

NOVEMBER 2023 MAIL CALL

23-24 GENERAL ORDER-05 PAGE 5

COMMANDER DELANEY AND OTHER STATE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS
DURING SOUTHERN CONFERENCE 2023 HELD IN
TULSA, OKLAHOMA



5153 Auxiliary member elected Southern
Conference Guard on Page 27

World War II, Army Air Force
Recovered Page 24

23-24 STATE COMMANDER
RONALD K. "RON" DELANEY



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STATE OFFICERS MESSAGES

Ronald K. "Ron" Delaney, State Commander	Post 4588
Debbie McElhannon, Senior Vice Commander	Post 9854
James M. Prestenback, Junior Vice Commander	Post 3665
Elvin "Ray" Bass, State Quartermaster	Post 3337
Mitchell R. "Mitch" Cota, State Adjutant	Post 3750
Editor Mail Call/Louisiana Combat Veteran	
State Historian	
Sharee M. Arends, State Surgeon	Post 5159
David Fields, State Chaplain	Post 5159

NATIONAL COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
DUANE T. SARMIENTO

MEET THE CHALLENGE



2023-2024



MID-WINTER 2024
JANUARY 25-28, 2024
THE HOTEL BENTLEY
 200 Desoto Street
 Alexandria, LA 70131

93RD STATE CONVENTION 2024
JUNE 27 - 30, 2024
THE HOTEL BENTLEY
 200 Desoto Street
 Alexandria, LA 70131



STATE COMMANDER MESSAGE

Comrades, I write this with a heavy heart. The Department of Louisiana is and has been LAST in membership. As PSC Bobby Lovergne stated in his recent email that this past weekend was the Southern Conference. I had to give a Commanders report about the situation in our lovely state. It was with a heavy heart that I had to report that Louisiana was LAST in membership. This was especially hard to report since Louisiana was FIRST in all the VFW!!!! WE can do better than LAST!! Work the phones, knock on doors... do whatever it takes to get those unpaid, expired, and expiring members back into the fold. It does bother me that when we sign up as a member of the greatest VSO, we agreed to pay our dues, and those who don't pay on time keep the Department from the CinC contests which will be a monetary award that can help the members of Louisiana VFW.

We missed out on \$1000 by not being at 88% by 1 November.. As of this morning, we sit at 79.44%. So, to receive \$1000, we need 1624 renewals, new members, or reinstate to reach the next goal from CinC is 1 February 95%, or roughly 85 members a day!! And the Department will receive \$1000!!!

Remember, I'm not doing this so I can have a new hat. I'm doing this to help veterans in our state!!

For those that didn't know PSC Thomas Franklin has passed. He was a Life of Post 4224 in Baker. His time as Department Commander was 1983-1984. Arrangements are forthcoming. We extend our thoughts and prayers for the family.

It has come to my attention that some post members have been disrespectful to other post members. That is completely against the Bylaws. And it will not be tolerated under my watch or anybody else's watch. If this is how you work and act with other people and you're in a position of authority in your post, STOP or STEP DOWN if you can't work with others. This will not be tolerated!!! Remember the first lines when we start meetings. "Comrades, we are assembled again to transact business of mutual benefit. **DO NO LET PETTY JEALOUSIES OR TRIVIAL PERSONALITIES INFLUENCE OUR DELIBERATIONS. LET US UPHOLD ALWAYS THE OBLIGATIONS COMRADESHIP AND**



RON DELANEY
Air Force - Post 4588

LOYALTY TO OUR ORGANIZATION AND OT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED States OF AMERICA"!!

We, as a department, can achieve any goal. We've done it before. Help us help each other.

Success isn't always about greatness. It's a Consistency. Consistent hard work Leads to Success. Greatness will come. -Dwayne (The Rock) Johnson



National Representative for Mid-Winter 2024



Glenn R. Umberger Jr. National Council of Administration Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Glenn R. Umberger Jr. was elected to a four-year term on the VFW's National Council of Administration on Aug. 3, 2021, at the 122nd VFW National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, representing the Department of Pennsylvania.

He served in the United States Army from 1985 to 2018, earning his VFW eligibility serving in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In recognition of his service, he received two Meritorious Service Medals, 10 Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with three campaign stars, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with gold hourglass and "M" device, Saudi Arabian Medal for the Liberation of Kuwait, and the Kuwait Medal for the Liberation of Kuwait, among several other awards and citations.

Glenn joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars in 1993 at Post 23 in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, later transferring to Post 7155 in Trappe, Pennsylvania, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with his election as the VFW Department of Pennsylvania Commander from 2015 to 2016. On the national level, he has served on several committees, to include the National Veterans and Military Support Committee, National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure Committee, and served as National Deputy Chief of Staff and National Aide-de-Camp.

He received his Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice at Shippensburg University. He is currently employed with the Department of the United States Army as a regional facility operations specialist.

Glenn is a member of the American Legion and a life member of the Military Order of the Cootie, the VFW National Home, the Association of the United States Army, and the National Rifle Association.

He resides in Schwenksville, Pennsylvania.



23-24 General Order-04

PAGE 5 IS TO BE READ AT MEETINGS THEN POSTED

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.**

ARTICLE X - RULES OF ORDER

Sec. 1001 - Rules of Order Governing All Meetings.

25. The dispensation and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages or use of smoking/vaping products in VFW meeting rooms during VFW meetings are **prohibited**.

Post Commanders: *If you, your Quartermaster, or Adjutant do not have an email address please designate a member of your Post, with an email address, to disseminate information from District and Headquarters. Also, please ensure the Post roster is always up to date and accurate.*

General Rule 13, (a) All members who are able will stand during the offering of the prayers; (b) members will follow the action of the Chaplain or presiding officer relative to removal of caps during prayers; if uncovering, the hat shall be placed on the extended closed fingers of the right hand in such a way that the Cross of Malta is exposed and held over the heart; (c) official caps will not be worn during luncheons, banquets or other meals; (d) Official caps will be the only head covering allowed to be worn at regular meetings of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

BY COMMAND OF
RON DELANEY
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:



Mitchell R. Cota, PSC
State Adjutant

NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day
12 District 5 Meeting	13	14	15	16	17	18 District 4 Meeting
19	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving Day	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
		Notes				

November 7 - Election Day

November 10 - U.S. Marine Corps Birthday

November 11 - Veterans Day

November 15 - Patriot's Pen Post judging deadline

November 15 - Voice of Democracy Post judging deadline

November 15 - VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" application period for spring semester ends

November 15 - Teacher Award Post judging deadline

November 18 - National Family Volunteer Day

November 23 - Thanksgiving Day

This month, our nation honors all who have served; but in the VFW, every day is Veterans Day! This month, Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento is issuing a challenge to all VFW Departments to show your leadership and motivational skills to bring in new members!



Throughout the month of November, we will be comparing each Department's New and Reinstated totals for the month to where they were in November of last year. The Commander-in-Chief wants to see every Department increase their New/Reinstated members by 10% over last year's November numbers!

Every Department that meets this challenge will receive a \$500 cash award, plus a custom plaque to display at the Department Headquarters to commemorate your achievement!

This challenge will compare the totals of each Department's November 2022 New/Reinstated members (Annual and Life) to your New/Reinstated numbers for November 2023. In order to meet this challenge, the Department will need to show a ten percent increase from last year's November totals.

Each Department's prior year totals and current totals will be shown on the tracker visible through the Online Membership System (OMS) - simply click on the "Commander's Challenge" link under "Reporting".

The true mark of leadership is when you can motivate others to success, so we want all our Departments to contact your Districts and Posts, encourage and assist them to recruit and reinstate members into the organization, and to

MEET THE CHALLENGE!

This contest will count all New and Reinstated Life and Annual members processed between November 1 and November 30, 2023. Applications and payments processed online before close of business will be credited that day, payments and applications made through the mail will be processed when received. Questions about this or other membership programs can be sent to membership@vfw.org.

DISTRICT MEETINGS

District Meeting/Workshop	District Meeting/Workshop	District Convention
<p>District 2 August 26, 2023</p> <p>District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3267 1133 Hickory Ave., Harahan, LA 70123 Registration 9am Meetings 10am</p>	<p>District 2 January 13, 2024</p> <p>District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3750--- 140 Angus Dr., Luling, LA 70070 Registration 9am Meetings 10am</p>	<p>District 2 May 4, 2024</p> <p>District Convention</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3750 140 Angus Dr., Luling, LA 70070 Registration 9am Meetings 10am</p>
<p>District 3 August 26, 2023</p> <p>School of Instruction</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 5097 1004 Tiger Dr., Thibodaux, LA 70302 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$8)</p>	<p>District 3 January 13, 2024</p> <p>Business/Awards</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 5097 1004 Tiger Dr., Thibodaux, LA 70302 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$8)</p>	<p>District 3 April 20, 2024</p> <p>Business/Elections</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 5097 1004 Tiger Dr., Thibodaux, LA 70302 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$8)</p>
<p>District 4 August 19, 2023</p> <p>Workshop Following C of A</p> <p>Meeting place: Post 9822 120 VFW Road, Duson, LA 70529 Registration - 9:00 a.m. Joint Opening - 10:00 a.m. Lunch - 12:00 p.m. VFW/Aux Business Session - 1 pm</p>	<p>District 4 November 18, 2023</p> <p>Programs</p> <p>Meeting place: Post 4158 102 Jimmy C Vorhoff Jr Dr. Abbeville LA 70510 Registration - 9:00 a.m. Joint Opening - 10:00 a.m. Lunch - 12:00 p.m. VFW/Aux Business Session - 1 pm</p> <p>District 4 February 10, 2024</p> <p>Mid-Year Update/Awards</p> <p>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</p>	<p>District 4 April 13th</p> <p>Elections</p> <p>Meeting place: Post 4158 102 Jimmy C Vorhoff Jr Dr. Abbeville LA 70510 Registration - 9:00 a.m. Joint Opening - 10:00 a.m. Lunch - 12:00 p.m. VFW/Aux Business Session - 1 pm</p>

DISTRICT MEETINGS

<p style="text-align: center;">District 5 September 9, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3802 5416 Hwy 27 S., De Quincy, LA 70633 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$?)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 5 November 12, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 9854 2292 Highway 109 S, Vinton, LA 70668 Registration 1pm Sessions start at 2pm. Lunch 12pm. (\$?)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 5 April 20, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Convention</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 7321 2668 Hwy 171 North, Lake Charles, LA 70611 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$?)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">District 7 August 19, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 8971 3809 Highway 190, Eunice, LA 70535 Registration 9am. Meeting start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$8)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 7 October 28, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 2484 123 N Liberty St., Opelousas, LA 70570 Registration 9am. Meeting start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$8)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 7 May 18, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 5153 1020 VFW Drive, Arnaudville, LA 70512 Registration 9am. Meeting start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$8)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">District 8 September 9, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3784 13214 S Choctaw Dr., Baton Rouge LA 70815 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$7)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 8 January 13, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3693 42430 Church Point Rd., Gonzales, LA 70737 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$7)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 8 April 27, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nomination and Elections</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 4224 3215 Ben Williams Lane, Baker, LA 70714 Registration 9am-10am. Sessions start at 10am. Lunch 12pm. (\$7)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">District 9 September 16, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 8290 28000 Main St., Lacombe, LA 70445 Registration 9am Sessions start at 10am Breakout 11am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 9 January 20, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3652 15800 Demarco Lane., Hammond, LA 70403 Registration 9am Sessions start at 10am Breakout 11am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District 9 April 20, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District Convention</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 8720 21470 Mire Dr., Abita Springs, LA 70420 Registration 9am Sessions start at 10am Breakout 11am</p>

DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 10 September 16, 2023	District 10 February 17, 2024	District 10 May 18, 2024
<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3841 2471 Leglise St., Mansura, LA 71350 Registration 10am Sessions start at 10:30am Lunch 12pm. (\$10 Donation)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 8852 2419 3rd St., Alexandria, LA 71302 Registration 10am Sessions start at 10:30am Lunch 12pm. (\$10 Donation)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 3139 412 Elmo S., Marksville, LA 71351 Registration 10am Sessions start at 10:30am Lunch 12pm. (\$10 Donation)</p>
District 11 August 26, 2023	District 11 January 13, 2024	District 11 May 4, 2024
<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meeting place: Post 5442 (Farmerville) 100 Hudson Rd., Farmerville LA 71241 Registration/meet & greet 10:30am Meeting 11am:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meeting place: Post 3615 (Ruston) 200 E. Mississippi Ave., Ruston LA 71270 Registration/meet & greet 10:30am Meeting 11am:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District Convention</p> <p>Meeting place: Post 1809 (Monroe) 1499 Highway 594, Monroe LA 71203 Registration/meet & greet 10:30am Meeting 11am:</p>
District 12 September 9, 2023	District 12 January 20, 2024	District 12 May 11, 2024
<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 5187 860 Dahlia Vines St., Zwolle, LA 71486 Registration 9am Lunch (\$10)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District Meeting</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 4588 1004 Jeter St., Bossier City, LA 71111 Registration 9am Lunch (\$10)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District Convention</p> <p>Meetings place: Post 5951 1315 Northgate Road, Bossier City, LA 71112 Registration 9am Lunch (\$10)</p>

FUTURE DATES TO REMEMBER

July 27 - August 1, 2024 - National Convention, Louisville, KY

August 9 -14, 2025 - National Convention, Columbus, OH

August 15 - 20, 2026 - National Convention, Salt Lake City, UT

July 31 - August 54, 2027 - National Convention, Milwaukee, WI

August 5 - 10, 2028 - National Convention, San Antonio, TX

STATE SR. VICE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

November is upon us and that means cooler weather and shorter days. Remember the three Ps when the temperature drops, plants, pipes and pets. Don't leave any of them unattended or unwrapped outside when it is cold. Stay safe and be careful of the slick ground.

November also brings Southern Conference, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. For those attending Southern Conference, safe travels and have fun. Although every day should be Veterans Day, Saturday, 11 November is officially Veterans Day. Show support for our fellow veterans and comrades on Veterans Day; have a ceremony, thank a veteran or just call and do a buddy check. Remember, many restaurants offer either free or discounted items on or near Veterans Day. Thanksgiving is a time to remember the things that we are thankful for; however, some veterans have a hard time around holidays, so check on each other to make sure everyone makes it through the holiday season.

Entries for Americanism, Patriots Pen, and Voice of Democracy should be to the post and posts have until 15 November to judge. Check with your district chairperson to make sure what date the entries need to be at the district level. We don't want entries not judged because they were late, so verify deadlines.

A few items I would like to address. According to Article X – Rules of Order Sec. 1001 Number 4 on page 109, "When a member rises to speak, the member shall rise and address the presiding officer. When two or more members rise to claim the floor at about the same time, the presiding officer assigns the floor to the member who appeared to have risen first and addressed the chair. Please remember to rise and address the presiding officer when you have something to discuss at the meetings."

Many posts change or cancel meetings during the holidays. Remember, to vote on the meeting change and inform the district commander, state commander and adjutant that the meeting date and/or time has changed or canceled. Send the updated information for your meeting.

Lastly, if a member or post commander is having any issues, I ask that you keep your district commander informed, as well as the state commander. When a district commander checks on you and or your post, he or she is trying to make sure you have everything that you need.



DEBBIE MCELHANNON
Army - Post 9854

We want all of our posts to thrive and continue to do great things.

Stay safe and check on your buddies.



FUTURE DATES TO REMEMBER

June 27 - 30, 2024 - State Convention
Alexandria, LA

STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Comrades,

It brings great joy seeing our Posts across this Great State taking care of Veterans and engaging with their communities. Please continue to share these moments on our Louisiana VFW & Aux Members Only Facebook page.

All Americanism, Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy entries should have been turned into Posts no later than October 31st. Good luck on your Post entries and judging. Let's keep up the great work and promoting Patriotism with our youth. Let's not forget about Teacher and Safety entries.

I attended the Southern Conference in Tulsa, OK along with other Leadership from November 2-5, 2023. I will still be available phone, text or email if anyone needs something. We will also be campaigning/supporting our own Bobby Lovergne as he makes his run at National Junior Vice.

As Veterans Day approaches, I will like to say "Thank you for your service and your dedication to the VFW". Without you, none of this is possible. Keep up the great work and may God bless you!

"The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly."
– Jim Rohn



JAMES M. PRESTENBACK
Army - Post 3665



State Historian

Please send pictures your Post or Auxiliary take of our Commander and President's visit to your Post or District meetings.

Things needed

Pictures of the State Commander and/or State President with Post or District Officers, everyone's names in the picture, the date of the event, and a paragraph or two of awards or ceremony that took place that day.

STATE ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE

Comrades,

First my apologies for the delay in this months Mail Call. From the 2nd through the 5th of November, many of the State Officers and Members attended the 2023 VFW Southern Conference held in Tulsa, OK. Along with many of our comrades from the VFW, Members from our Department's Auxiliary were on hand to represent the Big Easy Department. We had a great time meeting with the officers and members of the VFW and VFWA from the other 13 Departments that make up our 14 state strong Southern Conference. If you have never had the chance to attend one, it is a great place to see how other officers and departments operate and how we all fit in our Southern Conference.

Attendance also afford you a chance to see how a conference picks their designee choice in becoming Junior Vice Commander-In-Chief every fourth years. During each National Convention, the four conferences Western, Eastern, Southern, and the Big Ten, send their choices of candidates to represent their conference. The other three choose to endorse their candidate and mostly most of the time do but it gives you a chance to hear from their candidates for National Chaplain, Judge Advocate General, Surgeon General, and Junior Vice Commander -In-Chief.

Our Senior Vice Commander-In-Chief, Al Lipphardt from our Southern Conference stated during the Banquet that if he is elected for 2024-2025 term, he would be reappointing Dan West as his Adjutant General for his year.

Our own PSC Bobby Lovergne, and Louisiana's National Council Member, completed his two year term as the Southern Conference Chairman during this trip. He is also our department's choice for Junior Vice Commander-In-Chief for 2026-2027 becoming Commander-In-Chief after our



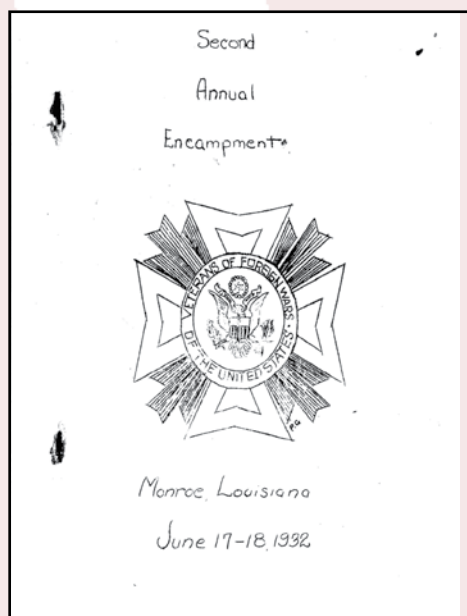
MITCHELL R. "MITCH" COTA, PSC
Air Force - Post 3750

97th Convention in 2028.

I have started collecting and scanning the documents as far back as our **Second Annual Encampment** (Convention) and will be posting it soon on the members only section of the website, for your reading pleasure. So I am asking all Post, Post Auxiliary, and District and District Auxiliary send me what ever, no matter how little or as much information you all can find about your Post or District History. As I receive it I will compile it by year and begin putting it together to

make a Department Century of VFW History. Check out the "Historian," on pages 21 and 22.

As far as our membership goes, I believe looking to the past at PSC Samuel D. Haas, our first Department Commander, and his steering force that built our great department. His drive took us from a part of the Texas Department and guided us to a newly formed Louisiana/ Mississippi Department. Please give it a read. It's not much but more will follow in later issues.



Cover of Second Annual Encampment

COMMITTEEMEN CORNER

November already has crept upon us, 5 months into the VFW Year and a lot has taken place, a new Post in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, another new Post in the Pacific Area. Many testimonies in front of Congress about various issues concerning active duty and veterans issues and all the while working to make our VFW stronger by encouraging veterans of all ages and conflicts to join our ranks. Remember when talking to Expired/Unpaid members that being a member of the VFW is more than going to a meeting, numbers we have behind us while advocating for veterans rights and issues. “No One Does More for Veterans than the VFW” is not just a catch phrase it is what our National HQ and DC Office do daily.

102% is the goal, let us not let Louisiana be the Turkey that is left out in the cold because we cannot back up what we accomplished last year. Continue those Buddy Checks, recruiting events, working the Unpaid/Expired rosters; membership is all of our responsibility.

By the time you read this, we will have completed the Southern Conference Convention in Tulsa, Ok, what a quick two years it has been serving as Chairman of the Conference. We have maintained a stranglehold on the CIC Membership Cup, brought back the Southern Conference Night at National Convention at NO cost to the Departments, scheduled the 1st ever Southern Conference Cruise that will be taking place December 12-17 which a lot of VFW and Auxiliary members will be going on. All of these items were things I brought up when I decided to run for Conference Chairman, we have to bring FUN back to this Organization and what better way to do it that lead the way. I am confident that Victor Letourneaut from North Carolina will continue the progress we have made, now time to focus on the campaign for National Junior Vice Commander in Chief.

As Ronald Reagan said ***“We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone”***

Until next month I hope each of you have a great Thanksgiving and spend quality time with family and friends during the upcoming holiday season.



ROBERT “BOBBY” LOVERGNE, PSC
National Committee Member
Air Force - Post 3750



Committeeman's Corner Continued

Greetings again and another week of Council News. Our General Counsel has stood up for our veterans who lost their lives due to Shiite terrorist attacks and allowing their parents or family members to begin filing suit against those funding these terrorist. As you can see under Administrative Actions, 51 Posts under suspension and 10 Article IX Actions underway. Folks let your members know that their actions reflect on our Organization, watch some of the things you Post on Social Media especially if you have a Red Bead around your cover, this represents the Department and it can be taken as Conduct prejudicial to good of the order and discipline or conduct unbecoming a member in their relations to the VFW or other members. In today's world you are always in that glass house so don't be throwing stones.

Legal Counsel

- Last week the VFW sent a letter to the Department of Defense and Solicitor General in support of the Supreme Court denying certiorari in the case *Atchley v. AstraZeneca UK Ltd.* That case was filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act, which imposes civil liability on companies that knowingly finance terrorist attacks. The plaintiffs, Gold Star families and veterans who were killed or injured by a Shiite terrorist group in Iraq, allege certain pharmaceutical companies, including AstraZeneca, provided funding to terrorist groups in exchange for the award of contracts. Denying cert would allow Gold Star families and wounded veterans to finally begin discovery in their lawsuit. This case has been tied up in court for the past six years. Consequently, the victims haven't even had a chance to prove their claims yet. Such a delay is unconscionable for our veterans, and denying cert would allow the case to be remanded back to the District Court where it can proceed.

Administrative Operations

- Department Inspections: We are moving forward with the Department Inspection initiative for the 2023-2024 term and have plans to complete ten (10) inspections this year. The hope is that we will have the first inspection scheduled for the beginning of October and have all inspections completed by May 2024, prior to the start of Department conventions. In the coming weeks we will be reaching out to the Departments that have been selected by the Commander-in-Chief as well as the inspection team members to begin working through availability and scheduling. Additionally, the inspection team will be conducting initial and refresher training in September before we start our schedule. We look forward to another successful year of inspections and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Quentin Carroll at QCarroll@vfw.org.
- There are currently 51 Posts under suspension, three of which are new. We have processed four Post consolidations pursuant to Section 209 of the National Bylaws. The organization has 5,669 chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 10 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, nine Administrative Actions and 11 membership eligibility challenges.
- We have 63 Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review, none of which are new; current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 30 days.

Membership

- Mentorship can look different at every Post. Sometimes it's easy to recognize efforts made by comrades to promote VFW institutional knowledge, we see it all the time. Sometimes it is smaller, less obvious efforts that enable the Post to thrive. Seek these comrades out and recognize them! We know that Posts with strong mentorship programs are successful. What are you doing to promote mentorship within your Departments?
- Another Membership Monday training webinar will happen Monday, Nov. 6, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. CST. We will be covering the topic "New Member Application and Renewal Processing." Get a complete understanding of the new member application process from application submittal to new card delivery. The webinar will be recorded for future viewing as all Membership Mondays are.

- If you have a topic for training, we would love to hear from you! Contact us by emailing, Membership@vfw.org. Follow our Facebook Page, <https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembership>.

VFW Foundation

- From Oct. 23 to Nov. 30, 2023, Walmart will match donations 2:1 when customers round up to donate to any participating veteran service charitable organization at checkout on Walmart.com or in the app. Please remember to designate the VFW Foundation. If you are not already enrolled, sign up for Spark Good Round Up: <https://www.walmart.com/sparkgood>.
- The 2023-2024 VFW Foundation grant cycle opened on Oct. 1, 2023, and applications are available at [vfw.org/Grants](https://www.vfw.org/Grants). VFW Posts, Districts and Auxiliaries may qualify for grant funding. A total of three reimbursement-based grant opportunities will be provided:
 - o #StillServing Grant (SSG) – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for expenses incurred while performing community service activities where Post/District/Auxiliary members engaged community members directly.
 - o Post Assistance Grant (PAG) – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$2,500 for expenses incurred from purchasing qualifying equipment or making repairs/renovating a Post owned property.
 - o Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) Grant – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for donations made to food insecurity organizations or for the purchase of food that supports a Post or Auxiliary ran food pantry.

National Legislative Service

- Joint Senate Committee Hearing on Military Transition: VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci testified at a joint hearing of the Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Armed Services on military to civilian transition. He explained the need to pass VFW-supported H.R. 3933/S. 2888, TAP Promotion Act, in addition to amending laws and policies that govern the DOD Transition Assistance Program (TAP), commonly referred to as TAP class. Gallucci stated, "A solid transition can set up veterans for success after service. Conversely, a failed transition could lead to devastating consequences like unemployment, homelessness, even suicide. The perception of veterans after service directly correlates to the next generation's propensity to serve. Failed transitions hurt military recruiting, making this a national security priority." This hearing follows a December 2022 Government Accountability Office report on TAP that indicated 70 percent of transitioning service members did not begin the class at least 365 days before separation or retirement as mandated by law. Read the testimony or watch the hearing, which begins at the 14:24 mark.
- Shortened Survivor Benefit Plan Deadline: Military retirees interested in enrolling in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) must now submit their letter of intent (LOI) to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) by Nov. 1, 2023. Authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, the SBP Open Season began in December 2022 and ends on Jan. 1, 2024. The initial step in the enrollment process is to file a nonbinding LOI with DFAS. Once processed, individuals will be provided personalized buy-in amounts, premiums, and estimated benefits, which can then be used to make informed decisions.

National Veterans Service

- NVS Director Mike Figlioli traveled to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to discuss VA benefits, the VFW Pre-Discharge program, and brief active-duty sailors, Marines, soldiers, and civilian employees on filing disability claims. He also assisted with the inauguration of the newly organized Guantanamo Bay VFW Post 12225.
- NVS leadership participated in the TAP Military Life Cycle Module-Community Integration Resources collaboration meeting.
- NVS Director Mike Figlioli will attend a collaboration meeting with IBM to develop to navigate technology in military to civilian transitions. • NVS BDD team and NVS leaders will meet for an update and feedback virtual meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2023.

- NVS Director Mike Figlioli and Executive Director Ryan Gallucci held an office call at the VFW Washington Office with the Chairman of the Board of Veterans Appeals.
- NVS Health leadership participated in a VHA Veteran integrated Care collaboration meeting.
- NVS Director Mike Figlioli and NVS Staff will hold the monthly VSO Update Forum at 2pm on Oct. 25, 2023, via ZOOM.
- NVS managers will meet with USAA to continue work on USAA Impact Days and provide updates on the grant process.
- NVS Health team participated in the Washington, D.C., Winter Haven planning session for homeless veterans.
- NVS BDD participated in the Army GO TAP course and provided in-person counseling for VA claims.
- VFW's NVS Pre-Discharge representatives briefed transitioning service members on VA benefits at Fort Bliss Texas, NSA Bethesda, Maryland, Fort Drum, New York, Fort Cavazos, Texas, and New River, North Carolina.

Next weeks Council Update will get to you on Monday as I will be in Tulsa for the Southern Conference Convention next week. If any of you need any assistance please let me know as I am here to be the go between from National and the Department.

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
 (504) 251-5628



NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEEMAN

Legislative Report October 2023

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.

October 2nd:

Claims Representative Access Bill Introduced:

Sens. King (I-ME), Cramer (R-ND), Shaheen (D-NH), and Rounds (R-SD) have introduced [S. 2888](#), TAP Promotion Act, to authorize accredited claims representatives to be present in DOD Transition Assistance Program (TAP) classrooms. This legislation is the companion bill to [H.R. 3933](#) introduced by Rep. Van Orden (WI-3). The goal of these bills is to help mitigate gaps in care for transitioning service members who use the VA Benefits Delivery at Discharge program, which provides an expedited VA disability claims pathway for benefits and services. The VFW has been a long-standing supporter of this initiative as a means to reduce suicide risk among recently transitioned veterans. [Read the press release.](#)

Report on Military Barracks Released: The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on its review of military barracks. The study, which was required as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, found mold and raw sewage among other health, safety, and well-being concerns. GAO also found that DOD lacks reliable mechanisms to track barracks conditions and the funding spent on improvements. This report bolsters the need to pass VFW-supported H.R. 3165, Military Housing Transparency and Accountability Act. [Read the report.](#)

National Cemetery Administration Survey: VA has released a survey to determine awareness of burial options and end-of-life benefits. If you are a veteran, family member, survivor, caregiver, or friend, please take a few minutes to answer these questions so VA is better able to serve you. [Take the survey.](#)



MATTHEW J. WEST, PSC
Army - Post 3619

October 9th:

Afghan Female Tactical Platoon Event: The VFW Washington Office hosted members of the Afghan Female Tactical Platoon, lawmakers, and fellow veterans groups to discuss the critical need for the passage of the Afghan Adjustment Act. This legislation would ensure a path to lawful permanent residence for those who assisted decades-long U.S. operations in Afghanistan, which aligns with the VFW resolution on this issue that was overwhelmingly passed by our membership at convention. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Brittany Dymond spoke at the event about the importance of honoring our allies. She stated, "The Veterans of Foreign Wars is an organization comprised of veterans who were deployed overseas to different countries. In order to accomplish our missions, we often had to rely on our allies who stood shoulder to shoulder with us in harm's way." [Read more.](#)

VFW Leadership in Europe: VFW National Commander Duane Sarmiento, Senior Vice Commander Al Lipphardt and Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci arrived in Belgium for the first stop on their two-country mission that also includes Germany. The delegation visited NATO's Supreme Headquarters

Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) and Chièvres Air Base in Brussels before traveling to Germany. [Read more.](#)

VFW Brings Claims Services to Korea: VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) provided critical information to major commands and transitioning service members alike. NVS Director Mike Figlioli, Deputy Director Gregg Orto, and Field Operations Assistant Director Cindy Noel paid visits to U.S. Forces Korea, Eighth U.S. Army at Camp Humphreys, and Seventh Air Force and 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base. At each location, they met with the local command groups and gave briefings to service members about the VA claims process and free benefits claims assistance services. Following Korea, the NVS team headed to military commands in Hawaii. [See the post.](#)

VA Expands Maternity Care Coordination: As of Oct. 1, 2023, veterans will have access to maternity care coordinators from the beginning of pregnancy to 12 months postpartum. This is an expansion from the previous end date of eight weeks postpartum. These coordinators help veterans navigate health care inside and outside of VA, connect them with care after delivery, and ensure access to follow-up screenings. [Learn more.](#)

October 16th:

National Buddy Check Week: The first annual National Buddy Check Week is Oct. 16 - Oct. 20, 2023. In this new VA program, veterans are encouraged to contact ten fellow veterans and check on how they are doing. The goal is to build peer-to-peer connections, improve mental health, and increase access to VA resources. Veteran family members, caregivers, and survivors are also encouraged to participate. [Learn more.](#)

Direct Deposit Only for VA Caregiver Stipends: VA will no longer issue paper checks for all primary family caregivers. Enrollment as a vendor for direct deposits may be done through VA's [Customer Engagement Portal](#). Caregivers will need their social security number, address, and bank routing/account numbers to complete the required form. The [CSP Direct Deposit Enrollment User Guide](#) provides step-by-step enrollment instructions. [Learn more.](#)

TRICARE Open Enrollment Season Coming Soon: TRICARE Open Season will be Nov. 13 - Dec. 12, 2023. This is your chance to enroll or change your health care plan for the next year. If you are satisfied with your current plan, no action is necessary and your coverage will continue automatically for 2024. It is important to note that new retirees have only one year to enroll for TRICARE Prime or Select. Enrollment is not automatic for retirees. [Learn more.](#)

October 23rd:

Joint Senate Committee Hearing on Military Transition: VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci testified at a joint hearing of the Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Armed Services on military to civilian transition. He explained the need to pass VFW-supported H.R. 3933/S. 2888, TAP Promotion Act, in addition to amending laws and policies that govern the DOD Transition Assistance Program (TAP), commonly referred to as TAP class. Gallucci stated, "A solid transition can set up veterans for success after service. Conversely, a failed transition could lead to devastating consequences like unemployment, homelessness, even suicide. The perception of veterans after service directly correlates to the next generation's propensity to serve. Failed transitions hurt military recruiting, making this a national security priority." This hearing follows a December 2022 Government Accountability Office report on TAP that indicated 70 percent of transitioning service members did not begin the class at least 365 days before separation or retirement as mandated by law. [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 14:24 mark.

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amounts, premiums, and estimated benefits, which can then be used to make informed decisions.

[Learn more.](#)

October 30th:

VFW-Supported Amendment Passes Senate:

The Senate passed an amendment to the Military Construction, Veteran Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024. In July, the VFW testified in favor of H.R. 705, Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, which mirrors the aforementioned bill. This amendment would block VA from automatically referring veterans with fiduciaries to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which prohibits the ownership of firearms. It would also require that any VA referrals to NICS must first have the order of a judge indicating that the person is a danger to themselves or others. The VFW sees this as a necessary step to ensure the right of due process for veterans. [Read more.](#)

Senate Committee Hearing on VA

Accountability: The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs held an oversight hearing on VA accountability and transparency. Efforts to streamline VA's ability to hire and fire employees in an efficient manner were discussed.

"Accountability and transparency must be cornerstones of fulfilling VA's mission to provide high quality care and benefits to our veterans. We can all agree that bad actors at VA cannot and will not be tolerated," said Chairman Jon Tester. [Watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 12:18 mark.

Expected COLA Increases Announced: The Social Security Administration (SSA) announced a 3.2% benefit increase for 2024. VA compensation payment rates will match the rates from SSA. Veterans can expect to see the new amounts starting with their January 2024 payment. [Read more.](#)

Free Veterans Infographics Available: The RAND Epstein Family Veterans Policy Research Institute is offering four thoroughly researched and up-to-date charts for your use. These charts, also known as infographics, cover veterans' social, economic, and physical well-being. They can be used in presentations when educating your fellow

veterans and communities in the interest of bolstering support and improving policies affecting veterans' needs. [Get the infographics.](#)

Respectfully,

Matthew J. West

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

National Legislative Committee Member

2020-2026



Historian

The Spanish-American War ended August 1898 and the Philippine Insurrection went from 1899-1902. Veterans returning home banded together creating Chapters in Ohio, Colorado, and Pennsylvania with a common goal caused by these wars or hostile actions. The end result was the same, veterans coming home lacked the ability for medical care and/or veteran's pension. This left them to care for themselves, but many were wounded, sick, and some were left with no means of providing for themselves. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) grew from the endeavors of these first few veterans struggles.

The early days of the VFW got a big boost at the end of World War I (WWI), when 4.6 million men returned from the war. Our government was unprepared to reintegrate and care for these men, many with physical and psychological trauma affecting these veterans for the rest of their lives. The men that were able, took up a different fight, a fight for their fellow brothers in arms, a fight started by veterans that



Samuel D. Haas



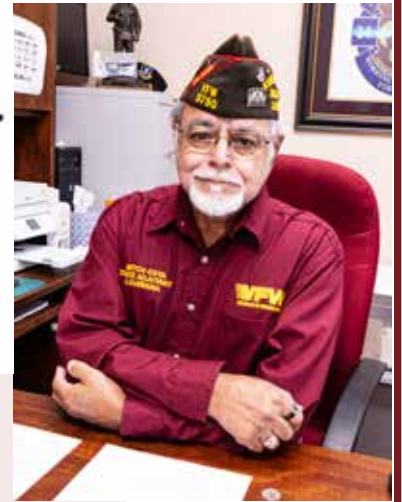
founded the three original states of the VFW.

Our Department was championed by one of these WWI veterans for his hard work, recruiting members, and establishing Posts for the Department charter, Samuel D. Haas, our Department's first State Commander at the age of 37. Louisiana was chartered on July 5th, 1931,



but its creation started some ten to twelve years before its charter. The earliest Post I have found was Louisiana VFW New Orleans Post 351, who's chartered date of April 6th, 1921, fell under the Department of Texas/Louisiana/Mississippi when all were combined.

The efforts of these few hundred veterans of the original ten Posts, eight belonging to Louisiana and



MITCHELL R. "MITCH" COTA, PSC
Air Force - Post 3750

the remaining two to Mississippi. It was hard work just from a communications point of view. Today even though many of our veteran are embracing this technology age we are living in, few do not. Today's Internet, cell phone in our pockets, to communicate almost instantaneous, or to jump on a plane and be across country in the same day for a meeting the next, were just not believed in the 1920's.

The Communications and travel of the 1920's is something we today would find hard to navigate. Long distance phone call are a thing of the past where the only way to make one was to go through an operator or maybe more. Hopefully your party was in their office and maybe not. Their email was the telegram sent by telegraph and then you could only send or receive a message of a few sentences at a time. Flying cross country often meant flying in a plane designed to carry mail. Driving cross country usually meant taking the train. Driving over roads mainly made of dirt or shell, for local (in state) travel.

Past State Commander (PSC) Haas, by the files I have been sifting

through, communicated by telegraph, letter writing, and phone calls. I learned about the phone calls from some of the letters stating the conservations mentioned. PSC Haas was a chartered member of VFW Post 1736 in 1930 the year before our Department's establishment.

Regarding the original ten Posts that chartered our department, I am still searching to find out who they were. I have so far identified Post 351 and Post 1736. At the end of PSC Haas' year at the Second Annual Encampment, he added an additional 15 Post, ending his year with 25 Post in the Department of Louisiana. This all done with technology we today would nearly find impossible, growing and living in this age of information at our fingertips and calling someone at the touch of a button. What is most amazing is this was all done at the beginning years of The Great Depression of 1929-1939. Buying food, gas, paying mortgages, and where finding or keeping a job was paramount on the people of those days. Buying VFW caps but then cost \$5, gas traveling to conferences cost .17 cents, and about \$8 a night paying for a hotel room. These men were dedicated to a cause that the VFW

represented, where helping veterans and their families was their focus.

I tip my hat to PSC Haas' accomplishments and salute his ability to communicate the message of theirs and the generations of war veterans. The message of the 1930's and 40's were received by veterans looking to make it better for future warriors, be it men or women. They were in the VFW working for veterans rights and benefits not knowing women would one day fill the ranks in the fields, planes, or the seas. They did it for the veteran.

We are the current stewards of the VFW, and we need to find the message that resonates with this generation of veterans today. Today's conflicts create today's veterans of 18 to 25 year olds. We need to find the message and ideals that motivate them and make them want to belong to an organization they want to participate in. All this without losing what makes the VFW what it stands for.



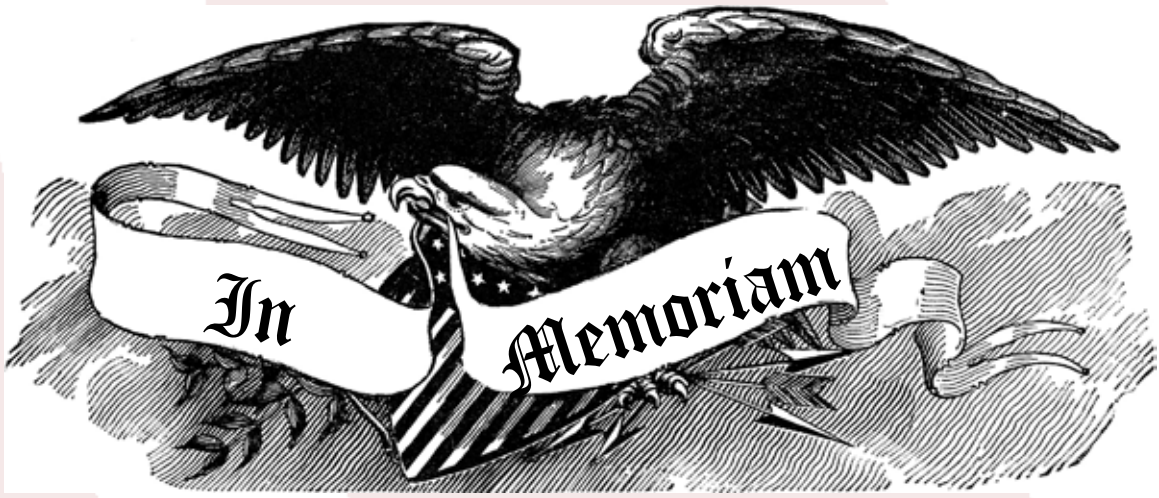
State and National Conventions were called Annual Encampments, and National Delegates to the Encampments wore the above medal. I am still looking, but the term Encampment seems to have changed to State and/or National Convention around 1956, 57, or 58. We are missing the first year it changed but I will continue to research to find the answer.



State Historian

I am asking each Post and Auxiliary to do a little research into their own history. Find pictures and old documents that made the members of your Post and/or your Auxiliary valuable to your community. The information needed is Date of the Post or Auxiliary Charter, how many State Commanders or State Presidents if any, and anything from the first ten years or more that you find interesting to the VFW.

SOLD TO J. W. Angiers, Q. M. Dept. of La. & Mississippi, ADDRESS New Iberia, Louisiana.		Invoice No. 15196	Our Order No. 15196
TERMS—NET CASH		Your Order No. Dept. No. 42 Post No. 1	Shipped Via Parcel Post.
Back Order	Shipped	Claims for Shortage or Non-Delivery of any article upon this invoice must be made within 15 days, otherwise it will not be allowed.	
2	VFW Caps, size 7 1/2--Post No. 2403-- Louisiana	5 00	
Shipped to H. C. Redmon, Commander Post No. 2403, VFW, 716 Franklin Street, Gretna, La.			



Loss of PSC Franklin November 6th, 2023.



The Department of Louisiana is saddened at the loss of Past State Commander Thomas J. Franklin of VFW Post 4224. PSC Franklin served as the 53rd Department Commander from 1983 to 1984.

Sympathy Cards can be sent to his family at
9310 Shady Bluff Rd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70818

SERVICE MEMBER: PVT DOYLE W. SEXTON



Conflict WORLD WAR II
Service UNITED STATE ARMY AIR FORCES
Status ACCOUNTED FOR
Date of Identification JULY 13, 2023



PVT DOYLE W. SEXTON

On July 13, 2023, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) identified the remains of Private Doyle W. Sexton, missing from World War II.

Private Sexton entered the U.S. Army Air Forces from Utah and served with the Headquarters Squadron of the 19th Bombardment Group in the Philippines. He was captured on the Bataan Peninsula following the American surrender on April 9, 1942. Private Sexton died of diphtheria on July 19, 1942, at the notorious Cabanatuan Prison Camp in Nueva Ecija Province, where he was buried in Communal Grave 312, along with other deceased American POWs. At its peak, Cabanatuan held approximately 8,000 American and Filipino prisoners of war that were captured during and after the Fall of Bataan. Conditions at the camp were poor, with food and water extremely limited, leading to widespread malnutrition and outbreaks of malaria and dysentery. By the time the camp was liberated in early 1945, approximately 2,800 Americans had died at Cabanatuan.

Following the war, American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) personnel exhumed those deceased buried at the Cabanatuan cemetery and relocated the remains to a temporary U.S. military mausoleum near Manila. In 1947, the AGRS examined these remains in an attempt to identify them. Twelve sets of remains from Common Grave 312 were identified, while the rest were buried at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial as Unknowns. In early 2018, the Unknown remains associated with Common Grave 312 were disinterred and sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis, where the laboratory results and the totality of the circumstantial evidence available identified one set of disinterred remains as those of Private Sexton.

Private Sexton is memorialized on the Walls of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery in the Philippines.

Unit Headquarters
Squadron 19 Bombardment
Group (Heavy)

Historical Country of Loss
Philippine Islands

Loss Area Current
Nueva Ecija

Home of record UT



Aircraft of the 19th Bombardment Group



B-17



LB-30



B-24

Highlights from Southern Conference 2023

Joint Opening and Memorial Service



△ Commander and President Delaney awaiting the wreath laying ceremony.



△ Commander and President Delaney prepare to lay the wreath at the altar.



△ Commander and President Delaney laying the wreath at the altar.

Some of Louisiana's Delegates during the Joint Opening and Memorial Service



← Photo op for PSC Reber and distant future State Commander Prestenback, being photobombed by our future State Commander McElhannon. (It's always great to have fun!)

Highlights from Southern Conference 2023

Western dress banquet.



Highlights from Southern Conference 2023



←Past National Auxiliary President Sissy Borel prepares to install the new Officers of the Southern Conference Auxiliary.



→Past National Auxiliary President Sissy Borel installing the new Officers of the Southern Conference Auxiliary. PSP Lorna Mills centered being installed as 2024-2025 Auxiliary Guard for the Southern Conference.



2023-2024 State Presidents of the Southern Conference



DON'T FEED THE SHARKS



DontFeedTheSharks.org

What is a “Claim Shark”?

- A Claim Shark is an individual or company that charges hefty fees to “assist” or “consult” veterans with filing their VA benefit claims – this practice is illegal!
- Claim Sharks are not VA accredited, meaning they aren’t required to adhere to the well-established professional and ethical standards of VA accreditation, so their advice can often be misleading or even fraudulent.
- Like a “Loan Shark,” once you’re in, you can’t get out, and may be subject to new and hidden fees whenever you get a new rating, no matter who does the work.

Some of their predatory practices are:

- Promising or guaranteeing an increased disability rating or percentage increase.
- Advertising expedited VA claims decisions.
- Requesting login credentials to access a veteran’s personal information through secure VA websites like eBenefits or VA.gov.
- Using confusing tactics or ambiguous language to mislead claimants or coerce them into signing a contract.
- Telling veterans to forego VA exams and offering health consultations within their own network of doctors.

Who are the Claim Sharks?

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • Trajector Medical | • Patriot Angels |
| • Vet Benefits Guide | • Veteran Care Services |
| • Veterans Guardian | • VetComm |
| • VA Claims Insider | • VA Claims Academy |
| • Telemedica | • Vet Assist |

Veterans can protect themselves by:

- Always working with VA accredited representatives.
- Attending all exams ordered by VA.
- Not signing contracts.
- Not agreeing to fees or payments from future benefits.
- Not agreeing to pay for medical consultations or opinions.
- Not providing access to Protected Health Information or Personal Identifiable Information.

Who is NOT a Claim Shark?

- VA accredited veterans service organization representatives, like the VFW
- VA accredited claims agents
- VA accredited attorneys
- Attorneys assisting with Camp Lejeune lawsuits who do not charge excessive fees



DISTRICT 9 - POST 3652



VFW Post and Auxiliary members of Post 3652, participated in a Post fundraiser:
Commander Bert Cusimano, Quartermaster Brian Bonanno, Sr. Vice Commander Carl Armour, Trustee TJ Hutson, Adjutant Joy Josits, Jeff Crownover, Craig Meyer, Elizabeth Harper, Stephen Smith
Aux Members that helped: President Dave Townsend, Secretary La'Nette Buras, And Future member Cary Cusimano



Post 3652 made a total of \$3200.00 for the unmet needs fund of the Post and plan on doing it next year again on November 9th.

Recruited one New member for the Post and talked to 5 more potential members.

DISTRICT 9 - POST 3652



It was held at Low Road Brewing in Hammond Louisiana owned by Lynette and Tim Shoaf (they are the ones in the picture with all the beer around them)



One of the Wing Cookers, The Mardi Gras Krewe The Krewe of Omega, has offered to give the Post and it's members the chance to ride on the Float this upcoming year.



Until next year Low Road Brewing!



I am a warrior.
 I am a wingman.
 I am a shipmate.
 I am a battle buddy.
 I am a sister-in-arms.
I am a Veteran.
I belong at VA.

VFW PROGRAMS DEADLINE DATES

Smart/Maher Citizenship Education Teacher Award

- *October 31, Entries to the Post
- November 15, Completion of Post judging
- December 15, Completion of District judging
- *February 1, Department winners and reports due to National (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation)

Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen

- *October 31, Student entries to the Post
- November 15, Completion of Post judging
- December 15, Completion of District judging
- January 10, Completion of Department judging
- January 15, District participation reports due to Department Chairmen
- *January 15, Department winners due to National
- *January 31, Department reports due to National

Scout of the Year

- *March 1, Scout entries 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 (Department to National)
- *April 30, National Outstanding Community Service Post Submission(s) (Department to National)
- *June 30, Community Service Reports Deadline

Public Servant National Award (Law Enforcement, Firefighter, Emergency Services)

- January 1, Nominations due (from Post to Department)
- *February 1, (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation), Nominations due from Department 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.***

Updated 8/1/2022

Membership

COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

This month, our nation honors all who have served; but in the VFW, every day is Veterans Day! This month, Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento is issuing a challenge to all VFW Departments to show your leadership and motivational skills to bring in new members!

Throughout the month of November, we will be comparing each Department's new and reinstated totals for the month to where they were in November of last year. The Commander-in-Chief wants to see every Department increase their New/Reinstated members by 10% over last year's November numbers! Every Department that meets this challenge will receive a \$500 cash award, plus a custom plaque to display at the Department Headquarters to commemorate your achievement!

This challenge will compare the totals of each Department's November 2022 new/reinstated members (annual and life) to your new/reinstated numbers for November 2023. To meet this challenge, the Department will need to show a ten percent increase from last year's November totals. Each Department's prior year totals and current totals will be shown on the tracker visible through the Online Membership System (OMS), click on the "Commander's Challenge" link under "Reporting."

The true mark of leadership is when you can motivate others to success, so we want all our Departments to contact your Districts and Posts, encourage and assist them to recruit and reinstate members into the organization, and to MEET THE CHALLENGE!

This contest will count all new and reinstated, Life and annual members processed between Nov. 1 and Nov. 30, 2023. Applications and payments processed online before close of business will be credited that day, payments and applications made through the mail will be processed when received. Questions about this or other membership programs can be sent to membership@vfw.org.

2023-24 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2023-24 Membership Program is available online at vfw.org, under MY VFW, scroll down to Membership Quick Links, click on Membership Recruiting and Retention. You will see the 2023-24 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

MEMBERSHIP OBJECTIVES

As the membership year has begun, keep in mind our membership objectives, also written in the 2023-24 Membership Program.

- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member.
- Increase membership drives and/or events.
- For Posts, District and Departments to reach 102% membership by June 30, 2024.

- Develop new Posts and/or revitalize existing Posts.
- Increase Life membership and Legacy Life membership.
- Provide membership assistance, using teams from your conference to assist and mentor those who request assistance.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION DEPARTMENT AWARD

Congratulations to VFW Post 12225, Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, established on Oct. 18, 2023. If you have questions about Memstats, Post Query, or if you are trying to charter a Post and you have more than (15) members on a charter application, give me a call, Matt Nute at 816.968.1122. We have many resources available to help you.

New Post Development and Post Revitalization Department Award: For each new Post chartered, and/or revitalized, the Department Quartermaster will receive:

- A \$250 credit from the VFW Store to be used towards necessary materials for the new Post.

For details on this and all other All-American membership incentives, view the Commander-in-Chief's National Membership Program at vfw.org under *Membership Recruiting & Retention*.

For any questions or further information, please contact the Membership Department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 1.888.564.6839.

UPCOMING TRAINING

Membership Monday training webinar will be on Nov. 6, 2023, at 2:00 PM, CDT, Topic: New Member Application and Renewal Processing. We urge you to pass along this information to all who would be interested.

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook to view the latest membership news, Post Shout-Outs, and important resource information throughout the year - facebook.com/VFWmembership/.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOP THREE RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters (as of 10.27.23):

Steven L. Woodward – 347
VFW Post 2224, Dept. of WA

Timothy M. Borland – 203
VFW Post 9972, Dept. of AZ

Frank M. Persa – 134
VFW Post 5580, Dept. of WA

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to vfw.org, click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life

members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership; each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Enrollment Cost:

Annual Payouts:

<u>Levels</u>		<u>Posts</u>	<u>Departments</u>	<u>National</u>
Gold-	\$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver-	\$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze-	\$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

What will your Legacy be?

VFW Foundation

The 10th Anniversary of the VFW Sport Clips Help A Hero campaign runs through Nov. 11, with over 1,800 franchisee stores participating. Join the campaign and donate at vfw.org/2023HAH. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Brooke Brown, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, bbrown@vfw.org.

The VFW Foundation 2023-24 grant cycle is open! Applications are available at vfw.org/grants. VFW Posts, Districts and Auxiliaries may qualify for grant funding. There are a total of three reimbursement-based grant opportunities:

- #StillServing Grant (SSG) – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for expenses incurred while performing community service activities where Post/District/Auxiliary members engaged community members directly.
- Post Assistance Grant (PAG) – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$2,500 for expenses incurred from purchasing qualifying equipment or making repairs/renovating a Post owned property.
- Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) Grant – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for donations made to food insecurity organizations or for the purchase of food that supports a Post or Auxiliary ran food pantry.

Please contact Grants Manager Jason Couch with any questions you may have at jcouch@vfw.org.

The VFW Foundation Board meeting was held on Tuesday, Oct. 3 at the National Museum of Military Vehicles in Dubois, Wyoming. Dan West, VFW Adjutant General and Board President gave an overview of VFW activities including how military families would be helped through Unmet Needs if there was a federal government shutdown. Marc Garduno, VFW Quartermaster General and Board Secretary-Treasurer discussed the Foundation's financial health and 2022-23 FY results. Additionally, there was discussion about the VFW National Convention sponsorship process, Board member nominations and informative reports from staff members Lisa Baronio, Brooke Brown and Ben Vargas as well as input from consultant Tony Lowe.

Contact: VFW Foundation Director of Donor Relations Richard Freiburghouse, rfreiburghouse@vfw.org.

As we hear the season of giving, here is some helpful information about why the support of every VFW member is vitally important. VFW's life-changing programs are not possible through membership dues alone. In fact, **membership dues alone cover just 18% of the cost of programs**. As a nonprofit organization, the VFW relies heavily on the generosity of its members and patriotic supporters. When members donate, 100% of their net donation goes directly back to support their Department. *Please spread the word and give as generously as you are able.*

VFW National Veterans Service Quarterly Supporter Newsletter – This month's edition is on its way! In this quarterly update, we'll keep you informed about the impactful work being done by the VFW National Veterans Service for our veterans. You will see stories of how the VFW in D.C. is fighting for veterans' rights and legislation affecting veterans. We'll also share heartwarming stories about VFW Accredited Service Officers actively aiding veterans in securing their well-deserved VA benefits, all made possible through your invaluable support of this essential program. If you, or a fellow veteran, are in need of assistance in filing a VA claim, please visit vfw.org/NVS.

VFW 2024 "Fly the Flag" – We are delighted to inform you that you will soon be receiving a special edition 2024 Fly the Flag" printable Calendar from the VFW. This distinctive patriotic calendar is our way of expressing gratitude for your unwavering membership and generous support of the VFW. As an added token of appreciation, we've included a bonus gift – the VFW "American Songbirds" Calendar. Our intention is for these special gifts to inspire you to proudly display the American flag, particularly on the dates highlighted in your calendar, demonstrating your unwavering support for all the veterans who have valiantly preserved our freedom.

To further fuel your patriotic spirit, visit heroes.vfw.org/Flag, where you can access a complimentary flag poster to print for display. *Your donations* will help *your VFW Department* serve veterans in need throughout the year. Veterans in your Department are counting on you!

2023 Veterans Day Matching Gift Campaign to Friends of Freedom Online Community – Last month, Friends of Freedom members received an email with exciting news! A generous supporter of the VFW has graciously pledged to match all donations, dollar for dollar, up to \$50,000, until Veterans Day, which falls on Nov. 11, 2023! This represents an extraordinary opportunity for your contribution to have twice the impact in paying tribute to the courageous men and women who have selflessly dedicated themselves to our nation.

No matter the amount, your act of generosity will carry double the weight, directly benefiting veterans, service members and their families. Watch your inbox for this incredible email so that your gift can go twice as far!

Sign Your Name, Change Your Future – Research shows that people who give feel happier and healthier than those who don't. From collecting tax receipts to planning for deadlines, our team at the VFW Planned Giving Office makes it easy for you to give. Include the VFW in your will or living trust by contacting our Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119 or email us at plannedgiving@vfw.org.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Adjutant General Dan West would like you to join with him in supporting the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate fundraising mail.

It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW's Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department toll-free at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at partners@vfw.org with "Partners in Patriotism Application" in the subject line.

VFW Friends of Freedom – If you are not already a member of the VFW's online community, please visit vfw.org and look for the gold banner that says "**Find Out What's Happening**" to sign up. As a member of the VFW's Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation's veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit vfw.org/VFWatWork and click on "**Read VFW success stories**" to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans' rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

Department Resources – Many great resources are available for your Department to use in promoting fundraising programs. By visiting heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools, you will find the latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

Veterans & Military Support Programs

VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"

The 2024 Spring Semester deadline is Nov. 15, 2023. The application is available online only at vfw.org/scholarship.

REMINDER: This is our 10th year working with Sport Clips. Visit your local Sport Clips for a haircut from now until Nov. 11, 2023, and donate to the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" program. Your donation will provide scholarships to service members and veterans. On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, participating Sport Clips stores will donate \$2 for every hair care service and many locations will offer free Veterans Day haircuts for veterans. Please contact us at mherron@vfw.org if you have any questions about the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" program.

VMS All-American Requirement

VMS donations will only be handled through the Dashboard. All Posts must click on the VMS donation tab on the Dashboard to donate. The link will point them to OMS. Please do not send checks to the National Headquarters.

If a Post does not use a credit card, the Post will send their donation to their Department HQs and the Department HQs will submit the donation for their Post. Credit will automatically update on the Dashboard daily.

Overseas Departments will donate for the other programs through the link also in lieu of participation. This will automatically update daily.

Continue to do what you are doing and thank you for your continued support!

Veterans & Military Support (VMS)

If your Department hasn't paid for their 2023-24 VMS Lapel Pins, please pay for them as soon as possible. You may use the VMS Donation link on the upper right-hand corner of the Dashboard.

The Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools webpage is updated every month. Link to the webpage is vfw.org/community/troop-support/VMSP-Chair-Tools.

VFW Programs

DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS. Military service flags, insignias, etc. should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag.

BELLS OF PEACE 2023. On Nov. 11 at 11:00 a.m. local time...Americans everywhere and across the nation will toll bells in remembrance of those who served and those who sacrificed in the war that changed the world...

- Sign up to participate (once you have signed up, we will send you updates and notices).
- Recruit others including organizations to pledge with you.
- Find out more and see the special landing page for information and RESOURCES:
<https://bellsofpeace.org>

ALL AMERICAN DASHBOARD. Please encourage Posts to read the 2023-24 Membership program. Military Assistance Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance has been received from National HQs to supplement the Unmet Needs financial grants & VFW Sport Clips Help A Hero scholarship statistics. The information charts reside on the KPI tools section.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN ESSAY CONTEST DEADLINE REMINDER. The deadline for the annual Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay contests is quickly approaching. The students must have their completed entry form with the (audio and/or written) essay submitted to a participating VFW Post by **Oct. 31, 2023**. Each corresponding deadline for Post, District and Department to have their entries to the next level are: Nov. 15, 2023, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2023, for completion of District judging; Jan. 10, 2024, for completion of Department judging and the Department winners are due to National Headquarters by **Jan. 15, 2024**.

Please ensure that the entry forms are filled out completely and that the appointed individual at the Post is available to receive the entries and answer questions. As we get closer to the deadline, more students and parents will be reaching out trying to find a participating Post so we want to ensure they can make contact.

Simply visit vfw.org/#login, log in to My VFW, then click on **VFW Training & Support** under the **Member Resources** heading, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs and Activities**, then click on **Chairperson Guides** under the **Additional Resources** heading. Here you will find all the program materials.

Please remember that Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen are VFW programs supported by the VFW Auxiliary. It is inappropriate for the VFW Auxiliary to conduct separate judging at any level.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email nlopez@vfw.org or call 816.968.1155.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS. Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen first place Department winner will receive a National scholarship or award. The amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now totals \$172,000, with the top three awards being raised to \$35,000, \$21,000 and \$15,000. The Patriot's Pen National Awards total is \$55,000.

Anyone (including students, parents, teachers, and chairpersons) can download and print the student entry forms for Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen by visiting the below links:

Voice of Democracy: vfw.org/VOD/

Patriot's Pen: vfw.org/PatriotsPen/

For Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen brochures, posters, awards and more, visit the VFW Store: vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy for Voice of Democracy and vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen for Patriot's Pen.

VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM MONTH IN NOVEMBER. VFW and VFW Auxiliary members are encouraged to volunteer in their schools to talk about their military and home front experiences to students. Invite your local military recruiter to join you to talk about military service today. Additional information can be found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide.

Simply visit vfw.org/#login, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. Here you will find all program manuals, and on the same page are all other program materials.

Participate in this activity during the week of Veterans Day, which is part of "National Veterans Awareness week," as designated by Congress. Find Pledge of Allegiance pencils and coloring books, plus other citizenship education tools at the VFW Store vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation.

SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM DEADLINE REMINDER. The deadline for the annual Teacher Award contest is quickly approaching. All teacher nominations should have been completed and submitted to a participating VFW Post by Oct. 31, 2023. A completed nomination should consist of a completed entry form with a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five-pages, including the resume, as a maximum of documentation of their teacher experience, along with a head-and-shoulder photo, if available at the time.

Each corresponding deadline for Post, District, if applicable, and Department to have their entries to the next level are as follows: Nov. 15, 2023, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2023, for completion of District judging, if applicable; Feb. 1, 2024, for completion of Department judging and their winners forwarded to National Headquarters.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires is the "VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form" with the entry documentation downloaded. A link will be forwarded soon to the Department Adjutant/Quartermaster to submit it to National Headquarters. You can locate additional information by logging in to vfw.org and searching under "My VFW" in the Training & Support section.

The VFW's Department Citizenship Education Teacher Award includes a citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

The VFW's National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include: three national \$1,000 awards for the top K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses; \$1,000 award to each winning teacher's school; plaques for both the winning teacher and school; and an all-expense-paid trip to attend a VFW National Convention.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email tbeauchamp@vfw.org or call 816.756.3390 and ask for extension 6287 or Tammy Beauchamp.

NEW UPDATES. VFW National Programs has updated the Fred C. Hall and Outstanding Community Service Post award programs starting this program year. Please share this with your Community Service Chairpersons.

The new programs are as follows:

FRED C. HALL MEMORIAL AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE. Each year on July 1, the national Programs office will determine the top community service Posts in each conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact, from July 1 to June 30 the previous year. Your community service total impact is figured by the money spent to host and organize the community service event, plus total hours all volunteers participated, plus the mileage for all volunteers (Dollars Donated + Hours + Mileage = Total Impact).

These four Posts will be awarded the Fred C. Hall Memorial Award for Community Service and will be invited to attend the VFW National Convention. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations for five nights, and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POST OF THE YEAR. Each Department will have an OCSP winner based on total impact also. National will select based on end of year reports on July 1. Winners will also be published in the Convention program booklet and receive a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS. All nominations, consisting of a completed Post entry form and the required documentation, should be in the hands of the local Post by Oct. 31, so they may begin their judging. Once their judging has been completed, VFW Post Safety Chairperson's are to submit up to five winning nominees (one for each career area) to their Department Headquarters for judging no later than Jan. 1.

Once judging has been completed, Departments are asked to submit their five winning nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office, by completing the "VFW Department Public Servant Award Request Form" through Formstack. VFW Programs staff will email the form link to Department Adjutants/Quartermasters prior to the deadline of Feb. 1.

VFW Programs will create citations for the following awards in each Department:

- VFW National Law Enforcement Award
- VFW National Firefighter Award
- VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Award

- VFW National 911 Dispatcher Award
- VFW National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician (E.O.D.T.) Award

All Department Public Servant Citations must be requested through the “VFW Department Public Servant Award Request Form” through Formstack. VFW Programs staff will email the form link to Department Adjutants and Quartermasters. Deadline for Department submissions to National is Feb. 1.

Each Department will receive their requested awards and should contact their recipients to arrange a presentation. Department Commanders may present the awards at their Department Convention, but are encouraged to also present the award in front of the recipient’s peers at a professional association event, city council meeting, etc. The purpose of the second venue is to expose these VFW awards to the general public and especially other law enforcement, firefighters, EMTs, dispatchers and EODTs personnel, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant.

Simply visit vfw.org, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Public Servant Program**.

NOTE: Remember, the First Responder Medal is available through the VFW Store. To review this item, please click on the following link: vfwstore.org/products/32134.

CONDUCT A VETERAN’S DAY PROGRAM ON NOV. 11. Organize a community event on Veterans Day honoring all veterans. For a ceremonial procedure, refer to the information found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairperson’s Guide. If you should need a Veterans Day speech, please go to: vfw.org/MY-VFW/Patriotic-Holiday-Speeches. Click here for Veterans Day merchandise vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday.

HALF-STAFF U.S. FLAG ON DEC. 7. Public Law 103-308, passed in 1994, designates Dec. 7 as “National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day” and requests the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff (sunrise to sunset) in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on that day. To order a flag, go to vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags.

“UPDATED” POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Under previous Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997), it indicated there were only six days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices were required to display the POW/MIA flag. Now under new law, Public Law 116-67 (Feb. 21, 2020), it is required that the POW/MIA flag be flown on all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to vfwstore.org/products/GP237.

IRS AND VFW AWARD MONIES. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that any recipient that receives more than a \$599 award should receive a Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable. This will include the VFW programs Patriot’s Pen and Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

VFW Member Benefits

Don't Get Stuck with Costly Medical Bills.

If you are a veteran and have TRICARE insurance coverage, you still may be on the hook for out-of-pocket health care expenses. As of 2023, TRICARE Select now has a YEARLY catastrophic cap of \$4,028 — that can be a lot to pay each year.

The VFW's exclusive provider, SelmanCo, offers its members a group rate on a TRICARE Supplement Insurance Plan. The rates are based on age and can cover the health care costs left behind by your TRICARE plan. Those additional savings can really add up!

[Click here](#) to download the CONFIDENCE OVER CHANCE Info Guide and discover more.

"Buddy"® Poppy

"BUDDY"® POPPY CAMPAIGN. Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as "They Gave, Will You?" is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of three (3) weeks in advance of your distribution date.

BUDDY POPPY UPDATE: National Headquarters conducted a review of the Buddy Poppy policy and procedures and implemented the following changes effective Aug. 1, 2023:

- 1) Departments must order poppies through OMS.
- 2) All poppies are shipped within 10 days of ordering except orders placed in June and July, due to preparation for National Convention, please allow an additional five business days.
- 3) All orders for the traditional Buddy Poppy, Anniversary Poppies or tin tab Poppies must be placed through your Department Headquarters. Auxiliaries must go through their Post to order all poppies.
- 4) The tabs do count towards the Buddy Poppy requirement for the All-American program.
- 5) If you do not receive your order within four weeks of placing it with your Department, please contact your Department Headquarters to report you have not received your order.
- 6) If you do not report a missing order within 90 days of processing, the order will NOT be replaced free of charge, and you will have to resubmit your order.

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairperson's guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that non-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The silver, gold and diamond anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out unless you are currently in your 100th year. These are ordered through the Department in OMS and processed the same as the red poppies. Currently we have no plans to replenish inventory due to increased cost and the small quantities we sell of the Anniversary Poppies. Based on the past four years sales, we have sufficient inventory for the next 3.5 years of the Gold, 5 years of Diamond and 52 years of the Silver.

National Veterans Service

2023 VA VOLUNTARY SERVICE (VAVS) NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NAC) VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nominations for Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Volunteer of the Year awards are underway! Nominations are for two awards (one male and one female), which will be presented during the 2024 VAVS National Advisory Committee meeting. **Nominees for this award must participate in established VAVS assignments, serve as a Regularly Scheduled (RS) Volunteer and meet one of the following criteria:**

- Volunteer with hospitalized Veterans
- Volunteer with Veterans at Outpatient Clinics
- Volunteer with Veterans in Community Living Centers
- Volunteer with homeless Veterans
- Volunteer with Veterans and Veterans groups in the community
- Host Veterans functions in the Lodge, Post, Chapter, i.e., Memorial Day, July 4th and Veterans Day observances, etc., that qualify as a VAVS assignment
- Host Veterans functions outside the Lodge, Post, Chapter, i.e., fishing trips, day at the races, sporting events, etc., that qualify as a VAVS assignment
- Visit Veterans confined to their homes as a VAVS assignment
- Adopt-A-Veteran

VFW Department Commanders, Adjutants, Quartermasters, and Hospital Chairpersons, please select your two candidates (one male and one female) and send all supporting documentation along with their nomination letters to: jmoss@vfw.org. Deadline for submission is Dec. 8, 2023, (VAVS VOY information in connection with nomination will be emailed to VFW Department leadership).

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

Your Voice on Capitol Hill

The VFW National Legislative Service staff regularly testifies before Congress on behalf of our VFW members. Our testimonies cover a wide array of issues that are critically important to veterans from all eras,

as well as current active duty and Guard/Reserve service members and their families. We have been invited to testify before the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs on many different topics such as military to civilian transition; mental health and suicide prevention; Department of Veterans Affairs' accountability; education and employment assistance; concurrent receipt and retirement compensation; and numerous pieces of pending legislation concerning benefits options and delivery of care. Read our [congressional testimony](#) or view the list of [current legislation](#) for which the VFW is advocating.

In addition, we also regularly have meetings with senators, representatives, and key committee staffers to field questions and provide detailed information regarding the [VFW's position](#) on specific issues. Making sure our veterans receive the benefits and care they deserve is paramount and always our priority, and your members of Congress know it. They often reach out to ask for our input and support on issues they know are important to our membership. We stand firm with our legislative priorities, and Congress listens.

VFW Store

One of the most effective and visible ways to show your pride in the VFW, and raise awareness of programs in your community, is to purchase branded merchandise from the VFW Store. Your VFW shirt, cap or pin will spark curiosity in others. That, in turn, can lead to meaningful conversations about our organization. To shop for VFW logoed merchandise, click vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/vfwlogo?page=1&size=100.



2023-24 State VFW Commander & Auxiliary President Shirts

See Order Form for Pricing Information

MEN'S STYLE POLO

These run true to size.



POLO SHIRTS AVAILABLE IN SHORT SLEEVE ONLY WITH BOTH MEN'S & WOMEN'S STYLE OPTION.

WOMEN'S STYLE POLO

*Please Note Women's Polos run small & you should order up a size.



ALL SHIRTS
WILL HAVE
COMMANDER / PRESIDENT
LOGO EMBROIDERED ON
LEFT SIDE
WITH OPTIONAL
PERSONALIZATION UP TO 3
LINES ON RIGHT SIDE
EXAMPLE
(NAME/TITLE/ POST#)

MEN'S & WOMENS LIGHT BLUE BUTTON DOWN
LONG OR SHORT SLEEVE AVAILABLE

These run true to size.



OUR SPECIAL PROJECT TAPS

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors is on every shirt. A big THANK YOU to our VFW home Post 4588 for sponsoring that extra cost! It was important to us to help bring awareness to the valuable resources TAPS provides. It is on the sleeve of the Polos & on back yoke of button ups.



2023-24 State Commander & President Shirts

Name: _____ Post#: _____
 Email _____ Phone# _____

BUTTON UP

PERSONALIZED OPTION

Shirt with Commander/President Logo on Left & Name /Title UP TO 3 LINES on Right

Men's & Women's Long or Short Sleeve

Print Name/Title (up to 3 lines)

Size		Small	Medium	Large	X Large	2X	3X	4X
Cost		\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
Long Sleeve	Men's							
	Ladies							
Short Sleeve	Men's							
	Ladies							

BUTTON UP

Shirt with Commander / President Logo ONLY

Men's & Women's Long or Short Sleeve

LOGO ONLY NOT PERSONALIZED

Size		Small	Medium	Large	X Large	2X	3X	4X
Cost		\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
Long Sleeve	Men's							
	Ladies							
Short Sleeve	Men's							
	Ladies							

POLO

PERSONALIZED OPTION

Short Sleeve Polo with Commander/President Logo PLUS Name /Title UP TO 3 LINES

Men's & Women's Short Sleeve POLO

Print Name/Title (up to 3 lines)

Size		Small	Medium	Large	X Large	2X	3X	4X
Cost		\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
Short Sleeve	Men's							
	Ladies							N/A

POLO

Short Sleeve POLO with Commander/President LOGO ONLY

Men's & Women's Short Sleeve POLO

LOGO ONLY NOT PERSONALIZED

Size		Small	Medium	Large	X Large	2X	3X	4X
Cost		\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
Short Sleeve	Men's							
	Ladies							N/A

**Make Checks Payable to Ron Delaney & Send Form & Payment to:
 Ron Delaney, 222 S Cloverleaf Dr., Haughton, LA 71037**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

SR VICE CDR RAFFLE

DRAWING 27 JANUARY 2024 AT MID-
WINTER CONFERENCE IN ALEXANDRIA

TICKETS \$10.00 EACH FOR 3 PRIZES

1ST PRIZE – RUGER AMERICAN 6.5

CREEDMOOR WITH VORTEX SCOPE

2ND PRIZE – WOODEN FLAG

3RD PRIZE – METAL LASER ART PIECE



RUGER AMERICAN® RIFLE WITH
VORTEX® CROSSFIRE II® RIFLESCOPE



19" X 36"

For more information contact Jennifer Lockett @ 337-602-8418 or Debbie
McElhannon @ 337-526-3695. Thank you for your support!

Return tickets by 26 Jan at MWC or mail by 18 Jan to 5455 Henderson Rd, Vinton, LA 70668



18" X 12"



DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

PLEASE DISREGARD ANY OTHER BUDDY POPPY ORDER FORMS! THESE ARE THE PRICES YOU WILL BE CHARGED!!!!

DISTRICT # _____
 POST # _____
 AUXILIARY # _____

DATE: _____

BUDDY POPPY ORDER FORM

MAIL TO: VFW DEPT. OF LOUISIANA
 10185 MAMMOTH AVE.
 BATON ROUGE, LA 70814

ALL CHECKS ARE TO BE MADE
 PAYABLE TO "VFW DEPT. OF LA"

QUANTITY:	ITEM:	PRICE:	TOTAL:
	BUDDY POPPIES	Per 1,000	\$275.00
		Per 500	\$137.50
		SUB-TOTAL=	

All other VFW Buddy Poppy supplies may be purchased directly from the VFW Store Online by visiting their website www.vfwstore.org. See list of other Buddy Poppy Items and Product Codes that VFW Store Offers

ITEM NAME:	ITEM #:
Buddy Poppy Coin Canisters	A9703
Buddy Poppy Posters	09701
Buddy Poppy Volunteer Buttons	09705

Visit the VFW Store website listed above to order and view more items offered!

Please allow 10-12 weeks for processing!

GRAND TOTAL: _____

SHIP POPPIES TO: _____ TITLE: _____
 STREET ADDRESS: (PHYSICAL ADDRESS - NO -- P.O. BOXES!)

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY:	
_____	QUANTITY ORDERED FROM NATIONAL - DATE _____
_____	QUANTITY SHIPPED FROM DEPT HQ DATE _____
DATE RECEIVED _____	CHECK # _____ CHECK AMOUNT _____