement agencies worldwide, as well as by civilian long-range shooting enthusiasts. The Barrett Model 82A1's legacy includes its significant impact on the development of large-caliber, long-range rifles and its iconic status in the world of firearms.

VFW 5951

GOLF TOURNAMENT



— September 19, 2026 —

Crooked Hollow Golf Club

8667 Elysian Fields Rd., Greenwood, LA

— 0830 Shotgun Start —



Entry Fees: \$125 Per Person / \$500 Team of 4

Includes:

Green Fees, Carts, 2 Mulligans, 2 Beers, Water & Lunch

EXTRAS:

\$20 Par 5 Team Zero Shot • Closest to the Pin • Longest Drive • \$5 50/50 Pot

Point of Contact: Herb Lemon, 318-773-5904

**STATE CONFERENCE
FUNDRAISER FOR
SR. VICE SONJA LAMBERT
LUNCH WILL BE IN THE LOBBY
ON THE 1ST FLOOR
TACO SOUP, DESERT, & DRINK
\$10.00
FRIDAY JUNE 19, 2026
PLEASE COME OUT AND
ENJOY THIS DELICIOUS MEAL**



VFW AUXILIARY FUNDRAISER DINNER

★ State Convention – June 19, 2026 ★

Celebrating **250** Years of the United States of America!

Join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and patriotic celebration as we honor America's 250th Birthday!



DATE:
June 19, 2026



LOCATION:
State Convention



TICKETS:
\$10
per person



TABLE RESERVATIONS AVAILABLE:



TABLE OF 8



TABLE OF 10

Reserve your table early and celebrate together!

★★★ **IMPORTANT!** ★★★
EVERYONE MUST COMPLETE AND SUBMIT A FORM
— even if your meal was prepaid in January.

RETURN COMPLETED FORMS TO:
Debbie Holmes
110 Sellers Rd
Dubach, LA 71235
✉ debbieholmes@bellsouth.net

★★★ **RESERVATION FORM** ★★★

Auxiliary or District Number: _____

<p>RESERVATION TYPE (please check one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Table of 8</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Table of 10</p>	<p>PAYMENT METHOD (please check one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prepaid (January)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Payment Included</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Will Pay at Convention</p>
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★ *Thank you for supporting your VFW Auxiliary!* ★



LAPLACE VFW POST 3337

**VETERANS DAY
GOLF TOURNAMENT**



**BELLE TERRE COUNTRY CLUB
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2026**

111 Fairway Dr, LaPlace, LA 70068

7:00 AM REGISTRATION

8:00 AM SHOTGUN START

QUESTIONS OR SPONSOR DONATIONS CONTACT

Ray Bass (504) 273-3622 or Wesley Mitchell (985) 788-8807

YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

