



Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars



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November 2020

2020-2021 Series

*“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above”
James 1:17*

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

General Orders No. 4

2020-2021 Series

1. Pursuant to National By-Laws & MOP, Article X, Rules of Order, “The following Rules of Order shall govern all meetings. Any procedural matter not provided for by the Rules or Convention Rules shall be governed by the current Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.”

/os/

MICHAEL L. MERIT
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /

Curtis A. Watts
Adjutant



FROM THE COMMANDER



**Michael L. Merit
State Commander
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of Oklahoma**

Comrades,

November 1st 2020

First, I hope this finds all of you and your family healthy and well. If not, I pray for a speedy recovery. Hey! Here we are beginning our fifth month of the year. I hope everyone that is able has continued their year in full swing. I know that the ongoing COVID pandemic is still limiting our ability to do our jobs 100%, so now is the time that we must throw the book out and think outside of the box. Speak with each other and share what works for you. During this time, we must help each other out to accomplish our mission. Remember, we are TEAM OKLAHOMA! Therefore, we must work together as one.

We are just coming off an extremely busy but successful Fall Festival this year. We were visited by CIC Hal Roesch, National Auxiliary President Sandy Onstwedder, MOC Supreme Junior Vice Commander and South Carolina VFW Senior Vice Commander Dwight Hora, MOC Supreme Adjutant Gordon Lam, Past MOCA President Leeann Lam and National Auxiliary Council Member Vikki McGahhey. I know there were a lot that were not able to attend due to other commitments and COVID, but know that we were thinking about you. The attendance was amazing. For the first time since we have been at the Wyndham, we exceeded our room block! Additionally, two new MOCA Auxiliaries were created. As I said while we were there, I think Sandy said it best when she said, "This doesn't feel like a meeting, it feels more like a family reunion." And was it ever.

The Veterans Service Committee is still waiting on applications for an assistant service officer in Muskogee. State Service Officer PSC James Dockemeyer is working with the National Service Office to formulate a job description. Just as soon as that is complete, we will release it to everyone. As we continue to climb in the number of claims being submitted, we need assistant state service officers now, more than ever! So, if you or someone you know is interested in applying for the position, please contact the State headquarters.

Every Post now should have received all the VOD/PP/TOY entries. Please check with your District Commander or District Youth Programs Chair for the deadlines for District submissions. Everyone must work together to ensure that ALL entries are judged and given a chance to move forward. I have heard from around the state that it has been tough this year due to COVID, but I have also been impressed with the number of entries I am hearing we have

already. Keep up the great work out there and let's send entries that bring home the top national prizes in each category.

Membership Update. October end numbers are as follows: Southern Conference, Oklahoma is #1. Nationally, Oklahoma is #16. We still have 1,556 to go to that magic 100% before the end of the year. That is approaching fast! Remember, keep working those At Large Lists and the Retention Lists you all have received. Our highest recruiter to date, State Surgeon Stacy Reddig has recruited 29 new members. NCM Robbie Clark is at 21, 1 at 6, 1 at 5, 3 at 4, 4 at 3, 14 at 2 and 27 at 1. Our overall breakdown is 92 new members, 51 reinstates and 64 without a recruiter. Quartermasters, please ensure you are entering a recruiter number when putting in new members so the right person gets the credit for them. Remember 100% by December 31st, 2020 and 110% by June 30th, 2021! We also have my Commander's Challenge for the first half of this year. The first Post to 100% by December 31st, 2020 will receive \$100. Every Post after the first, but before the deadline, will receive \$50. Post 7740 will receive the \$100. So far 1048, 1193, 3689, 4465, 5914, and 8676 will receive \$50 each.

Also, congratulations to Post 3689 for surpassing 110%! So, get out there and bring these new members in. There's still plenty of time to win some money for your Post!

As discussed last month concerning legislation, we are working with NAIV, Inc or receive their congressional charter known as S4715 and is sponsored by Senators Rounds and Thune of South Dakota. We have contacted our congressional delegation asking the to support it as well. If you would like more information on the bill or would like a letter to send to them, please contact me and let me know. The Veterans Assistance Fund/Lottery Bill has now received the endorsement of the Oklahoma Veterans Council and ODVA. We are working diligently with State Sen. Frank Simpson and Rep. Tommy Hardin to draft and introduce this bill for the upcoming state legislative session. We will also be reintroducing the License Plate bills since they were just a House floor vote shy of being passed when COVID shut everything down. For everyone that went out and exercised that greatest of American liberties by voting, thank you.

I have discussed with many of you a new partnership between the Military Order of the Purple Heart and this Department. As you may or may not know, during the last session of the State Legislature, Oklahoma was designated as a Purple Heart state. We are now working with MOPH to designate each town that has a VFW Post as a Purple Heart City. It is actually quite a simple process with minimal time requirement. The information on how to complete the process will be attached to these General Orders. We already have several towns and cities working on this. I would love to see all 86 cities and towns in our state be designated by the end of this administrative year. Any questions, please do not hesitate to ask myself or Mitch Reed. His contact information is inside the packet.

Our Department Centennial is April 16th, 2021. By this point, all of you should have received a card in the mail asking you to update your information and submit your picture and story to be

added to our Centennial Memory book. I hope all of you have participated and have purchased a book. It is a great memento to have. Not many get to celebrate 100 years, so this is going to be an amazing experience for all of us. Speaking of mementos, our Centennial Coin design was released at the State Convention. The coins are in and a lot have already been distributed. All the State Officers and District Commanders have preorder forms. They are two inches wide and the price per coin is \$20. Each coin will be individually numbered, and the current set is 500 coins. We would love to have to order another 500! So, get in contact with one of the state officers to reserve yours today!

I want to acknowledge the following anniversary Posts: Post 539 Henryetta 100 Years! Post 474 Muskogee 100 Years! Post 577 Tulsa 100 Years! Post 4446 Stigler 75 Years! Post 4465 Clinton 75 Years! Post 3077 Collinsville 75 Years! Post 3573 Locust Grove 75 Years! Post 4890 Norman 75 Years! Post 4859 Atoka 75 Years! Post 4578 Guthrie 75 Years! Post 4876 Altus 75 Years! Post 4938 Edmond 75 Years! Post 4574 Ardmore 75 Years! Post 1202 Ada 75 Years! All the awards were presented by CIC Hal Roesch for the Posts or District Commanders.

****Changes to All State Requirements****

1. The Buddy Poppy Requirement has been removed due lack of Buddy Poppies.
2. The donation to the Oklahoma VFW Foundation has been removed due to financial constraints of Posts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Take care of yourselves out there TEAM OKLAHOMA! I wish you the best. Please continue what you are doing. I could not have asked for a better Department to command. Each of you are the tip of the spear and that is why we are "FIRST TO FIGHT FOR VETERANS!"

Michael L. Merit
State Commander



History of Veterans Day

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..." The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m. The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

Whereas the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

Whereas it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

Whereas the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the [first "Veterans Day Proclamation"](#) which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose.

Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

FROM THE STATE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

State Senior Vice Commander
National and State Legislative Chair
Bylaws/Resolutions Chair

Jim Bassett

Oklahoma is 1st out of 14 Departments within the Southern Conference.
Oklahoma is 16th out of 52 Departments within the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

This is the election month. We, as patriotic members, should have gone out and made our voice heard by voting. This is your voice at work selecting how our government operates. The VFW will not tell you how to vote, but they will encourage you to vote. We are nonpartisan. Our only political motive is to stop the erosion of our benefits. Our activities in Washington DC may not impact us directly, they may not even impact those currently serving. Our actions will impact school aged children that may end up being deployed to some unknown battlefield in the future. That is who we are working for. We are looking out for them while they are only interested in when recess is and growing up.

Like I stated in the paragraph above, this is the election month. Things had a way of getting out of hand when people discuss politics. I have never heard of the violence that this election has precipitated. Please don't get dragged in to a political discussion or debate that may end up in an assault, especially if you are wearing VFW items. But the beauty of the VFW was demonstrated to me at a District meeting this month. A member stated that he was a liberal Democrat. He also pointed out that the gentleman sitting next to him was his best friend, a conservative Republican. They get along because their bond as veterans is stronger than political ideologies. I attended a fundraiser and recruiting drive in August. I was floored because a middle aged lady came up to me and asked how the VFW was leaning politically. I explained to her that we encourage our members to register and vote how they see fit. I further explained that our politics concentrate solely on legislation that impacts veterans, regardless of the political party. She was happy with that answer and actually donated to us. Please remember, the VFW does not support a party or candidate. You are encouraged to register, and to vote for any candidate or party you desire. The VFW's concern is the erosion of benefits that veterans receive. Please keep an eye on legislation that impacts your benefits. One way to do that is through knowledge and not hearsay or social media. Simply register to receive the Action Corps newsletter. This is a simple and easy way to stay informed. You can register at <https://votervoices.net/VFW/register>.

Please! Please! Keep the social distancing up, keep wearing the mask, and keep washing your hands! Stay away from places that do not seem to keep to the cleaning protocols. We have VFW members that have compromised systems that are susceptible to Covid-19 or other illnesses. We have had members suffered or currently suffering from Covid. Remember, this will help you and also help those around you. We have had a potential exposure at the Fall Fest. If you experience any of the symptoms, please get tested to confirm. Also, please don't try to find out who it was. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) prevents disclosure of any individual. If you test positive, please contact those that you know you have been in contact with in accordance with CDC standards. You don't need to say it was you, just that you have been in contact with a positive test result.

I'm sorry that I missed Fall Fest. I have heard from one of the vendors that they enjoyed the event. We are trying to set up more vendors for the events. If you know of a vendor that would be interested in attending, please let me know. We do have a sponsor program that allows vendors to advertise on our web site as well as attend events that we hold. With that stated, I wanted to welcome our newest sponsor, T-Mobile.

RETAIN, RETAIN, RETAIN!!! Retain your members. Get to know them, encourage them to get involved. Ask them for ideas that they may want to manage or get involved with. Is there interest in education? Veteran's service? Helping other veterans? Community recognition? Aiding the community? Something special that they think the VFW should be doing? One never knows of what golden idea can come out of someone feels engaged.

Have you considered a blended meeting? Post members physically present and home bound members virtually present. Under current National policy, this is an option. In fact, members of the National Staff are interested in virtually attending Post, District, and Department level meetings. If you are interested in having one of them attend, let me know. Also, never forget that we have members who are in a home or hospital and this may be what cheers them up! Not everyone is staying home due to Covid.

We are working with organizations for next year. We have already committed to the Oklahoma State and Tulsa Fairs. We are waiting on the announcement of schedule dates for the OKC Dodgers and OKC Energy. If you have contact info for any organization that will put the VFW in front of the public, let me know and I can help. If you do hear of a major event, please let me know.



DONATE!! DONATE!! Our first blood drive will be February 13th at our Mid-Winter conference. If you have an event that would benefit from a Blood Drive, let me know. This is another way that we can help our veterans, families, and communities. In the

meantime, the American Red Cross and Oklahoma Blood Institute are running low. If you have recovered from Covid, your blood may actually help others. Donate some blood if able, help our community. The Supreme Military Order of the Cooties has set up an online report of blood donated. They will send you a certificate of recognition if you donate, please submit the information at <http://vampire.puptent1.org/>. The blood drives are being sponsored by the Military order of the Cooties Grand of Oklahoma.

Be Visible!

We need to increase our presence in our communities. The VFW and the Auxiliary used to be very active within their communities. What are you doing in your community? When you're out volunteering for the VFW or Auxiliary, please wear something that identifies you as a VFW or Auxiliary member; it helps increase public awareness. Any time you help a veteran is also a good time to wear something that identifies you as a member of the VFW or Auxiliary. There are some exceptions if you are working with other entities, check with them to find out if you can wear VFW or Auxiliary items.

The Special Olympics schedule has been modified due to Covid, but they are always looking for volunteers. They are in need of coaches, assistants, chaperons, and cheering sections. When you're out volunteering for the VFW, please wear something that identifies you as a VFW or Auxiliary member; it helps increase public awareness. Sign up to help, better yet, have your post sign up to support or sponsor them. In August, I golfed with a Special Olympian as their partner during a qualifying round. I was fun and we both enjoyed ourselves. Apply at <https://www.sook.org/>.



Be Visible!

Jim Bassett

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FROM THE STATE JUNIOR. VICE COMMANDER

Wow, what a great month October was for us. Thank you to everyone who attended the Fall Festival in OKC. The turnout was incredible! I enjoyed getting to see and visit with our comrades and auxiliary. November is a busy month, don't forget to VOTE on Tuesday November 3rd! District meetings are in full swing, I hope to see many of you in attendance. Veterans Day is also coming up on November 11th, what are your posts and auxiliaries doing to observe it? Parades are still happening in some areas so get out there and show your support. It is also a great time to identify veterans and their families and bring them into this great organization.

Is your town or city a Purple Heart town or city? Let's paint this state purple!

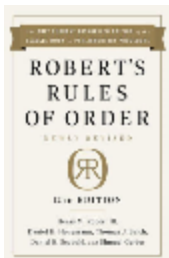
I want to thank our members and auxiliary for their perseverance to do our programs and recruiting while facing this pandemic, hats off to all of you.

Let's keep going in a forward direction and have another great month!

Jeremy J. Owen

State JR Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma

FROM THE STATE ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER



Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) 12 Edition are being released. If you are interested in a copy, please contact State QM Curt Watts. Paperback version, \$20.00, Spiral Bound version, \$25.00, Pre-Punched version, \$25.00.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) is the most comprehensive and most recognized authority on parliamentary procedure. It is used throughout the world by non-profit and not-for-profit organizations. RONR provides operational guidelines for members, officers, boards, and committees. It answers most parliamentary questions and provides examples of terminology for use by members and officers. RONR provides essential information to ensure that meetings are fair and efficient.

The 12th edition supports modern technology while retaining the fundamental principles of parliamentary procedure—rules based on the rights of the majority, of the minority, of individual members, of absentees, and of all of these together.

Updated features of the 12th edition include section-based paragraph numbering to facilitate cross-references and e-book compatibility, an expanded appendix of charts, tables and lists, helpful summary explanations about postponing a motion, reconsidering a vote, making and enforcing points of order and appeals, and newly expanded procedures for filling blanks, new provisions regarding debate on nominations, reopening nominations, and completing an election after its scheduled time. This edition provides dozens more clarifications and additions to improve the presentation of existing rules, include new interpretations, and address common inquiries.

RONR Paperback is 6 x 9 inches, 816 pages.

Curt Watts

FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER 01 November 2020

Programs National Awards & Citations Committee Team VFW, please share this far and wide. Nominations are due by **Dec. 4, 2020**. The National Awards and Citations Committee will meet on Jan. 27, 2021, via a virtual meeting to discuss and choose the recipient for the VFW Congressional Award. In addition, the committee will be discussing the awards to be given at the national convention in Baltimore. **Development** **Oct. 27 Appeals:** Veterans Day matching gift email #2 to all Friends of Freedom. October quarterly supporter newsletter #1 to member and nonmember donors. **Administrative Operations There** are currently 47 Posts under suspension, 15 of which are new. We received two new submissions for Post consolidations pursuant to Section 209 of the National Bylaws. One Charter surrender was completed pursuant to Section 210 of the National Bylaws. The organization currently has 6,060 active chartered Posts. Administrative Operations is engaged in 22 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, 13 administrative actions and four pending membership eligibility challenges. This past week we received 27 new Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review. We also reviewed and approved 19 total Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions and currently have 20 submissions pending review and approval. Current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 14 days. **Meetings and Events Ongoing** participation in weekly educational online meetings/webinars/ZOOMs pertaining to meetings industry updates. Ongoing weekly ZOOM call with various meeting planners and supplier's discussions on state of the industry, ideas exchange and overall encouragement during this time. Ongoing weekly ZOOM call with ALHI hotels and presentations of the current state of the meetings industry as provided by CEO/President Michael Dominguez. His presentation includes overall updates on COVID-19. Sources include Johns Hopkins and CDC. Continuing to review responses for RFP (*request for proposal*) for 2025 & 2026. Initial bids/dates to be received by Nov. 1. Slow responses as in many cases, points of contact have been furloughed and there have been staff reductions. Received design for Baltimore convention name badge from the communications department; approved by Adjutant General for use for 2021 Baltimore convention. Researched dates for Feb. 2021 NCOA Meeting in K.C. Hotel are preparing contract to finalize. Forwarding hotel contracts to Baltimore housing manager. Forwarding housing reservations forms to Baltimore housing manager for her review and revisions. Revising

internal housing blocks to provide to Baltimore housing manager in preparation of doing housing sub-blocks. Beginning the process to obtain hotel contracts for 2022 – Kansas City convention for review, legal review and ultimately to be finalized by Jan. 31, 2021, 18 months from convention date. **VFW Foundation** We continue to accept applications for the VFW Foundation Post Pandemic Relief Grant. This one-time grant of up to \$2,500 is designed to help VFW Posts that are unable to cover specific expenses for mortgage payments, rent (if leasing a building), utilities (gas, electric, water, etc.), insurance or property tax, due to hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As of this writing, the Foundation has approved grants to 103 Posts totaling \$237,132. For more information or to apply please go to vfw.org/grants. The first-ever virtual VFW Sport Clips Help A Hero Walk is in full swing. The event, which can be accessed at vfw.org/VirtualWalk2020, offers supporters a safe and healthy way to engage in the Sport Clips' annual Help A Hero campaign which began in-stores on Oct. 12. Currently, more than \$227,000 has been raised, which includes approximately 163 online donors and 216 fundraisers, as well as in-store donations. When you need a haircut please visit your local Sport Clips location and tell them "thank you" for supporting this vital VFW program. The VFW's Burger King Unmet Needs campaign will be held throughout the month of November. BK customers are encouraged to donate \$1 or more during a meal purchase. Proceeds will help veterans, service members and their families with assistance for rent, mortgage, utilities, medical expenses, vehicle repairs and food/necessities. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic we still have 300 restaurants participating in the November 2020 Unmet Needs fundraising campaign. For a list of BK restaurant locations go to vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants and view the interactive map. Please visit your local participating BK and thank the restaurant manager for their ongoing support of this event.

National Legislative Service Last week, the VFW-supported version of [S. 785](#), the *Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019*, was signed into law last Saturday. This law supports VA as it continues to make improvements to veterans' mental health care by covering a strategic plan for veterans transitioning from active duty, pilot programs integrating alternative therapies, establishing a VA and DOD clinical provider treatment toolkit, improving care and services for women veterans, and expanding the mental health medical workforce. The VFW currently supports [164 pieces of legislation](#) pending before the 116th Congress.

Communications and Public Affairs The VFW Podcast is now available for download on [Apple Podcasts](#). Scheduled and attended a special tour of the new National Museum of the U.S. Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, with VFW Executive Director B.J. Lawrence and fellow VFW Washington Office directors.

Operations Recently there has been conflicting information disseminated to both borrowers and lenders regarding the repayment of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loans, specifically on loans less than \$50,000. This more than likely affects many of our members that own small businesses. Director Tony Lowe met with SBA administrators to gather details and offer recommendations to develop their messaging. Additional information will follow in future reports.

National Security & Foreign Affairs Communication coming this week from the House Armed Services Committee staff reports that HASC Chairman Adam Smith expects Congress will pass the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) immediately following the Nov. 3 election. NSFA will continue to monitor, specifically the 15 amendments dealing with Military Health Care, and continuing reforms to Military Treatment Facilities. NSFA Director Bob Jackson was invited to participate in an online COVID symposium sponsored by the Association for the Academy of Advanced Sciences (AAAS), CDC, and John Hopkins University. The symposium focuses on the ongoing vaccine effort, specifically regarding how the population will receive the vaccination, which is expected to be available beginning sometime within the first few months of 2021.

National Veterans Service National Veterans Service participated in a VSO roundtable meeting with Chairman Cheryl Mason at the Board of Veterans Appeals. The meeting was a restart to the monthly meetings among co-located organizations like the VFW to discuss BVA business processes. VFW's Pre-Discharge Claims Representatives continued to provide virtual VA benefits briefings to transitioning service members, this week hosting briefings at Naval Station Norfolk, Joint Base Andrews, and Camp LeJeune. National Veterans Service participated in a meeting with Veterans Health Administration to discuss the ongoing implementation of the MISSION Act and community care delivery for veterans. National Veterans Service joined Toyota's Veterans Employee Resource Group for a briefing and overview on veterans' benefits. Toyota had reached out to the VFW looking to provide additional resources to

their veteran employees at Toyota facilities around the country. National Veterans Service concluded its first ever Virtual Basic Training Conference for newly accredited VFW service officers. There were 21 new service officers who participated in the training and the average score on the final exam was an 85. NVS will continue its online training with a Virtual Intermediate Skill Level Training Conference in November for accredited service officers with fewer than five years of experience. Have a wonderful, happy Thanksgiving!

Robbie Clark
National Council Member
Department of Oklahoma

FROM THE STATE COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRMAN



Veterans and Military Services Committee Chair
Tony McGrew



Happy Comrades, This month I would like to highlight the Unmet Needs portion of the VMS Program. This is a vital and useful tool for outreach to Veterans, Service Members and their families.

It provides assistance to help in a time of need, not a hand out. Created in 2004 Unmet Needs assists military service members, veterans, and their families who are experiencing a financial hardship directly related to their military service. The financial assistance is in the form of a one-time grant in an amount up to \$5,000. All grants are paid directly to the “creditor” companies (such as the electric company, mortgage company, landlord, etc.) and not to the individual. The funds can be used for rent, car repairs, medical expenses, infant-care items and many other necessities. Each case is reviewed individually and acceptance determined by a committee.

The only way they will know these services are available to them is, if we tell them. I encourage you to be always on the lookout for a Veteran or Service Member and just take a couple of minutes to let them know we are here and how we may help them. Not only will they appreciate it but, you will feel better knowing you helped someone.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities and Events:

Yellow Ribbons: We have 3 upcoming Yellow Ribbons. *I will have more info on these as they draw closer.*

1) Location: Oklahoma City, OK. **THIS YELLOW RIBBON WAS CANCELLED. I HAVE NOT RECEIVED INFO ON RESCHEDULING YET.**

Venue: TBD

Event date: 17 October 2020

Event Time: 0800-1630 (setup is from 0700 to 0800)

Type of event: 1st Post-deployment

Unit: HHB 1-158th FA & A Co 1-158th FA

of Attendees: 200 adults (120 Service Members, 60 adult guests and up to 20 kids)

2) Location: Oklahoma City, OK

Venue: TBD

Event date: 7 November 2020

Event Time: 0800-1630 (setup is from 0700 to 0800)

Type of event: 2nd Post-deployment

Unit: HHB 1-158th FA & A Co 1-158th FA

of Attendees: 200 adults (120 Service Members, 60 adult guests and up to 20 kids)

#3) Location: Oklahoma City, OK

Venue: TBD

Event date: 12-13 December 2020 (2 day event)

Event Time: 0800-1630 (setup is from 0700 to 0800)

Type of event: 1st & 2nd Post-deployment

Unit: 834th Aviation Regiment

of Attendees: 200 adults (120 Service Members, 60 adult guests and up to 20 kids)

All are welcome to attend these events, just let me know which ones you would like to attend so I can schedule you in.

Dress Code: Please wear business casual clothing, no t-shirts, shorts, or baseball caps. Do wear your VFW Cap. We want to project a professional and competent image.

We are participated with the Oklahoma ARNG on their Trunk or Treat Program to hand out candy to children of the ARNG Members at their facility on N. Kelly Ave.

Post 8706 received a donation from a Family Trust this month. The donation was an electric wheel chair, 2 standard wheel chairs, a portable potty, stool and walking cain. The electric wheel chair, portable potty, stool and one of the standard wheel chairs were given to deserving veteran and family member of the Post.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This post is willing to share a 55 gallon drum at the cost of time and money to go get it.

They want us to distribute the sanitizer to local schools or nursing homes. If you are interested in helping to distribute the sanitizer, please contact the post.

I failed to find out who the contact is for this program but if you call William Richey, 918.829.9610, he can put you in touch with their individual.

