



*Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars*



P.O Box 369, Choctaw, OK 73020
(580) 359-2963/ www.vfwoklahoma.org

April 2026

2025-2026 Series

*"He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster."
—Friedrich Nietzsche*

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

General Orders No. 10

2025-2026 Series

1. Each Department shall be governed by a Department Convention. The Department Convention shall consist of:
 1. The Commander-in-Chief and Past Commanders-in-Chief who are members in good standing in a Post within the Department.
 2. The National Council Member, the Department Commander, all Past Department Commanders who are members in good standing in a Post within the Department; all elected officers of the Department, Chief of Staff, Inspector, and the Adjutant.
 3. All District Commanders throughout the Department. In the absence of the District Commander, the District Senior Vice Commander, or, in the Senior Vice Commander's absence, the District Junior Vice Commander may be registered and function as a member of the Convention.
 4. All Post Commanders throughout the Department. In the absence of the Post Commander, the Post Senior Vice Commander, or, in the Senior Vice Commander's absence, the Post Junior Vice Commander may be registered and function as a member of the Convention.
 5. Delegates to be elected by the Posts.
2. Each member of the Department Convention as those persons are defined in Section 504, except delegates elected by the Posts, present at a meeting of the convention shall be entitled to one vote, and an individual possessing more than one qualification for membership in the Department Convention shall have no more than one vote. The delegate or delegates of the Post present at a meeting of the Department Convention shall be entitled to vote the full delegate strength to which the Post is entitled.

The Post Commander, or the Senior or Junior Vice Commander functioning in their place as a member of the Convention, may, at their option, choose to vote as a delegate rather than as a Post Commander. Should there be a division among delegates representing the Post, each delegate present and voting shall cast their pro rata share of the total delegate voting strength of the Post. A roll call may be required and entered upon the record of the Department Convention at the call of at least three officers or delegates representing at least three different Posts.

3. **The Post Commander may appoint a *Benefits Advisor* and such other chairmen and committees as deemed necessary to conduct the affairs of the Post or as may be required by Post Bylaws.**
4. Attention is directed to Section 213 of the National Bylaws concerning any Post in arrears for any financial obligations to County Council (if applicable), District, Department and National for fees, dues, poppy money, supply money, failing to have the office of Quartermaster properly bonded in accordance with Section 703, failing to ensure that the Post is properly insured in accordance with Section 709, failing to submit properly completed quarterly Post Trustees Report of Audit, Post Election Report for the ensuing year, or other obligations, shall be deprived of all representation in County Council and District meetings; County Council, District, Department and National Conventions. Such representation shall be restored promptly upon proper adjustment of such deficiencies.
5. Trustees shall not be eligible to serve as an elected officer, Adjutant or on a committee whose books, records and accounts are audited by the Trustees. Among the duties of the three (3) elected Post Trustees, they shall:
 - a. At least monthly, review the Monthly Report of Receipts and Expenditures of the Post Quartermaster.
 - b. Within thirty (30) days from the end of each quarter, properly audit the books and records of the Post Quartermaster, Post Adjutant and any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or on behalf of the Post and submit a Post Trustee's Report of Audit to the Department Quartermaster for referral to the Department Inspector.
 - c. The Report shall be in accordance with and upon such form as may be prescribed by the Adjutant General. The audit shall be signed by the Post Commander and Trustees, who shall, by their signatures, certify to the accuracy of the information contained therein.
 - d. Perform such other duties as may be incident to the office or may from time to time be required by the laws and usages of the organization or lawful orders from proper authority.
6. Proof of Eligibility Requirements for Officers: All Posts, Districts and Departments should be reminded of the provisions of Sections 216, 416, and 516 of the Manual of Procedure that officers, elected and appointed, shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted to the respective Adjutant and properly reviewed.
7. District Meetings Dates & Changes: District Commanders are reminded to notify the State Adjutant at okadj@vfw-oklahoma.org or okasstadj@vfw-oklahoma.org of any changes to district meetings including new dates for District meetings.

/os/
Jeff Harris
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /
Heidi Teeter
Adjutant

Commander Jeff Harris

Hello TEAM Oklahoma,

How is TEAM OKLAHOMA doing now that the warmer months are here with us now? But you know now that it is warmer, does not mean that our comrades do not want us to still check on them. So please call or just go over and say HI.

There are still comrades that have not paid their dues that we contact. Say hi and collect their dues. The State membership is over 96 % and climbing. We still have a few months to go on recruiting, but please don't stop.

We were in Washington D.C. for the VFW Washington Conference March 1-5. Joshua Starks, the National Legislative Chairman for Oklahoma set up the dates and times to meet with Senator Markwayne Mullins Senator Lankford, Congresswoman Stephanie Bice, Congressman Tom Cole, Congressman Kevin Hern and Congressman Frank Lucas. This all took three days to do, so Josh did a really good job at doing all this. Our goal was to tell them about the VFW's Legislative Priorities. Well, let me tell you how good a job Josh did. He made us all booklets showing us what it is wanted to talk to the group about. And when we sat down to talk to them, that is just what he did. Josh has studied these Priorities and knew just what to say. Oklahoma was so proud of Josh.

Monday there was a Reenactment of the March of the Bonus Army, we met at the Lincoln Memorial and started our tour of the Monuments. Now it all would have been just fine, but it was snowing and cold and little ole me was in my wheelchair. I braved the March. I was surprised to see how many were there with the bad weather.

We all got to go to the Joint hearing Testimony of Commander in Chief Carol Whitmore, where her message is simple and resolute: HONOR the CONTRACT. It was standing room only there. One of the major items that the Commander in Chief talked about was the MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT. If you do not know what this is then read on and talk to your congressmen to get it passed next year. It failed in Senate this year, the Senator from Wisconsin voted against it.

A lot of stuff is happening in the state. We have a new HQ building, we are starting a new VFW post in Choctaw, we are trying to get redistricting done to help the state. So, a lot of stuff needs to be done, and you would like to help just say " Hey what can I do?"

This month of April, is when elections will be going on. I am sure you could take an office of any kind to help your post out. Don't forget that the election forms must be sent to State HQ and to National. To make All State, you must have 101 % in membership and worked the programs. It is not a hard thing to do. I have looked at the Dashboard and a lot of posts and districts have already completed this. So, if you want to have an All-State post or district just look at the program book and get busy.

Well in closing comrades, let's all get together and get our stuff done. TEAM OKLAHOMA can do what needs to be done. I am so proud to be the State Commander for Oklahoma. You have all done so much for the VFW and you should be proud.

T.E.A.M. Oklahoma,

Jeff Harris

State Commander
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Senior Vice Commander Tony McGrew

WHO DAT!!

At first this may sound kind of comical. However, if you are from the deep-south it has a more probing meaning. It is a question not of simplicity but of more depth. Someone wants to really know who you are, they want to know your identity. You do have one and that is something we probably never thought much about. After a little searching and investigation, I came across an article on the net discussing identity. You cannot have an identity without a past, so our identity could be the sum total of our past experiences. Pretty bold statement but if you think about it, sounds reasonable, doesn't it?

I believe most of us, as members of the VFW, share a very large number of similar experiences. So, does this mean we have similar identities? I think we do. Are you a leader? Do you like to get things done? Do you have a low tolerance for nonsense? So, can our identity be shaped by our past, including experiences, relationships, and memories? If so, then true identity must be a conscious, evolving choice. Relying on past experiences to define current identity is limiting and prevents progress. Now that is heavy, but well worth thinking about.

Here is some food for thought. After thinking about this for a while I came to the conclusion that since we all have similar military, even shared experiences, different pasts, if you will, is the identity of your Post the collective identity of its members?

Now, here's the BIG question. What is your Post's Identity? What is it known for? You should know this!

I challenge each Post to do a self-discovery to determine your unique Identity.

With Respect and gratitude for all that you do,

Tony McGrew

State Senior Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Candidate for State Commander

Junior Vice Commander Larry Hurd

Hello from the paw-paw patch.

As we can see the weather is typically unpredictable. This month has been a good month with the Department membership increasing and is now up to 96.0%.

The VFW Washington conference was very interesting. All of the Departments except for the Department of Europe and Arkansas had their Department Junior Vice Commanders and their Adjutant/Quartermasters at the conference. It was a great way to learn about what the other departments are doing and meeting with our representatives. Our conference members only met with Senator Lankford. The other Oklahoma senators and congressman were in committee meetings so we met with their defense representatives. Only one representative was not familiar with the VFW resolutions.

Senator Lankford met everyone and shook their hand. When I met with him he said you look familiar. I asked him if he remembered when he came to Altus before he was elected the first time and he was stopped by an Altus Police officer. He said he did remember so I told him that I was the officer. He had a big smile and shook my hand. He also said in his briefing that the mother of all bombs was built in McAlester and that our military mission was to take out the military equipment and infrastructure while the Israeli mission was to take out the government.

On Monday we had our first meeting. After the meeting and the fact that it was snowing hard, we all went back to the hotel to change clothes as the VFW was having a remembrance Bonus Army March from 1932. The Bonus Army March was an army march on the capital to get congress to Honor the Contract and start taking care of the military members that were hurt in the WWI. So, the VFW marched from the Lincoln memorial to all five of the memorials in the park and we all did the march as the snow fell.

On Tuesday we attended the Commander in Chief's testimony then went to other meetings. During the CIC's testimony the whole Armed Services Committee members were very upbeat and anxious to vote for the Major Richard Starr Act and get it passed. Later that day Senator Ron Johnson from Wisconsin voted "no" twice, once to vote down the Act and the second "no" was on a vote to bring the Act back to the floor. Everybody went to his office to talk to him. But of course, he was not there. His defense aid was also gone. The staffer that answered the phone was the only one there. So, the Oklahoma members took our picture outside of his office with thumbs down.

All of the other representatives we met with were very interested in our resolutions and knowledgeable on the subject. So, this is a short report on our Washington Conference and I hope the membership got their monies worth from the Junior Vice and Adjutant/Quartermaster at the conference.

Respectfully,

Larry Hurd

State Junior Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

State Surgeon *Deric Duncan*

Comrades,

As we move into the spring season here in Oklahoma, it is critical that we begin preparing for severe weather. Storms, high winds, and rapidly changing conditions are a reality we face every year, and preparation can make all the difference.

First, I encourage every Post to take time to review your facility. Check your insurance coverage, especially for high wind and storm damage. Inspect your building for any roof damage or issues that may have resulted from winter freezes. Addressing these concerns now can prevent much larger problems later.

Preparation also extends beyond our buildings. When storms impact our communities, many will look to the VFW for leadership and support. This is an opportunity for us to be ready. Consider organizing basic supply collection efforts at the Post or District level so that you are prepared to respond quickly after a storm. As Team Oklahoma, we can make a real difference when our communities need us most.

Equally important is taking care of our own. Be proactive in checking on the members of your Post. There is no worse feeling than discovering a comrade was impacted by a storm and no one knew because we failed to reach out. A simple call or message can make all the difference.

In addition, with everything currently taking place in the Middle East, there is a great deal of uncertainty affecting our active duty, Reserve, and National Guard families. Many of us have been in that position. We understand the stress, the waiting, and the unknown. This is where our experience as veterans becomes invaluable. Reach out. Offer support, guidance, and reassurance where you can. Sadly, we have already seen Oklahomans lose their lives in the current conflict, and it is more important than ever that we stand together and help carry that burden.

This is also a time to emphasize buddy checks. It is easy to become overwhelmed by the constant flow of news and information. While staying informed is important, too much exposure can take a toll on mental health. Take time to check in on one another. Ask the question. Make the call. If someone is struggling, remind them they are not alone and that resources are available.

We have always taken care of each other. That is who we are.

Let's stay prepared, stay connected, and continue to look out for one another.

Respectfully,

Deric Duncan

State Surgeon
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars
"Bring the Spark, Ignite the Flame"

Adjutant/Quartermaster

Heidi Teeter

Comrades,

Hopefully, this bipolar Oklahoma weather is treating all of you better than it has been me. Between bouncing back and forth from warm to cold and the wind my sinuses and allergies are beating me up. I pray we get those April showers we always hear about because the dry weather is taking a toll on the state with all the wildfires. If you or someone you know has been affected by the wildfires, please reach out. We have a trailer full of supplies. I also highly encourage post leadership to keep an eye on the fires in your areas and consider opening your posts for anyone displaced by fire if needed. My post, MSG Earl Plumlee Post 4465 in Clinton is available if needed.

Please take note of the following dates:

- 2026 State Convention, June 11-14, 2026, Embassy Suites, Norman
- 2026 Fall Fest, October 9-11, 2026, Embassy Suites, Norman
- 2027 Mid-Winter, February 19-21, 2027, Renaissance Waterford, OKC
- 2027 State Convention, June 3-6, 2027, Embassy Suites, Norman
- 2028 Mid-Winter, February 11-13, 2028, Embassy Suites, Norman

The room block for 2026 State Convention is open. If you are using the VFW block please have your room booked by **MAY 21, 2026**. You can book online by clicking [VFW OK STATE CONVENTION 2026](#) or by calling 405-364-8040 and use code **90F (Nine Zero F)**. Auxiliary Secretary/Treasurer Deborah Minor-Gonzales and I will be meeting with our Embassy Suites event planner April 6 to work on details. We will get agendas and banquet information out as quickly as possible after that.

I have delegate strength out with these GOs; this does include the delegate fees. The delegate worksheets are attached as well. There are ***two*** different ones. There is one for ***state*** delegates and one for the ***National*** delegates. It is the post quartermaster's responsibility to ensure the post delegates are registered with National. If you want me to do your post delegate registration for National you ***MUST*** tell me and send the appropriate National dues. The ***state*** form can be submitted digitally by clicking [here](#). Below you will see Judge Advocate Randy Traxler talking about voting in the Training and Development entry. Please read that carefully and please make sure you have at least one registered delegate or alternate at State Convention on the floor when voting happens.

Assistant AQ Penny Jefferson and I have been working to update the Department dashboard we have it done with anything received prior to March 10th. There are some items that get submitted through the reporting, but I still have to input myself such as department or district meeting attendance. To keep Penny and I from having to sort through hundreds of reports I have created a form to be filled out. The digital version is [here](#) and a pdf fillable version is attached to the main body of these GOs. If you see anything missing, please email me at okadj@vfw-oklahoma.org and/or Penny at okasstadj@vfw-oklahoma.org. Again, if you need anything please reach out.

Charlie Mike,
Heidi Teeter

State Adjutant/Quartermaster
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Judge Advocate Randy Traxler

The Judge Advocate plays a critical role in maintaining the integrity of the Post by ensuring decisions and guidance are grounded in the organization's governing documents. This requires more than opinion or past practice, it demands deliberate research and clear reference to the VFW National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure, and any applicable lower-level bylaws. Providing accurate, consistent interpretations protects the Post from procedural errors, disputes, and unintended violations.

When questions arise, the standard should be to **verify before advising**, this may mean taking a recess, Judge Advocates should take the time to review the appropriate sections, cite the governing authority, and communicate findings in a way that is clear and actionable for Post leadership. This approach builds credibility, reduces confusion, and reinforces confidence in the Post's decision-making process.

Ultimately, integrity at the Post level is sustained through disciplined adherence to bylaws and transparent, well-informed guidance. By grounding every recommendation in written authority, the Judge Advocate ensures fairness, consistency, and alignment with the mission and structure of the VFW. Any member can fulfill this role; it takes dedication and commitment to the organization's structure and documents.

Respectfully and fraternally,

Randy Traxler

Judge Advocate
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Chaplain Marcus King

Comrades,

As we move into April, I want to thank every Post and Auxiliary for the work you continue to do in your communities. The outreach, the steady presence, and the care you show to veterans and families are what keep our organization strong. I encourage you to stay engaged, stay visible, and continue looking for opportunities to serve right where you are.

This past Sunday was Vietnam Veterans Day. I hope each of us took a moment to honor those who served during that conflict and to remember the brothers and sisters who never made it home. Their sacrifice remains central to our mission.

With Memorial Day approaching, I look forward to hearing what your Posts are planning. Whether it's ceremonies, community partnerships, or educational events, these efforts help ensure that the meaning of Memorial Day is carried forward with clarity and respect.

I also want to remind everyone that The Wall That Heals will be in Oklahoma in May.

- Bartlesville: May 7–10
- Edmond (Mitch Park): May 14–17

This exhibit provides a powerful opportunity for reflection and remembrance. I encourage Posts to help spread the word, support attendance, and assist host communities however you can.

Thank you for the way you continue to serve. Your commitment makes a difference.

In service and support,

Marcus King

State Chaplain

Department of Oklahoma

Veterans of Foreign Wars

 vfwokchaplain@outlook.com

 405.651.5509

Training and Development

Randy Traxler and Jim Bassett

Delegate Strength & Voting – Quick Guide

Veterans of Foreign Wars Training & Development

What is Post Delegate Strength?

- A Post votes based on its **assigned number of delegate votes**
- This is called **delegate strength**
- The Post vote is cast as a **single block total**

Example:

Post = 10 votes → Post casts exactly 10 votes

Who Carries the Votes?

- Only **credentialed delegates (or seated alternates)**
- Delegates present carry the **entire Post vote**

Example:

Post has 10 votes, only 6 delegates present

Those 6 delegates still cast all 10 votes

Commander Voting

- A Commander may have an **individual vote**
- This vote is **separate from the Post**

Does NOT:

- Add to Post strength
- Change Post vote total

Example:

Post = 10 votes

Commander aligns = still 10 Post votes

You may hear:

“Post XYZ – 10 + 1”

- 10 = Post delegate strength
- +1 = Commander's individual vote

This reflects alignment, not increased Post strength

Past Department Commanders

- May also have **individual voting rights**
- Their vote is **independent of the Post**

Even when "voting with the Post":

- They are aligning, not adding votes (and this means a candidate loses a vote towards majority)

"Voting with the Post"

- Means voting the same way as the Post delegation
- Does NOT increase voting power

Alignment does not equal additional strength

Commander as Sole Representative (Critical)

If a Commander is:

- A credentialed delegate, and
- The only representative present for the Post

They can only cast **one vote at a time**:

- Either as a delegate (Post vote), or
- As a Commander (individual vote)

They cannot cast both simultaneously

This is why **delegate depth is critical**. A properly authorized individual should be present to cast the Commander's vote AND a delegate that can cast the delegate vote is critical.

Full Example

Post Delegate Strength: 10 votes

At Convention:

- 6 Delegates carry all 10 votes
- Commander has 1 individual vote
- Commander casts votes as 10 + 1
- Past Department Commander has 1 individual vote but chooses to "vote with their post"

Total Votes Cast: 11

Post Vote Remains: 10

Bottom Line

- Delegate strength defines the Post's voting power
- Only credentialed delegates carry that strength
- Individual votes (Commander, Past Department Commander, etc.)
 - May align
 - Do not increase Post votes

Ensure your Post sends enough delegates to fully represent its voting strength.

Respectfully,

Randy Traxler

State Education Co-Chair
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Jim Bassett

State Education Co-Chair
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Redistricting

Deric Duncan

Comrades,

As we get closer to the Department Convention, the Redistricting Committee continues to work diligently to present a plan that strengthens the Posts, Districts, and the Department of Oklahoma as a whole.

We encourage all members to reach out to the committee with any questions or concerns. We have held multiple open meetings for the membership, allowing voices from across the Department to be heard. Through those discussions, we are seeing strong engagement and hearing from many Posts that are excited to finally bring this proposal forward for a vote.

Change can be uncomfortable. However, change can also be necessary for growth.

Up to this point, much of our focus has been on the mechanics and structure of the proposal. Now, we want to highlight something equally important: the benefits of bringing together different strengths, ideas, and approaches within our Districts.

Every Post in our Department is unique. Each brings valuable experience, successful programs, and proven ideas that others may not yet have explored. As new Posts are aligned within Districts, this does not mean we lose the relationships we have built. Instead, it creates new opportunities to learn from one another and expand what is possible.

For example, one Post in our Department successfully runs a fundraiser through popcorn sales. Another offers music classes for veterans. These ideas may not fit every Post, but for some, they could become valuable tools to enhance their local impact. By working more closely across District lines, we open the door to sharing these successes and adapting them to meet the needs of our own communities.

There is strength throughout this Department. Redistricting gives us the opportunity to connect that strength in new ways.

This is not just about drawing new lines. It is about building a stronger, more connected Department. It is about learning from one another, supporting one another, and growing together.

As Team Oklahoma, we will continue to make each other better.

Yours in service,

Deric Duncan

MIA/POW Chair

Department of Oklahoma

Veterans of Foreign Wars

"Bring the Spark, Ignite the Flame"

Veterans and Military Support

Jim Bassett

With activity worldwide, units are again being deployed. Reach out to your locale units and find out how we can help. I also encourage each post to reach out to units in their area to build a relationship with them. If you are unsure, let me know and I can help you find someone.

I would also like each post that has adopted a unit to contact them and find out what events they will need help on in the upcoming year. From July to June. We can fill out the MAP grant when the window opens and hopefully have them funded. I also suggest identifying one member of the post as the main point of contact (POC) with your unit. This POC will be the one they reach out to and coordinate to support their needs. It may be the Commander, Quartermaster, Adjutant, or any post member that is willing to take it on.

The impact that VMS has in Oklahoma is huge! We have provided \$146,392 for 191 applicants. We provided \$75,498 in Military Assistant Program (MAP) grants to military units.

Please start thinking about supporting SportClipss in October. They will be doing their annual VFW Help-A-Hero Scholarship fundraiser. If there is a SportClips that is near you, talk to them. During the fundraiser, visit the shop and welcome patrons. Tell them about this outstanding program. Hint, hint!! You can use this as major talking point with potential members in uniform. This program has awarded \$198,900 to 48 military recipients in Oklahoma. While writing this article, one more scholarship was awarded. More than \$15 million has been awarded since 2010. Support this worthy program.

Jim Bassett

State VMS Chair
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services

Tony McGrew and Jim Bassett

The VA and ODVA are looking for volunteers to either help with residents or just visit them. If your post is interested in visiting the ODVA homes or the VA hospitals, let us know and we can help coordinate your group.

The VA as well as ODVA have been asking for help. The list below is from the VA Center in Oklahoma City. I'd imagine that the list would be almost identical for the Tulsa area VA as well as the ODVA homes throughout the state.

Personal Care Items:

- Deodorant (men & women)
- Body Wash 3 in 1 (men)

- Body Wash (women)
- Shampoo/Condition or 2 in 1
- Shaving Cream & multi-blade razors
- Hairbrushes and combs
- Denture grip
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Lip Balm
- Lotion
- Beard trimmers/electric razors

Men's Clothing: (NEW ONLY)

- Men's sweatpants (S-4XL)
- Men's T-shirts (S-4XL)
- Men's underwear (M-3XL)
- Men's pajama pants (M-4XL)
- Men's slippers (S-XXL)
- Men's shoes (8-14)
- Belts (all sizes)

Women's Clothing: (NEW ONLY)

- Women's sweatpants (S-XXL)
- Women's underwear (S-XXL)
- Women's sports bra (no wire or clasps) (M-XXXL)
- Women's shirts (preferably loose fitting) (S-XXL)
- Women's slippers (M-XXL)
- Women's shoes (7-10)

Other Miscellaneous items (NEW ONLY)

- Coffee (large cans for coffee program)
- Puzzle Books, Craft Kits, Models
- Adult Coloring Books, Colored pencils
- Adult backpacks
- Packaged snacks/bottles of individual water
- Quilts (used for pinning ceremonies)
- Afghans (given to cancer patients)

SEASONAL ITEMS (NEW ONLY):

- Coats (Men & Women – sizes M-3XL)
- Gloves (preferably warm heavy-duty)
- Stocking cap/beanie
- Face masks/gators
- Hand and Feet warmers
- Tent (1-2 person)
- Thermal underwear (Long-johns)
- Blankets
- Off or bug repellant (summer)

Please ship or drop off items to:
 Oklahoma City VA Health Care System
 CDCE (Voluntary Service) Room GB121

921 NE 13th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
Questions? 405-456-5162

Thank you for all you do for our Veterans!

We encourage you to volunteer at homes or hospitals. If you are interested in the VA hospital, let us know. Contact Tony McGrew, tony.vfw8706@gmail.com. Or Jim Bassett, bassettj15@yahoo.com.

Tony McGrew

Jim Bassett

State VAVS Chair
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

VOD/Patriot Pen/Teacher of the Year

Jim Bassett

Last month (it came out separately) I sent out the figures for the Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teacher of the Year programs. I'm including them this month to make sure that you can see them. I think we have a reporting issue. And no, the new themes for the year are not released yet.

Going over the numbers and listening to problems with the overall program I wanted to make sure that every Post and District Chair are completing the reports. Each Chair should be submitting one report to the Department for the Department's Dashboard. That is easy enough, the Department Quartermaster/ Adjutant can help. The Department Assistant Quartermaster /Adjutant can also help. Each Post and District are also required to submit a report on the National Dashboard. Again, the Department QM/A can help, so can the VoD/PP/ToY Committee members. If you have questions, feel free to contact me and we can talk about it. If you want training on the program or Scholars App we can do that too.

- Voice of Democracy – Posts participating 22, Auxiliaries 11, and districts 11, total of 483 students reported on the National Dashboard.
- Patriot's Pen – Posts participating 24, Auxiliaries 17, and districts 11, total of 546 students reported on the National Dashboard.
- Teacher of the Year – Posts participating 8, Auxiliaries 3, and districts 5, with 13 participating schools, 24 teachers reported on the National Dashboard.

Students applying through Scholars App:

- 385 completed with 98 who started the process but did not complete the process.
- Over 4,670 accessed and viewed the scholarships.

So approximately one third of the applications came from Scholars App. Notice the over 4,000 number that looked. That is over 4,000 students that looked at our scholarship and had the

door opened for thousands of other scholarships. Overall, our numbers on Voice of Democracy have increased. So has the Teacher of the Year.

I also want to thank the other committee members, Frank Whitlock, and Mike Devenitch, as well as chairs in the post and district level for their hard work. This is a great program and recruiting tool.

Jim Bassett

State VoD/PP/ToY Chair
Department of Oklahoma

ESport *Deric Duncan*

Comrades,

As we begin developing a Department-level YouTube and Twitch presence as part of our Esports initiative, we want to provide a brief update on what we are doing and why it matters to the future of our organization.

This effort is not about chasing numbers or focusing on gaming alone. It is about building new avenues to reach veterans, connect Posts across Oklahoma, and create additional ways for members to engage with one another and with the VFW mission.

Post 4938 has been serving as a testing ground to understand how this works in practice. Through consistent scheduling, veteran-centered content, and interactive livestreams, we are learning how digital platforms can function as an extension of the Post, a place where veterans can gather, talk, share experiences, and learn about the VFW before ever walking through our doors.

We are now taking those lessons and beginning to structure a Department framework by:

- Establishing Department YouTube and Twitch channels to create a unified presence.
- Providing Posts with an opportunity to participate without needing specialized equipment or technical expertise.
- Using livestreams and digital programming to highlight Service Officers, programs, and community impact.
- Creating ways for Posts across the state to connect and collaborate rather than operate in isolation.
- Exploring future Department-level esports events and online outreach that support membership growth and visibility.

This initiative is simply another tool to serve our members and ensure the VFW remains strong and relevant for the next generation of veterans.

We will continue building this carefully and transparently, always focused on how it can support Posts and enhance the work already being done across Oklahoma.

Respectfully,

Deric Duncan

State Surgeon

Department of Oklahoma

Veterans of Foreign Wars

"Bring the Spark, Ignite the Flame"

POW/MIA ***Deric Duncan***

As we move into the spring season, there are many meaningful ways for Posts and Districts to recognize and honor those who remain Missing in Action.

One of the most impactful efforts is to organize a vigil within your community. These events provide a moment of reflection and ensure that the sacrifices of our missing service members are never forgotten. Posts are also encouraged to create outdoor displays that visibly recognize those still unaccounted for, helping to raise awareness among the public.

Another important initiative is to reach out to and invite the families of the missing into your Post. Recognizing their sacrifice and maintaining that connection reinforces our commitment to never forget.

Additionally, spreading awareness remains one of the most powerful tools we have. Members are encouraged to utilize resources such as the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) website to learn about individual service members who are still missing. Sharing their profiles on social media helps keep their names and stories alive within our communities.

There are countless ways to ensure that we continue to honor and remember those who have not yet returned home. It is our responsibility to keep their memory present and their sacrifice recognized.

Respectfully submitted,

Deric Duncan

MIA/POW Chairman

Department of Oklahoma

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From the Desks of the Department Adjutant Teeter and Public Relations Chair R. Traxler:

Stay Connected – Update Your Email and Check Your Inbox!

We want every member to receive the Department's *General Orders* and important updates without interruption. Please take a moment today to ensure we can reach you:

1. **Verify your email address** with your Post and on your VFW member record.
2. **Check your spam and junk folders** – if you find any Department emails there, mark them as “Not Spam” so future messages go directly to your inbox.

Your involvement starts with staying informed. Help us strengthen communication across the Department by making sure you and your fellow members are connected and receiving the information you need.

We Want to Feature YOU for Warrior Wednesday!

Every week, we're spotlighting the dedicated veterans and leaders who make our organization stronger — and we want your story to be next. “Warrior Wednesday” is our way of celebrating the service, sacrifice, and continued commitment of VFW members across the Department.

📌 Here's how you can be featured:

- Send us your **name, current position, Post number, and location**
- Share your **branch of service, years served, MOS, and eligibility details**
- Tell us **why you're active in the VFW** and what keeps you engaged
- Add a few **hobbies or interests** that show who you are beyond the uniform
- Include **1–2 high-quality photos** — one from your time in service and one current

Submit your information to okadj@vfw-oklahoma.org, okasstadj@vfw-oklahoma.org or oktraining@vfw-oklahoma.org and join us in highlighting the stories that inspire, connect, and strengthen our VFW family. Let's make every Wednesday a celebration of the warriors among us!

DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

D-1 > May 2nd, Locust Grove, 1100, State Senior Vice Commander Tony McGrew
D-3 > May 2nd, Stigler, 1100, State Commander Jeff Harris
D-4 > May 2nd, Durant, 1100, State A/Q Heidi Teeter
D-5 > May 3rd, Claremore, 1400, State Commander Jeff Harris
D-7 > May 2nd, Henryetta, 1100, State Surgeon Deric Duncan
D-8 > May 9th, Ponca City, 1100, State Jr Vice Commander Lary Hurd
D-9 > TBD
D-10 > May 9th, Del City, 1000, State Surgeon Deric Duncan
D-13 > April 25th, Clinton, 1100, State Surgeon Deric Duncan
D-14 > Apr 25th, Ardmore, 1000, State Senior Vice Commander Tony McGrew
D-15 > May 16th, Woodward, 1100, State A/Q Heidi Teeter

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Easter >> April 5
Easter Monday>>April 6
Tax Day>> April 15
Oklahoma VFW Birthday>>April 16>>105 years young
Department Senior Vice Commanders Training>>April 16-19>Kansas City, MO
NVS Accredited Representative Proficiency Training>> April 26-29> Annapolis, MD
Loyalty Day>>May 1
Cinco De Mayo>> May 5
VE Day, German Unconditional surrender signed, 1944>>May 8
Mother's Day>>May 10
Memorial Day>>May 25
Oklahoma VFW State Convention>>11-14 June>> Embassy Suites, Norman, OK
Flag Day>>June 14
Army Birthday>> June 14>> 251 years young
Juneteenth>> June 19
Father's Day>>June 21