



*Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars*



P.O Box 369 Choctaw. OK 73020
580 359 2963/ www.vfwoklahoma.org

August 2026

2026-2027 Series

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

— Mahatma Gandhi

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

General Orders No. 02

2026-2027 Series

1. Pursuant to National By-Laws Article VII Miscellaneous Provisions, Section 703, Bonds, "Each officer accountable for funds or property pursuant to any provision of these Bylaws shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, they may be accountable. The bond premium shall be paid from the funds of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Department, District, County Council or Post to which each officer is accountable. The bonds of such accountable officers, in amount and as to surety, shall be approved by their respective units and held by their respective Commanders. The Commander of each unit shall be responsible for the proper and adequate bonding of all accountable officers in their unit."

2. **Attention of Post & District Commanders & Quartermasters:** Commanders & Quartermasters are reminded at all levels of the annual requirement to complete an IRS 990, IRS 990N, for tax exemption requirements. Failure to complete the required IRS 990 may result in loss of tax-exemption status.

3. **Department Directory/Roster:** Commanders & Adjutants are asked to send all corrections, changes etc. of the Department Roster to okadj@vfw-oklahoma.org for changes.

4. **District Meetings Dates & Changes:** District Commanders are reminded to notify the State Adjutant at okadj@vfw-oklahoma.org of any changes to district meetings including new dates for District meetings.

/os/
Tony McGrew
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /
Heidi Teeter
Adjutant

***Commander
Tony McGrew***

Hello Comrades

There's no doubt the past year was a big success for the Oklahoma VFW. 16 All American Posts and 5 All American Districts. Thank you for the dedication and hard work it took to accomplish this milestone in Oklahoma VFW history.

If you couldn't make it to the School of Instruction at the Altus Post on the 18th you missed one of the best Schools of Instruction, I have ever attended, as a matter of fact, I think we struck Gold, thanks to the Training Team. I'm calling it the Gold Standard for SOI's. Not only was it fun I think everyone learned a lot. Not to worry though, we have more to come at the Tulsa and Guthrie Posts.

Big, even huge event is coming in March. We are planning on holding a Vet Con Event at the fairgrounds, exciting, right? More on this later. Be safe and good to each other.

Respectfully,

Tony McGrew

State Commander
Department of Oklahoma

***Senior Vice Commander
Larry Hurd***

Hello from the Paw Paw patch.

The National Convention is over and I learned a lot. Corey Geisler is the CIC, Glenn Umberger is the Senior Vice and Bobby Lovergn is the Junior Vice.

If you noticed the proposed bylaw change to do away with the relief fund, sec 704 passed as sec 218 is the relief fund for the posts. Sec 704 was the relief fund for the districts and departments. Also, sec 1102 also failed. Those are two of the many proposed changes. There also was a proposed change to eligibility with a change to the GWOTE ribbon so if you were in SUPPORT of GWOTE but did not go in actual combat area of operation you were awarded the medal and became eligible to join the VFW. This also failed. That is just some of the changes.

The trip was good. There were bunches of donkeys and horses by the road and took lots of pictures. If the post has not ordered the new podium book, order them from the

Department Adjutant. They will probably be available in September. That's all for now, have a great month.

Make an Impact, Veterans First.

Respectfully,

Larry Hurd

State Senior Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma

*Junior Vice Commander
Deric Duncan*

Comrades,

VFW National Convention has just concluded, and I can honestly say I have never been more energized about the direction of our organization. As our Senior Vice Commander, Larry Hurd, likes to call me, "Sizzle," and after this convention, I am more fired up than ever.

Every day, our organization is moving forward, answering the call that the Veterans of Foreign Wars has stood for since its founding. We are fighting for veterans in Congress, supporting them in our communities, and providing services that change lives. Simply put, no one does more for veterans than the VFW.

Now it is our turn here in Oklahoma.

I am calling on every Post, every District, and every member to kick the burners up another notch. This is going to be a year of action. This is the year we make a lasting impact not only in the lives of veterans, but also in the lives of their families and the communities they call home.

The challenges before us are real, but so are the opportunities. Together we are fighting for passage of the Major Richard Star Act, ensuring that combat-disabled retirees receive the benefits they have earned. We are also standing against legislation that would take benefits away from one group of veterans to give them to another. The VFW has always been the voice of veterans, and now more than ever, that voice must be heard.

For too long, people have tried to define the VFW with outdated stereotypes. Some say the VFW is only for older veterans. Some think it is just a bar or a place where veterans gather to tell war stories.

They could not be more wrong.

The VFW is an organization that advocates for veterans on Capitol Hill. It provides emergency assistance to veterans in crisis. It mentors our youth through scholarships and community programs. It honors those who served, remembers those who never came home, and builds the camaraderie that reminds every veteran they are never alone.

That is who we are.

But none of this happens without you.

If you're wondering how to become more involved, reach out. Talk with your Post Commander. Contact your District officers. Call your Department officers. Ask where you can serve. Volunteer for a committee. Start a new program. Help another Post. Find a way to bring one more veteran into our family.

Every one of us has a spark. When we combine those sparks, we create a flame that cannot be ignored.

Together, we will prove once again that no one does more for veterans than the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Let's get to work.

Bring the Spark. Ignite the Flame.

Yours in Comradeship,

Deric Duncan

State Junior Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma

Surgeon
James Patterson

MENTAL HEALTH AS IT RELATES TO RECRUITING

Did anyone in this entire Department of Oklahoma VFW join this organization because you wanted or needed more stress or drama in your life? I'm betting that no one person had that as a reason for volunteering your own money and time to join our VFW. We all have unavoidable stress, and or drama in our various parts or compartments of our lives, such as family, and jobs. As we raise children, go through years of relationships with our spouse or significant other, lose parents, grandparents, etc., each phase of our life we will face things that cause us stress. In our jobs as we move towards retirement we will have great days and not so great days as we deal with various stress and drama from coworkers to deadlines, pay issues etc. After retirement we may stress dealing with a fixed income, less flexibility in our financial

situation, and health issues. The last thing we need in our lives is the one area that we chose to devote our time and money to, the VFW, to become an area of stress or drama. Now to be fair, losing a close friend, an invaluable member of a post like a Quartermaster or Commander for example will cause us to grieve, and most surely have some stress as we try to keep that post on track after losing someone so important to its function. What we don't need is for a new or even a long-time member, to be so put off by self-inflicted stress or drama that they quit participating or to renew their annual membership. Imagine a new annual member comes into his/her first post meeting and all they see and hear is bickering or gotcha moments instead of a well-run post meeting. That impacts retention, that member may never return or renew because they don't want to be around the drama. Our SOI this year is doing a great job of educating us on the ins and outs of how to conduct a meeting. I would add that from a mental health viewpoint, understand that the VFW is a membership run organization, and we vote at each level on all kinds of topics, and we will not all always agree. I encourage us all to remember that having a different opinion is ok, that if we don't take every issue as a personal attack if someone votes against your view, we can avoid a lot of stress and drama. I also encourage each of us to look for ways to ask questions in a polite, calm manner of those whom you may disagree with or about the proper process of doing whatever it is that we may be trying to do. In a meeting avoid those "gotcha" with a bylaw, by voicing your concern as a question, if possible, ask for a recess to get clarification, if we do things from a standpoint that we are all in the same boat and want the best for our organization and for our fellow veterans we can avoid a lot of the stress and drama that hurts our retention and recruiting efforts. Strive for unity of purpose and we can improve our entire organization from Post to Department.

Have a great August!

Best regards,

James Patterson

State Surgeon
Department of Oklahoma

*Adjutant/Quartermaster
Heidi Teeter*

Comrades,

August is here, which means school will be starting. Now is a great time to start getting the VOD and Patriot Pen information out to your schools. Information on the scholarships can be found [here](#). Due to redistricting Scholar's App had to completely wipe our system. VOD and Patriot Pen Chairman Frank Whitlock and I are working on getting the District and Post portal's put back in. If you downloaded the QR code prior to July 14, please let either Frank or I know. Scholar's App has a way of making them work with the new portals, but we need to know who you are.

The 127th National Convention just wrapped in Reno, NV. I am very proud of Oklahoma, as we had a great showing of delegation. We passed quite a few Bylaw, Manual of Procedures, Ritual

amendments, and Resolutions. I will get something built and sent out letting you know what passed, while we wait on the 2027 Podium books to come in.

If your post is having an event, please report that to your District Commander prior to the 25th of the month so that they can let me know. We will publish these events in the General Orders each month to get as much awareness of these events as possible. To truly grow we must all work together.

I have again included the letter and questionnaire for the VFW Accountable Officer Bond and the VFW Club Manager/Employee Bond. The accountable officer bond is valid for September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027, and the manager/employee bonds are valid for October 1, 2026-September 30, 2027. When you are filling out the questionnaire, please put the amount you want covered for not the total cost of the bond. The rates for both bonds are as follows:

- \$4.50 per thousand for \$3,000 - \$99,000 (example $\$4.50 \times 3 = \13.50)
- \$3.50 per thousand for \$100,000 - \$250,000 (example $\$3.50 \times 100 = \350)
- \$2.50 per thousand for \$251,000 - \$299,000 (example $\$2.50 \times 251 = \627.50)
- \$2.00 per thousand for \$300,000 - \$600,00 (example $\$2.00 \times 300 = \600)

As a reminder if you are mailing your 990 or audit to the Department make sure to keep a copy in your records. These are items that are checked during post inspections.

Upcoming dates for training and meetings:

- School of Instruction – August 29, 2026 – Tulsa Post 577 – 9:30 am
- Officer Training – September 19-20 – Guthrie and Edmond Posts
- 2026 Fall Fest – October 9-10 – Embassy Suites in Norman
- 2027 Mid-Winter – February 19-21 – Renaissance Waterford OKC
- 2027 State Convention – June 3-6 – Embassy Suites in Norman
- 2027 Fall Fest STILL WORKING AS WE HAVE TO WAIT ON COLLEGE FOOTBALL SCHEDULES
- 2028 Mid-Winter – February 11-13 – Embassy Suites in Norman
- 2028 State Convention – June 8-11 – Embassy Suites in Norman

I look forward to working with each one of you throughout the year. Again, if you need anything please reach out.

Charlie Mike,

Heidi Teeter

State Adjutant/Quartermaster
Department of Oklahoma

Judge Advocate
Randy Traxler

PMCS for Your Post

Every veteran understands the value of **Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS)**. Before a vehicle leaves the motor pool, operators inspect it, correct deficiencies they can, and report those they cannot. They don't wait for a breakdown to discover something was overlooked.

As we begin a new VFW fiscal year, our Posts should adopt the same mindset. Strong Posts don't happen by chance—they are maintained through routine inspections of leadership, finances, records, and procedures. Waiting until an annual inspection, audit, or disagreement to identify problems is like waiting for an engine to fail before checking the oil.

Conduct a leadership PMCS by asking a few simple questions:

- Are our governing documents current, accessible, and understood?
- Are our financial reports, audits, and records accurate and up to date?
- Are meeting minutes, elections, and committee appointments properly documented?
- Do our officers understand their duties, and are we developing future leaders?
- If our Post operates a canteen or other business activity, are we complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including required tax filings such as the IRS Form 990 and any licensing or reporting requirements?
- Are we correcting small issues before they become major problems?

One of the most important lessons from PMCS is that **finding a deficiency is not a failure; ignoring it is**. Every issue identified is an opportunity to improve the health and readiness of your Post.

The Judge Advocate's role is not simply to resolve disputes through advising based on our governing documents after they occur. It is to help leaders identify risks early, encourage compliance with our governing documents and applicable laws, and strengthen the organization before problems develop.

As you start this fiscal year, take time to conduct a PMCS on your Post. Fix what you can, make a plan for what you cannot, and keep your Post mission ready.

Mission-ready Posts, like mission-ready equipment, don't stay that way by accident; they require consistent preventive maintenance, disciplined leadership, and a commitment to compliance.

Do not forget to check on your rarely seen veterans and families. They are in all ways what helps keep a post mission ready.

v/r,

Randy Traxler

Judge Advocate
Department of Oklahoma

Chaplain Marcus King

Comrades,

As we return home from the National Convention and settle back into the rhythm of our Posts and Districts, I want to share a reflection that came out of my own moments of overstimulation while navigating the pace, noise, and constant movement of the week. It reminded me of something simple but essential to how we lead.

Every member of our team is unique. Each one brings strengths, skills, and experiences that can lift your Post and District when they are recognized and put to good use. At the same time, every member also has limitations — areas where they may struggle, or environments that overwhelm them, or tasks that simply do not fit their abilities. Good leadership means knowing both sides.

I encourage you to take time this month to look at your people with intention. Identify what they do well. Notice where they shine. Give them opportunities that match their strengths. And just as importantly, understand their weaknesses without judgment. Protect them from tasks that drain them or set them up for frustration. When we do this, we build teams that function with respect, patience, and purpose.

Cherish your members. All of them. The loud ones, the quiet ones, the steady ones, the anxious ones, the highly skilled, the brand-new, the ones who carry the room, and the ones who need a moment to breathe. They are the heart of your Post. When we value each person for who they are — not who we wish they were — we strengthen the entire organization.

As we move through the rest of the summer, keep looking out for one another. Lead with awareness. Serve with humility. And remember that the best teams are built not by perfection, but by understanding.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcus King

State Chaplain

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Department of Oklahoma

*Training and Development
Jim Bassett and Randy Traxler*

Comrades

The next School of Instruction will be conducted at VFW Post 577 in Tulsa on August 29.

Agenda/Schedule:

0930 AM: Start - Commanders welcome and remarks

0945 AM: Start Mock Meeting

1030 AM: Mock Meeting End - Debrief Starts

1130 AM: Break for Lunch

1 PM-UTC: Jeopardy begins

Commander's Closing Remarks

Overview: Department officers will conduct a mock meeting to provide an opportunity for members to observe and provide feedback on how they think meetings should go. Department officers will use the script document to run a mock meeting in a replicate-able way. Department Officers should read in advance and be prepared in order to demonstrate a clear and professional example.

The members attending will use the observer worksheet to take notes for discussion and mentorship after the mock meeting during a debrief.

Jeopardy will be used as part 2 of the training covering the following topics. CoA members are welcome to submit questions to help build out the game.

1. **Order in the House**

Motions, debate, voting, points of order, quorum, and parliamentary procedure.

2. **Roberts Rules will be changed to Know Your Bylaws**

National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure, Post bylaws, standing rules, and officer authority.

3. **Officer on Deck**

Duties and responsibilities of the Commander, Quartermaster, Adjutant, trustees, vice commanders, and appointed officers.

4. **Follow the Money**

Receipts, disbursements, audits, bonds, bills, authorization to spend, restricted funds, and financial controls.

5. **Meeting Mechanics**

Traditional versus contemporary meetings, order of business, minutes, committee reports, unfinished business, and closing procedures.

6. **Membership Matters**

Eligibility, applications, investigating committees, balloting, dues cards, transfers, and member rights.

7. **Programs with Purpose**

Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Teacher of the Year, Scout of the Year, Buddy Poppy, National Home, and community service.

8. **Rule of Ritual**

Officer stations, flag courtesies, guests, opening and closing ceremonies, honors, and proper forms of address.

9. What Should You Do?

Scenario-based questions involving disputes, illegal motions, missing reports, disruptive members, emergency spending, and procedural mistakes.

10. Misc.

Officer Training will be conducted on September 19-20. It will begin at the Sooner Post 4578 in Guthrie, but some comrades will move to the Francis E. Hamilton Post 4938 in Edmond. More details will follow in the next General Orders.

Respectfully,

Jim Bassett

State Education Co-Chair
Department of Oklahoma

Randy Traxler

State Education Co-Chair
Department of Oklahoma

Voice of Democracy Patriot's Pen Teacher of the Year Frank Whitlock

Well, it's that time of the year again, it's VOD and Patriot Pen. I know everybody has noticed by now that scholar's app has taken everybody out, myself, Heidi, Teeter and Brandy Schafer are doing our best to put every post back into the scholars app. We are working on this now, so please be patient with us and when we get all the Post back in, we will send out an email letting everybody know.

Thank you for your understanding and patience with us during this time.

Respectfully,

Frank Whitlock

Department VOD & PP Chairman
Department of Oklahoma

Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services Jim Bassett

The Military Order of the Cooties visited the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center on the 5th of June. They went around and greeted residents and staff. We found a professional artist going through rehabilitation there. I know the Cooties plan on many more visits in the upcoming years. All VFW and Auxiliary members are encouraged to do the same. Residents at the VA Medical

Center in Oklahoma City are anticipating visits. Get a group together, VFW, Auxiliary, or both. Cooties are visiting, why not the VFW and Auxiliary? The same for Military Order of the Cooties Auxiliary and VFW Riders Group.

As always, the VA is always looking for volunteers. They are needing from highly skilled to handing out popcorn and books. If you are interested, let us know. 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.

Jim Bassett

State VAVS Chair
Department of Oklahoma

Veterans and Military Support

Lee McCullum

Units have deployed. Are you working with them to make sure that they have what they need? What can we do for the deployed or their families? Please don't forget their loved ones while they are gone. We all have been in their place, remember how you felt. They feel the same.

We presented the 137th Special Operations Wing with over 100 pounds of food as well as a check for \$1,341. This is what our members have done, the pantry at the 137th supplies Tinker AFB including the 507th Air Refueling Wing, in addition to the entire Air National Guard and Army Guard of Oklahoma. We are going to do it again. No contest, just helping our fellow veterans that may need support.

SportClips Help-A-Hero fundraising starts in October. This is an annual event. Visit your local store, talk to them. Talk to the patrons and tell them you're supporting SportClips with their fundraising. Funny thing is that this simple thing increases their fundraising. Also generates people's interest in the VFW, the Auxiliary, and new members. The downside is it also generates veterans' interest in working a VA claim. But hey, that is what we do!

Lee McCullum

State VMS Chair
Department of Oklahoma

DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

- D-1** > August 1st, Tahlequah, 1100, District 5 Cdr Frank Whitlock
- D-4** > August 1st, Hugo, 1100, State Surgeon James Patterson
- D-5** > August 9th, Dewey, 1400, State Cdr Tony McGrew
- D-7** > August 1st, TBD, 1100, Past State Cdr Jeremy Owen
- D-8** > August 8th, Sapulpa, 1000, State Chaplain Marcus King
- D-9** > September 12th, Edmond, 1030, State JVC Deric Duncan
- D-10** > September 12th, Shawnee, 1000, State Cdr Tony McGrew
- D-13** > August 22nd, Clinton, 1100, State JVC Deric Duncan
- D-15** > September 29th, Lawton, 1100, State SVC Larry Hurd

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Coast Guard Birthday >> August 4th >> 236 years young

End of Operation Iraqi Freedom>>August 31, 2010

School of Instruction>> August 29>> Post 577, Tulsa

VJ Day: Japan Surrendered >>September 2, 1945>>Ending World War II

Recognition Day POW/MIA>>September 18

Labor Day >> September 7th >> HQ (National and Dept) Closed

AQ Training>>September 10-13, Kansas City (HQ closed)

Fall Legislative Conference >> September 14th – 17th, Washington DC

Patriot Day >> September 11th

Air Force Birthday >> September 18th >> 79 years young

Officer Training>>September 19th-20th>>Guthrie/Edmond