



*Department of Oklahoma  
Veterans of Foreign Wars*



1103 N. Blackwelder Ave. OKC. OK 73106  
405 525-2680/ [www.vfwoklahoma.org](http://www.vfwoklahoma.org)

February 2021

2020-2021 Series

*“No man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent.”*

*Abraham Lincoln*

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

**General Orders No. 8**

**2020-2021 Series**

1. Attention is drawn to Section 213 of the National Bylaws. “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 Trustee Report of Audit, Post Election Report for the ensuing year, or other obligations, shall be deprived of all representation in County Council and District meetings; County Council, District, Department and National Conventions. Such representation shall be restored promptly upon proper adjustment of such deficiencies.

/os/

MICHAEL L. MERIT  
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /

Curtis A. Watts  
Adjutant



## ***FROM THE COMMANDER***



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

Comrades,

February 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

First, I hope this finds all of you and your family healthy and well. If not, I pray for a speedy recovery. Here we are beginning the eight month of the year. I hope everyone that is able has continued their year in full swing. I know that the ongoing COVID pandemic is still limiting our ability to do our jobs 100%, but keep after it and taking care of those we represent here in Oklahoma. Speak with each other and share what works for you. During this time, we must help each other accomplish our mission. Remember, we are TEAM OKLAHOMA! Therefore, we must work together as one.

Membership Update. January end numbers are as follows: Southern Conference, Oklahoma slipped to #3. Nationally, Oklahoma is #13. We still have 866 to go to that magic 100% before the end of the administrative year. That is down from 1075! Keep up the great work. Remember, keep working those At Large Lists and the Retention Lists you all have received. Our highest recruiter to date, NCM PSC Robbie Clark has recruited 84 new members. State Surgeon Stacy Reddig is at 64, 1 at 8, 2 at 7, 2 at 5, 4 at 4, 8 at 3, 19 at 2, 37 at 1 and 114 with no recruiter. Quartermasters, please ensure you are entering a recruiter number when putting in new members, so the right person gets the credit for them. We now have 24 of 84 Posts and 1 out of 11 Districts at or above 100%. Our overall breakdown is 166 new members and 193 reinstates and 55 new life members. Last year we were at 89.89% and this year we are at 92.54%. Keep up the great work and **remember, 110% by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021!**

Concerning working with your town to make it a Purple Heart City, I remind everyone that you **must contact Mitch Reed with the Military Order of the Purple Heart prior to any action being taken!** His contact information is in the packet attached to these General Orders.

Our Mid-Winter Conference is February 12-15, 2021 at the Wyndham Garden Airport Hotel, OKC. If you have not made your reservations, please make them as soon as you can and ask for the VFW rate. Our schedule is out and will be included in these General Orders. There is going to be plenty of training and committee meetings on Friday. We will release all that is going on as soon as we have it finalized. If you have not heard yet, we will not be having our annual VOD/PP Banquet on Saturday night due to COVID restrictions at the hotel. Therefore,

it will be at the Centennial if the restrictions allow it. Our National Representative is going to be National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland. Let's get everyone in town and show Jr. Vice CIC Borland the Oklahoma Standard. I look forward to seeing all of you in OKC in two weeks. Come ready to reunite, work and above all, have fun.

If you did not receive the email, I decided to make some adjustments to the All-State Requirements due to COVID related issues. They are attached to these orders. Please take the time to look them over and several requirements have either been lifted or relaxed. I know that this year has not been ideal, so the All-State Program should reflect that. I would love to see over half of our Posts and Districts qualify. Keep after it. If you have any questions concerning the changes, please feel free to get in contact with me.

Today kicks off the Oklahoma Legislature session. Please watch for more information to follow from State Legislative Chair State Junior Vice Commander Jim Bassett. I will let you know that the VFW and Auxiliary License Plate bills are back on the agenda. They are HB 1044 and 1045, respectively, and they are being sponsored by a member of the Ponca City VFW, Representative Ken Luttrell.

Our Department Centennial is April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Not many get to celebrate 100 years, so this is going to be an amazing experience for all of us. We currently have 70 coins remaining at the State Headquarters. They are two inches wide and the price per coin is \$20. Let's get the last of the coins sold. Please contact State Quartermaster Curt Watts to get yours today!



Finally, we have made it through the first half of a very tough year dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. We still have a long way to go to get back to a normal life. But I have faith in each and every one of you that we will continue pressing forward in doing what we do best: being the voice and action for every military member, veteran and their families here in Oklahoma. When you are feeling like it is getting too tough out there, remember the phrase that got Winston Churchill through the toughest times of World War II, "K.B.O. Keep Bugging On." Thank you for all that you have done so far this year and thank you in advance for all I know you are going to do for the rest of this year. Remember, we are **TEAM OKLAHOMA**, and we are always **First to Fight for Veterans!**

**\*\*\*UPDATE TO 2020-2021 ALL STATE REQUIREMENTS\*\*\***

## **ALL-STATE (POST)**

The prestigious title of “All-State Post” demonstrates that the post membership has been dedicated and involved in the VFW programs. The All-State verification form will be attached to the March 2021 and April 2021 General Orders for completion, submission, and arrival at the Department HQs no later than May 21, 2021. Cut-off for all criteria reporting will be May 21, 2021 unless stated otherwise. All outstanding documentation and/or reports must also be submitted to Department HQ by that date to allow the Awards Committee to meet, select, and prepare the awards for State Convention. The prestigious cap will be awarded to the Post Commander and Post Quartermaster for their efforts of guidance, tracking and submission of the requirements. The post will receive a mounted certificate for their achievements.

Membership requirements, each Post must:

- Reach 105% in membership.
- Each Post Commander and Post Quartermaster must each recruit two (2) N/R members.

Submission requirements, each Post must:

- Submit a minimum of one (1) Voice of Democracy entry to their District.
- Submit a minimum of one (1) Patriots Pen entry to their District.
- Submit a minimum of one (1) National Education Teacher Award from the post to district level for judging.
- Submit either, one (1) entry for the Safety Award (Law Enforcement, Fireman, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)) **or** Scout of the Year. Duplicate entries will not be accepted as part of the Department program.
- Submit minimum of five (5) community service reports.
- Only reports submitted via online reporting will be accepted. Only reports tabulated prior to May 21, 2021 will be used for judging purposes.
- Submit Quartermaster Bond. If the bond is not through the VFW, proof is required NLT September 4, 2020.
- Submit donations to the National Home for Children **and** the National Veterans and Military Support Services. Submit a minimum of \$50 for posts with under 100 members and a minimum of \$100 for all other posts. Submissions via the National website will also be accepted and will be verified via National’s monthly reporting emails. Donations must be sent to the State QM or National link for credit NLT May 21, 2021.
- Submit accurately completed Post election reports. Election reports **MUST** be received at State HQ

via OMS or hardcopy NLT 31 May 2021.

- Submit by write-up and provide proof of a minimum of two (2) recruiting events conducted by your post for the year to State HQ NLT May 21, 2021.
- Submit a completed post inspection report to HQ, along with quarterly audits NLT 30 days after each quarter has ended. Proof of 990 filing must be filed with current inspection form NLT December 31, 2020.
- Submit proof of registered delegate(s) for the 2021 National Convention NLT May 28, 2021.
- Provide payment of State delegate fees NLT May 21, 2021.

Attendance requirements. Each Post must:

- Attend a State conducted School of Instruction. Minimum attendance by:
  - Post Commander
  - Post Quartermaster
  - Any Post wishing to conduct a School of Instruction and wishing it to be counted toward the All-State Competition must have prior approval from the Department prior to the conduction of the School of Instruction.
- Participate in a 2021 Loyalty Day Program (Post, District or State level).
- Must attend at a minimum two (2) of the three Department sanctioned events. Those events are State Convention 2020, Fall Fest 2020, and Mid-Winter 2021.
- Must have one (1) of the following Post command staff (Commander, Sr. Vice, Jr. Vice) attend every District meeting within their District.

## **ALL-STATE (DISTRICT)**

The prestigious title of “All-State District” demonstrates that the District and Post level leadership and members have been dedicated and involved in the VFW programs and have shown to involve all aspects of membership and community to promote and support the Veterans within their communities. The All-State verification form will be attached to the March 2021 and April 2021 General Orders for completion, submission, and arrival at the Department HQs no later than May 21, 2021. Cut-off for all criteria reporting will be May 21, 2021 unless stated otherwise. All outstanding documentation and/or reports must also be submitted to Department HQ by that date to allow Awards Committee to meet, select, and prepare the awards for State Convention. The prestigious cap will be awarded to the District Commander and District Quartermaster for their efforts of guidance, tracking, collection, and submission of the requirements. The District will receive a mounted certificate for their achievements.

Membership requirements. The District must:

- Reach 100% in membership

- Each District Commander and Quartermaster must each recruit two (2) N/R members. This requirement is waived if they have the same requirement at the Post level.

Submission requirements, each District must:

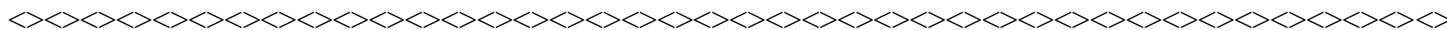
- Submit a minimum of one (1) Voice of Democracy entry to the Department.
- Submit a minimum of one (1) Patriots Pen entry to the Department.
- Submit a minimum of one (1) National Education Teacher Award from the district to state level for judging.
- All reports concerning these programs must be submitted by the District Commander by the due dates given by the Department Programs Director.
- Submit Quartermaster Bond. If the bond is not through the VFW, proof is required NLT September 4, 2020.
- Submit District donations to the National Home for Children **and** the National Veterans and Military Support Services. Submit a minimum of \$50 for districts under 700 members and a minimum of \$100 for all other districts. Donations must be sent to the State QM or National link NLT May 21, 2021 for credit.
- Submit complete District election reports. MUST be received at HQ NLT May 21, 2021.
- Successful completion of Post inspection MUST be completed by the District Commander/District Inspector NLT Nov. 30, 2020. Any extensions must be approved by the State Commander.
- Successful completion of District inspection MUST be completed by the State Inspector NLT Dec. 31, 2020. Any extensions must be approved the State Commander.
- Submit all district quarterly audits NLT 30 days after each meeting. IRS 990 must be submitted along with the audit NLT December 31, 2020.
- District Commander registered for State Convention NLT May 21, 2021.

Attendance requirements. Each District must:

- Conduct at least three (3) meetings within the VFW year. In case of inclement weather or other emergencies causing a travel hazard preventing a meeting, the District Commander must coordinate and report to the State Officer representative assigned to attend the meeting as well as notifying the State Commander and State Adjutant.
- Attendance by District Commanders (or District Senior Vice, or District Junior Vice Commanders) at all scheduled Council of Administration meetings and any other meeting that is called by the State Commander. Only the State Commander can excuse a District Commander or their above aforementioned representatives due to certain circumstances. The District designated representative, other than the Commander, Senior Vice or Junior Vice Commander, meets the quorum requirement,

but NOT the All-State attendance requirement for District Level judging.

- Attend a State School of Instruction (SOI). (Dual positions accepted if currently holding an attendance required by Post position.) Minimum attendance by:
  - District Commander
  - District Quartermaster
- Any District wishing to conduct a School of Instruction and wishing it to be counted toward the All-State Competition must have prior approval from the Department prior to the conduction of the School of Instruction.
- Participate in a 2021 Loyalty Day program at your own post, another post, district, or state level provided proof of attendance is submitted by said body conducting the event LT May 21, 2020.
- Must appoint a District Service Officer (by appointment order) who must attend scheduled Service Officer Training provided by the State Service Officer/or by his appointed Instructors within 120 days of appointment.
- Validate Post visits twice during the administrative year to show involvement and aid as needed. Corresponding reports must be submitted by the Post visited and by the District Commander making the visit to the State Headquarters for credit.



## ***FROM THE STATE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER***

State Senior Vice Commander  
National and State Legislative Chair  
Bylaws/Resolutions Chair  
*Jim Bassett*

Oklahoma is 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 14 Departments within the Southern Conference.  
Oklahoma is 13<sup>th</sup> out of 52 Departments within the Veterans of Foreign Wars.  
*As of 01 February, 2021*



Mid-Winter Conference 2021

***Moving Forward***

about during the conference.

The next event scheduled is the Mid-Winter Conference. It is scheduled for the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> of February. It will be at the Wyndham Garden Oklahoma City Airport located at 2101 S. Meridian, Oklahoma City. I look forward to seeing you there. There is a blood drive scheduled, sponsored the Oklahoma Supreme Military Order of the Cooties. There should be a few other vendors out and



Our mission is to take care of veterans and their families. One way to do that is reach out to the National Guard units near you. We have adopted them and have been working with them. In other words, they are our family. If you need help getting in touch with one, let Tony McGrew or myself and we can help. Offer to sponsor events; a MAP grant will handle many of them. Again, talk to Tony or myself and we are more than willing to help.

The fight to stop the eradication of veteran's benefits continues. Learn what is occurring and stay current and knowledgeable on issues. Facebook, Twitter, or other Social Media sites do not always tell the truth so do not get wrapped up on hearsay or social media truths. To do this, simply register to receive the Action Corps newsletter. This is a simple and easy way to stay informed. You can register at <https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>.

RETAIN, RETAIN, RETAIN!!! What are you doing to help retain post members? Recruiting is half of the battle on our membership. We need to keep the members that we currently have as well as bring in new members.

By now, you should have noticed that I want the VFW involved in our communities. When we are out there working in our communities, people notice. And they remember. When the time comes for them to think about support of a veteran organization or a veteran, they send them to the VFW. When you have a relative that calls and asks what veterans organization should they donate money to, and then mention several prominent ones from TV. I was stunned to say the least. I told them to donate to the VFW. The post near them was not active and they were not sure if the VFW as a whole still existed.

Coach Sims founded Sims the Boxing Academy. Boxing was a calling that started from his 23 years in service as a US Army boxer and 13 series combat veteran. Mr. Sims has continued serving his country as a pillar of our community enlisting the help from coaches who are also veterans. Sims Boxing Academy works with veterans as coaches, they mentor and train youth, not just become boxers, but to build strong mentally and physically able young men and women. Help prepare them for their future.

The American Red Cross has supported the military for years. Founded in 1881, the American Red Cross has been helping and supporting the military and their families. Now we can help the American Red Cross. During this pandemic, their food pantry and clothing locker are still operating and helping those in need. Their main offices have closed or moved to minimal staff. They need food and clothing donations so they can continue to help.



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

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



The Special Olympics have taken their events the virtual world. Baseball, golf, bowling, dancing. Yes, virtual dances. Even in the virtual world, they are still looking for volunteers. They are in need of coaches, assistants, chaperons, and cheering sections. Volunteering or even sponsoring, either individually or as a post, go to <https://www.sook.org/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/>. When you are out volunteering for the VFW, please wear something that identifies you as a VFW or Auxiliary member; it helps increase public awareness. I have spent time with some of the Special Olympians. They are some great people and a lot of fun to be around.



The Oklahoma VFW Foundation has need of volunteers! We are looking for people that enjoy engaging with businesses or other entities that donate money to worthy causes. The board feels that helping the veterans of Oklahoma is the greatest cause of all. We need help reaching out to businesses. Help us help the foundation grow so that it can support us in our mission to help veterans.

Like any organization, vacancies occur. If you are interested in serving your fellow veterans, please submit a letter with your fund raising and non-profit experience for consideration. The board, at their next scheduled meeting will consider and interview applicants. Please send your experience letter to Jim Bassett, [bassettj15@yahoo.com](mailto:bassettj15@yahoo.com). I will ensure the board reviews all letters.

### **Be Visible!**

What are you doing in your communities to stand out? When you sponsor an event, does everyone know that you are part of the VFW? Do you have Post or District banners letting people know? Are your members wearing something presentable with VFW or Auxiliary on them? When I was younger, yes before I qualified for the VFW, the VFW Posts were the heart and soul of most communities. I cannot think of any reason that posts cannot be that again. Yes, it is harder in some locations but mostly you just need to go out and do things in the community. Need help with a blood drive, let me know and I will help. Clothing, food, or school supply drives can easily be set up and communities notice.

Some post have been active in their communities. Some more than others. What are you doing to make sure they know you are with the VFW or Auxiliary? Wear something that identifies you! Any time you help a veteran is also a good time to wear something that identifies you as a member of the VFW or Auxiliary. There are some exceptions if you are working with other entities, check with them to find out if you can wear VFW or Auxiliary items.

### **Be Visible!**

*Jim Bassett*

State Sr Vice Commander  
Department of Oklahoma  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
405.664.3929  
[Bassettj15@yahoo.com](mailto:Bassettj15@yahoo.com)

## **All Call!**

Have you been interested in managing a program for the Department? I am looking for volunteers, new people, and new ideas. If you are interested in managing a program, holding the chair position, please let me know. Some chair positions have already been assigned, but I will consider each request. If not selected as the chair, you will be asked to be on the committee and support the program. My expectations are simple, someone who wants to work the program and make it a success.

- Buddy Poppy Chair
- Budget & Finance Committee, this is a three-year commitment, elected at Convention
- Bylaws/Resolution Chair
- Citizenship Education Chair
- Community Service Chair
- Credentials Chair
- Department Convention Chair
- Homeless Veterans Chair
- Hospital Chair
- Loyalty Day Chairs, normally assigned to District Commanders. If someone wants to plan and implement one large event for the state, let me know.
- Legacy Life Membership Chair
- Life Membership Chair
- Life Membership Vice Chair
- Membership Chair
- Membership Retention Chair
- National Home for Children
- National Legislative Representative
- Native American Chair
- Oklahoma Veterans Council
- Patriots Pen Chair
- POW/MIA Chair
- Public Relations Officer
- Safety Chair
- Scouting Chair
- Student Veterans Association Liaison
- State Legislative Chair
- State Service Officer
- Training and Development Chair
- Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service OKC

- Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service Muskogee
- Veterans and Military Support Committee Representative
- Veterans Service Chair
- Voice of Democracy Chair
- Women Veterans Chair
- Youth Activities Chair

For those that I discussed chair positions, do not worry, I am seeking volunteers.

*Jim Bassett*

State Sr Vice Commander  
 Department of Oklahoma  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars  
 1103 N. Blackwelder  
 Oklahoma City Oklahoma 73106  
 405.664.3929  
[Bassettj15@yahoo.com](mailto:Bassettj15@yahoo.com)  
<https://vfwoklahoma.org/>

### ***FROM THE STATE JUNIOR. VICE COMMANDER***

All, I hope this new month finds you well. First off, the midwinter conference is upon us. I would love to see all of you in attendance and get a chance to visit with you. The crunch is on for All State and All American awards so make sure to continue running with your programs and fulfill the criteria needed. The Posts in this Department are in a great position even with the pandemic trying to slow us down! Keep it up team Oklahoma! As we move through this new year make sure to check on our brothers and sisters and help them if needed, we are here for each other. In closing I believe this organization has been thinking outside of the box and beating the crazy challenges we have had to compete against. Keep it up!

Jeremy J. Owen  
 State JR Vice Commander  
 Department of Oklahoma

### ***FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER***

**Development:** Jan 28 Appeals: Partners in Patriotism quarterly and year-end statements to nonmember donors. Partners in Patriotism year-end statements to member donors. Jan. 30 Appeals: Label package with certificate to member donors. January year-end statements to member and nonmember donors. **Communication:** Monday (Jan. 25, 2021), VFW National Commander Hal Roesch along with Sport Clips Founder and Chairman Gordon Logan

successfully completed a virtual media tour regarding the Help a Hero Scholarship program, engaging in 22 broadcast interviews in markets across the country. More than 11,000 viewers logged on to VFW National Commander Hal Roesch's live State of the VFW address yesterday evening on Facebook with numbers continuing to rise. In case you missed it, you can watch it here: <http://www.facebook.com/VFWFans>

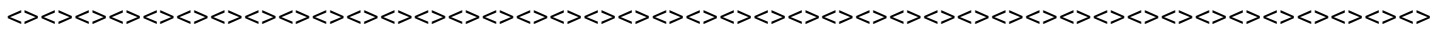
**Administrative Operations:** There are currently 52 Posts under suspension, two of which are new. We have completed four Post consolidations pursuant to Section 209 of the National Bylaws and one Post revocation pursuant to Section 212 of the National Bylaws. The organization currently has 6,032 active chartered Posts. Administrative Operations is engaged in 21 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, seven administrative actions and seven pending membership eligibility challenges. This past week we received one new Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submission in for review. We also reviewed and approved 11 total Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions and currently have 15 submissions pending review and approval. Current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 14 days.

**Meetings and Events Data Received:** A notification from the Events Industry Council on application to recertify (due every five years) my CMP - Certified Meeting Professional designation was approved. Valid for additional five years. Note: Originally received this designation in 1995. Ongoing - weekly ZOOM call with various meeting planners and supplier's discussions on state of the industry, ideas exchange and overall encouragement during this time. Periodically there are guest speakers providing information as it relates to meetings and events.

**Ongoing** - weekly ZOOM call with ALHI hotels and presentations of the current state of the meetings industry provided by CEO/President Michael Dominguez. The presentation includes updates on status of COVID-19. Sources include, but not limited to Johns Hopkins and CDC. Updates also provided on venues who have successfully hosted virtual/hybrid meetings. Semiweekly conversations with Baltimore to stay up to date on the city status as it pertains to the July 2021 National Convention. Receiving hotel contracts for 2022 Kansas City Convention for review and to pass along to legal for their review. 2022 Kansas City Convention hotels will all be located in the downtown area allowing for closer proximity to KC Convention Center where meetings will be held. Scheduled site visit (2/9) for NST for Auxiliary for KC Loews hotel for 2022 convention. Completing the 2021 exhibitor paperwork, targeted to send out by 1/31 for Baltimore. Jan. 21-22, participated in ESPA (Event Service Professionals Association) annual meeting held virtually, with 135 attendees. I currently serve as the ex-officio meeting planner board member for the association. Keynote speakers were Simon T. Bailey, Larry Perkins, CMP, and Dr. Elizabeth Lombardo. Contact: **VFW Foundation** : On Jan. 25, 2021, VFW Foundation Board Member, Sport Clips Founder and Chairman Gordon Logan, along with Sport Clips President and CEO Edward Logan presented a \$1,026,105 donation check to the VFW Foundation to provide scholarships for service members and veterans through the [VFW's Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship program](#). Considering the limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's effort was especially noteworthy. More than \$60,000 of the money raised was from Sport Clips' own \$1 per haircare service donation made on Veterans Day while clients, individual supporters, and Sport Clips team members donated the largest portion of the money raised in stores and through virtual walks. To date, more than 1,900 military and student

veterans have benefitted from the Help A Hero Scholarship program through \$8.7 million donated previously by Sport Clips Haircuts and its generous clients and product partners. National Legislative Service: This month marked the beginning of the 117th Congress. NLS has released the 2021 VFW Priority Goals, which focus on Budget; Health Care; Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs; Education, Employment, and Transition Assistance; Military Quality of Life; and National Security, Foreign Affairs, and POW/MIA **National Veterans Service:** Last weekend NVS hosted its first Virtual Post Service Officer training conference for 70 Post Service Officers from Virginia, Illinois, Arizona, and New Jersey. This was the first time that NVS leveraged technology to reach PSOs. NVS is evaluating the results of the training, but initial reaction is that the model was a success. This week, NVS VFW's Pre-Discharge Claims Representatives continue to conduct a series of virtual benefits briefings for transitioning service members around the country. This week, NVS delivered briefings at Joint Base Andrews, Washington Navy Yard, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, U.S. Naval Academy, Camp LeJeune, and Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. NVS Assistant Director for Health Policy James Moss participated in a VA briefing on environmental airborne hazards and The Military Coalition Health Care Committee meeting. NVS Assistant Director for Field Operations Gregg Orto also participated in this week's meeting of the VA Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of Veterans. **National Security and Foreign Affairs:** The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Oversight and Reform this week sent a letter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Intelligence and Analysis, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence requesting information and briefings as part of a review of the events and intelligence surrounding the insurrection on January 6, 2021. The Committees will conduct robust oversight to understand what warning signs may have been missed, determine whether there were systemic failures, and consider how to best address countering domestic violent extremism, including remedying any gaps in legislation or policy. It is expected that hearings will be held in the upcoming weeks by the various committees and NSFA will be monitoring the work of all the committees and will report to the COA as practicable. On Tuesday, the CDC briefed on their new report that discusses the emergence of the B.1.1.7 variant of SARS-CoV-2 (the "U.K. strain"). This variant is more easily transmitted than other strains, and the modeling done by the researchers suggests that B.1.1.7 may soon become the dominant strain in the U.S., despite the fact that it only appeared in the U.S. in December. The report stresses the importance of continued social distancing and masking, increasing vaccine coverage, and ongoing genomic surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 strains. NSFA director Bob Jackson will continue to monitor and provide updates in his daily COVID SITREP. PS Happy Valentine's Day to all you lovers out there....

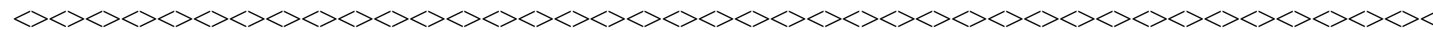
Robbie Clark  
National Council Member  
Department of Oklahoma



- D-1 > 24 Apr 21 11am>Post 5307, Salina> St. Cdr. Merit
- D-3 > 07 Feb 21 11am, Post 4884 Spiro School> St. Sr. Vice Cdr. Bassett
- D-4 > 06 Feb 21 11am>Post 1198 Coalgate> St. Jr. Vice Cdr. Owen
- D-5 > 07 Feb 21 10am>Post 7977, Skiatook> St. Jr. Vice Cdr. Owen
- D-7 > 06 Feb 21 11am>Post 1098, McAlester> St. Cdr Merit & St. Surgeon Reddig
- D-8 > 07 Feb 21 11am>Post 1201, Ponca City> St. Cdr. Merit
- D-9 > 06 Feb 21 10am>Post 4578, Guthrie> St. Sr. Vice Cdr. Bassett
- D-10 >15 May 21 10 am>Post #8706, Moore > St. Surgeon Reddig
- D-13 >01 May 21 12:30pm>Post # 6143, Weatherford>
- D-14 >20 Feb 21 11am> Post 5263 Lawton> St. Cdr. Merit
- D-15 >08 May 21 @11 am> Post # 4876 Altus > St. Surgeon Reddig

**DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- 12 Feb> Lincoln’s Birthday
- 12 Feb> VFW-OK Mid-Winter 12-14 Feb 2021
- 14 Feb> St. Valentine’s Day
- 15 Feb> Presidents’ Day
- 22 Feb> Washington’s Birthday
- 03 Feb> “Star-Spangled Banner”



**Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States  
 Department of Oklahoma  
 Mid-Winter Meeting  
 February 12-14, 2021  
 Wyndham Garden Hotel—Oklahoma City Airport  
 2101 South Meridian Avenue  
 Oklahoma City, OK 73108  
 405-685-4000  
 Fax 405-681-3941**

**VFW/VFWA Contracted Room Rate per night is \$82.00 + applicable taxes**

*As always, this schedule is tentative and subject to change*

**Friday, February 12, 2021**

- 1:00pm- 4:00 pm Service Officer Training (Wyndham Garden Hotel)
- 1:00pm- 4:00 pm Quartermaster Training (VFW State Headquarters) 1103 N. Blackwelder OKC
- 3:00 pm- 5:00 pm DC of Staff Membership Committee Update/ Training

6:00 pm- 6:45 pm National Representative Reception

**Saturday, February 13, 2021**

7:30 am- 8:00 am Buddy Poppy Display Setup

8:00 am- 8:30 am Buddy Poppy Judging

8:30 am – 1030 am VFW & VFWA Joint Session

10:40 am - 12:00 pm Past Commander’s Luncheon (Loc: TBA)

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Lunch

1:30 pm - 3:30 pm Council of Administration Meeting

**Immediately following CofA will be open discussion**

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Theme Trays / National Home

5:00 pm –6:00 pm Cootie Scratch/ **Cootie Time Immediately following**

8:00pm – until \*\* Red & White or Pink Social Time (Veteran’s Valentine Fun)

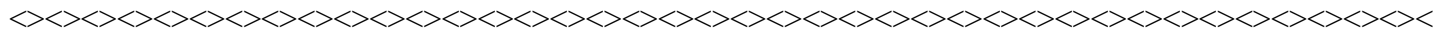
**Sunday, February 14, 2021**

9:30 am - 10:30 am Chapel Service

11:00 am CHECK-OUT

Protocols

- VFW will offer Zoom option
- Mask worn if not speaking or drinking in hotel (including meetings)
- All areas de-sanitized daily
- Temp taken prior to entry



**From:** VFW Communications [<mailto:Communications@vfw.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, February 1, 2021 10:23

**To:** VFW Communications <[Communications@vfw.org](mailto:Communications@vfw.org)>

**Subject:** USAA Commercial Casting Call

Dear VFW Leadership,

USAA is currently casting USAA members and their families for a new commercial. Please see the flyer below and share it with your membership.





# USAA NATIONWIDE CASTING NOTICE

## Casting USAA members and their families for a new commercial

Searching for:

**USAA members and their families. Must currently have USAA auto insurance and/or USAA homeowners or renters insurance. Must be:** Former military, any branch, enlisted ranks only. All genders, ages 57-75. Must have interesting story about joining USAA or a claims experience with USAA for auto insurance or homeowners/renters insurance-related purpose. Specifically looking for unique story of your interaction with USAA.

Please send the following:

- Name, years enlisted, military branch and rank
- Contact info (phone, email)
- Current city and state
- Which USAA products do you use? (Required)
- Write-up re: how you heard about USAA/why you became a member and your joining experience
- Recent photos of you, your family and/or of your military career

If this sounds like you or someone you know, please send the above information to: [kimberly.walsh@usaa.com](mailto:kimberly.walsh@usaa.com) with the subject line: "USAA Casting" by February 3.

### Project Details, if selected:

**Project:** PAID NON-UNION Commercial for USAA  
**Shoot:** Week of March 8<sup>th</sup> and week of March 15<sup>th</sup>

Respectfully,

### **VFW Communications**

VFW National Headquarters  
406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64111  
816.756.3390

## **Stay Healthy with free Sanitizer!!!**

In this time of Covid-19, we are all at risk. You never know who has been infected at any time. I voted this year, and the odds are high that at least one person there was infected by the virus. The worst part is they may not have even known it. Because most of our members are in the high risk category, we must protect ourselves and others. Wear a mask to protect yourself. Stay the approved social distance of 6 feet. Try to go to businesses that clean properly and allow the social distancing.



One of the tools to fight this virus is disinfectant. I want to extend a congratulations to the Claremore Post, J. R. Hooper Memorial Post 2976. They are receiving 55 gallon barrels of disinfectant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This post is willing to share a 55 gallon drum at the cost of time and money to go get it.

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

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