

UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, AND CONFERENCES

**District 4**  
**May 4th**  
**REP - PSC Wesley**  
 Elections

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

**District 7**  
**May 18, 2024**  
**REP - St Cdr Delaney**  
 District Meeting

Meetings place:  
 Post **5153**  
 1020 VFW Drive, Arnaudville, LA 70512  
 Registration 9am.  
 Meeting start at 10am.  
 Lunch 12pm. (\$8)

**District 10**  
**May 25, 2024**  
**REP - St Cdr Delaney**  
 District Meeting

Meetings place:  
 Post **3139**  
 412 Elmo S., Marksville, LA 71351  
 Registration 10am  
 Sessions start at 10:30am  
 Lunch 12pm. (\$10 Donation)

**UNCOMING CONVENTION**

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

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

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

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

**State Convention**  
 June 26 - 29, 2025  
 The Hotel Bentley, 200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA

**District 11**  
**May 11, 2024**  
**REP - SSVC McElhannon**  
 District Convention

Meeting place:  
 Post **1809** (Monroe)  
 1499 Highway 594, Monroe LA 71203  
 Registration/meet & greet 10:30am  
 Meeting 11am:

**District 12**  
**May 11, 2024**  
**REP - St Cdr Delaney**  
 District Convention

Meetings place:  
 Post **5951**  
 1315 Northgate Road, Bossier City, LA  
 71112  
 Registration 9am  
 Lunch (\$10)

THESE ARE THE LAST DISTRICT MEETINGS FOR THE 2023-24 YEAR.

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**STATE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE**

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Comrades,

This past week, I had the honor to drive Dan West around Louisiana talking to District and Post members about membership. We, as a department, are no longer in the cellar. But this doesn't mean we can just take it easy for the remaining 60 days or so.

We need to retain those members who signed up last year and to recruit new members.

Why? Because the VFW is like most organizations in the we are a membership driven organization. We must maintain a certain level of members so that we can maintain a larger footprint in Washington D. C.

Why? By having a larger footprint in D.C., we can hold Congress responsible for the passing of legislation to ensure that veterans get what they have been promised. And we can hold them accountable for benefits that we earned when they try to take back what we have or have been promised.

Bylaws and Ritual Booklet, aka, the Podium Book. In this book are the bylaws and rituals set forth so that we can protect ourselves from ourselves. Did you know that when opening a meeting the Constitutional Charter is on page 7 of the bylaws. This is where we can start to understand why we are here, and what we are obliged to do. Did you know that some posts give new members the Cross of Malta pin when they are installed as new members of the post?

Inside this podium book are the guidelines for meetings and such. Did you know that if someone from your post doesn't attend 3 District meetings your post can be suspended? Or if your post doesn't have a quorum the post can be suspended? Or if the commander or quartermaster resigns, a special election must happen in accordance with Sec. 203 about Special Meetings.

All this and much more can be found in the Podium Book. Please remember that each edition of the Podium Book becomes effective after the National Convention each year.

Please remember that when talking to a new applicant, they must prove their eligibility. That usually means a DD-214. There are 3 signature blocks on the back of the application. Those are for whoever verifies the eligibility, but it also means something about your integrity. After the applicant is verified, paid dues, and are voted into a post. Please don't hand them the keys. Instead, invite them AND their family to a Special Date cookout or other family event. Let them meet other comrades. Special Dates are listed on pages 59-63. Maybe let them be on a committee, that might be the beginning for them to understand and want to be within our ranks.

See you around the state. Ron Delaney

**ONLY PAGE 4- IS TO BE READ AT MEETINGS THEN POSTED**

**Please share Mail Call with Post Members by EMAIL.**

**MANDATORY:**

**General Orders:** All material in the State General Orders is directive in nature and will be read to the membership at the Post regular membership meetings each month.

**Bylaws Article II**

**Sec. 221 -Voting.**

Each Post member in good standing shall be entitled to one vote. Only Post members of the Post shall be entitled to vote at Post meetings.

Voting shall be as prescribed in the Manual of Procedure.

**Sec. 222 - Delegates, District Convention & Meetings, Department and National Conventions.**

(a) Delegate strength shall be one for every thirty members or fraction thereof in good standing. Delegates and alternates shall be elected in accordance with the Manual of Procedure.

(b) Delegates elected under this section shall not be considered instructed and may exercise full authority in the duty to be performed.

(c) Each Post will pay, in accordance with its Department Bylaws, a delegate registration fee for each and every delegate to which the Post shall be entitled.

(d) Each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twentyfive dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee.

**Manuel of Procedures Article II**

**Sec. 221 - Voting.**

In the conducting of Post elections or other routine business, each Post member in good standing present at the meeting shall be entitled to one vote. In the case of an election by poll system each member in good standing shall be entitled to cast one ballot during the hours of balloting determined by vote of the Post as outlined in Section 217 of the Manual of Procedure.

**Sec. 222 - Delegates, District Convention & Meetings, Department and National Conventions.**

Delegates and alternates for the District Convention and Meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected at a regular meeting in April. Delegate strength will be based on members in good standing as of March 31st.

Delegates and alternates of each Post shall serve as delegates throughout the year provided they remain members in good standing in the respective Post within the District.

Delegates shall not be recognized at the National Convention unless they personally register their completed delegate card with the National Credentials Committee.

Posis instituted after delegate strength has been determined, but prior to convening date of the respective convention or District meeting, shall on the day of institution, elect one delegate and one alternate for each thirty names or fraction thereof according to the number of names listed on the charter application.

BY COMMAND OF  
RONALD K. "RON" DELANEY  
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:



Mitchell R. Cota, PSC  
State Adjutant

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**STATE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE**

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I want to thank everyone who sent texts and cards when my mom passed away. We are truly a family in the VFW, and I appreciate each of you. I want to especially thank our State Commander and State President, Ron and Lisa Delaney, for coming to my mom's services. Funny Story, we got to the church for my mom's services, and I thought that I smelled something burning. I turned around and the State Commander had walked into the church, Just Kidding, the church representative had just lit the incense in preparation for the service. (Don't worry, I forewarned Ron that I was going to share that story)

By now, all posts should have completed nominations and elections. Most Districts have completed elections with a few District meetings left in May. Please remember to double check all elected and appointed officers' eligibility and submit proof of eligibility to the adjutant. Help your officers with their duties. If they are new, show them how to do the job or call your district or state officers for assistance. Don't elect then and leave them to learn on their own. As a reminder, all officers should be installed prior to the State installation on 30 June.

June is just around the corner. I look forward to seeing everyone at our state convention 27-30

June. I am excited for the new year starting 1 July. We need to hit the ground running. I remember one of our great past state commanders saying we need to start early to finish early.

If you have an event in your area that you would like me or a state representative to attend, please email the flyer or an invite to myself, the incoming adjutant, Carl Karnish, and my Chief of Staff.

I am working on my calendar the second weekend in May. I plan to visit each of the districts next year; send an email with your scheduled events early, so we can get the event on the schedule.

I look forward to continuing to work with you. Hope to see all of you soon. Until we meet again, stay safe, do buddy checks, and keep doing what you do for veterans!

Debbie McElhannon  
State Senior Vice Commander

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## SEEKING HIGHER OFFICE

**DEBBIE McELHANNON**  
**2024-2025 State Commander**  
**for the Department of Louisiana**

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Comrades,

Congratulations to all our newly elected Post and District Officers. Let's continue our efforts to grow and build this great organization. Let's finish this term strong!

It is truly an honor to serve as your Junior Vice Commander 2023-2024! I look forward to working with our 2024-2025 Leadership at the State, District and Posts levels. I would like to continue serving the Department of Louisiana as your next Senior Vice Commander 2024-2025.

Remember the purposes of the VFW:

1. To preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members
2. To assist worthy comrades
3. To perpetuate the memory and history of our dead and to assist their surviving spouse & orphans
4. To maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States, and fidelity to its Constitution and laws
5. To foster true patriotism
6. To maintain and extend the institutions of American Freedom
7. To preserve and defend the United States from all enemies

**Recruit, Educate and Mentor!**

James M. Prestenback  
State Junior Vice Commander

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**SEEKING HIGHER OFFICE**  
**JAMES M. PRESTENBACK**  
**2024-2025 State Senior Vice Commander**  
**for the Department of Louisiana**

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### STATE ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE

Hello comrades,

On April 1st, I submitted the Louisiana Combat Veteran into VFW National Publications Contest and have the honor in announcing the first issue I edited, published, and printed for our Department won the Silver Award. This was in the Department Publications Small Frequency (printed 1-4 times per year)

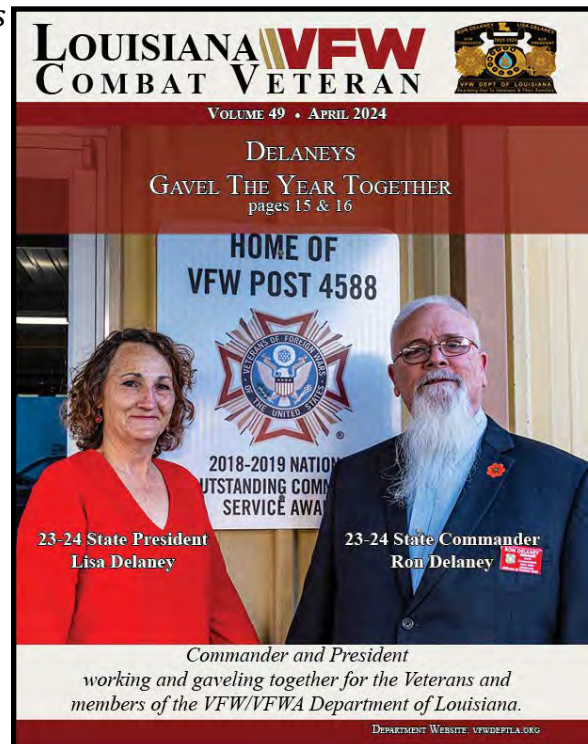
The judges for the contest picking the publications and their editors was judged by two non-VFW-affiliated journalism professionals. The categories were Best Magazine with one Grand Award given, Best Feature Article with one each Grand, One Silver, and One Bronze Awards given. For Department Publications One Grand Award for Large Frequency (printed 5+ times per year), One Award each Grand, Silver, and Bronze Awards given for Small Frequency (printed 1-4 times per year). For District/Posts Publications One Award each Grand, Silver, and Bronze Awards given for Large Frequency (printed 5+ times per year), One Award each Grand, Silver, and Bronze Awards given for Small Frequency (printed 1-4 times per year)

You can view the Louisiana Combat Veteran on the Department website.

As we move though, the month of May and all the Post and District officers elected and installed ready to hit the ground for next year's term. Please ensure election reports are completed online with National.

*"Respectfully working in comradeship for veterans and never running away from a challenge."*

Mitchell R. Cota, PSC  
State Adjutant



## STATE QUARTERMASTER'S MESSAGE

Comrades,

As we start the month of May all Post should have held elections last month. All 2024-2025 Election Reports should be filed online by logging into the VFW National OMS system.

Post are reminded to submit their Delegate Dues payment along with a list of Post Delegates to the State Convention. Adjutant Cota sent out a letter to each Post Commander in April with their Post Voting Count as well as any arrears the Post may owe. These arrears must be taken care of prior to State Convention for the Post to be eligible to vote.

Memorial Day is this month, and I encourage all Post to purchase Buddy Poppies today either the original or metal poppies. Orders for Buddy poppies can be placed online by visiting the department's website [www.vfwdeptla.org](http://www.vfwdeptla.org) under Programs - Buddy Poppies.

I would like to thank all of you for your support as I held the position of State Quartermaster this year. I will be running for State Quartermaster again in June for the 2024-2025 year and would appreciate your support.

Respectfully  
Elvin Ray Bass  
State Quartermaster

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**STATE OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED IN JUNE FOR THE 2024-2025 YEAR**

STATE COMMANDER  
STATE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER  
STATE JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER  
STATE QUARTERMASTER  
STATE CHAPLAIN

*Good Luck To All Candidates*

**APPOINTED STATE OFFICERS IN JUNE FOR THE 2024-2025 YEAR**

STATE ADJUTANT  
STATE INSPECTOR  
STATE SERVICE OFFICER  
STATE JUDGE ADVOCATE  
STATE SURGEON  
STATE CHIEF OF STAFF  
STATE OFFICER OF THE DAY

**STATE CONVENTION DIRECTOR TO BE ELECTED IN AUGUST FOR THE 2024-2028 TERM**

Greeting Comrades,

I hope this finds everyone well! I was blessed with the opportunity to attend District 5's meeting in Lake Charles this past weekend. It was great to see everyone. Thank you all for the hospitality!

Again, do not forget with the elections of our officers, please remember to make sure you have all the necessary documentation for those you elect to office.

The wonderful crazy weather season is in full swing. Please be aware of your surroundings and be prepared. We have seen some flooding recently and have had some crazy water rescues across the US. Remember: Turn Around Don't Drown!

May brings us Mother's Day, Happy Mother's Day to all the moms across the Department. I hope you have a blessed day with your family. May also brings Memorial Day, remember to get out into your community, show your support and attend those services.

As always, I look forward to the next time we all see each other!  
Stay safe and healthy each, and every day!

V/R  
Sharee' Arends  
VFW, Department of Louisiana  
Surgeon





**MOC STATE GRAND COMMANDER**

While never a US Marine, I always respected them. I had family members that were marines, Soldiers that were marines, and even a troop commander that was a marine. I learned early on in my 25.5-year service career that there was never a former marine, even when they now served in the United States Army. I always respected their recruiting motto that they were searching for “The Few. The Proud. The Marines.” As your new, and new again Cootie Grand Commander I also am searching for both the few and the proud, and while they might have served in any branch your Grand needs you. Cooties hope to bring a little more fun to the VFW life. We put a lot of focus on hospital work, and in particular in our States VA hospitals.

Your Grand in Louisiana currently has three pup tents or units spread across our great state. The Shreveport Area, Lake Charles Area, and New Orleans Area get a lot of love and consideration shown by our small number of current cooties. Back when I was a cub scout leader, I remember telling my pack a story about a child helping wash up starfish. And when he threw one into the ocean another boy asked look at all the starfish washed ashore, what difference does throwing one back make. He replied that yes in the grand scheme of the mission one starfish is a mere drop in the bucket but to that sole starfish it makes a world of difference.

In much the same way we can never affect all the veterans currently being served by our VA hospitals, living in Veterans homes, but to echo the VFW’s motto “no one does more for veterans”. Think of how much stronger we would be with you in the fight, how much wider our cast with your Post or District hosting a new Pup-tent unit, and who will be the first one to undertake this

remarkable mission too. Talk to any cootie at the next state convention, we can be found with bug pins on our shirt collars and we will be more than happy to assist you in taking up our mantle. Just like that single starfish to that one it makes all the difference in the world.

Thank you in advance,

David B. Fields  
Commander, Grand of Louisiana 2024-2025  
MSGDFields@gmail.com  
(318) 402-9747



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**COMMITTEEMEN'S CORNER**

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Summer is fast approaching and the end to the 2023-2024 VFW Year is near, what does that mean for you? Time to make those Buddy Checks and make sure those members you haven't seen or heard from are doing okay and ready to make it through another hot Louisiana summer. Also a good time to remind them that their membership in the oldest Veterans Service Organization will expire on 30 June or sooner. Let's continue to climb that Membership Ladder and at least get to the second floor and stay out of the basement.

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

As we elect our officers for the Districts and Post throughout the state, folks make sure you are going to do the job to the best of your ability and if you need help all you have to do is ask. We have Past Department Commanders, Past District Commanders and Past Post Commanders that have all heard the following during the installation of the new officers for each level "Past Commander, you have now been relieved of your duties as Commander. It is proper to remind you that in assuming the chair as Past Commander it will be your duty and privilege to counsel and otherwise assist your successor through the experiences you have gained during your term of office." We are all here to help so don't feel like you are on an island by yourself, ask for guidance and assistance when needed.

We have a fight going on within our state with HB496(Guard Act) and SB159(Plus Act). As you read this know that our Legislative Chairman Matt West along with many members of this Department and the VFW DC staff have been working directly with Secretary of LDVA Charlton Meginley to get HB496 passed. Plus contact your Representatives in the House and tell them you want them to support HB496.

It is an honor to serve this Department as the National Councilman and I look forward to the upcoming National Convention where we will be electing the new Commander in Chief from the Southern Conference Al Lipphardt. If you are attending the National Convention and want to assist with the Louisiana Hospitality Room please contact myself or Debbie know so we can add you to the list.

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

Robert "Bobby" Lovergne  
National Council of Administration Member  
Southern Conference Chairman  
Past Department of Louisiana Commander  
Department Budget Committee  
West St Charles VFW Post 3750  
(504) 251-5628

**Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Department of Louisiana  
Legislative Report April 2024**

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

April 1st:

**Congressional Watchdog Calls for DOD to Improve Transition:** The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has released a report titled Service Members Transitioning to Civilian Life: Agencies Can Improve Warm Handovers for Additional Assistance. During a review of DOD's warm handover process, GAO found that from April 2021 to March 2023, it did not provide needed transition assistance to 4,300 at-risk service members who were facing challenges with employment, housing, or medical care. The VFW continues to advocate for legislation to improve transition from service, including H.R. 3933 / S. 2888, TAP Promotion Act, to require accredited representatives from national, state, and local organizations to be included in Transition Assistance Program classes. Read the GAO report.

**April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month:** Military sexual trauma (MST) relates to sexual assault or harassment that occurred during military service. Although VA is spotlighting MST education and treatment this month, it works year-round to raise awareness of its resources to address this issue. According to its website, "Healing after MST can take time. But no matter how long it's been, VA is here to help." Learn more and explore VA's MST resources.

**VA Direct Deposit Consolidation Deadline:** As of April 20, 2024, VA will no longer send benefit payments for veterans or family members to more than one bank account. This is due to an IT modernization effort by VA for its GI Bill payment system. This change will impact approximately 50,000 students who receive the GI Bill and other VA benefits in separate direct deposit accounts. VA is sending weekly emails and text messages to this group of veterans and beneficiaries informing them of the upcoming change and asking them to select one bank account going forward. If students do not consolidate their bank accounts by April 20, VA will continue to send payments but will designate the non-education benefit payment account as the primary bank account. Read more for details on how to choose a single bank account for direct deposit.

**Vet Our Democracy:** VFW National Legislative Associate Director Joe Grassi joined a conference call briefing hosted by the nonpartisan, nonprofit organization We the Veterans and Military Families. It introduced the Vet Our Democracy podcast as its first civics education program. The podcast will focus on the rights and responsibilities that

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veterans, active duty military, and military families have as citizens, and offer suggestions on how veterans can support their local polling stations. Listen to the podcast.

April 8th:

**VA Sexual Assault and Harassment Report Hotline:** Veterans can call 1-800-MYVA411 (1-800-698-2411, option 9) to report sexual assault or sexual harassment at VA facilities. The call center is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors are also encouraged to report any incident of sexual harassment or sexual assault as soon as it occurs while still at the VA facility. These incidents can be reported directly to VA police, VA staff, local law enforcement, or by calling the hotline. Learn more.

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

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

April 15th:

**VFW Testifies Before House Subcommittee:** VFW National Veterans Service Deputy Director Christopher Macinkowicz testified at a pending legislation hearing before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. Macinkowicz commented on proposed legislation to improve the quality of veterans claims for VA benefits by providing training and oversight for those deciding VA claims. He noted, "While training and oversight is essential, without proper funding for these programs, the development and execution could be severely impacted, thus limiting

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the effectiveness of these programs.” He also communicated the VFW’s approval for legislation to assess VA notice letters sent to claimants by stating, “The VFW supports effective notification and believes that veterans should not be penalized for not understanding the complex laws of the VA claims process.” Read the testimony or watch the hearing, which begins at the 39:52 mark.

**VFW Testifies with Partner VSOs on VA Budget Request:** The House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs held an oversight hearing on VA’s budget request for fiscal years 2025 and 2026. VFW National Legislative Director Patrick Murray offered testimony based on The Independent Budget Recommendations for the Department of Veterans Affairs for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026. This report serves as a comprehensive roadmap to ensure VA is fully funded and capable of carrying out its mission to serve veterans and their families, both now and in the future. Watch the hearing, which begins at the 13:03 mark.

**VA Program to Help Veterans Facing Foreclosure:** In October 2022, VA ended its COVID-19 Veterans Assistance Partial Claim Payment program (COVID-VAPCP), which offered a financial option for veterans who lost their jobs during the pandemic and needed mortgage forbearance. Since the sunset of this temporary program, tens of thousands of veterans have ended their mortgage forbearances with few affordable options to pay back their missed payments and have been faced with foreclosure of their homes. On May 31, 2024, VA will launch the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase (VASP) program to help more than 40,000 veterans facing foreclosure on their homes. Through VASP, VA will purchase defaulted VA loans from mortgage servicers, modify the loans, and then place them in the VA-owned portfolio as direct loans. This will empower VA to work directly with eligible veterans to adjust their loans and monthly payments so they can keep their homes. Veterans with questions about avoiding foreclosure can contact a VA loan technician by calling 877-827-3702. Read more.

April 22nd:

**VFW Shares Testimony Despite Cancelled Hearing:** VFW National Legislative Director Patrick Murray was slated to testify on more than two dozen issues before the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. However, the chance to speak was taken away. “Just because the hearing was cancelled due to politics completely unrelated to veterans, it doesn’t mean we don’t still have something to say about proposed bills,” Murray said. Read the prepared testimony.

**Veteran Wins Supreme Court Case on VA Education Benefits:** The Supreme Court sided with James Rudisill in the case Rudisill v. McDonough by a 7-2 ruling. This decision could impact up to 1.7 million veterans, allowing those who accrue benefits under both the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post-9/11 GI Bill to use both benefits. Previously, a veteran could earn a maximum of only 36 months of education benefits, and had to either use the Montgomery GI Bill or transfer the entitlement to the newer and more expansive Post-9/11 GI Bill. The court found that Mr. Rudisill, who served in the U.S.

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Army during three separate time periods, accrued 48 months of benefits under the two different programs. VA is currently reviewing the decision. The VFW will provide updates as we learn the full impact of this ruling. Read more.

**VFW Claims Assistance for K2 Troops:** Veterans with prior service in Uzbekistan at the Karshi Khanabad Air Base, known as K2, who need assistance with their VA disability claims should contact a VFW Service Officer. The VFW is ready to assist K2 veterans who currently have health conditions they believe were caused by toxic exposures during their service in Uzbekistan. This includes veterans who have had VA claims denied, have claims in appeal, or who have never applied. Contact the VFW at [vfw@vfw.org](mailto:vfw@vfw.org) or find a VFW Service Officer in your area.

April 29th:

**Burial Benefits Improvement Legislation Introduced:** Sens. Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) introduced S. 4100, Honoring Veterans' Legacies and Burial Benefits Enhancement Act. This bill aims to preserve veterans' legacies for posterity, upgrade burial benefits for certain decedents, and establish a nonprofit entity enabling private donations, rather than tax dollars, to fund Veterans Legacy Program grants. Grantees would conduct historical research on veterans buried in national cemeteries and share their findings with the local communities through educational outreach programs. This legislation would also ensure dignified interments and enhance burial benefits for eligible family members and Medal of Honor recipients, regardless of service era.

**VA Mobile App Surpasses Two Millionth Download:** More than two million users have downloaded the VA Health and Benefits mobile app. This tool empowers veterans to access their health care and benefits information from anywhere on their mobile devices. Features include the ability to manage health care appointments, view the status of benefits claims and appeals, read benefit decision letters, refill and track prescriptions, and locate VA facilities. It also provides quick and direct access to the VA Crisis Line for immediate care. VA plans to add health care appointment scheduling to the app this year. Get the app.

Respectfully,

*Matthew J. West*

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

National Legislative Committee Member 2020-2026

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**SEEKING HIGHER OFFICE**

**SHAREÉ ARENDS**

**2024-2025 State Junior Vice Commander  
for the Department of Louisiana**

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**SEEKING HIGHER OFFICE**

**ELVIN R. "RAY" BASS**

**2024-2025 State Quartermaster  
for the Department of Louisiana**

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Veterans of Foreign Wars  
93rd Annual State Convention  
June 27, 28, 29, and 30, 2024  
The Hotel Bentley in Alexandria  
200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA 70131  
All VFW Members Invited

### VFW Tentative Agenda

#### Thursday, June 27, 2024

4:30pm - 5:30pm Pre-Paid Registration (VFW Only) Lobby Floor-Bentley

#### Friday, June 28, 2024

8:30am - 11:30am Pre-Paid Registration (VFW Only) Lobby Floor-Bentley  
9am - 12n First Business Session (Hall A, B, & C) Riverfront Center  
12n - 1:15pm Lunch  
12:30pm - 3pm Registration Lobby Floor-Bentley  
1:15pm - 3:30pm Second Business Session (Hall A, B, & C) Riverfront Center  
4pm - 5:30pm **Budget Meeting** Bentley Forum Room  
4pm - 5:30pm Auxiliary Bingo Bentley Claiborne Rm  
6:pm - 9pm Auxiliary Party Bentley Ballroom

#### Saturday, June 29, 2024

8:30am - 11:30am Registration Lobby Floor-Bentley  
8:45am Officer Line Up (2nd Floor outside Hall "A") Riverfront Center  
9am - 11:15am Joint Opening & Memorial Riverfront Center  
12n - 1:15pm Lunch  
12n - 1:15pm PSC Luncheon Bayou Robert Bentley  
12:30pm - 3pm Registration Lobby Floor-Bentley  
1:15pm - 3:30pm Third Business Session (Hall A, B, & C) Riverfront Center  
6:30pm VFW/Auxiliary Awards Banquet Riverfront Center

VFW Speaker, *National CIC Duane Sarmiento*

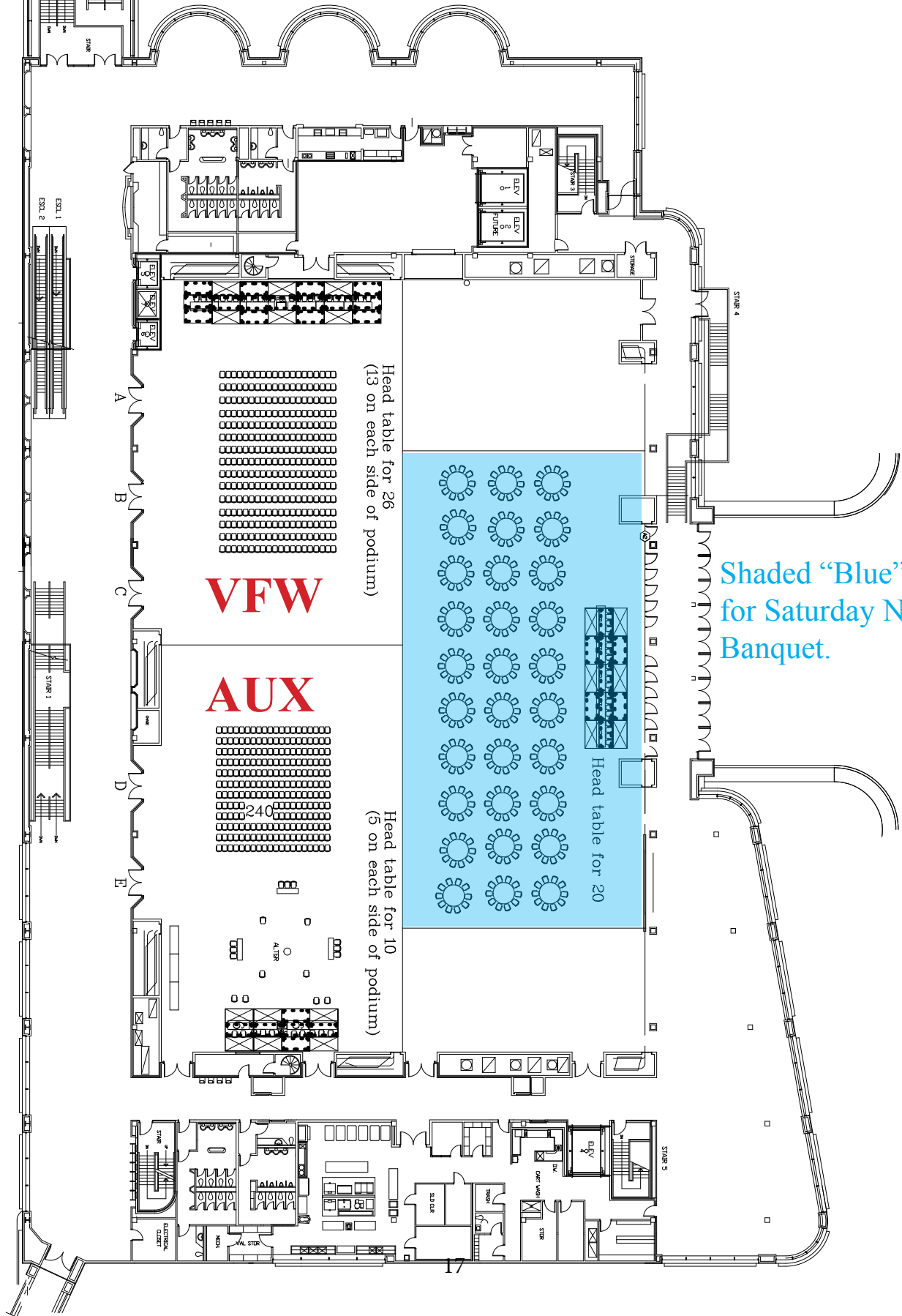
AUX Speaker, *National AUX Chaplain Donna Mills*

#### Sunday, June 30, 2024

8am - 9am Registration Lobby Floor-Bentley  
9am - 11am Final Business Session (Hall A, B, & C) Riverfront Center  
Final Nomination & Election of Officers  
11:15am Joint Installation Ceremony  
1pm Reception for Incoming State Commander and President  
All Comrades and Auxiliary members invited to attend!  
Safe Travels Home



**Edward G. "Ned" Randolph Riverfront Center  
Halls "A", "B", and "C" for VFW use.  
Halls "D" and "E" for AUX use.**



## Hotel Information



### **STATE CONVENTION 2024**

**JUNE 27 - 30, 2024**

#### **THE HOTEL BENTLEY**

200 Desoto Street  
Alexandria, LA 70131  
(318) 442-2226

### **Overflow Hotels**

**JUNE 27 - 30, 2024**

#### **HOLIDAY INN**

701 4th Street  
Alexandria, LA 71301  
Reservation (888) 465-4329  
Front Desk (318) 541-8333

**JUNE 27 - 30, 2024**

#### **FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES BY MARRIOTT**

2830 South Macarthur Drive  
Alexandria, LA 70131  
(888) 392-4091

# VFW State Convention Delegate and Alternate Form

Post #: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

One (1) Delegate and One (1) Alternate for each thirty (30) Members or Fraction Thereof. Delegate Fees: **\$5.00 per Delegate, Plus \$5.00 for Post Commander.**

Make checks payable to: VFW, Department of Louisiana. Mail form to: VFW, Department of Louisiana, 10185 Mammoth Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70814.

**Deadline Date is June 1<sup>st</sup>. Please only send a list of names of those Delegates and Alternates that will be attending the Convention.** Use a Separate page if more space is needed.

## Delegates - Please Print

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
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19. \_\_\_\_\_

## Alternates - Please Print

1. \_\_\_\_\_
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18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed - CDR.: \_\_\_\_\_

Adj: \_\_\_\_\_

Post must pay for **all Delegates** that are entitled to vote or it **loses all votes**. If the Post is entitled to 10 + 1 votes and yet only pays for 3, it then losses all votes. The Post must pay for all 10 votes which would be \$50.00 rather than 3 x \$5.00 = \$15.00.

### For Dept. Use Only:

Department Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

Louisiana

## State Convention

### Banquet Ticket Form

Tickets - \$30.00 per person

*Deadline: June 15<sup>th</sup>*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Post/Aux: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Tickets: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make a note if the tickets being purchased are for any State Officers, All State Team, etc....*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks Payable to VFW Department of Louisiana Mail to:  
10185 Mammoth Avenue Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70814**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**\*NO PHONE CALL REQUEST FOR TICKETS**

\*Tickets will be assigned on a first come first serve bases.

**\*No tickets will be held without payment!!**

**FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY:**

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Check No: \_\_\_\_\_

# 2024-2025 COMMANDER SHIRTS



**The First 2024-2025 Commander Shirt Order  
Is scheduled to go out on May 27th.**

\$50.00 each

Use the correct spreadsheet; VFW Post use the post spreadsheet and Auxiliary use the Auxiliary spreadsheet. Contact your Post or Auxiliary Leadership for the correct spreadsheet.

**Payments accepted**

To Post – cash, check made to Debbie McElhannon, Venmo - @debbiemc01 or cash app - \$Debbie McElhannon

To Auxiliary – cash, check made to Ella Wilson, or Venmo - @ejwilson\_72

Additional questions call Debbie @ 337-526-3695

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	VFW DEPARTMENT/POST #												
2	LADIES POLO												
3	LEFT CHEST EMBROIDERY	RIGHT CHEST EMBROIDERY	QT	COLOR	XS	SM	MD	LG	XL	2X	3X	4X	5X
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VFW DEPARTMENT/POST #

MENS POLO

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	VFW DEPARTMENT/POST #												
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VFW DEPARTMENT/POST #

MENS POLO

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# **WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE**

**BY VFW DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA**

**MAY 25, 2024**

**10 AM-2 PM**



**LOCATION: VFW 6640**

**2809 HARVARD AVE METAIRIE, LA 70006**

**FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

**KOLLEEN HERNDON 504-452-2550**

**WOMEN VETERAN CHAIRMAN**

**PAULA BALDWIN COMBATSOULSISTER@YAHOO.COM**

**337-424-1379**



**DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS**

REVISED 10/01/2023

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

DISTRICT # \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

POST # \_\_\_\_\_

AUXILIARY # \_\_\_\_\_

**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"**

<b>ORIGINAL BUDDY POPPY (500 Minimum)</b>			
<b>QUANTITY:</b>	<b>ITEM:</b>	<b>PRICE:</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>
	<b>ORIGINAL BUDDY POPPY</b>	<b>PER 500</b>	<b>\$145.00</b>
		<b>PER 1,000</b>	<b>\$290.00</b>
<b>TOTAL=</b>			

<b>METAL TAB BUDDY POPPY</b>			
<b>QUANTITY:</b>	<b>ITEM:</b>	<b>PRICE:</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>
	<b>METAL BUDDY POPPY</b>	<b>PER 500</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>
		<b>PER 1,000</b>	<b>\$160.00</b>
<b>TOTAL=</b>			

**SHIP TO:** \_\_\_\_\_

**VFW MEMBERSHIP #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STREET ADDRESS: (NO PO BOXES!)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY:</b>		
_____ QUANTITY ORDERED FROM NATIONAL	DATE: _____	
_____ QUANTITY SHIPPED FROM DEPT. HQ	DATE: _____	
DATE RECEIVED: _____	CHECK #: _____	AMOUNT: _____