

District 4
February 10, 2024
REP - SSVC McElhannon
 Mid-Year Update/Awards
 Meeting place:
 Post **1982**
 1907 Jefferson Terrace Blvd., New Iberia, LA 70562
 Registration - 9:00 a.m.
 Joint Opening - 10:00 a.m.
 Lunch - 12:00 p.m.
 VFW/Aux Business Session - 1 pm

District 10
February 17, 2024
REP - SSVC McElhannon
 District Meeting
 Meetings place:
 Post **8852**
 2419 3rd St., Alexandria, LA 71302
 Registration 10am
 Sessions start at 10:30am
 Lunch 12pm. (\$10 Donation)

UNCOMING CONVENTION

Washington Legislative Conference
 March 3 - 7, 2024
 Washington, DC

State Convention
 June 27 - 30, 2024
 The Hotel Bentley, 200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA

National Convention
 July 27 - August 1, 2024
 Louisville, Kentucky
 Housing Opens 3/18/24 - Closes 6/10/24

State Council of Administration
 August 9 - 11, 2024
 The Hotel Bentley, 200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA

State Mid-Winter Conference
 January 26 - 29, 2025
 The Hotel Bentley, 200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA

CAMP LEJEUNE LEGAL CLAIMS

Scout of the Year

- *March 1, Scout entires to the Post
- April 1, Post entries to Department Scouting Chairman or Department HQs
- *May 1, Department entry to National from Department Scouting Chairman or Department HQs

Community Service

- *April 30, Post Special Project & Fred C. Hall Award Submission (Dept. to National)
- *April 30, National Outstanding Community Service Post Submission(s) (Dept. to National)
- *May 31, Department Community Service Report (Dept. to National)

National Certificate of Recognition

April 1 (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation) List due to National from Department

*Required deadline (by VFW National Headquarters.) All other deadlines are suggested, and can be internally set at the discretion of the VFW Department leadership. Post Chairmen, be sure to communicate with your District Chairmen to find out their official deadlines, and District Chairmen need to communicate with their Department Chairmen to find out their deadlines. deadlines, and District Chairmen need to communicate

STATE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

What a great Mid-Winter Conference! It was good to see so many VFW members from across our state come together to accomplish business, have fun, while supporting our programs and fundraisers. It was the perfect setting to foster camaraderie amongst our members. I want to thank all the Chairman who submitted reports and especially the Chairman who did a fantastic job preparing for and presenting awards. The Etouffee cook-off was such a success, and it was remarkable way for the VFW Department to support the Auxiliary who supports us on a continuous basis. Overall, the Mid-Winter was an excellent display of outstanding TEAMWORK and many times this weekend I was very proud of our Department and all our dedicated members.

What an AWESOME job was done by James Bourque his wife Crystal, Carl Karnish & Paula Freeman completing our VOD, Patriots Pen and Americanism awards and presentations. It is always an honor to recognize our youth through these programs. The VOD District winners had a great time and formed an impressive bond during their time at our Mid-Winter. If you were able to attend the Banquet and witnessed the impromptu line dance some of these students I hope you found it as entertaining and heartwarming as I did. Several of the District winners held hands as the runners up and ultimately the winner was announced. It was evident that they were rooting for one another in addition to hoping to win for themselves. We should be pleased with the hospitality the Department as a whole showed them. Lisa and I look forward to escorting **Josephine Ciuffi** in the Parade of VOD winners in DC.

The Department of Louisiana has much work to do in membership. I encourage every Post to reach out to their expired or lapsed members to see how we can encourage them to renew their membership. We also need to hold membership drives and take advantage of opportunities to recruit new members. A strong membership base will keep both our Department and the National organization viable for many years to come. Having a large membership base or "footprint" in Washington, DC provides us with leverage to ensure Veterans Legislation is passed to help veterans across our nation. Our Veterans deserve benefits to provide them with the best possible quality of life and the VFW Priority Goals are designed to accomplish this. I commented on a FB post that if everyone of our 9060 members recruited or reinstated just 1 eligible veteran, we would be WAY on top with 18120 members and not last place in membership!!!

Now onto the not so good part. There are about 3 posts that are having problems. Remember, if your post does not have any of the top 4 officers, your post could be suspended up to 90 days. And if you elect an officer, please help them as much as you can for them to remain. There are posts that have members that are not eligible for membership, much less be an officer. Bottom line is that we as posts, districts and department need to be very diligent when new applicants want to be members. Another not so good area is those officers or post members who believe that the post belongs to them!!! Nothing could be further from the truth!! The Posts belong to the members. The members decide everything. If you are thinking of doing something, investigate the Bylaws/Ritual book. If it is not in this book, do not do it!!! Ask for guidance. Get that 2nd or 3rd opinion. Read the book was the best information a PSC Commander gave me.

As we enter into the home stretch of this year, let's work on our membership, community service and the other critical programs that we need for everyone seeking All-State or All-American.

Ron Delaney, State Commander

STATE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

I want to thank everyone that helped make our Dept of LA Mid-Winter Conference a success. We had a lot of fun and gave out some well deserved awards. Our Americanism, Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy winners did an outstanding job. The VOD winners had a great time.

We can now turn our focus on the Legislative Conference. Ron and Lisa will escort our VOD winner in the VOD Parade or winners while we are there. If anyone gets a chance to go to the Legislative Conference, I encourage you to go. It is a wonderful feeling to sit in the same room as our LA representatives and know you can make a difference because they are listening to what we have to say and taking notes.

Look forward to the remainder of the year. Until next time we meet, stay safe and continue what you do to help veterans.

Debbie McElhannon
State Senior Vice Commander

STATE JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Comrades,

I would like to thank all those who attended the Mid-Winter Conference in Alexandria, LA. A special thanks to all those who worked behind the scenes to make the Mid-Winter Conference a Great Success! Our Department fundraiser for the VFW National Home's Special Project was also a great success. Due to the generosity of our VFW & Auxiliary members, we raised \$1,000.00 on the alcohol basket raffle. Commander Ron Delaney raised an additional \$112.00 during Karaoke and donated it to our Special Project for the VFW National Home. I think they were throwing money at him so he would stop singing! Great times! Post Commander Randy Campbell (AKA Larry) of 4588 won the alcohol basket and donated it back to the Department with the exception of the VFW signature bottle of bourbon. Any post or auxiliary who donates to this VFW National Home Special Project will have a chance to win the alcohol basket. It does not matter the amount of the donation, you will be placed in a drawing and the winner will be pulled at the State Convention. If you choose to donate, please make the checks payable to the VFW Department of Louisiana and put "25/26 Retail Store" in the memo section. I will be visiting the National Home from May 16 through the 18th 2024 and will be presenting the donation check at that time.

Congratulations to all our Voice of Democracy District Winners! Good luck to our 1st place winner Josephine Ciuffi sponsored by Post 5735 Slidell, LA who advanced to the National Level of competition. Also, congratulations to our Patriot Pen and Americanism winners! Thank you to all Posts who participated in our VFW Programs.

Thanks for being a member of this great organization and I look forward to attending upcoming District & Post meetings!

James Prestenback, State Junior Vice Commander

STATE ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE

Comrades,

I personally would like to thank *Tori Leblanc* and *Eugene L. Perrino Sr.*, Adj/Quartermaster from FL, for all their assistance in helping me in recreating the podium scripts for use in Alexandria. It was greatly appreciated and monumental in the success we had over the weekend at our 2024 Mid-Winter Conference.

It was suggested during the conference that information in the Mail Call was being duplicating from different sources. Although I agree some of the information is the same as other publications, not everyone in the Department subscribes to the same sources, and therefore may not be getting the same info multiple times. Another suggestion was that Mail Call should be shorten for printing purposes. The entire Mail Call was not intended to be printed, only the portions concerning the General Orders need to be printed.

Neither the Commander nor I, intend going back to a limited publication just for the sake of a few that want fewer pages. As I serve at the pleasure of the commander and his wishes. I am obligated to follow his direction not my own in what is published. However, seeing we have the same point of view on this subject, and I am in agreement with him. Any newsletter should be informative to the readers, taking suggestions from readers to improve the content they would like to see, not the deletion of content for printing purposes.

That being said, out of the 35 or 40 in person reviews about Mail Call's new look and the positive comments in the new direction it has taken since I became its Editor, there was only one concern about its length conveyed to me stating that it was too long to print and reading the entire issue at a meeting. As I state earlier, the only portions intended to be printed and read at a meeting are the General Orders page(s). I did inform them that I would make a printable version with just the pages to be read at a Post meeting.

So, for the next four issues, as with this one, there will be one full version for viewing on a device and a printable version with the content meant for sharing during meetings.

Seeking Higher Office:

If you are planning to seek a Higher Office at State level, I urge you to send in your announcements to Mail Call. I will place it in March's issue of ***Mail Call***.

Mitchell R. "Mitch" Cota, PDC
State Adjutant

COMMITTEEMEN'S CORNER

Greetings All,

Greetings Comrades, great seeing a lot of you at the Departments Mid-Winter Conference the last weekend in January. First I want to apologize for losing my cool when the discussion for the funds to be given to District 2 to help the Posts that had to either get loans or use the funds they had to repair their Post homes. When you have a PDC and another past elected officer sitting in the back of the room spreading false information as to what the funds were going to be used for it is obvious that these individuals have forgotten about this line from our Congressional Charter ***“Do not let petty jealousies or trivial personalities influence our deliberations. Let us uphold always the obligations of unselfish comradeship and loyalty to our organization.”*** Seems these individuals are more worried about their own intentions and not what this organization is for and that is Helping Veterans. If we want to keep Posts in this Department then we as a Department need to help those we still have around.

This month as you make those buddy checks please talk to your Annual Pay members about taking that step and becoming Life Members. Folks it not only helps your Post but also the Department. Membership is always at the forefront of any conversation had as we all know the goal of 102%, we as a Department need to do our part to reach that.

Next month from 2 -7 March we will be on Capital Hill for the National Council Meeting as well as our CIC Duane Sarmiento briefing Congress on the VFW's Priority Goals. If you have anything you would like brought up to the National Council please let me know before February 15th so I can get it on the Council Workshop agenda.

Remember for all those affected by the Camp Lejuene Toxic Water, the VFW has vetted with 2 law firms to assist you in filing a claim. These firms have both agreed to not charge more than 25% to represent you compared to the TV lawyers that are charging as high as 50%. The deadline for registering for benefits to be paid out is August this year, don't wait until it is too late to file a claim. Be careful on who you get to represent you.

Until next month, let's keep pushing forward to improve our Department and raise the numbers back up by renewing, reinstating or recruiting new members.

Robert "Bobby" Lovergne
National Council of Administration Member
Southern Conference Chairman
Past Department of Louisiana Commander
Department Budget Committee
West St Charles VFW Post 3750

Legislative Report January 2024

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.

January 8th:

VFW 2024 Priority Goals: The 118th Congress is now in its second session, and there is still work to be done. The VFW 2024 Priority Goals include many issues concerning benefits and services for veterans, service members, and their families. The VFW will continue to advocate diligently to ensure members of Congress and the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor provide the resources and care our nation's veterans have earned and deserve.

FY 2024 NDAA Signed into Law: On Dec. 22, 2023, President Biden signed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2024 into law. This legislation focuses on DOD priorities and expenditures. It also authorizes appropriations but does not provide budget authority, which is provided by appropriations legislation. Read more.

Camp Lejeune Justice Act Informational Update: Veterans and family members seeking to file lawsuits because of water contamination at Camp Lejeune have only months left to do so. The VFW has partnered with trusted law firms to help those seeking to file suit against the government. BMBF Law and Bergman & Moore are here to help affected individuals. Section 804 of the PACT Act (P.L. 117-168), the Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2022, allows that individuals may qualify if they resided, worked, or were otherwise exposed (including in utero) to the ground water at Camp Lejeune for not less than 30 days during the period from Aug. 1, 1953, to Dec. 31, 1987; and have been diagnosed with a cancer, serious illness, or numerous other health conditions including neurological, kidney and liver diseases, miscarriages, infertility, and birth defects/cognitive disabilities in children. Your condition does not have to be on the VA presumptive list or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to file a claim. Surviving family members may pursue claims on behalf of deceased loved ones.

January 15th:

VFW Attends SVA NatCon 2024: VFW members were recognized for their outstanding commitment to the student veteran community during Student Veterans of America's (SVA) 16th Annual National Conference (NatCon), held this year in Nashville, Tennessee. Denny Cosmo of Bristol Community College received the SVA Chapter Advisor of the Year Award. Eric D'Arce, of Suffolk County Community College,

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was named as a Student Veteran of the Year finalist. D'Arce also serves as VFW Post 2913's Jr. Vice Commander and District 11 Legislative Chairman. Additionally, VFW-SVA Legislative Fellow Jamie Springston was selected as a finalist for Student Veteran of the Year. During the conference, VFW-accredited service officers assisted hundreds of student veterans at a claims clinic on site. VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci addressed the conference's general session stating, "Service organizations like SVA and VFW are vital to veterans to thrive through transition and beyond."

VFW National Home: The National Home was founded in 1925 as a place where the families left behind by war could remain together. Today's families face different challenges, and the National Home has evolved over decades to meet those needs. The community is open to the families of active-duty military personnel, veterans, and relatives of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members. Families may consist of one or both parents with one or more children. If your family needs help, please contact the helpline by calling 800.313.4200.

January 22nd:

House Investigation on VA Revolving Funds: The House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on VA's handling of revolving funds. A revolving fund is a business run by a federal agency, under authority granted by Congress, comprised of enterprises that provide services and collect fees. VA publishes the Franchise Fund's annual report, but the Supply Fund's financial statements are not public. It was discovered that the Supply Fund ran a \$37 million loss last year, but the financial statements characterized it as a profit. "I hope you can see why I am concerned," said Chairwoman Jen Kiggans. "This is not transparency." Watch the hearing, which begins at the 32:23 mark.

Mental Health Care Services During

Transition: The Military Health System's inTransition program aids service members, veterans, and retirees — regardless of component, time served, or discharge category — to establish or transfer mental health care during times of transition. This program is a free service that is not time limited. It is staffed with qualified coaches familiar with military culture who stand ready to assist individuals to connect with the care they need. Read more.

January 29th:

Volunteer to Vet the Vote: Tuesday, Jan. 30, is Help America Vote Day. This event provides an opportunity for veterans and military family members to volunteer as poll workers for Election Day 2024. In addition to recruiting poll workers, the nonpartisan Vet the Vote team will be at the Super Bowl next month educating the public on the voting process and directing voters to their polling stations around the country. Continue your service by becoming a poll worker in 2024 to help support democracy in

your community. Sign up now.

Setback for Toxic Exposures Fund: The

Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General investigated VA's initial spending plan for toxic exposures and found that a number of expenditures did not align with regulations. Among those were costs belonging to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). The removal of \$1.1 million to update the Memorial Benefits Management System for the NCA will no doubt create a setback in the progress VA anticipated relating to the allocation of funds. The VFW's 2024 Priority Goals include an increase in burial allowances to account for inflation. Proper funding to facilitate benefits management for eligible veterans is a crucial step in meeting this key objective. Read more.

VFW 2024 Priority Goals: The 118th Congress is now in its second session, and there is still work to be done. The VFW 2024 Priority Goals include many issues concerning benefits and services for veterans, service members, and their families. The VFW will continue to advocate diligently to ensure members of Congress and the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor provide the resources and care our nation's veterans have earned and deserve.

Matthew J. West

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

National Legislative Committee Member 2020-2026

CAMP LEJEUNE LEGAL CLAIMS

Sharing a [VIDEO](#) about my team and I's efforts to help as many veterans and their families as possible with Camp Lejeune legal claims. If you are willing to push it out to your COA and share with Auxiliary counterparts, and share however else you wish, that would be great as the deadline is rapidly approaching on **August 10th**. But we are urging folks to get a hold of us by the end of May to assure the time necessary to properly prepare their claim.

Jason E. Johns

National Legislative Committee

Past State Commander-WI (2020-2021)

WIA-Purple Heart-26 Oct 2003-Iraq

Type in the link below to view the video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30_OlnnEfQQ

Greeting Comrades,

It was a pleasure, as always, to see everyone this past weekend at the Mid-Winter Conference. We had a successful blood drive this weekend, getting fourteen (14) out of the goal of fifteen (15) units. Thank you!

As your surgeon, it is my responsibility to remind you to take care of yourselves. And to provide you with information on how to do that as efficiently as possible.

Unfortunately, we had a couple of slips, trips, and falls this weekend. The weather was not any help with the rain and the humidity on those old marble floors. Here are ways to help avoid slips, trips, and falls:

- Use handrails when walking on stairs.
- Use well-lit pathways or carry a flashlight for use in dark places.
- Wear comfortable, slip-resistant shoes.
- Use a cart and take the elevator when carrying bulky items.
- Stay focused and alert.
- Put your cell phone away when you are on the move.
- Use walkways and pedestrian paths.
- Wipe your feet on a mat when entering a building during wet weather.
- Know your ability, be willing to ask for assistance if in doubt.

This time around it was cooler weather, but warmer weather is coming. At our next gathering in June, the sun will be shining, and it will be hot. Please remember to maintain hydration and understand the symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Final note, please make sure you are staying up to date on all your medications and vaccinations. When traveling, ensure you are not only bringing your medication, but packing enough for the time you will be away from home.

Again, it was an absolute pleasure to see everyone, and I am looking forward to seeing everyone in June.

V/R

Sharee' Arends
VFW, Department of Louisiana
Surgeon

23-24 General Order-08

IS TO BE READ AT MEETINGS THEN POSTED

Please share Mail Call with Post Members by EMAIL.

MANDATORY:

General Orders: All material in the State General Orders is directive in nature and will be read to the membership at the Post regular membership meetings each month. **Some of these have remained the same and will remain for a while longer to instill their importance to our order. New Items will be added to the General Order and will have some highlighted in Red areas.**

1. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, which provides that each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee. Posts are encouraged to register their Post delegate(s) online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or by submitting their National Convention Post and Delegate Registration form that will be mailed to all Posts as part of the Election Report/Convention Registration mailing going out later this month. Registration forms for the 124th National Convention may be mailed to: Convention Registration, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.
2. Attention is directed to Section 217 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure covering the nomination, election and installation of Post Officers. Post Election Report forms are being mailed to Post Quartermasters with instructions that they complete the form online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or they can complete the form and return directly to National Headquarters immediately following the election of Post Officers but not later than June 1.
3. Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure provides that delegates and alternates for the District Convention and meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected at a regular meeting in April. Posts are entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each thirty (30) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Post as of March 31.
4. Pursuant to Section 403 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, each District shall hold an annual District Convention for the purpose of electing District officers, such convention to be held not less than ten (10) days nor more than seventy-five (75) days prior to the convening of the Department Convention. Pursuant to Section 403 of the National Bylaws – Regular Meeting, Districts shall hold at least two (2) regular meetings each year for purposes of transacting business and conducting schools of instruction. Pursuant to Section 417 of the National Manual of Procedure, District officers shall not assume the duties of their office until the Department Commander is installed. District officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed in accordance with Section 416 of the Manual of Procedure.
5. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 218 (a)(11) of the National Manual of Procedure, wOfficers: Duties and Obligations. Trustees Report of Audit must be prepared in detail within thirty (30) days from the end of each quarter, one of which ends March 31.

BY COMMAND OF
RON DELANEY
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:



Mitchell R. Cota, PSC
State Adjutant

Message from Department Auxiliary President.

FIRST & FOREMOST....I want to thank all the VFW Districts that participated in the Etouffee Cook Off. The food was not only DELICIOUS, it also provided a wonderful meal for the Friday Night Auxiliary Fundraiser. The Auxiliary motto is “Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes”. This was an example of our Heroes providing unwavering support to the Department of Louisiana Auxiliary and it was EXTREMELY APPRECIATED! Thank you. I have a set of metal hooks that I am sure belong to one of the cook off teams. Let me know if you are missing them and I will arrange to get them back to their rightful owner.

Ron and I are looking forward to 2 significant events happening in Bossier City over the next few months. First, the National Auxiliary President is visiting on February 18 & 19. Attached is a flyer and below are additional details. Carla Martinez is a dual member and belongs to the VFW as well as the Auxiliary and it would be great to see VFW members join us in welcoming her to Louisiana and show her some “southern hospitality”! Please Join us if you can.

Secondly we will hold our combined Commander’s & President’s Testimonial on March 16th at our home VFW Post in Bossier. VFW Post 4588 Gandy-Brown is where we started and maintain our membership and we are pleased to be able to celebrate with everyone in Bossier City. Flyer is also included. All are welcome and tickets are available at the door.

I want to thank all the VFW members for their service to our country and continued service through the VFW. Your contributions are priceless.

Lisa Delaney

Department of Louisiana Auxiliary President

National President Carla J. Martinez Visits Louisiana

~~~~~ February 18, 2024 ~~~~~

12:30 pm Aisle of Honor at Shreveport Airport

Dress in Official Auxiliary Look & bring a Flag to join us in welcoming Carla! We need to gather in the lobby of the airport at 12:30 p.m. in case her flight is early.

Carla is scheduled to arrive on Delta Flight 5206 at Shreveport Regional Airport at 1:19 p.m. located at 5103 Hollywood Ave., Shreveport, LA 71109

4:00 pm Wreath Laying at Eagle Park Turner’s Pond  
300 Lakeshore Dr., Minden, LA 71055 (30 min. from LeBossier Hotel)

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5:00 pm Dinner at VFW Post 2885  
232 Horseshoe Loop, Doyline, La

~~~~~ February 19, 2024 ~~~~~

8:00 – 9:00 am Breakfast at VFW Post 5951
1315 Northgate Road, Bossier City, La. 71112

10:00 am Warrior Horse (Interactive Equine Therapy)
524 Wallace Lake Rd, Frierson, LA 71027 (30 min. from Post 5951)

12:30 pm Lunch at Café' USA with 4588 OFDC Members
3380 Barksdale Blvd., Bossier City, LA 71112
Lunch is Dutch Treat

2:30 pm Visit to Northwest LA Veterans Home
3130 Arthur Teague Parkway, Bossier City, LA 71112

6:00 pm Banquet Celebration at VFW Post 4588
4001 Jeter Street, Bossier City, LA 71111

~~~~~ February 20, 2024 ~~~~~

No activities planned as Carla's flight leaves at 6:00 am

**DEPARTMENT COMMANDER AND PRESIDENT'S TESTIMONIAL**

March 16, 2024 from 10:00am to 2:00pm  
VFW Post 4588  
1004 Jeter Street, Bossier City, 71111  
\$20.00 per Person  
Join us for a good time and great lunch!

Tickets include admission to Dance Saturday Night at 6:30pm.

Hotel Accommodations  
LeBossier Hotel  
4000 Industrial Drive  
Bossier City, Louisiana  
319-747-0711  
\$79.00 plus tax  
Block Code: VFW Commander

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA****2023-2024 PROGRAM WINNERS****BUDDY POPPY HAT CONTEST WINNERS****Category 1 Prettiest: District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place District 2, 6640  
2nd Place District 3, 12182  
3rd Place District 12, 4588

**Category 2 Most Original: District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place District 8, 3693  
2nd Place District 3, 3665  
3rd Place District 3, 4222

**Category 3 Favorite Hobby/Pastime: District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place District 9, 8290  
2nd Place District 11, 3615  
3rd Place District 4, 9822

**Americanism****Category 1 (Coloring the American Flag): District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place – **Justin Wilcox**, District 9, 3652  
2nd Place – **Davis Simms**, District 11, 3375  
3rd Place – **Isaia Duet**, District 3, 3665

**Category 2 (Drawing the American Flag): District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place – **Harper Hesson**, District 7, 8720  
2nd Place – **Maggie Jo Darby**, District 5, 9854  
3rd Place – **Landry Varnado**, District 8, 7017

**Category 3 (Drawing a Historical Event): District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place – **Ella Barousse**, District 3, 12182  
2nd Place – **Samantha Abbshire**, District 9, 3652  
3rd Place – **Lia Parker**, District 5, 3106

**Category 4 (“How I Honor Veterans” Essay): District Post & Auxiliary**

1st Place – **Camille Eisworth**, District 8, 4224  
2nd Place – **Somya Singh**, District 11, 1809  
3rd Place – **Slade Stark**, District 5, 3619

**MOST PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS: DISTRICT 11 POST 1809 – 39 SCHOOLS**  
**MOST PARTICIPATING STUDENTS: DISTRICT 5 POST 3616 – 2655 STUDENTS**

**VOICE OF DEMOCRACY (“WHAT ARE THE GREATEST ATTRIBUTES OF OUR DEMOCRACY?”)  
DISTRICT POST & AUXILIARY**

- 1st Place – **Josephine J. Ciuffi**, District 9, 5735  
 2nd Place – **Anna Claire Bourque**, District 7, 9903  
 3rd Place – **Matthew P. Gomez**, District 4, 9210  
 4th Place – **Ryan J. Lemoine**, District 10, 3139  
 5th Place – **JeKneisha Peterson**, District 8, 4224  
 6th Place – **Bella S. Giordano**, District 3, 3665

**PATRIOT’S PEN (“HOW ARE YOU INSPIRED BY AMERICA?”)  
DISTRICT POST & AUXILIARY**

- 1st Place – **Dejon Sylvester**, District 8, 7017  
 2nd Place – **Caleb Barron**, District 7, 5153  
 3rd Place – **Leah Lemoine**, District 10, 3189

**POW/MIA**

Recovered POW/MIA’s Since the January Issue of *Mail Call*.  
 If you wish to read their full story go to:  
<https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/Year/2024/>

- Feb. 2, 2024**  
**Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Pitsor, R.)**  
**Feb. 2, 2024**  
**Airman Accounted for from WWII (Colter, R.)**  
**Jan. 30, 2024**  
**Airman Accounted for from WWII (Stevens, H.)**  
**Jan. 29, 2024**  
**Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Seibert, E.)**  
**Jan. 23, 2024**  
**Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Crayton, T.)**  
**Jan. 18, 2024**  
**Tanker Accounted for from WWII (Cloud, L.)**  
**Jan. 18, 2024**  
**Sailor Accounted for from USS California (Hillman, M.)**  
**Jan. 17, 2024**  
**Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Barrow, R.)**  
**Jan. 16, 2024**  
**Pilot Accounted for from WWII (Willhite, T.)**