

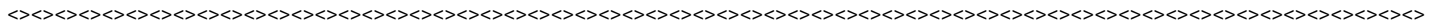


Department of Oklahoma  
Veterans of Foreign Wars



P.O Box 1126 OKC. OK 73101

405 850-0815/ [www.vfwoklahoma.org](http://www.vfwoklahoma.org)



December 2021

2021-2022 Series

*“May we think of freedom, not as the right to do as we please, but the opportunity to do what is right”*

*Peter Marshall*



**DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA HEADQUARTERS  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES**

**General Orders No. 06**

**2021-2022 Series**

1. The attention of District and Post Commanders is directed to Section 103 of the Manual of Procedures, which prescribes the manner in which applications for membership will be handled. Applications for membership of new, reinstated or transfer members must be voted on by the members present at a regular Post meeting.
2. Commanders on all levels are reminded that according to Section 105 of the National Bylaws, a member whose dues are unpaid after their anniversary date ceases to be a member in good standing and loses all rights of membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars. They shall not attend meetings or conventions and shall not participate in Post, County Council, District, Department or National functions.
3. Notice to Commanders and Adjutants: All Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen, and Teacher of the Year Reports MUST be submitted via the All-American Dashboard. Post Adjutants must enter their Posts’ report. District Adjutants must approve Post Reports and enter the District Report. Contact Department Adjutant Curt Watts for information and/or questions.
4. Notice to All: I wanted to make sure you are aware that News 9 is giving away a complete HVAC system to a veteran in need. A worthy veteran can be nominated at the following link: [news9.com/veteran](http://news9.com/veteran).
5. Department Directory/Roster: Department Directory has been updated to reflect new State Officers. The updated directory can be found in the “members only” section of the Department website at [vfwoklahoma@outlook.com](mailto:vfwoklahoma@outlook.com)

6. ***Trustee's Report of Audit:*** Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 218 of the Manual of Procedure, "Duty of Trustees." Trustees Report of Audit must be completed in detail at the close of each quarter, one of which ends Dec 31 2021. Commanders are reminded that accurate and complete records shall be kept by all person handling Post funds, including the Club Manager, Bingo Chairman and VFW Riders Groups. These records shall be audited by Post Trustees in the same manner as Post Quartermaster and Adjutant.

Posts & Districts are reminded to forward their Trustees' reports at the end of each quarter of the current year: June 30th, Sep 30th, Dec 31st and March 31st. Send these audit reports to VFW-OK, P.O. Box 1126, Oklahoma City, OK 73101 or email to [vfwhqokqm@outlook.com](mailto:vfwhqokqm@outlook.com)

/os/

JAMES BASSETT  
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /

Curtis A. Watts  
Adjutant

# Commander Jim Bassett

Oklahoma is 8<sup>th</sup> out of 14 Departments within the Southern Conference.  
Oklahoma is 41<sup>st</sup> out of 52 Departments within the Veterans of Foreign Wars.  
*As of 29 November 2021*

Merry Christmas to all. I hope each of you have a joyous Christmas! Enjoy your time with friends and families. I ask that you remember our troops that are away from their family and friends. Also, those that need help and comfort. Make reaching out to members a holiday tradition.

I attended Southern Conference in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Kudos to Department of South Carolina for a fun filled time. Next year, North Carolina will host. Then in 2023, Oklahoma will have the honor of hosting the Southern Conference. This is a great opportunity to meet and visit with members from 13 other states.

I'm still hearing about events that posts or districts are holding that we may have been able to help with. We need to be proactive in our communications of events that the department could have helped. If your post or district is going to host or participate in a major event, please let the department know. We do have vendors that may help your event. We cannot ask them if we do not know about them. Please help the department get word out.



Recruiting versus retention. If we retain our members, then we have cut the numbers to recruit in half. Let's make it easy on ourselves. What are you doing to keep your members?

I have been asked if I have a special project. The answer is no. My concentration is on retention. My class of commanders has created a perpetual Voice of Democracy scholarship. Currently it is only a \$2,000 to the recipient. The more money donated to the scholarship, the more can be awarded to the recipient. To donate to this worthy cause, you can send the money to our department to be collected as a total donation from the department or you can send your donation to:

Class 122 VOD Scholarship  
James Lierz  
VFW National Headquarters  
406 W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
816.756.3390

We have multiple investigations or enquiries going on. Please let the processes continue to their conclusions. Please don't talk about them, spread rumors or speculation about the proceedings. Spreading lies or misinformation only complicates the process and contaminates the body pool if we need take something to an Article 9 hearing. We meet to "*transact business of mutual benefit. Do not let petty jealousies or trivial personalities influence our deliberations. Let us uphold always the obligations of unselfish comradeship and loyalty to our organization and to the government of the United States of America.*" Please, let us not forget that.

As always, I want everyone to take precautions that they feel they need to do to stay healthy. Be it wearing a mask, social distancing, or taking the vaccine. Do what you feel is best for your health. The winter months are on their way. Family holidays are planned. Don't forget those without families. This can be a depressing time of year for many, keep an eye out and check with people; Buddy Checks. Stay healthy, stay on top of deadlines, but mostly, remember to have fun. We have many wonderful opportunities out there; we just need to capitalize on them.

*Jim Bassett*

State Commander  
Department of Oklahoma  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
P. O. Box 1126  
Oklahoma City Oklahoma 73101  
405.664.3929

[Bassettj15@yahoo.com](mailto:Bassettj15@yahoo.com)

<https://vfwoklahoma.org/>

*While others talk...do.*

*While others fear...believe.*

*While others wait...work.*

## *Senior Vice Commander Jeremy Owen*

Comrades, I hope these comments find you healthy and happy! If not I pray for a speedy recovery. November was a busy month for the VFW and AUX, we made it through but it's not time to slow down! With Pearl Harbor remembrance, Christmas, and the year all coming quickly. Remember this time of year is hard for a lot of people so don't hesitate to pick up the phone and do buddy checks or even go see them. Let's talk about retention. If you didn't know, we lose a large number of members that leave our organization simply because no one has asked them to pay their dues. Pick up the phone and call your annual members. We are in full motion getting our southern conference put together, our year to host is 2023-24. If you feel you could be of benefit for the planning of it, contact Commander Bassett or A/Q Watts. We are on track to have a great year so let's keep pushing TEAM OKLAHOMA.

Have you thought about supporting our very own Oklahoma VFW Foundation? There are several ways to do it: Amazon smile is a great way. Just go to <https://smile.amazon.com> once there then find Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation. Post donations & personal donations are another great way to support our Foundation. Donations are tax deductible. Donating to the Oklahoma VFW Foundation is a way of donating back to Posts within our department and our programs. Donors may also designate where they want their donation dollars to go toward, for instance, Veterans Services, Honor Guards, etc. Donations can be sent to Oklahoma VFW Foundation, [P.O. Box 1126, Oklahoma City, OK](mailto:okvfwfoundation.org) or by visiting the Foundation website at <https://okvfwfoundation.org> and the selecting the donate button.

Jeremy Owen  
State Senior Vice Commander  
Department of Oklahoma



# **Junior Vice Commander**

## **Erica Traxler**

*Student Veterans of America Liaison  
Citizenship Education Chair*

Comrades,

I hope this month's General Orders finds you well. I would like to remind the District JVCs that we are having JVC training on December 5th at 3pm. The post meetings will be held on 11 & 18 December. They will be 1-3pm and 3:15-5:15pm both days. Quadrant 1 will be at 1pm, Quadrant 2 at 3:15 on December 11th. Quadrant 3 will be at 1pm and Quadrant 4 at 3:15 on the 18th. If you have questions, please send them to my email. Also, please let me know if you will not be able to attend.

I hope that each post and district has been successful setting up their Facebook pages. Social media is an excellent way to advertise and communicate. You can also share information about your events with Comrade Kinsler for him to post on the Department's Facebook page. The more we communicate then more people we will be able to reach about all the wonderful things you are doing for veterans in your communities.

Mid-Winter is January 14-16 this year at the Embassy Suites again. Please get your rooms reserved so we can see you there. We can always have more vendors attend so if you know of any please get them signed up. You can reach out to me if you need assistance getting them registered. The only way these conventions can be successful is by people participating. We can learn from one another, assist with events, and help make the team stronger.

Membership is crucial to keep this beloved organization alive and fighting for our freedoms and rights. Every day I am emailed membership stats for the nation. I see how every state is doing, plus I am emailed our state statistics down to the post. We need to continue to recruit because the new members we recruit today are our future. We want to continue the VFW legacy and recruiting is how we do that. You can order membership applications from the VFW store or get them from your post. If you have a recruiting event and want a state representative present please reach out so we can accommodate. I look forward to seeing each post grow.

This was my first time attending the Southern Conference and it was interesting. Many CoA members were present and took notes on what we liked and did not like to help make our hosting of Southern Conference the best it can be. If you have any information to assist our committee on making this the best SC ever please do not hesitate to contact us. We are one team and we will represent as one. I hope many of you decide to attend and show the other states in the SC how we Oklahomans conduct business.



Thank you again for allowing me to serve you as the Oklahoma Junior Vice Commander. This is truly an honor. I look forward to seeing you at Mid-Winter at the Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton. Please call, text, or email if you need anything.

--

**Erica Traxler**

Junior Vice Commander, VFW Oklahoma  
Student Veterans of America Liaison  
Citizenship Education Chair  
989-239-5999  
ericatraxlervfw@gmail.com

**VFW OK Jr. Vice Commander Erica Traxler is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. 3-5PM, 5 Dec 21.**

**Topic:** District Jr. Vice Training

**Time:** Dec 5, 2021 03:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83198127888?pwd=TVB4TVI5b1pTaDMycERnWnpSOGtrdz09>

Meeting ID: 831 9812 7888

Passcode: 757300

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,83198127888#,,,,\*757300# US (Tacoma)

+13462487799,,83198127888#,,,,\*757300# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 831 9812 7888

Passcode: 757300

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/km1CB34D>

**VFW OK Jr. Vice Commander Erica Traxler is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. 1-3 PM, 18 Dec 2021**

**Topic:** Post Jr. Vice Commander Training

**Time:** Dec 18, 2021 01:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

7

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461157580?pwd=R2lISld4VFVuVTNTSHpRUGVKWFIDdz09>

Meeting ID: 844 6115 7580

Passcode: 945612

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,84461157580#,,,,\*945612# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,84461157580#,,,,\*945612# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 844 6115 7580

Passcode: 945612

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc2IF8xvv7>

**VFW OK Jr. Vice Commander Erica Traxler is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. 3-5 PM, 18 Dec 2021**

Topic: Post Jr. Vice Commander Training

Time: Dec 18, 2021 03:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83978725708?pwd=WjhOM1owbUhPcVFGRXVKV3hYcHI5dz09>

Meeting ID: 839 7872 5708

Passcode: 336715

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,83978725708#,,,,\*336715# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,83978725708#,,,,\*336715# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 839 7872 5708

Passcode: 336715

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/ko0g2b6Py>

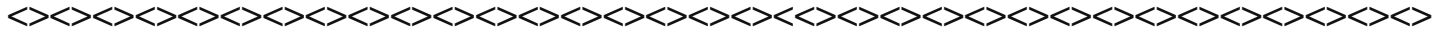


*State Adjutant/Quartermaster*

*Curt Watts*

*Department Parliamentarian (RP)*

ADJUTANTS: Please note that Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen, and Teacher of the Year reports will need to be submitted into the All-American Dashboard via the Online Membership System (OMS) access. Post Adjutants will submit their reports using the AA Dashboard. District Adjutants will approve and/or edit the Post reports. District Adjutants will submit the district's reports and the Department Adjutant will approve then wait for National approval. This system is a great tool, and we need to utilize it to our fullest extent.



*National Council Member*

*Curt Watts*

Comrades, I hope all is well with each of you and your families and that you had a “thankful” Thanksgiving. Sharon & I hope that each of you and your families will have a blessed and peaceful Holiday Season filled with joy, laughter, and fun with family and friends. Let us always count our blessing and remember those less fortunate than us and do what we can to lessen their burden during this season of giving.

I wanted to inform you of a few things on the National level.

Quartermaster General Debra Anderson provided a summary of results from the VFW Operating Budget for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2021, and I wanted to share these with you.

The VFW ended the year with a \$2,250,480 surplus from normal operations. There was some incredible stock market performance for the year ending with \$13,057,633 of gain on our general fund reserve investments. In addition, the market performance also had a significant impact on our Life Membership Fund and Pension Plan. The assets in our Life membership Fund increased by \$30 million during the year. This should have a positive impact of future dues payouts.

Quartermaster General Anderson also made note of a few larger items that had both positive and negative impacts on the current year operations:

- 1) **Salary & Benefits** – The VFW eliminated several positions during the year and operated with many additional open positions. Because of positive market performance, our pension expense was significantly less than budgeted. Overall, the salaries and employee benefits saving were \$2.3 million.
- 2) **Travel** – COVID-19 continue to have a significant impact on the organization for the first half of our fiscal year. Cancellations of in-person Washington Conference, officer

training, service officer training, foreign travel & general travel produced savings of approximately \$2 million.

- 3) **General Administration** – The VFW was short of our budgeted amount for Contributions Revenue by \$950,000. This is primarily unrestricted estate revenue. VFW did receive some restricted estate gifts valued at \$1.47 million that were restricted for our veteran service work.
- 4) **Programs** – The VFW expended more in Post Pandemic Grants and Help-A-Hero scholarships than were budgeted, but this was supported by increased funding from the VFW Foundation to off-set these additional programmatic expensed.
- 5) **Emblem & Supply** – The VFW Store revenue ended up significantly under budget. The impact of COVID the first half of our fiscal year limited sales opportunities with Posts and Departments. The Store had a strong finish the second half of the year, and more normalized operations in this fiscal year is expected.

Quartermaster General Anderson stated that “We believe that our strong operational performance over the last decade will provide the organization a solid foundation as we move forward.”

Currently, the National Legislative Conference in Washington D.C scheduled for late February-early March is still a go. However, there are some concerns as to what might transpire due to COVID. Our hopes are that we are allowed to meet with our Senators and Representatives and speak for Veteran related legislation.

If you have yet to hear, Oklahoma’s candidate of choice for National Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief nominee from the Southern Conference Al Lipphardt from Georgia won the election during the Southern Conference held in Hilton Head Island, SC in November. Oklahoma votes made a difference. Please note Comrades that Al was deeply touched by Oklahoma’s support and wanted us to thank each of you.

Comrades, feel free to contact me at my email address below or my cell number if desired.  
Respectfully,

Curt Watts  
National Council of Administration 2021-22  
Oklahoma  
[vfwokncm@outlook.com](mailto:vfwokncm@outlook.com)  
405.590.8577

***State Surgeon***  
***Mike Iron***

Mike wanted this article from the Surgeon General Dennis Guthrie posted.

**Suicide**

Suicide- a very dark subject. One which a lot of people feel extremely uncomfortable speaking about it. Just like in the 1950's, 60's, and 70's speaking about breast cancer, until First Lady Betty Ford brought it out in the open. Today, many lives are being saved because we talk about breast cancer. We have walking and running fund raisers that help with awareness, as well as pink t-shirts and the media talking about it.

We need to start making suicide apart of the conversation. We need to be talking about the "Signs". Knowing the "Signs" can help save the life of a friend or even a loved one. Veterans' families especially need to know the "Signs". Veterans and active-duty military still have extremely high rates of suicide in all age groups. Veterans struggle with the experiences they had while serving our country. Ageing veterans can be dealing with the loss of a spouse and/or health issues.

We all have triggers that can affect how we manage everyday stressors. Stressors such as the Afghanistan withdrawal. How this event was handled by our military and our government affected veterans of all wars. For Vietnam veterans it reminded them of the fall of Saigon. For all post 9-11 veterans they wonder what all the sacrifice was for. Families who lost loved ones are affected.

Another big stressor for many veterans is the holidays. Those veterans that are self-isolated are particularly vulnerable. Some dates or anniversaries of trauma are hard but if they fall during the holidays, it may become more than they can bear. We need to constantly check in on our "buddies" and if they need help get them the help they need.

I recently heard a Director of a VA hospital say we are down to 17 a day from 22 a day committing suicide. I did the math; 17 a day adds up to 6,205 a year! When we were losing 22 a day that added up to 8,030 a year. To put this in perspective we lost 7,000+ in 20 years in the middle east. Better than half of all veterans have never been in the VA system. To me that means there is a lot of work to be done getting veterans connected to the programs that can help. We need to build partnerships to serve the needs of our veterans and their families, for their physical wounds as well as their invisible wounds.

The National VFW, along with other service groups, and state Veteran agencies, all provide training and resources to Veterans Service Officers (VSO's) to help veterans directly create a road map and identify resources to give hope for the future. Programs such as Unmet Needs,

employment training, and scholarships for education are just a few examples. Getting every veteran set up at the VA for evaluation of medical and psychological needs is critical. Along with these programs the VSO's can obtain benefits to help stabilize the veteran's finances and give each veteran time to seek support groups. Support can be found at Vet Centers, the VA, and other non-profit groups. Support might be found in another veteran, perhaps that older vet that has managed to make it through to a productive life.

One group of veterans that is often overlooked is our National Guard units. They only meet once a month. They are sent back home after deployment. Sometimes they got out after deployment and are entirely overlooked and fall through the cracks in the system. The VFW in each state needs to make sure our National Guard troops know about and understand what is out there for them. Their families need to know what is out there for them. Too often both National Guard and Active-Duty military that wish to remain in the service do not want to ask for help as it is still a stigma, and they feel it will affect their ability to obtain promotions.

Many VFW Posts have already adopted National Guard units. Checking with the Commanding Officer, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt., as well as the family readiness person to make sure they are using the "Buddy System" can help save lives. The "Buddy System" is simply checking on and talking with those you served with. You were with them when they had good days and when things did not go so well. Talking, listening, and knowing the "Signs" can help.

So, getting back to lowering the number of suicides: It means making sure veterans, their family and friends understand the "Signs" and what to do if they see one or more of these signs is particularly important.

- 1) Thinking about hurting or killing themselves,
- 2) Looking for ways to kill themselves,
- 3) Talking about death, dying, or suicide,
- 4) Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.,
- 5) Hopelessness, feeling like there is no way out,
- 6) Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings,
- 7) Feeling like there is no reason to live,
- 8) Rage or anger,
- 9) Engaging in risky activities without thinking,
- 10) Increasing alcohol and drug abuse,
- 11) Withdrawing from family and friends.

**We have a National Crisis line 1-800-273-8255, or chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net, or text to 838255.**

Some states also have a "hot line". We need to get these out and keep pushing them. Family and friends need to use the A.C.E. system:

A Ask directly, "are you thinking about hurting yourself?"

C Care – comely control the situation. Listen and show concern. Talk to them and let them talk, **LISTEN**.

E Escort- do not leave this veteran alone to take care of problems! Get help from a professional. Remove all firearms or other things from this veteran which could be used to harm himself or herself.

These are but a few of the things to look for. Veterans are incredibly good at hiding emotions and saying everything is ok. They have learned to push through to complete the mission. It is when things become so overwhelming that we as friends and family need to help. It is critical to step in and provide the support and professional help necessary at this point.

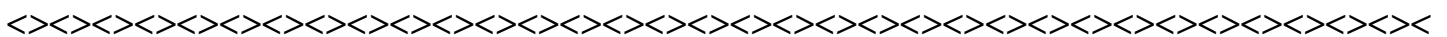
I was asked, “What should we do?” This is a very good question and I put it back to you, What can we do?

We can get involved, we can educate veterans and their families to know the “Signs”. At our VFW Post we can hand out the cards from the VA with the signs and the Crisis Line information. We can offer to speak at different civic groups. Veterans are everywhere. Just saving ONE life is a huge accomplishment!

Please call me or email me with your questions, ideas, or what has worked for you.

Thank you for all you do for our veterans.

Dennis Guthrie  
Surgeon General 2021-2022  
541-280-5161  
75crazyhorse69@gmail.com



*National Legislative Committee Member*

**Michael L. Merit, PSC**

Team Oklahoma,

We are just about half-way through this VFW administrative year (21-22) and almost half way through this congressional term (21-23). Currently, the VFW supports 133 of 134 bills it is watching. Today, I finished up our latest scorecard of how well the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation is supporting those bills. If I had to give them a grade as a whole concerning those particular bills, they would receive a resounding "F".

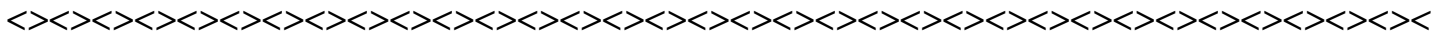
I have attached that scorecard to this email for you to review. Each bill on the Excel spreadsheet is linked to its corresponding page at [congress.gov](http://congress.gov) so you can review what each bill is about, should you choose to. What this scorecard shows me is that we need to communicate better to our congressional delegation and urge them to support these bills. Remember, the more they hear from us, the better they represent our Oklahoma military, veterans and their families. But, they won't listen if we do not give them a reason to.

So, we are going to be trying something new. At the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference, we will be having a joint legislative class for the VFW and Auxiliary so we all can better understand this process and get even more involved. Watch the next few Department General Orders for more information. I hope a lot of you will attend so we can make our voices heard even more.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me at: [okvfwlegislative@gmail.com](mailto:okvfwlegislative@gmail.com)

V/R,  
Michael L. Merit  
All American State Commander 20-21  
District 5 Commander  
Grand Quartermaster/Adjutant MOCOK  
VFW Department of Oklahoma

*Note: Please see Comrade Merit's attached Excel spreadsheet "VFW Supported Bills-Oklahoma Cosigners" with legislative-related information.*



*Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen & Teacher of the Year Chairman  
Mike Devenitch*

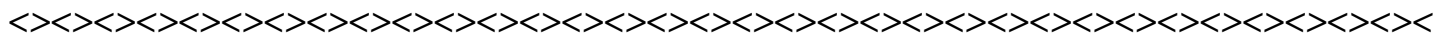
**VFW YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS:** Thanks for everyone's hard work! The next deadline is to have district judging completed by December 15<sup>th</sup>. Please make sure the essay word count/time and have a ***picture of the student*** in your package sent to state. District judges please complete all paperwork so all posts and auxiliary get credit for the program. For the 2021-2022: **Voice of Democracy (VOD)** audio-essay program theme is - **"America: Where do we go from here?"** and the **Patriot's Pen (PP)** youth essay – **"How Can I Be a Good American?"** We will be sending a high school student to Washington, D.C.! : ) State judging will be held at the Moore Public Library, (Meeting Rm 1 & 2), 225 S. Howard Ave, Moore, OK on the evening of Thursday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Please contact me if you plan on attending this event to reserve a

seat. See <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships> for more info.

**TEACHER OF THE YEAR (ToY): EVERY POST CAN SUBMIT 3 PACKAGES!** Please give me a heads up email on packages being submitted. That is one for each category annually: elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics and promote America's history and traditions. Look for teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are great candidates for this award. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors, you or other interested individuals. Submit all nomination to me. Post should have the teacher packages complete, be sure to complete fully and sign the ToY form. Please send to be by December 15<sup>th</sup> so I can get ready for judging. See <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year> for more info.

VOD/PP/ToY CONTACT: Michael H. Devenitch, (405) 819-9914. 4224 Manhattan Dr. Moore, OK, 73160 [sentrymike@yahoo.com](mailto:sentrymike@yahoo.com)

**Michael H. Devenitch**  
Past State Commander (2012-2013)  
Department of Oklahoma  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
[sentrymike@yahoo.com](mailto:sentrymike@yahoo.com)



***Veterans and Military Services Committee Chair***  
***Tony McGrew***

Hello Comrades,  
VMS Programs are an integral part of the VFW's never-ending obligation to assist members of the active-duty military, national guard and reserves, as well as their families. VMS is broken down into 3 distinct stand-alone programs.

- Unmet Needs
- Military Assistance Program (MAP)
- VFW "Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship" program



Veterans & Military Assistance Support Program is the VFW's never-ending obligation to assist members of the active-duty military, National Guard and Reserves, as well as their families.



One leg of this Program is the Military Assistance Grant Program outlined below

- Intended as financial assistance for Posts to sponsor events for active duty military units, National Guard, and Reserves.
- Events are most successful when local Posts interact directly with the military unit and involve the Veterans Service Officers.
- Grants are intended for food or food type items, plates, cups and so on. Amount provided is dependent on the number of military members and their families in attendance.
- A Military Assistance Grant application must be submitted to VFW National Headquarters a minimum of two weeks prior to the event.
- The application must be filled out completely by the Post and include a breakdown of the event budget and the VFW involvement with the event.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities and Events:

I know this time of year is busy for everyone and just a few hours of your time can make a huge difference in our Brothers, Sisters and their family's lives. You be the ONE.

- December 4<sup>th</sup>.

552 ACW Children's Holiday Party, Tinker AFB,  
Providing refreshments for 400 children and 300 adults.

- December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Army National Guard's C Company 1-179<sup>th</sup> Family Holiday Dinner,  
Edmond Armory - 104 Members and 80 Family Members.

- December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Army National Guard's A Company 1-179<sup>th</sup> Holiday Party  
El Reno -108 Members and 124 Family Members,

- December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Army National Guard's B Company 1-179<sup>th</sup> Holiday Dinner  
Vance AFB – 146 members and 37 family members

- December 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Air Guard's 137<sup>th</sup> SOW Christmas Dinner Gift Baskets. We will be providing 25 Christmas Dinners for the Airman.

If you have any questions about these events, please get in touch.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

All for One; One for All  
Tony McGrew  
State VMS Chair  
District 10 Commander  
Department of Oklahoma  
405-820-6467  
[Tony.vfw8706@gmail.com](mailto:Tony.vfw8706@gmail.com)  
<https://www.vfwoklahoma.org>



***State Safety Chairman***  
***Ron Albert***

As the State Safety Chair, I hope these General Orders find each of you in good health. I would like to thank each of you for the unwavering support I have been given throughout my time in the Oklahoma VFW. I want all Post and District Commanders put safety before planning and remember the cold season is coming. Have extra blankets, food, water, and a flashlight in your car just in case of a break down. If you are going to travel, make sure you check your tires and heaters on your car to make sure they work prior to your trip.

I just want to remind everyone about the VFW Public Servant Award Citations for the Emergency Medical Technicians, Firefighters and Law Enforcement Personnel. We encourage all post to submit as many candidates as possible you believe should be recognized for their outstanding commitments, selfless service and sacrifice they provide and demonstrate to the community. The criteria for those awards are as follows:

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN:**

Any individual who actively gives emergency medical treatment  
Provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care.  
Provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

**FIREFIGHTER:**

Any individual who fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and gives assistance to our nation's citizens.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT:**

Any individual who serves in a municipal, county, states, or federal unit tasked with enforcing the laws pertaining to their area of responsibility.

Unfortunately, this award does not apply to individuals who are employed by private companies or security services.

All of these candidates must have demonstrated some if not all of the following:

- 1) Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties
- 2) Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities
- 3) Continuous growth in their skills and responsibilities with their profession
- 4) Recognition by those they serve and their colleagues
- 5) Continuing or previous volunteer work for their community

Please fill out and submit the VFW Public Servant Award Citation (included) for all candidates along with the following:

- 1) A Photograph from the chest up
- 2) One page summary of the candidate's overall background in their field
- 3) One page summary of the candidate's overall volunteer work for their community
- 4) One page record of all the candidate's accomplishments and/or awards in their field and/or in the community

All packets must be submitted to the VFW Post 5263 by 05 December 2021 for selection. There are two ways you can submit them and they are:

- 1) Via email at [vfw5263cdr@gmail.com](mailto:vfw5263cdr@gmail.com) with Public Servant Award Citation from (your department name) in the subject line.
- 2) Postal Mail at VFW Post 5263

Att: Public Servant Award Citation  
103 NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lawton, OK 73507

All candidate packets will be read and judged by an appointed board. One candidate from each category will be chosen and sent up to the VFW National Headquarters by 01 January 2022, where they will be combined with other Oklahoma VFW Public Servant Award Citations. There all candidate packets will be read and judged by an appointed board. One candidate will be chosen from all categories and that candidate will be recognized by the Oklahoma VFW National Headquarters. The candidate will be informed of the recognition date, time and location when they've been notified of them winning.

If you have any further questions, concerns, clarifications, etc please contact me via email at [vfw5263cdr@gmail.com](mailto:vfw5263cdr@gmail.com) or call my cell phone number at 580-512-0510. Please leave a voicemail if I don't answer. Thank you for your continued unwavering support and I look forward to receiving all the packets. May you have a great day.

## **DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION**

D-1 > 22 Jan 22	1100hrs>Post 5307 Salina> St. Surgeon Mike Irons
D-3 > 06 Feb 22	1100hr>Post 8384 Muldrow> St. Surgeon Mike Irons
D-4 > 05 Feb 22	1100hrs>Post1198 Coalgate > State Cdr. Jim Bassett
D-5 > 06 Feb 22	1000hrs>Post 7977 Skiatook > State Cdr. Jim Bassett
D-7 > 05 Feb 22	1100hrs>Post 8798 Eufaula> St. Surgeon Mike Irons
D-8 > 06 Feb 22	1100hrs>Post 2027 Glencoe> State Quartermaster Curt Watts
D-9 > 12 Feb 22	1000hrs>Post 7740 Crescent> Sr. Vice Owen & Jr. Vice Traxler
D-10 >08 Jan 22	1000hrs>Post 8706 Moore, New Hope Christian Church> Jr. Vice Cdr. Erica Traxler
D-13 >04 Dec 21	1300hrs>Post 6141 Fairview> Jr. Vice Cdr. Erica Traxler
D-14 >05 Feb 22	1100hrs> Post 5263, Ft. Sill> Sr. Vice Owen & Jr. Vice Traxler
D-15 >08 Jan 22	1100hrs> Post 1193 Lawton > State Cdr. Jim Bassett

### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

05 Dec> District Jr. Vice Training via Zoom, 1500hrs,  
05 Dec> Somalia Campaign Began (1992)  
07 Dec> National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day  
08 Dec> U.S. Declared War on Japan (1941)  
11 Dec> Germany and Italy Declared War on U.S. (1941)  
11 Dec> Post Jr. Vice Commander Training via Zoom, 1-3pm, & 3:15-5:15pm.  
15 Dec> Iraq War Ended (2011)  
18 Dec> Post Jr. Vice Commander Training via Zoom, 1-3pm, & 3:15-5:15pm.  
20 Dec> Panama Campaign Began (1989)  
21 Dec> Winter begins  
25 Dec> Christmas Day  
31 Dec> Official End of WWII (1946)  
31 Dec> Kosovo Campaign Ended (2013)  
01 Jan> New Year's Day  
14 Jan> VFW-OK Mid Winter Conference 14-16 Jan 22, Embassy Suites, Norman, OK

