



*Department of Oklahoma  
Veterans of Foreign Wars*



P.O Box 1126 OKC. OK 73101-1126  
580 515-0567/ [www.vfwoklahoma.org](http://www.vfwoklahoma.org)

February 2025

2024-2025 Series

***“We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.”  
~Martin Luther King, Jr***

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

**General Orders No. 08**

**2024-2025 Series**

1. Pursuant to National By-Laws, Section 213 – Arrearages, Deficiencies and Omissions. “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 the 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.”

2. Pursuant to Article V, Sec 3 of the Department of Oklahoma, Veterans of Foreign Wars By-Laws, “A delegate registration fee established by the Council of Administration will be paid by each Post for every delegate to which it is entitled and by others authorized to cast a vote as defined by the National By-Laws. This fee may be increased/decreased at each succeeding convention by the Council of Administration. Said fees shall be paid to the State Quartermaster 15 days prior to the opening session of the Department Convention. Anyone wanting to register after this date will be assessed an additional fee of \$1.00 for each delegate registered. Post delegate fees are due and payable regardless of convention attendance. Post that do not pay prior to the convention will be assessed the delegate fees at the plus \$1.00 rate.” A listing of Posts currently in arrears of delegate fees are listed below.

Post/Member	Due Date	Amount	Post/Member	Due Date	Amount
Member Tucker, Jason	06/30/2024	6.00	Post 05307 VFW (D01)	06/30/2024	12.00
Post 01201 VFW (D08)	06/30/2024	36.00	Post 05805 VFW (D04)	06/30/2024	6.00
Post 01202 VFW (D10)	06/30/2023	6.00	Post 06141 VFW (D13)	06/30/2024	6.00
	06/30/2024	6.00	Post 07092 VFW (D15)	06/30/2024	6.00
Post 01843 VFW (D08)	06/30/2024	5.50	Post 07203 VFW (D13)	06/30/2024	6.00
Post 02270 VFW (D09)	06/30/2023	26.00	Post 07740 VFW (D09)	06/30/2024	9.00
Post 02847 VFW (D13)	06/30/2024	3.00	Post 10876 VFW (D10)	06/30/2024	12.00
Post 02855 VFW (D08)	06/30/2024	18.00	Post 11194 VFW (D10)	06/30/2023	30.00
Post 03085 VFW (D03)	06/30/2024	12.00		06/30/2024	30.00

Post 03656 VFW (D08)	06/30/2024	12.00		Post 11201 VFW (D14)	06/30/2024	6.00
Post 03669 VFW (D15)	06/30/2023	12.00				
	06/30/2024	12.00				

3. **Attention Post Commanders, Quartermasters, & Trustees.** Pursuant to Section 218 of the National By-Laws & Manual of Procedure, “Duty of Trustees” Trustees Report of Audit must be completed in detail at the close of each quarter, one of which ended December 31. Commanders are reminded that accurate and complete records shall be kept by all persons handling Post funds, including the Club Manager and Bingo Chairman. These records shall be audited by Post Trustees in the same manner as Post Quartermaster and Adjutant records.

4. **Attention Post Officers:** Pursuant to National By-Laws, Section 220 -Vacancies and Removal of Elected Officers or Committee Members.” Any elected Post officer or Committee member removed, by reason of failure to pay current dues of under the provision of this section shall not be eligible to serve in any Post office or committee in the same administrative year in which the officer of committee member is removed.

/os/  
DAN FULLER  
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /  
Heidi Teeter  
Adjutant

# *Commander Dan Fuller*

Greetings to all Comrades,

I would like to thank District # 10 at Midwest City and District #1 at Locust Grove for the two great meetings. I am always impressed with the dedication of the VFW Members and Auxiliary that put so much work into keeping our mission going. NOTE: District #1 is only .018% from becoming an All-American District.

We are doing well on the CICs mission for all departments to be 102%, Oklahoma has now moved into 7th place in the nation. We are still #1 in the Southern Conference! We will need just over 500 more members to reach the goal of 102%.

I am looking forward to our Winter Feast this month. We will have lots of work to get done, but I hope that we also take time to catch up with our brothers and sisters from across the state and support each other in the complex environment of bringing Americanism to the state and the cities that we resided. I believe we are very fortunate to have the opportunity to support our troops here and overseas.

Remember the 3 R's Recruit, Retain and Reinstate.

Endeavor To Persevere

A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both. ~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

Respectfully,

*Dan Fuller*

State Commander  
Department of Oklahoma

# *Senior Vice Commander Jeff Harris*

Comrades,

Greetings comrades, I hope everyone is doing well and all well. It's the Flu season so hope all is doing well. The year is just starting, and Oklahoma is in 6th place Nationally and 1st place in the Southern Conference with the state of Kentucky moving up as well. The state has done well in membership with the members we have that work membership recruiting very well.

I hope each post and district are working on their programs. Past State Commander Jim Basset has done a super job with VOD and PP. The 1st place winner in VOD is from Edmond and the 1st place winner in PP is from Muldrow. We will get to hear the speeches at the Mid-Winter Banquet. I hope we have a lot of people to show up for our meeting.

The Auxiliary will be having bingo on Friday, and they are having a Ways and means table set up. So, let's all go out and support them much as we can.

District meetings are happening this month and I am going to as many as I can. I want everyone to know that I am available to help with any post or district that needs help.

So, comrades, I look forward to seeing all of you at the Mid-winter meeting and I am a candidate for the office of State Commander, and I appreciate all support

Respectfully,

*Jeff Harris*

State Sr. Vice Commander

***Junior Vice Commander***  
***Tony McGrew***

Comrades,

January, the first month and the beginning of a new year has left us behind to plot a new course and plan the next 11 months of the new year, 2025.

I recently came across a speech that Theodore Roosevelt gave in 1910, which some call "The Man in The Arena"; the speech reminded me of those who have stood on the wall and bore the burden of freedom and gave their all. Below is a portion of this speech.

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat. Shame on the man of cultivated taste who permits refinement to develop into fastidiousness that unfits him for doing the rough work of a workaday world. Among the free peoples who govern themselves there is but a small field of usefulness open for the men of cloistered life who shrink from contact with their fellows. Still less room is not there for those who deride of slight what is done by those who actually bear the brunt of the day; nor yet for those others who always profess that they would like to take action, if only the conditions of life were not exactly what they actually are. The man who does nothing cuts the same sordid figure in the pages of history, whether he is a cynic, or fop, or voluptuary. There is little use for the being whose tepid soul knows nothing of great and generous emotion, of the high pride, the stern belief, the lofty enthusiasm, of the men who quell the storm and ride the thunder. Well for these men if they succeed; well also, though not so well, if they fail, given only that they have nobly ventured, and have put forth all their heart and strength. It is war-worn Hotspur, spent with hard fighting, he of the many errors and valiant end, over whose memory we love to linger, not over the memory of the young lord who but for the vile guns would have been a valiant soldier."

I urge all of you to get into the VFW Arena, even for just 1 round to make a difference.

Respectfully,

*Tony McGrew*

Candidate: State Senior Vice Commander.

*Surgeon  
Larry Hurd*

Comrades,

Hello from the Paw Paw patch in Southwest Oklahoma. A couple of months ago it was the hot paw paw patch. Now it's just cold. So, everyone be careful and stay warm and watch the roadways when driving. In the Veterans Affairs Council meeting in January the OK medical director advised all attendee's that the VA is having an AI generated text message that was going out to the Oklahoma veterans stating hope you kill yourself. If any veteran receives this email or one similar, he advised to notify the VA police. Currently the VA Police is processing several incidents and are trying to locate the originator and will file charges and prosecute them. Veterans Awareness Day awards will be at the State Capital on April 7th, 2025, at 1pm at the House of Representatives' chambers. The awards being presented will be the veteran of the year, veteran's family of the year. There will be several other awards being presented. If planning to go be early as seating is limited.

Mid-Winter convention will be February 21, 22 and 23. The Public servant awards, teacher of the year, VOD and Patriot Pen awards will be presented during the joint meeting. The meeting starts at 9am.

The OKVA has a new mental health 40,000 facility at 44 and 23. In March Ft. Sill will start a new Chemo Care clinic. Some private sector nursing homes are being taken off the VA nursing home list for poor care, not being finically responsible, and fraud. Up to January of this year the OKCVA medical hospital has seen 3080 more vets that the same item frame last year. OKCVA is the largest growing medical center.

With Mid-Winter convention right around the corner I am announcing my candidacy for the State Junior Vice Commander position. As your state Surgeon I have learned a lot about being the State Surgeon and now I would like to move up to the next level as your State Junior Vice Commander. Thank You for your support in advance. I will be at the Mid-Winter convention and willing to talk with any comrade that has any questions or just wants to talk.

From the Paw Paw patch stay healthy, be safe and I will see you at Mid-Winter

*Larry Hurd*  
State Surgeon  
Department of Oklahoma

*Service Officer  
James Dockemeyer*

Comrades,

During the Midwinter Conference Post Service Officer Training will be offered. We will address the new changes that developed during the last National Convention. The classroom setting will be Feb 21, 2025, from 2:00 pm until 4:00 pm in the Scissortail room at Embassy Suites NW.

v/r  
*James Dockemeyer*  
State Service Officer  
Department of Oklahoma

# *Adjutant/Quartermaster*

## *Heidi Teeter*

Comrades,

I would like to start this article off by addressing the emails that some have been receiving from what appears to be either Commander Fuller, District Commanders, or Post Commanders.

These emails started out coming from what appeared to be Commander Fuller. However, upon closer inspection it appears someone has created an email address using his name. When the response this person was looking to get was not achieved, they abandoned that one and tried again. This has happened several times with his name. I would like to reiterate that Commander Fuller would **never** send an email requesting anyone purchase gift cards. Recently these scammers have started doing the same thing but instead of using Commander Fuller's name they are using our Post and District Commanders' names.

Should you receive one of these emails, please forward them to [vfwokadj@outlook.com](mailto:vfwokadj@outlook.com). I am working to gather these fake email addresses and attempting to find out who is behind them, so that we can report them to the authorities. If you are unsure if your Post or District Commander actually sent said emails call them and verify. If you receive another email from Dan Fuller, please call or text me at 580-515-0567 to verify.

Following the "District Information" is an article from Judge Advocate Randy Traxler that highlights what to look for and what to do. I put it separate from the rest so that it would be easier to print and hang in your post if you desire.

At the end of these general orders, I have again included Mid-Winter information, if you have not yet purchased banquet tickets, please do so ASAP. **All banquet ticket orders need to be received by February 12.** If anyone has attempted to reserve a room and got told there were no more rooms, the hotel has given us more, however, the additional room block expires at 11:59 pm on February 7, 2025.

I have been working on getting the department dashboard and All-American dashboard updated with all information that I input and have received since January 2, 2025. District and Post Commanders, Quartermasters, and Adjutants please review the information under "Good Standing" if there is something missing (aside from SOI) please let me know. I have also again included a form that each District and Post needs to fill out and send back to me to receive credit for things like District Meetings, Department Meetings and Donations. Some of you may report this information when doing reporting, however, to pull that information I would need to sort through hundreds of reports. This form will hopefully streamline this portion of reporting and make it more efficient. Feel free to send this form to me as many times as needed to ensure you receive credit for everything.

As always, if anyone has any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Charlie Mike,

*Heidi Teeter*

State Adjutant/Quartermaster  
Department of Oklahoma

# *Judge Advocate*

## *Randy Traxler*

### **"Everyone Poops" and lessons in Humility from the Judge Advocate**

Mistakes are an unavoidable part of the human experience. Much like the universal truths humorously illustrated in the classic children's book *Everyone Poops*, making mistakes is something every single one of us does. And yet, admitting to mistakes often carries an unwarranted stigma, particularly in professional settings. This stigma can stifle growth, innovation, and collaboration. To foster a culture of learning and accountability, it's time we remove the shame associated with mistakes and adopt a healthier, more constructive response.

### **The Power of Normalizing Mistakes**

*Everyone Poops* uses humor and simplicity to normalize a universal experience, reminding readers that what's often considered taboo is simply a fact of life. In a similar vein, we must normalize the idea that making mistakes is a natural part of learning and growth. Acknowledging mistakes openly, without fear or judgment, creates an environment where individuals feel safe to take risks, explore new ideas, and own their actions.

However, normalizing mistakes doesn't mean we should trivialize them. Instead, it's about finding balance—acknowledging missteps while taking proactive steps to address and learn from them. That's where Brené Brown's TASC model comes in.

### **Lessons from a Real-World Example**

As an organizational trainer, I encountered a valuable lesson recently. During the Fall Festival, I made a motion that was carried. However, the discussion among the CoA did not delve deeply enough to equip the individual responsible for executing the task with the clarity they needed. This was entirely within my scope of responsibility. I made the motion, knew the desired outcome, and assumed—incorrectly—that everyone else shared the same understanding.

By mid-January, it was brought to me that this oversight had caused unnecessary challenges. Acknowledging my mistake, I plan on turning to the TASC model to address the new challenges as well as avoid future issues:

1. **Task:** Who owns the task? I plan to revisit the motion under unfinished business to clarify the ownership and ensure the responsible person had clear accountability.
2. **Authority:** Does the individual have the authority to act and be accountable?
3. **Set Up for Success:** Have we provided proper resources, clarity, and time?
4. **Checklist:** Does the individual have a clear list of actions required to achieve the task?

In hindsight, borrowing a technique from SCRUM—"what does done look like"—and verbally painting a picture of success could have saved considerable time and confusion for everyone involved.

### **Moving Forward**

We frequently encounter similar scenarios at the Post, District, and Department levels. Missteps like these are sometimes appealed or sent higher for clarification, but more often than not, we must work through missing information to achieve success. These challenges emphasize the importance of clear communication, thoughtful discussion, and collaborative planning.

Heading into Mid-Winter, I am committed to improving my approach. When making motions or participating in discussions, I will:

- Ensure clarity in roles and responsibilities.
- Paint a clear picture of what success looks like.
- Collaborate proactively to set others up for success.

By adopting this mindset, I aim to be a better teammate, represent our membership more effectively, and enhance the leadership we provide. I look forward to discussing this approach and other ideas with you at Mid-Winter. Let's continue to learn and grow together as we work toward our shared goals.

V/r

*Randy Traxler*

Judge Advocate

Department of Oklahoma

## *Chaplain Jason Burns*

Greetings Comrades,

I Hope this finds you well. It's been a busy 8 months for the Chaplain Ministry here in the Department. We have attended more Funerals than I would like to count. Countless visits to hospitals and homes. We have given hours of our ears to Comrades and family members who just needed someone to listen.

Assistant State Chaplain King started and hosts a Teams Chaplain Call every Tuesday night that covers many topics and training within the department. These are open to not only the VFW but also to the Auxiliary, Cooties and Riders. If you are interested in the Tuesday Teams Call, then let myself or Chaplain King know and we will get you connected.

Mid-Winter is a few weeks away and I hope to see all of you ready to enjoy each other's company. As you all know this is my last year serving as your State Chaplain as I have decided to serve the Department in other ways. So, with that being said I want you all to do me a favor. Over the next few months, listen and get to know each Comrade that is running for office whether it's at Post, District or State Level. Then pray and search your heart on who you feel is best for that position in the office. Remember the VFW is a Membership organization and your vote counts.

A true leader is someone who can follow and listen to his or her counterparts. I will be praying for clarity in your hearts and minds as we move forward over the next few months.

With Blessings and Kindness,

*JASON BURNS*

State Chaplain 2023-2025

All State Post & District Commander

All American Post & District Commander

Matthew 11:28



# *Voice of Democracy/Patriot Pen*

## *Teacher of the Year*

### *Jim Bassett*

The total count of participants in this year's Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen essay contest are 103 and 895. We had a total of 201 complete applications through the Scholars App. Roughly 20% of the applicants came from the app. Considering only a ¼ of the post used it, not bad.

Currently, the plan is not to make Scholars App mandatory next year. I do encourage all posts and districts to sign up and receive their QR code. It makes everything easier. While we did have a few issues, the company fixed them all on the same day.

The winners have been notified and invited to our Mid-Winter. When you meet them there, make sure to congratulate them on their hard work.

#### **2024 - 2025 Oklahoma VFW State Essay Winners:**

#### **Voice of Democracy Winners:**

<b>1st Place</b>	<b>2nd Place</b>	<b>3rd Place</b>
Lydia Kent District 9 Post 4938 Home School	Samantha Rother District 13 Post 6143 Corn Bible Academy	Camille Garrett District 10 Post 8706 Southmoore HS

#### **Patriot Pen Winners:**

<b>1st Place</b>	<b>2nd Place</b>	<b>3rd Place</b>
<b>Silas Wilkerson</b> District 3 Post 8384 Liberty Schools	<b>Myles Hays</b> District 10 Post 8706 Brink Junior High	<b>Cambri Cantrell</b> District 8 Post 3656 Bristow Middle School

#### **Teachers of the Year:**

<b>Grades 9 to 12 – 1st Place</b>	<b>Runner-Up</b>
Heather McCormick District 15 Post 4876 Blair High School	Brandon J. Armstrong District 15 Post 4876 Blair High School

**Grades 6 to 8 – 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

Elizabeth Ramos  
District 7  
Post 539  
Schulter School

**Runner-Up**

Summer Woolsey  
District 3  
Post 3649  
Wilburton Middle School

**Grades K to 5 – 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

Robin A. Langley  
District 10  
Post 1202  
Stratford Elementary

**Runner-Up**

Michelle Blackwell  
District 14  
Post 1193  
Carriage Hills Elementary

The winners have been forwarded to National to continue their quest to win. Just for your information, last year’s winner placed sixth. He is Barrett Love, from Woodward, Oklahoma. He was awarded the \$5,000 Rehoboth Beach Post 7447 and Auxiliary Dept. of Delaware Scholarship.

This is a great recruiting tool. When recruiting, ask about family members. Using the programs is a great way to encourage potential members to join.

Last year, Barrett Love, from Woodward, Oklahoma, represented the VFW Department of Oklahoma. He came in 6<sup>th</sup> place and was awarded the \$5,000 Rehoboth Beach Post 7447 and Auxiliary Dept. of Delaware Scholarship.

We have some great competitors this year, let’s see how this year’s winners do.

*Jim Bassett*

State VoD/PP/ToY Chair  
Department of Oklahoma

**VMS**  
*Jim Bassett*

Oklahoma military members have been the recipients of 46 Help-A-Hero Scholarships totaling \$191,900.00. That is a huge impact and a great recruiting tool to tell potential members. When you tell them that this can be used in conjunction with other scholarships and oh, yeah, you do not need to be a VFW member. Very much like the Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen essay, we are helping our communities. All of these are the VFW helping others.

I have been given permission to set up permanent tables at four locations on Tinker AFB. I will be setting them up soon.

*Jim Bassett*

State VMS Chair  
Department of Oklahoma

# *Training and Development*

## *Randy Traxler and Jim Bassett*

This was posted on social media by VFW Assistant Adjutant General Brian Walker

### How Rumors Kill Morale in the Workplace

In any work environment, morale is key to productivity and employee satisfaction. However, the spread of rumors can severely undermine these efforts.

Why do rumors thrive?

- They often stem from small pieces of information and can spiral out of control, especially in informal settings.
- With the speed of social media, misinformation can spread like wildfire.

The impact is profound:

#### 1. Increased Anxiety:

Uncertainty about job security or changes creates stress, distracting employees from their work.

#### 2. Erosion of Trust:

When rumors circulate, employees may feel management is withholding information.

3. Decline in Team Cohesion: Competition and self-preservation take precedence over collaboration.

#### 4. Toxic Culture:

A workplace filled with gossip fosters negativity, stifling innovation and creativity.

So, how can we combat this?

#### - Open Communication:

Regular updates and transparent messaging can keep everyone informed.

#### - Encourage Transparency:

Be honest about company challenges and solutions.

#### - Promote a Positive Culture:

Foster teamwork and support among employees.

#### - Address Rumors Head-On:

Don't let misinformation fester—clarify and correct it.

- Train for Effective Communication:

Equip employees with skills to navigate conversations constructively.

- Create Safe Reporting Mechanisms:

Allow employees to voice concerns without fear.

By prioritizing communication and trust-building, we can reduce the damaging effects of rumors and create a thriving workplace culture.

Respectfully,

*Randy Traxler*

State Education Co-Chair  
Department of Oklahoma

*Jim Bassett*

State Education Co-Chair  
Department of Oklahoma

## DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

- District 1
  - February 1<sup>st</sup> 11 am
  - Locust Grove, 316 N Broadway
  - Dept Commander Dan Fuller
- District 3
  - February 1<sup>st</sup> 11 am
  - Wilburton, 108 W Ada Ave
  - Dept SVC Jeff Harris
- District 4
  - February 1st 11 am
  - Boswell, US-70 (American Legion, beside the Finish Line gas station)
  - Dept Judge Advocate Randy Traxler
- District 5
  - February 9<sup>th</sup> 2 pm
  - Collinsville, 15637 N 137th East Ave
  - Dept Surgeon Larry Hurd
- District 7
  - May 3<sup>rd</sup> 11 am
  - Okmulgee, 1427 N Okmulgee
  -
- District 8
  - February 8<sup>th</sup> 11 am
  - Ponca City, 2821 E Prospect
  - Dept Chief of Staff Jeremy Owen
- District 9
  - February 15<sup>th</sup> 10 am
  - Oklahoma City, 4605 S Pennsylvania Ave
  - Dept JVC Tony McGrew
- District 10
  - January 18<sup>th</sup> 10 am
  - Midwest City, 9500 NE 10th St
  - Dept Commander Dan Fuller
- District 13
  - April 19<sup>th</sup> 11 am
  - Clinton, 1705 ½ US 183
  -
- District 14
  - January 11<sup>th</sup> 10 am - **POSTPONED**

- Marlow, 305 W Arapahoe
- Dept Surgeon Larry Hurd
- District 15
  - February 8<sup>th</sup> 11 am
  - Altus, 500 N Veterans Drive
  - Dept Commander Dan Fuller

### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

**NVS Virtual Basic Training for New Accredited Representatives** >> February 3-7  
**Valentine's Day** >> February 14<sup>th</sup>  
**President's Day** >> February 17<sup>th</sup>  
**U.S. Coast Guard Reserve Birthday** >> February 19<sup>th</sup>  
**Midwinter Conference** >> February 21-23 >> Embassy Suites – NW >> OKC  
**Voice of Democracy** >> March 1<sup>st</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> >> Washington DC  
**Washington Conference** >> March 2<sup>nd</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> >> Washington DC  
**U.S. Navy Reserve Birthday** >> March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
**K9 Veterans Day** >> March 13<sup>th</sup>  
**Medal of Honor Day** >> March 25<sup>th</sup>  
**Vietnam War Veterans Day** >> March 29<sup>th</sup>  
**Gold Star Spouses Day** >> April 5<sup>th</sup>  
**National Former POW Recognition Day** >> April 9<sup>th</sup>  
**Dept Sr Vice Training** (for Dept Sr Vices only) >> April 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> >> Kansas City, MO  
**Air Force Reserve Birthday** >> April 14<sup>th</sup>  
**Army Reserve Birthday** >> April 23<sup>rd</sup>  
**NVS Accredited Representative Proficiency Training Conference** >> April 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> >> Annapolis, MD

### **OFFICE CLOSINGS:**

National Headquarters >> February 17<sup>th</sup>

# ***EMAIL PHISHING***

## ***Randy Traxler***

Scammers are working harder than ever to steal personal information through phishing emails and text messages (smishing). As part of the **VFW Oklahoma** community, we want to ensure you stay informed and protected.

### **How to Recognize and Handle Phishing Attempts**

#### ◇ **If You Receive a Phishing Email:**

- **Do NOT click on links or open attachments**—they may contain malware.
- **Verify the sender**—look for misspellings or unusual addresses.
- **Report the email:**
  - Use your email provider's "Report phishing" option.
  - Forward it to **reportphishing@apwg.org** (Anti-Phishing Working Group).
  - If it appears to be from a trusted company, report it directly to them.
- **Mark as spam and delete** the email.
- **Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)** on your accounts for added security.

#### ◇ **If You Receive a Phishing Text (Smishing):**

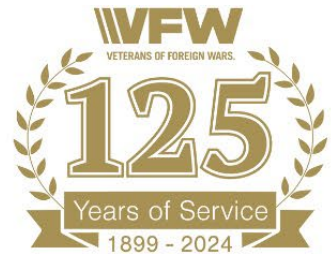
- **Do NOT click links or reply**—this confirms your number is active to scammers.
- **Report the text** by forwarding it to **7726 (SPAM)** and to the **FTC at reportfraud.ftc.gov**.
- **Block the sender** on your phone.
- **Check with the company directly** if the message claims to be from your bank, service provider, or another organization.
- **Keep your phone updated** to protect against security threats.

### **What to Do If You've Already Been a Victim**

If you've clicked on a phishing link or shared sensitive information, take action immediately:

- Change your passwords** for any affected accounts.
- Contact your bank or credit card company** if you shared financial information.
- Report identity theft** to the **FTC at [www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov)**.
- Scan your devices for malware** if you clicked on a suspicious link.

By staying vigilant, we can protect ourselves and each other from cyber threats. If you suspect a phishing attempt targeting VFW members, please report it immediately.



## General Orders No. 7

## 2024-25 Series

1. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, which provides that each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee. Posts are encouraged to register their Post delegate(s) online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or by submitting their National Convention Post and Delegate Registration form that will be mailed to all Posts as part of the Election Report/Convention Registration mailing going out later this month. Registration forms for the 124th National Convention may be mailed to: Convention Registration, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.
2. Attention is directed to Section 217 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure covering the nomination, election and installation of Post Officers. Post Election Report forms are being mailed to Post Quartermasters with instructions that they complete the form online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or they can complete the form and return directly to National Headquarters immediately following the election of Post Officers but not later than June 1.
3. Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure provides that delegates and alternates for the District Convention and meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected at a regular meeting in April. Posts are entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each thirty (30) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Post as of March 31.
4. Pursuant to Section 403 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, each District shall hold an annual District Convention for the purpose of electing District officers, such convention to be held not less than ten (10) days nor more than seventy-five (75) days prior to the convening of the Department Convention.  
  
Pursuant to Section 403 of the National Bylaws – Regular Meeting, Districts shall hold at least two (2) regular meetings each year for purposes of transacting business and conducting schools of instruction.  
  
Pursuant to Section 417 of the National Manual of Procedure, District officers shall not assume the duties of their office until the Department Commander is installed.  
  
District officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed in accordance with Section 416 of the Manual of Procedure.
5. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 218 (a)(11) of the National Manual of Procedure, Officers: Duties and Obligations. Trustees Report of Audit must be prepared in detail within thirty (30) days from the end of each quarter, one of which ends March 31.

### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Office 816.756.3390  
Fax 816.968.1157

### WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Office 202.543.2239  
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org  
www.vfw.org



6. Certificates of charter evidencing consolidation have been issued to the following Posts:

Post No. 4575 and 12206 consolidated as Post No. 4575, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Post No. 3652 and 7196 consolidated as Post No. 3652, Hammond, Louisiana

BY COMMAND OF  
ALFRED J. LIPPHARDT  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

OFFICIAL:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan West", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan West  
Adjutant General

# NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN



KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

VOLUME 49, NO. 7

FEB. 2025

## Membership

For the month of February 2025, the Post that leads each division will receive an 8' VFW table drape customized for the Post to be used for meetings, recruiting events, and other functions. In addition, at the end of the year every Post who has led their division in the monthly challenges will be featured on a video display at the National Convention to recognize their achievements.

Keep it up and we will show everyone how NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS!

This contest will run from Feb. 1, 2025, through Feb. 28, 2025. Applications and payments processed online before close of business will be credited that day, payments and applications made through the mail will be processed when received. Questions about this or other membership programs can be sent to [membership@vfw.org](mailto:membership@vfw.org).

### EARLY BIRD AWARD:

Congratulations to the following Posts who led their membership division as of Dec. 31, 2024. They will be awarded a five-night hotel stay at the Washington Conference, March 2 -6, 2025.

<u>Division</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Division</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Post</u>
1	Pacific Areas	2485	6	Wisconsin	11038
1	Pacific Areas	8180	6	Maryland	5246
2	Maryland	2632	7	Louisiana	7017
2	Montana	1087	8	Missouri	7822
3	Texas	9174	9	Pennsylvania	6555
3	Oklahoma	577	9	California	1932
4	Louisiana	9822	10	California	10965
4	Texas	2059	10	Tennessee	6908
5	Texas	12209	11	Washington	12228
5	Virginia	12202	11	Pacific Areas	12231

### MEMBERSHIP RESOURCES:

Do you want to help your Post meet your membership goals? Log into [vfw.org](https://www.vfw.org) and go to <https://www.vfw.org/my-vfw/vfw-training-and-support/membership-recruiting-and-retention> where you can view training videos, download recruiting materials and posters, and gain access to all the tools you need in order to help recruit, retain, and mentor your members!

As a reminder, every month we will award points to our Posts as follows:

- Recruit a new Annual Member into the Post: 1 point
- An Annual or Lapsed Member converts to Life: 5 points
- Recruit a new Life Member into the Post: 10 points

## **MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

As the membership year has begun, keep in mind the membership requirements set out by the Commander-in-Chief:

- Achieve 102% in Membership
- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member.
- Increase membership drives and/or events.
- Develop new Posts and/or revitalize existing Posts.
- Increase Life Membership and Legacy Life Membership.

## **NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MATERIAL ORDER FORM**

As you get started in the new membership year, we have made it easier for you to get all the recruiting brochures you will need to make this membership year successful! It's as easy as one two three!

1. Go to [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) and click the login link in the upper right corner. Sign in when prompted.
2. Under "Membership Quick Links," select Membership Online Order Form.
3. Use the dropdown list to indicate items you need. The form will automatically calculate the cost of items and shipping. When finished, click SUBMIT and it will take you to a billing page if there are any charges.

Follow these simple steps and if you have any questions, you may contact the Membership department at 1.888.564.6839 or email us at [membership@vfw.org](mailto:membership@vfw.org).

## **UPCOMING TRAINING**

Our next Membership Monday training webinar will be on Feb.10, at 2:00 PM, CDT, Topic: "Life and Legacy- Building the Future". We will cover how to contact your members when their dues are coming up for renewal, best practices for recovering lapsed members, and the importance of converting them to Life Membership. Follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/VFWMembership> to learn how to attend this online training.

## **LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life Members and is now available in memoriam for past Life Members. There are three levels of membership; each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

**Enrollment Cost:**

**Annual Payouts:**

<b><u>Levels</u></b>		<b><u>Posts</u></b>	<b><u>Departments</u></b>	<b><u>National</u></b>
Gold-	\$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver-	\$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze-	\$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

***What will your Legacy be?***

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR TOP RECRUITERS!**

Top Three Recruiters

Timothy M. Borland – 572  
VFW Post 9972, Dept of AZ

Ed Stefanak, Jr. – 246  
VFW Post 9539, Dept of SC

Steven L. Woodward – 185  
VFW Post 2224, Dept of WA

These comrades are leading the charge for membership growth – will you take up the challenge and see your name on this list?

# VFW Foundation

The VFW Foundation welcomes our new Executive Director Hal Roesch II. Hal has an intricate knowledge of the VFW as after joining the organization in 1991, he served at the Post, District and Department levels before becoming the 112th VFW Commander-in-Chief in 2020-21. Additionally, as a 20-year United States Air Force retiree, Hal personally understands the needs of America’s service personnel, veterans and military families. We are confident that his leadership will be instrumental to the fulfillment of our mission as we enter a new phase of fundraising and program outreach.

On Jan. 13, 2025, Sport Clips Haircuts presented a check to the VFW Foundation for \$1.33 million toward [Help A Hero Scholarships for veterans](#), the largest veterans’ scholarship program of its kind. The donation presentation was held at VFW Post 1 in downtown Denver where free haircuts for local veterans were part of the event. The application period for fall 2025 Help A Hero Scholarships is open now through April 30 to receive up to \$5,000 of assistance per semester, per family for service members and veterans in the rank of E-5 and below. To find out more, visit your local Sport Clips, [SportClips.com/hero](http://SportClips.com/hero) or [vfw.org/Scholarship](http://vfw.org/Scholarship).

Contact: VFW Director of Donor Relations Richard Freiburghouse, [RFreiburghouse@vfw.org](mailto:RFreiburghouse@vfw.org).

# VFW National Convention

**VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING** – 126th National Convention housing will officially open March 18, 2025. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at [vfw.org/convention](http://vfw.org/convention). The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Columbus, OH – Aug. 9-13, including a tentative agenda.

**CONVENTION REGISTRATION** – Section 222 of the Manual of Procedure states each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials, and one identified registered delegate for the VFW National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee provided the Post has paid the mandated \$25 advance registration fee. All advance registrations should be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111. **ATTN:** Convention Registration, Quartermasters are strongly encouraged to register delegates utilizing the on-line membership system (OMS).

## Development

As we near the season of giving, here is some helpful information about why the support of every VFW member is vitally important. VFW's life-changing programs are not possible through membership dues alone. In fact, **membership dues alone cover just 18% of the cost of programs**. As a nonprofit organization, the VFW relies heavily on the generosity of its members and patriotic supporters. When members donate, 100% of their net donation goes directly back to support their Department. *Please spread the word and give as generously as you are able.*

**2025 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign Kick Off** – The 2025 NVS Annual Campaign Kick Off is underway, and we urgently need your support to make a meaningful impact on the lives of America's veterans. This campaign is crucial for assisting veterans from all generations, particularly those returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, in accessing the benefits they rightfully deserve. Your donation ensures the VFW's national force of highly trained and accredited service officers is at the ready to help America's veterans navigate the complicated VA system.

As a token of our appreciation, enclosed in this package, you will find the 2025 Petition to Congress and an "American Hero" Memorial Day Ribbon Card. We urge you to add your signature to the petition and card before returning them to us. The collected petitions will be delivered to Congress, sending a powerful message that any proposed cuts to veterans' benefits are unacceptable to those who have proudly worn the uniform. The signed cards will be distributed to hospitalized veterans and service members, bringing them a heartfelt reminder in time for Memorial Day. Some members will receive the 2025 "Help Our Heroes" Member Survey to fill out and return. Your valuable input, gathered through this survey, will play a crucial role in shaping our ongoing efforts to support veterans.

**2025 Label and Certificate of Appreciation** – This January, anticipate the arrival of the 2025 Label and Certificate of Appreciation from the VFW. Alongside these tokens of gratitude, you will find a special Memorial Day "American Hero" Ribbon Card.

We kindly request you to sign and promptly return the card, as your participation holds the power to bring warmth and solace to our fellow service members and hospitalized veterans this Memorial Day. The act of receiving a Thank You card from a fellow veteran resonates deeply with those who have served.

Your gesture demonstrates that they are remembered and cared for by their comrades, providing a meaningful connection during a time of reflection. In honor of your fellow veterans navigating the long road to recovery from battle injuries, we invite you to make a donation. Your generosity directly contributes to the strength and availability of programs that provide crucial support for veterans across your Department.

**Your 2024 Year-End Tax Receipt Is On Its Way!** – Late January we will be mailing the 2024 Year-End Tax Receipts to VFW members who have requested to receive one at the end of the year.

**How to Keep Control of Your Estate** – Planning for the future means taking action now. Once you've created a will that aligns with your values, there are two important steps to take. First, update your will on a regular basis so that any life changes and current wishes are reflected. Next, share your estate plan with your loved ones, including charitable giving to organizations like the VFW. Learn more about why these steps matter: <https://vfw.planmylegacy.org/keep-control-of-your-estate>. The VFW Planned Giving Office is here to help you at 816.968.1119 or [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org).

**Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism?** – Adjutant General Dan West would like you to join him in supporting the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis, which helps reduce expenses and eliminates the amount of fundraising mail you receive. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department toll-free at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at [partners@vfw.org](mailto:partners@vfw.org) with "Partners in Patriotism Application" in the subject line.

**VFW Friends of Freedom** – If you are not already a member of the VFW's online community, please visit [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) and look for the gold banner that says "**Find Out What's Happening**" to sign up. As a member of the VFW's Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation's veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit [vfw.org/VFWatWork](http://vfw.org/VFWatWork) and click on "**Read VFW success stories**" to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans' rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

**Department Resources** – We encourage all VFW Departments to actively support the VFW Department Fundraising Programs. The success of these initiatives rely on the participation and backing of your department's members. Promotional materials can be accessed by visiting [heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools](http://heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools).

## Marketing Communications

Have you downloaded the VFW Events app in the [Apple App Store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/vfw-events/id1444444444) or the [Google Play Store](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.vfw.events)? Be on the lookout for the latest version featuring the 2025 Washington Conference which will be live in the next couple of weeks.

Stay up to date with all of the action throughout the conference by following #VFWDC2025 on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Not able to join us in D.C.? Watch the livestream of the Parade of Winners Monday, March 3 at 6 p.m. EST and the livestream of the Chief's testimony on March 4, all at [vfw.org/VFWDC2025](https://vfw.org/VFWDC2025).

## Veterans & Military Support Programs

### 2025 VFW Day of Service

Make your state stand out! We're kicking off 2025 VFW Day of Service, a nationwide community service effort, and we are counting on you to help make this year bigger and better. Please visit <https://todaysvfw.org/vfw-day-of-service/> to learn more, check out helpful tools and resources—and most importantly — sign up!

Day of Service events should be scheduled during the month of May 2025 and Dashboard credit for “Day of Service Participation” will not be applied until after May 2025. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Mark Herron at [mherron@vfw.org](mailto:mherron@vfw.org).

### Military Assistance Program (MAP) Grant Funds

Be advised that the VFW MAP Grant is now closed for the 2024-2025 program year. The 2024-2025 MAP Grant funds have been depleted. Any events held after the closure of the MAP grant will not be reimbursed with the 2025-2026 funds.

### VFW's “Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship”

The **2025 Fall Semester** opened Jan. 1, 2025, and will close Apr. 30, 2025. The application will be available online only at [vfw.org/Scholarship](https://vfw.org/Scholarship).

### All American Eligibility

To qualify for **All-American**, a **minimum donation of \$125** must be donated to **VMS** by **June 30, 2025**. VMS donations will only be handled through the Dashboard. All Posts must click on the “**VMS Donation**” tab on the **Dashboard** to donate. The link will point them to OMS. Please do not send checks to the National Headquarters. If a Post does not use a credit card, the Post will send their donation to their Department HQs and the Department HQs will submit the donation for their Post. Credit will automatically update on the Dashboard daily. Overseas Departments will donate to the other programs through the link also in lieu of participation. This will automatically update daily.

When you make your **\$125.00** or more donation, all that needs to be entered into the box is 125 or more. The **\$** and **.00** are **not required** in the donation amount box.

**Do not use the red donate link** in the upper right-hand corner of this webpage. This is for general donation purposes only.



## VMS Lapel Pin Payment

If your VFW Department headquarters ordered and received the 2024-25 VMS Lapel Pins, please pay for them as soon as possible. You may utilize the “**VMS Donation**” link on the upper right-hand corner of the **Dashboard**.

## VFW Programs

**DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS.** Military service flags, insignias, etc. should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to [vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag](https://vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag).

**VFW 125TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE POST PROGRAM SIGN UP.** We encourage as many of our VFW posts to get signed up to become a 125th Anniversary community service Post. To date, we have 89. Please help us spread the word. Our birthday was a couple of days ago, but our celebration will last the rest of the year and conclude at the National Convention in Columbus.

The VFW National Commander invites all VFW Posts to be the catalyst to get their communities involved in commemorating the contributions of all veterans and their family members to our country during the VFW 125th Anniversary year. In addition, it is hoped you will encourage your community to study the history of this era to help ensure a safer and better tomorrow.

Have our posts click this link <https://vfw125.org/get-involved/> and click on the **red** Accept Invitation icon for further information.

**PROGRAMS DASHBOARD TOOL. (NOTE: Previously ALL-AMERICAN DASHBOARD)** Please encourage Posts to read the 2024-25 Membership program. Military Assistance Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance has been received from National HQs to supplement the Unmet Needs financial grants & VFW Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship statistics. The information charts reside in the KPI tools section.

**SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM DEADLINE REMINDER.** Nominations for this award and the judging at Post, District and Department level, if applicable, should be completed. After Department judging, each Department could have selected one candidate from each category and submitted their winners to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1. The Department Teacher winners that are received at National Headquarters will be entered in the National judging and receive a VFW National citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

NOTE: The VFW National Programs Department requires the Department Headquarters to submit their winners via Formstack, using the link the Department Adjutants/Quartermasters recently received. For each Department winner, they will need to complete a “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form” located on Formstack, then download the winners’ entry documentation. Once they hit submit, it will arrive at National Headquarters. If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email [tbeauchamp@vfw.org](mailto:tbeauchamp@vfw.org) or call 816.756.3390 and ask for extension 6287.

**VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS.** Judging at all levels should have been completed at this time or the near future. Once completed, VFW Departments may submit their five winning nominees, if available, (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office, by completing the “VFW Department



Public Servant Award Request Form” through Formstack. VFW Programs staff has emailed the form link to Department Adjutants/Quartermasters prior to the deadline of Feb. 1.

Each Department will receive their requested awards and should contact their recipients to arrange a presentation. Department Commanders may present the awards at their Department Convention, but are encouraged to also present the award in front of the recipient’s peers at a professional association event, city council meeting, etc. The purpose of the second venue is to expose these VFW awards to the public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters, EMTs, dispatchers and EODTs personnel, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store [vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant](http://vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant).

NOTE: Remember, the First Responder Medal is available through the VFW Store. To review this item, please click on the following link: [vfwstore.org/products/32134](http://vfwstore.org/products/32134).

**VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS.** Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen first place Department winner will receive a National scholarship or award. The amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now totals \$174,500, with the top three awards being raised to \$35,000, \$21,000 and \$15,000. The Patriot’s Pen National Awards total is \$55,000.

**PLEASE REVIEW UPDATE ON O.C.S.P. PROGRAM.** VFW National Programs has updated Outstanding Community Service Post award programs starting this program year. Please share this with your Community Service Chairpersons.

**OUTSTANDING NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD.** Each year on July 1, the national Programs office will determine the top community service Posts in each conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact, from July 1 to June 30 the previous year. Your community service total impact is figured by the money spent to host and organize the community service event, plus total hours all volunteers participated, plus the mileage for all volunteers (Dollars Donated + Hours + Mileage = Total Impact).

These four Posts will be awarded the Award for Community Service and will be invited to attend the VFW National Convention. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations for five nights, and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.

**NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE POST OF THE YEAR.** Each Department will have an NCSP winner based on total impact also. National will select based on end of year reports on July 1. Winners will also be published in the Convention program booklet and receive a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

**“UPDATED” POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS.** Under previous Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997), it indicated there were only six days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices were required to display the POW/MIA flag. Now under new law, Public Law 116-67 (Nov. 7, 2019), it is required that the POW/MIA flag, on certain federal properties, be flown on all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to [vfwstore.org/products/GP237](http://vfwstore.org/products/GP237).

**IRS AND VFW AWARD MONIES.** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that any recipient that receives more than a \$599 award should receive a Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable. This will include the VFW programs Patriot’s Pen and Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

# VFW Member Benefits

Think about all your monthly expenses: rent or a home mortgage, utilities, car payments, groceries, loans, kids' tuition, Netflix, etc. It's hard to just make ends meet as it is, and it feels like some of these expenses never end. However, have you ever asked yourself *"Would my family be able to cover these costs if something were to happen to me?"*

You can help protect your loved ones by looking into all the life plans available in the insurance market. Each product is meant to protect you and your family through all stages of your life. Whether you're still employed or living in your retirement, you are guaranteed acceptance until age 75.

For additional information about your Life Insurance Plan options [click here](#) or call 1.877.850.0183.

## "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy

**"BUDDY"<sup>®</sup> POPPY CAMPAIGN.** Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as "They Gave, Will You?" is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of three (3) weeks in advance of your distribution date.

### BUDDY POPPY POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

- 1) Departments must order poppies through OMS.
- 2) All claims of non-receipt of a Buddy Poppy order must be made within 60 days of the date of the order or will NOT be replaced free of charge.
- 3) All orders for the traditional Buddy Poppy, Anniversary Poppies or tin tab poppies must be placed through your Department Headquarters. Auxiliaries must go through their Post to order all poppies.
- 4) The tin tabs do count towards the Buddy Poppy requirement for the All-American program.
- 5) If you do not receive your order within four weeks of placing it with your department, please contact your Department Headquarters to report you have not received your order.
- 6) All poppies are shipped within 10 days of ordering except orders placed in June and July, due to preparation for National Convention, please allow an additional five business days.

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at [vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy) or by calling Member Service Center at 1.833.839.8387.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairperson's guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that non-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

**VFW ANNIVERSARY BUDDY POPPIES.** Special poppies are available to Posts celebrating their 25th, 50th, 75th and 100th anniversaries. The poppies are the same design as traditional poppies but come in silver for the 25th anniversary Post, gold for the 50th anniversary Post and diamond (iridescent white) for the 75th anniversary Post. Posts currently in their 100th anniversary year can order any color and as many as they need. If not in your 100th anniversary year, please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out. These are ordered through the Department in OMS and processed the same as red poppies and should be distributed and used in displays just like the red poppies. Currently we have no plans to replenish inventory of Anniversary poppies due to increased cost and the small quantities we sell of Anniversary Poppies. Based on the past four years' sales, we have sufficient inventory for the next 1.1 years of the Gold, 1.2 years of Diamond and 14 years of the Silver.

## National Veterans Service

### ACCREDITED SERVICE OFFICER PROFICIENCY TRAINING, ANNAPOLIS, MD

National Veterans Service will conduct a hybrid training conference for VFW accredited representatives April 27-30, 2025, at the DoubleTree Annapolis Hotel in Annapolis, MD. This hybrid course will include in-person instruction that will be live-streamed simultaneously via electronic media to those who are unable to attend in person. Formal notification to students required to participate in these conferences will soon be sent out. Please address questions relating to accredited service officer training to Keith Garrison, Assistant Director, Training, NVS, at [kgarrison@vfw.org](mailto:kgarrison@vfw.org).

### CHANGE IN VA WEBSITES AND APPS SIGN-IN

After **Jan. 31, 2025**, you will need to sign in to your VA websites and apps with your DS Logon, Login.gov or ID.me. The MyHealtheVet userID and password will no longer be an option after Jan. 31, 2025.

If you don't have a [Login.gov](https://login.gov) (<https://login.gov>) or [ID.me](https://id.me) (<https://id.me>) account, you can find out how to create an account at <https://www.va.gov/initiatives/prepare-for-vas-secure-sign-in-changes/> or you can scan this QR code with your phone camera.



## National Legislative Service/Action Corps

### VFW 2025 Priority Goals

The 119th Congress is now in session. Fortunately, the *Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act* was passed and signed into law in the final days of the previous Congress. This bipartisan, bicameral legislative package was a significant and long overdue victory for transitioning service members, veterans, caretakers, and survivors.

However, there was much unfinished work on other important legislation. The [VFW 2025 Priority Goals](#) include many issues that still need to be addressed. We will continue to advocate diligently to ensure the newly seated Congress provides the resources and care our nation's veterans and their families have earned and deserve.

## VFW Store

### VFW STORE:

**Presidents' Day is coming up.** Shop the VFW Store for items to celebrate:  
[vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/presidentsday?page=1&size=100](https://vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/presidentsday?page=1&size=100)

**Teacher awards** such as plaques and certificates are also available:  
[vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation](https://vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation)



## Roll Call of Departed Comrades

PERRINO, EUGENE, L., SR., All American Department Quartermaster 2016, 2021 and 2023, Department Adjutant 2015-2025, Department Quartermaster, 2014-2025, and a Gold Legacy Life Member of Harry F. Nesbitt Post No. 10087, Beverly Hills, Florida, January 26, 2025.



## PLANNING CALENDAR

### SCHEDULE OF VFW MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Rev. February 2025

#### 2025

February 3-7	NVS Virtual Basic Training for New Accredited Representatives
March 1-5	Voice of Democracy Washington, DC
March 2 - 6	Washington Conference Washington, DC
April 10 – 13	Senior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO
April 27-30	NVS Accredited Representative Proficiency Training Conference Annapolis, MD
June 28	VFW National Home 100th Anniversary Celebration Eaton Rapids, MI
August 9 - 13	National Convention Columbus, OH
September 8 – 11	Fall Legislative Committee Washington, DC (Tentative)
September 19	National Budget & Finance Committee Meeting Kansas City, MO
September 20 – 21	National Council of Administration Meeting Kansas City, MO
September 21-25	NVS Accredited Representative Skill Training Annapolis, MD
September 21-26	NVS Basic Training for New Accredited Representatives Annapolis, MD
September 25 - 28	Commander-in-Chief's Homecoming Des Moines, IA
October 2 -5	Department Adjutant/Quartermasters Training Kansas City, MO

#### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
Office 816.756.3390  
Fax 816.968.1157

#### WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
Office 202.543.2239  
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org  
www.vfw.org

October 16 – 19            Junior Vice Commanders Training  
   Kansas City, MO

October 17 – 19            Big Ten Conference  
   Bettendorf, IA

October 24 – 26            Eastern Conference  
   Wilmington, DE

November 6 – 9            Southern Conference  
   Montgomery, TX

## **2026**

February 28 – March 5    Washington Conference  
   Washington, DC

April 16 -19                Senior Vice Training  
   Kansas City, MO

August 15 - 19            National Convention  
   Salt Lake City, UT

September 11             National Budget & Finance Committee Meeting  
   Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

September 12 – 13        National Council of Administration Meeting  
   Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

September 14 -17        Fall Legislative Committee  
   Washington, DC (Tentative)

September 24 – 27        Commander-in-Chief's Homecoming  
   Billings, MT

October 1 – 4              Department Adjutant/Quartermasters Training  
   Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

October 15 – 18            Junior Vice Training  
   Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

October 22 - 25            Southern Conference  
   Mobile, AL

## **2027**

February 27 – March 4    Washington Conference  
   Washington, DC

July 31 - August 4        National Convention  
   Milwaukee, WI

## **2028**

August 5 - 10             National Convention  
   San Antonio, TX



**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.**

Oklahoma

## **VFW-OKLAHOMA MID-WINTER CONFERENCE INFORMATION**

### **Comrades & Auxiliary Sisters & Brothers,**

Our Mid-Winter Conference will be held 21-23 February 2025 at the Embassy Suites-Northwest at 3233 NW Expressway, Oklahoma City, OK. Please see the information below to book your hotel room plus see the following **Banquet Announcement & Ticket Information**. The group room rate is available from Friday through Sunday. It is always impossible to get this information to everyone in one email, so we ask for your help in disseminating this information to all those interested.

#### **From the Hotel:**

We have a room block reserved at the Embassy Suites-Northwest at 3233 NW Expressway, Oklahoma City, OK for February 21, 2025, through February 23, 2025. Booking your room is simple, just call the hotel at **405-842-6633** and tell them rooms are for the **VFW event** or use the booking link [2025 MID-WINTER VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MEETING](#).

We're looking forward to seeing you in February! We hope you enjoy your stay and your group's event!

**Don't Wait, Book Your Room Now!**  
**Event Dates:** February 21, 2025 - February 23, 2025

#### **Questions?**

Contact:  
Heidi Teeter Quartermaster or Hotel





# DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2025 BANQUET TICKETS NOW ON SALE!!!!

**BANQUET WILL BE HELD SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY  
2025**

## **BUFFET DINNER:**

- Traditional Caesar Salad
- Caprese Salad
- Penne and Fettuccini Noodles
- Tuscan Chicken
- Italian Meatballs
- Italian Sausage and Peppers
- House Made Marinara
- Creamy Parmesan Alfredo Sauce
- Blistered Herb Roasted Potatoes
- Classic Ratatouille
- Garlic Bread
- Tiramisu and Italian Cream Cake
- Iced Tea, Coffee, & Water

**ALL NECESSARY DIETARY RESTRICTIONS MUST BE NOTED ON FORM OR EMAILED TO THE BELOW CONTACT(S).**

**TICKETS ARE \$60.00 EACH AND CAN BE PAID BY CHECK,  
CREDIT CARD OR BY PAYPAL INVOICE TO VFW-OKLAHOMA,  
ATTN: QM HEIDI TEETER@ [VFWHQOKQM@OUTLOOK.COM](mailto:VFWHQOKQM@OUTLOOK.COM)  
OR CALL HEIDI @ (580) 515.0567.**

**TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED PRIOR TO CONFERENCE!**

**(DEADLINE FOR TICKET PURCHASES ARE CLOSE OF BUSINESS WEDNESDAY, 12 FEB 2025. NO EXCEPTIONS!)**

**NOTES: A SMALL PROCESSING FEE OF \$3.60 WILL BE APPLIED FOR CREDIT CARD & PAYPAL INVOICE PAYMENTS. WE APOLOGIZE FOR THIS INCONVENIENCE**





# Jason Burns For Department Surgeon 2025-2026



Qualifying Campaign- Bosnia & Iraq  
All State & All American District 14 CMDR  
All State & All American Post 1192 CMDR  
State Chaplain

My goal as your State Surgeon is to promote and put into effect health programs for the benefit of the membership and their families.

Programs I would like to put into effect are Monthly Support & Awareness Groups like: PTSD, MST, Suicide, Family ECT.

I would also like to partner up with Licensed Counselors to offer services to our membership and their families also. I would also like to have Faith Leaders to offer Spiritual Guidance.

I will also be working on setting up a new Surgeon network that will link up the Districts & Post Surgeons so they can send weekly reports.

I look forward to working with the Chaplains on the care of our membership and families that are in the hospital, long or short term care.

Also I will carry out what needs are called upon me by the Commander.

It has been an honor serving the membership of the Dept of Oklahoma over the past few years and I hope you will consider electing me to the office of State Surgeon to continue serving at the state level.



**Dear VFW Members,**

My name is Deric Duncan, and I am running for the position of VFW Department of Oklahoma Surgeon. Currently, I serve as the Department Inspector, MIA/POW Chair, OKC State Fair Chairman, Grant Committee Chair, and Building Committee Chair. Previously, I held the position of District 9 Commander.

I am running for this role because I believe there is much more we can achieve together. My primary goal is to reconnect with our veterans who are in VA homes, shut-ins, and those in hospitals, ensuring they feel part of our vibrant community. I believe in starting this work now, not waiting for election outcomes.

Additionally, I am committed to transparency within our department. It is vital for every officer to keep our membership informed, as you are the driving force behind this department. My aim is to refocus our efforts on how we can best serve you and the posts within Oklahoma.

Leadership is about service, not control. My phone and email are always open for your thoughts and concerns. Last year, I advocated for hiring more service personnel and bringing in grant writers. Although I didn't win the election, I utilized my position on the Council of Administration to push these initiatives forward, and I'm pleased to say they were approved.

I will continue to advocate for measures that benefit our membership and ensure your voices are heard. Together, we can create a stronger, more connected veteran community.

Thank you for your support!

**Sincerely,**

**Deric E. Duncan**



# Nicholaus J. Berens

Chaplain Berens has over 3 years of experience in Oklahoma serving as a professional hospital chaplain, hospice chaplain, and bereavement counselor, along with 4 years of service as the Glenpool VFW post chaplain. Nick's calling as a chaplain, his education, and his experience have prepared him to equip VFW Post and District chaplains with the tools necessary to succeed in their roles.

Nick has been a trusted chaplain to veterans living in the Tulsa metro area and surrounding rural communities for the past ten years, and he will continue his service to veterans through his leadership as State Chaplain. He is committed to the VFW motto "Nobody does more for veterans," and he aspires to help State leadership walk out this motto.

As State Chaplain, Nick's goals include being a mentor to Post and District chaplains by providing pastoral care to them, and by facilitating opportunities for them to grow in their roles as VFW leaders. Nick will act as an advisor and resource to assist chaplains in caring for VFW members and their families.

## Chaplain Experience

- Chaplain – Post #9126 Glenpool, Oklahoma (2021 – present). Provides pastoral care to veterans, serves in leadership, and leads Reboot Recovery peer-counseling groups.
- Hospice Chaplain – RoseRock Healthcare (2016 – 2018). Provided end-of-life pastoral care to patients and their families, including conducting military funerals for veterans.
- Chaplain Resident – Jack C. Montgomery VAMC (2014 – 2015). Completed five units of ACPE Certified Clinical Pastoral Education and applied his education to providing pastoral care alongside a multi-disciplinary team of healthcare workers.

## Education

- Master of Arts in Biblical Literature – Oral Roberts University (2015).
- Master of Divinity – Oral Roberts University (2013).
- Master of Arts in Theological/Historical Studies – Oral Roberts University (2011), with honors (3.81 GPA).

During his time at ORU, Nick helped establish the ORU Student Veterans Organization as a chapter of the Student Veterans of America (SVA). He also led efforts to create the ORU Student Veterans Lounge and oversaw its re-dedication as the Ryan Ianelli Veterans Lounge, in honor of CPT Ryan Ianelli (ORU 2006) KIA in Afghanistan, September 2013. He successfully defended two master's theses, "A Mishnaic Hebrew Reconstruction of Matthew 5:1-12" (2014) and "How Irenaeus Used the *Regula Fidei* to Refute Gnostic Secret Knowledge" (2010).

- Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice (Generalist) – Lake Superior State University (2006).
- Associate of Science in Criminal Justice (Law Enforcement) – Lake Superior State University (2000).

While at LSSU, Nick made the Dean's list in Fall 2006 (GPA 3.5 or higher). He also served in student government and various club leadership roles.



# Mike Farris For State Chaplain



**Vietnam Veteran**

**Retired Army 1970-1976**

**Lifetime VFW Member since 12/1984**

**3 Year Trustee - VFW Post 7180**

**Ordained Minister - 24th July 2012 - Non Denominational**

**Currently assisting Post 7180 Chaplain**

**Life Member of Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association  
(Ch Chaplain 26 July 2014 - 22 July 2019)**

*I would like to help our homeless Veterans and continue my  
service of our members who need assistance*

# VOTE MARCUS KING



## STATE CHAPLAIN 2025-2026 Ephesians 6: 10-20

### PROVEN LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION TO SERVICE

#### ★ VFW MEMBER SINCE 2018 ★

#### ★ UNITED STATES ARMY SERVICE ★

- Active Duty: 1996-2004
  - South Korea (1999-2000)
  - Iraq (March-November 2003)

#### ★ LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE ★

- National Aide-De-Camp 2023-2024
- National Aide-De-Camp 2024-2025
- District 13 Chaplain- Serving since 2023
- Assistant State Chaplain- 2024-2025

#### ★ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ★

- Active in Post and District community outreach events
- Supporting Department outreach efforts, including homeless veteran stand downs

#### ★ ADDITIONAL LEADERSHIP ★

- President/CEO of Point Man International Ministries – Serving since 2020
- Previous Roles: Outpost Leader and Secretary/Treasurer



RECONSARGE1975@ATT.NET



405.651.5509



**Erica Traxler  
for  
Oklahoma National Councilmember  
2026-2030  
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States**

Erica Traxler was elected to Past State Commander on June 15, 2024, at the Oklahoma State Convention in Claremore, Oklahoma.

She served in the United States Army from 1999 to 2013, earning her eligibility by serving in Iraq in 2003. In recognition of her service, she received the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Gold Recruiter Badge with Three Sapphire Stars, Driver and Mechanic Badge, USA Recruiter Badge, Total Army Instructor Training Identifier, and the Master Resilience Trainer Identifier. She retired in 2013 while stationed at Fort Hood, Texas.

Erica joined the VFW in 2017 at the Fort Sill Post 5263 in Lawton, Oklahoma, where she maintains her Gold Legacy Life Membership. She has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District, and Department levels, culminating with her election to Junior Vice Commander in September 2021. At the state level she has served as the Student Veterans of America chairwoman 2020 to present, Citizenship Education Chair 2020 to present, Bylaws committee 2022 to 2024, District Commander and has served on multiple committees at the National Convention. Erica was elected to Oklahoma Grand Commander of the Cooties in June 2024 for the ensuing year as well as post 5263 Commander. She is also the OKVFW Riders Group resident/Chairwoman for 2024 and the VFW Riders Adjutant at the national level.

Erica received her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health and Rehabilitation Counseling in December 2022. She currently works for the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services and is working toward getting her license.

Erica is a life member of the Military order of the Cootie, at LMSFT Pup Tent #16 in Lawton, Oklahoma and a life member of the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan.

Erica, her husband Randy, and their daughters Makayla and Kaylee reside in Lawton, Oklahoma.



## Department of Oklahoma Dashboard Reporting Form 2024-2025

### District Dashboard Information

	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3
District Meeting Held (Y/N)*			

	State Convention 2024	Fal Fest 2024	Midwinter 2025
Department Meeting Attnded (Y/N)**			

	Post #
District Commander Post Visits	

	How Many?
Recruiting Events Held	

### Post Dashboard Information

	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3
District Meeting Attended (Y/N)**			

	State Convention 2024	Fal Fest 2024	Midwinter 2025
Department Meeting Attnded (Y/N)**			

	National Home	Oklahoma VFW Foundation
Donations (Amount)		

	How Many?
Recruiting Events Held	

\*To receive credit there must have been a quorum. (at least 1 delegate each from 50% of Posts in the District)

\*\*To receive credit at least 1 delegate must have attended.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reporting District or Post Number

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
District/Post Adjutant

# --- THE REAL CAPTAIN AMERICA ---

*The Life and Leadership of Joshua L. Chamberlain*

*By Lt Col Greg Kent, USAF (retired)*



*Union General  
Medal of Honor Recipient*

**Tuesday, February 11, 2025**

**7:00 – 8:00 pm**

**Oklahoma Christian University**

**DAH – Cail Auditorium**

**Free to the Public**

*Til Valhalla - Mission 22  
Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame*

**T-shirt Giveaways**



OKC VA HCS

# HEALTH FAIR

**Friday  
February 7, 2025**

**at OKC VA HCS Gym  
Room GH118  
10:30 am-2:00 pm**

**We will have FREE food,  
CPR/AED training, & more!**

**Employees and Veterans  
Welcome!**

**For more information:  
Email: [shirley.elftherakis@va.gov](mailto:shirley.elftherakis@va.gov)**

***\*Please do not include personal information on  
emails\****



**FREE**

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Information**

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Screening  
Blood Pressure  
Cardiac Rehab  
Weight loss  
Stress Management  
Heart Healthy Diets  
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