

# Mail Call

Department of Louisiana

May 2025 | Issue 11



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## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**VFW Day of Service**  
May 3, 2025

**State Convention**  
June 26-29, 2025  
The Bentley Hotel Alexandria &  
Convention Center

**National Convention**  
August 9-13, 2025  
Columbus, OH

**Council of Administration**  
August 22-24, 2025  
The Hotel Bentley  
Alexandria LA

**2025 Southern Conference**  
November 7-9, 2025  
Margaritaville Lake Conroe  
Resort  
Montgomery, Texas

*“Generations Continuing to Serve”*

# DISTRICT MEETINGS

**DISTRICT 2 MEETINGS:**

**DISTRICT 3 MEETINGS:**

**DISTRICT 4 MEETINGS:**

<b>May 3, 2025</b>	<b>Post 9822</b>
Registration	9:00 am
Meeting	10:00 am
Lunch(\$8)	12:00noon
<b>State Rep, QM, Elvin "Ray" Bass</b>	

**DISTRICT 7 MEETINGS:**

<b>May 17, 2025</b>	<b>Post 6720</b>
Registration	9:00 am
Meeting	10:00 am
Lunch(\$10)	12:00noon
<b>State Rep, QM, Elvin "Ray" Bass</b>	

**DISTRICT 8 MEETINGS:**

**DISTRICT 9 MEETINGS:**

**DISTRICT 10 MEETINGS:**

<b>May 3, 2025</b>	<b>Post 7643</b>
Registration	10:00 am
Meeting	10:30 am
Lunch (\$10)	12:00noon
<b>State. Rep, ADJ, Carl Karnish</b>	

**DISTRICT 11 MEETINGS:**

<b>May 10, 2025</b>	<b>Post 1809</b>
Registration	9:30 am
Meeting	10:00 am
Lunch	12:00noon
<b>St. Rep, Cmd Debbie McElhannon</b>	

**DISTRICT 12 MEETINGS:**

<b>May 10, 2025</b>	<b>Post 5951</b>
Registration	9:00 am
Meeting	10:00 am
Lunch (\$10)	12:00noon
<b>State Rep, JVC, Sharee Arends</b>	

**DISTRICT ELECTIONS:**

Article IV- Districts Section 416, District officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the District Adjutant. ***Additionally, District Commanders, District Senior Vice Commanders, and District Junior Vice Commanders shall submit proof of edibility to the Department Adjutant. District officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed.***



# VFW KICKS OFF DAY OF SERVICE

## May 3rd

The VFW Day of Service is an outgrowth of the organization's #StillServing campaign launched in 2020 to recognize the ongoing dedication of veterans and service members who continue to serve their communities. VFW members log more than 3 million community service hours annually.

#VFWDayofService on social media and get involved at [vfw.org/DayofService](https://vfw.org/DayofService).

**If your Post is participating in a VFW Day of Service, be sure to use the hashtag #VFWDAYOFSERVICE when posting on social media.**

## PROPOSED DEPARTMENT BYLAW CHANGES

The Department has proposed important changes to the Department's bylaws aimed at improving operations and clarifying procedures. These changes include increasing the new member fee from \$2 to \$5 and raising Department Convention registration fees from \$5 to \$10 for both delegates and leadership attendees. These updates will help the Department more effectively support operations and event planning in today's evolving budgetary needs.

All members are encouraged to review these updates and stay informed, as these proposed changes will be voted on during the **94th Annual State Convention in June**. You can find the full list of proposed bylaw changes on **pages 16-18** of this newsletter.

### 94TH ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION

June 26-29, 2025

Bentley Hotel & Randolph Convention Center  
Alexandria, LA

#### State Convention Delegate/ Alternate Registration:

Post may send in their Delegate/Alternate Registration form now, so that the Department can start typing name badges.

**To Submit the Delegate/Alternate Form by mail:** Post may find the Delegate/Alternate Form in this month's mail call.

**To Submit the Delegate/Alternate Form online:** Post may also submit their form & payment online by clicking the link below:  
<https://form.jotform.com/242125563185051>

#### Banquet Tickets

Purchase your Banquet Ticket now! Tickets are \$40.00 per person! Click the link below to pay for your tickets online

<https://form.jotform.com/240304921208143>

Visit our website [www.vfwdeptla.org](http://www.vfwdeptla.org) under News—State Convention for more information!

### 126TH NATIONAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS INDEX

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF & NATIONAL OFFICERS

#### FINANCE & INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

201 PERIODIC REVALIDATION OF VFW NATIONAL RESOLUTIONS

#### NATIONAL SECURITY & FOREIGN AFFAIRS

#### COMMITTEE NATIONAL POW/MIA

#### SUBCOMMITTEE

401 PROTECT POW/MIA FULL ACCOUNTING MISSION FUNDING

402 ENSURE DOD COMPLIANCE WITH TAP LAW

403 RESEARCH BLAST OVERPRESSURE

404 REPATRIATE AMERICA'S FIRST FOREIGN WAR CASUALTIES

#### VETERANS SERVICE COMMITTEE

601 PROTECTING HEALTH CARE AND BENEFITS

602 TOXIC EXPOSURES

603 MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

604 ENSURE VETERAN SUCCESS IN EDUCATION

605 VA NURSING HOME ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

606 DENTAL CARE ELIGIBILITY

607 MEDICARE

View each Proposed Resolution here: <https://vfwdeptla.org/uploads/documents/National%20Resolutions%20126thNationalConventionProposedResolutions.pdf>

## STATE COMMANDER'S MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE WINNER FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH!

The top recruiter for the month of **April** is **PAUL STONE** from **Post 5951!** Congratulations **PAUL!**

### COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S CHALLENGE

The monthly Commander's Challenge is rolling along as we see our Posts making great strides in recruiting and upgrading members to Life membership! To remind everyone, every month during the 2024-25 membership year, we will reward our Posts who lead their divisions in recruiting as well as Life Member upgrades.

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

Every month a different award will be given out to the Posts that lead their divisions, and at the end of the year at our National Convention, each Post will be recognized for their achievement on a video display at the Membership booth.

**MARCH'S winners will receive an 8-foot VFW personalized table cover customized for the Post to be used for meetings, recruiting events, and other functions!**

## 100 % POST

Congratulations to the Districts & Post that have reached 100% already this year!

### STATE COMMANDER'S MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE/TOP RECRUITER AWARD FOR MAY!

**\*\*SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS!**

### ATTENTION ALL POSTS: CHECK YOUR STATUS FOR THE ALL-STATE TEAM!

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wDjAr-TdAoRiybKLGGrHa2oo\\_EpynZdH-XXOaiWlaviI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wDjAr-TdAoRiybKLGGrHa2oo_EpynZdH-XXOaiWlaviI/edit?usp=sharing)

**All State Team Entry Forms are due to Department Headquarters by May 5, 2025.**

The criteria for All State Team is listed on Pages 78-79 in the Leadership Book for this year. You can also find the Information and Entry form on the Department's website by visiting [www.vfwdeptla.org](http://www.vfwdeptla.org) Click on Programs - All State Team or [click here](#)

**Reminder: One requirement to be eligible for the All State Team is to submit a Community Service Record Book (either an actual Record Book or a Digital Version such as a Power point).**

**MINIATURE MODEL**

**82A1 .50 CAL**

**May Top Recruiters Award**



**The model measures in at 13" when fully assembled. 'Almighty' weighs a whopping 14 oz, almost 1 full pound!**

**This will be the conversation piece of any room you choose to display it in. Dial in the scope and get ready for the ants to invade!**

# PAUL STONE CANDIDATE FOR STATE CHAPLAIN 2025-2026

- Member of Post 5951
- Post Sr. Vice Commander (25-26)
- District 12 Sr. Vice Commander (25-26)
- Dept. Membership Chairman (25-26)
- Grand Seam Squirrel (M.O.C.) (25-26)
- District 12 Honor Guard Member
- Worshipful Master of Mt. Lebanon PHA Masonic Lodge #20, Shreveport
- Scribe for King Solomon H.R.A.M. #5 (PHA), Shreveport
- 15 Year USAF Veteran, Services Career Field



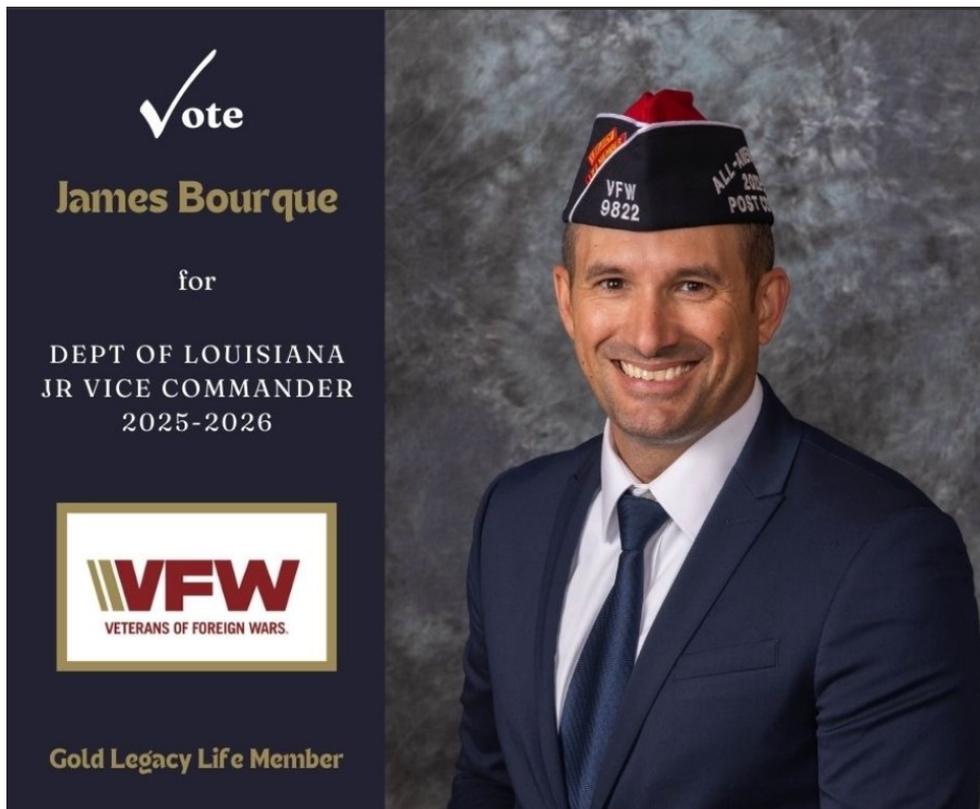
## FEDERICO "MAX" ARENDS III CANDIDATE FOR JUDGE ADVOCATE

VFW Member since 1996

Offices Held;

- Post Adjutant
- Post Commander
- District 12 Adjutant
- District 12 Sr. Vice Commander
- District 12 Commander
- State Surgeon
- St. Jr. Vice
- St Sr. Vice
- State Commander
- National Council Member
- National Youth Education & Community Service Committee

## CANIDATE FOR JR. VICE COMMANDER 2025-2026:



A campaign graphic for James Bourque. On the left, a dark blue vertical banner contains the text: a white checkmark above the word "Vote", "James Bourque" in gold, "for" in white, "DEPT OF LOUISIANA JR VICE COMMANDER 2025-2026" in white, the VFW logo (VFW VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS) in a white box, and "Gold Legacy Life Member" in gold at the bottom. On the right is a portrait of James Bourque, a man in a dark blue suit and tie, wearing a black VFW garrison cap with "VFW 9822" and "ALL-AMERICAN POST" visible.

## CANIDATE FOR SURGEON 2025-2026:

### Canidate for State Surgeon 2025-2026



Joe Dufrene  
Member of VFW Post 6640  
Currently District Two Sr. Vice Commander  
Past District Two Commander  
Navy Corpsman (1986–1996)  
Medical Laboratory Technician for Over 32 Years

## EVENT FLYERS:

Any District/Post that has upcoming events and would like to include a flyer in our monthly Mail Call, please send the information to [adj@vfwdeptla.org](mailto:adj@vfwdeptla.org)!

## Future National Convention Dates:

**August 9-14, 2025**

Columbus, OH

**July 31-Aug 4, 2027**

Milwaukee, WI

**Aug 15-20, 2026**

Salt Lake City, UT

**Aug 5-10, 2028**

San Antonio, TX

## VFW Department of Louisiana Headquarters CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office- 225-928-5025 | [www.vfwdeptla.org](http://www.vfwdeptla.org)

\*Please note the Department NO longer has a Fax Number!

### State Quartermaster

Elvin R. Bass

Email: [lavfwqm@yahoo.com](mailto:lavfwqm@yahoo.com)

### State Adjutant

Carl Karnish

Email: [adj@vfwdeptla.org](mailto:adj@vfwdeptla.org)

### State Administrative Assistant:

Tori LeBlanc

Email: [lastatevfw@yahoo.com](mailto:lastatevfw@yahoo.com)

### State Commander:

Debbie McElhannon

Email: [debbiemc4vets@gmail.com](mailto:debbiemc4vets@gmail.com)

## State Commander's Special Project Brothers and Sisters in Arms

[Click here for more information, please visit https://  
www.brotherandsisterptsddogs.org](https://www.brotherandsisterptsddogs.org)

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORTING:

All reports should be submitted **MONTHLY** by logging onto the Department's Website - Members Only Section. It's very important that Community Service Activities are reported in the month that they take place!

## Department Conference/ Convention Dates:

**2024-2025**

State Convention

June 26-29, 2025

**2025-2026**

CofA/Officer Training

August 22-24, 2025

**Mid Winter**

January 22-25, 2026

**State Convention**

June 18-21, 2026

**2026-2027**

CoA/Officer Training

August 28-30, 2026

**Mid - Winter**

January 28-31, 2027

**State Convention**

June 17-20, 2027



## CHALLENGE COIN

We invite all of our Post to join us in honoring our local law enforcement officers, EMTs, and firefighters by purchasing Challenge Coins to show our appreciation to them.

Cost \$10.00 each + shipping

All Posts should check with their District to see if they have placed an order to distribute to Post!

*Click the link below to order yours today!*

<https://form.jotform.com/242673672339162>



## From the desk of the State Commander...

We have had a great year. We only have two months left in this program year. Thank you for the hard work and the accomplishments you have made throughout the year. Hopefully, you have looked at your checklist for All-State and All-American. All-State forms and your Community Service Record Book are due on 5 May. If you have all requirements except membership, send the form. You must get 101% membership in May to be recognized at the State Convention.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of LA is currently over 101% membership and ranked fifth in the Nation; this is due to everyone's dedication. We are 87 members away from making 102%. National VFW is 33,197 members from 102%. Let's help CIC Al Lipphardt reach his goal of 102%. If you need help with a membership drive, someone can come to help. Many people talk about membership and keeping our numbers up so Congress hears our voice. Yes, this is important, but I have mentioned that equally important is active membership. When you recruit someone, call and check on your comrade and invite them to a fun event. Find something that will make them want to be a part of what you are doing for the VFW. The more people we have actively serving in our posts, the more that we can accomplish for veterans.

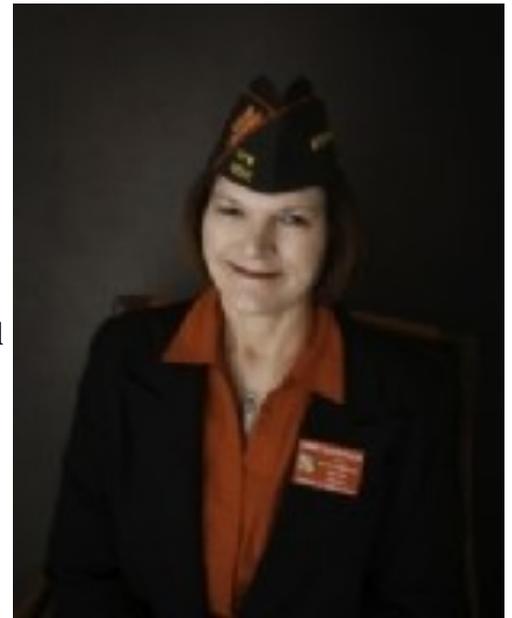
Remember it is time to prepare our annual tax documents, the 990. All posts and districts are required to file taxes and must have their own EIN. You cannot use the state EIN on your tax documents. Ray will have a Quartermaster (QM) meeting in the next week or two and will discuss this topic.

Incoming Commanders (CDR) and QMs make sure you put the correct time and location of your meetings in your election report. Many posts have made changes this year and we want to make sure the information is correct in the next leadership book. Also, district CDRs need to send the district meeting dates for next year by 1 June.

I look forward to the state convention. I truly enjoy the comradery at these meetings. We have many events scheduled. On Friday, we have a health fair scheduled in the morning and VA claims assistance all day. Space is limited for the late-night haunted tour and the suicide prevention class. Call to sign up for these events. See the agenda for all events. Remember elections are on Sunday. We need each post and district to stay to vote on Sunday. Make sure your posts send all required documents and pay all dues so you can vote. It would be upsetting if your candidate lost by a few votes and your post wasn't eligible to vote.

If you are planning on going to National in Columbus Ohio and would like to attend a special black-tie banquet on Monday of National, let us know. Most awards will be given out at the banquet. The Department will reserve tables.

I look forward to continuing to serve veterans together and to build our VFW stronger. Comradery and helping veterans are our main purpose. Thank you for what you do. The hard work is done in the posts; without the posts hard work, the district and state could not be successful. I appreciate your hard work and dedication to serving and helping veterans; Generations continuing to serve.



**State Commander  
Debbie McElhannon**

# A message from our State Sr. Vice Commander....

Greetings,

May is a busy and meaningful month for our organization, filled with events that highlight our continued service and honor. From the VFW Day of Service and District Conventions to Memorial Day and Mother's Day, we are reminded of both our commitment and our community.

On May 3, 2025, we launch our VFW Day of Service as part of the #StillServing campaign, showcasing how veterans continue to make a positive impact well beyond their military service. The campaign runs throughout the month of May, and I strongly encourage all Posts to register and take part in this important initiative.

We concluded April with five successful District Conventions. Congratulations to all newly elected District Officers for 2025-2026! I am energized by the incoming leadership and look forward to attending the remaining District Conventions in the coming weeks.

On Memorial Day, we pause to honor and remember our comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. We will never forget their courage and dedication.

It is truly an honor to serve as your State Senior Vice Commander. Today, I humbly announce my candidacy to serve as your next State Commander. With a deep commitment to our mission and a proven record of leadership, I stand ready to lead with integrity, transparency, and an unwavering focus on supporting our veterans, their families, and our communities.

James Prestenback  
State Senior Vice Commander, Louisiana  
Candidate for State Commander



**Sr. Vice Commander  
James Prestenback**

# A message from our State Jr. Vice Commander....

Greetings Comrades,

I do not even know where April went. We are full steam ahead as always.

Posts should have completed elections for the next year of line officers. Districts are starting as well! It is important that you have verified those that were elected are qualified to be in those positions.

Those of you who have held a position are in a great space to assist and teach those that are taking that position. It is even stated in the by-laws; "it will be your duty to assist your successor with all the counsel and experience you have gained during your term of office." Do not let them fail!

Remember, do not stop recruiting, reinstating, or retaining members! If you have not already, make sure you apply for the National Day of Service. Remember, any event in the month of MAY qualifies if you apply on the National Website. Spring and summer are just around the corner, and it is a perfect time to start planning more events that involve the community. Adopt a unit, hold a family day, hold a health fair, there are so many things you can start planning now. The sooner you plan, the better the outcome! Get your post/district out there to the community and grow! Do not forget to share your flyers/posters with the Department so if any of us are traveling, or want to visit, we have the information.

I look forward to seeing each of you during my travels to the District meetings and at Convention in June



**Jr. Vice Commander**

## A message from our State Adjutant....

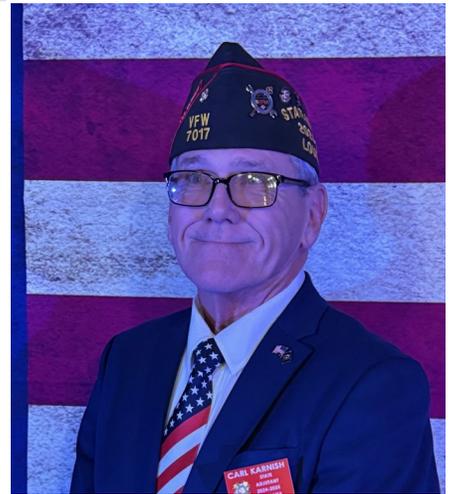
Elections are done, the results are in. Congratulations to those who made a choice to run for an office and were elected. That was the easy part! So now what happens? Are you just a figure head in the position? Do you REALLY know what your position calls for?

Whether you are in a Post position, District position or Department position you can find out your responsibilities in Podium Edition under the Manual of Procedure. Article II covers Post, Article IV covers District and Article V covers Department.

To be an effective leader, learning what is right and following the By Laws is essential. Many times, we shoot from the hip thinking we know the answer, we give the answer and later find out the information we gave out is not accurate,

Everybody learns differently. Some by reading, some by doing and some by watching. In any case while learning your position you have other resources. One of the most important can be the person who held the position last.... ask them questions. Utilize all the resources available. There is training on VFW.ORG, there is always training at CofA.

As we end this year and begin the next year lets keep the focus of why are we in the VFW ... to help veterans and their families.



**State Adjutant  
Carl Karnish**

## A message from our State Quartermaster....

As we begin the month of May, all Posts should have completed their elections last month. The 2025-2026 Election Reports must now be filed online through the VFW National OMS system. If any Post have trouble submitting their Election Reports for the upcoming year, please contact Department Headquarters and we will assist you.

Posts are also reminded to submit their Delegate Dues payment along with a list of Post Delegates for the upcoming State Convention. In April, Department Headquarters sent an email to each Post Commander and Quartermaster with a letter containing their Post Voting Count for State Convention, as well as any outstanding arrears. Please note that any arrears must be resolved prior to the State Convention in order for a Post to be eligible to vote.

With Memorial Day approaching, I encourage all Posts to order Buddy Poppies today! Orders can be placed online by visiting the department website at [www.vfwdeptla.org](http://www.vfwdeptla.org) and navigating to Programs > Buddy Poppies.

Finally, I want to express my sincere thanks for your support during my time as State Quartermaster this year. I will be seeking re-election for the 2025-2026 year in June, and I would greatly appreciate your continued support.



**State Quartermaster  
Elvin Ray Bass**

# A message from our State Surgeon....

Comrades, your friendly Surgeon here. Did you know that April highlighted a time to focus on managing stress and actively participating in one's healthcare journey. This includes being aware of the impacts of stress and seeking healthy coping mechanisms. May is dedicated to encouraging physical activity and coincides with National Mental Health Awareness Month. This month emphasizes the importance of physical activity for overall health, including mental well-being, and encourages individuals to make time for exercise and engage in activities that promote a positive mental state.

Although National Public Health Week has passed, we can all still accept the challenge of FIVE DAYS TO HEALTH. Monday: Enroll in Health Care Tuesday: Talk with Your Healthcare Provider Wednesday: Connect with Buddies, Peers, or Neighbors Thursday: Go Tobacco-Free Friday: Develop and Practice Healthy Habits

And, know that this becomes a year round effort towards a healthier life.

The Riders Group will be hosting the 2nd Annual VFW Riders Rally in Bossier City, LA 2-4 May 2025. Flyer will be updated in this issue of the Mail Call!

Operation Daily Battle (ODB) can hold QPR training upon request. If you are interested in our class, please reach out to either myself or to Ed Horton (Chairman ODB). We will be conducting classes during state convention if anyone is interested as well. Class size is limited to 35 members and we will have registration set up well in advance. This program is sponsored by the VFW Riders Group.

If you do decide to reach out to me, both my phone number and email are below. However, if you call, please leave a message as I don't answer my phone during my work day...my Boss doesn't like that.



**State Surgeon  
Lawrence Koons**

# A message from our State Chaplain....

Challenge can be both a good or bad thing, it's up to you how you will adapt and also how you will use it to grow. When I was recovering from my accident I had a multitude of challenges and with each one of them used the experience to emerge stronger. All too often. I was asked how I made so much progress and I would reply that retreating wasn't a option. In much the same ways my VFW career has gone the same way. All the times weren't perfect but often when things are hectic or going a million miles a hour is when you create the most memorable experiences.

And as I look back on my years as State Chaplain, District commander, post commander, Cootie seam squirrel, and Grand Commander the memories makes the effort pay off. As posts, districts, and even our Department start a new year we are in the same place. New comrades take on posts and District positions and we as a organization grow even stronger. Never forget that your leadership want to see you success and are always here to help you as needed



**State Chaplain  
David Fields**

# **Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Louisiana Legislative Report May 2025**

These are the key Topics from this month. Please read through these and let me know your thoughts on how we can continue to show Louisiana, that our Elected Officials are committed to our Veterans.

April 7th:

VFW Joins Maryland Governor's Veteran Roundtable: VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci and VFW Department of Maryland Commander Joe Cicchillo met with Maryland Governor Wes Moore and other members of the veterans' community for a roundtable discussion on key policy issues. Gallucci and Cicchillo are both residents of the state who offered the governor and his team insights regarding challenges facing Maryland veterans, such as accessing earned care and benefits. They also provided an update on the VFW's efforts to fight Claim Sharks at both the state and federal levels, and explained the VFW's "Honor the Contract" rallying cry, which calls on our nation's leaders to meet the contractual obligation of caring for those who served in uniform.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Military sexual trauma (MST) relates to sexual assault or harassment that occurred during military service. Although VA is spotlighting MST education and treatment this month, it works year-round to raise awareness of its resources to address this issue. Learn more and explore VA's MST resources.

Get the Facts on Toxic Exposure Screenings: VA has conducted toxic exposure screenings for millions of veterans since the passage of the Honoring our PACT Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-168). However, myths persist regarding the law's purpose and scope, such as only older veterans are eligible for screening. To rebut common misconceptions, VA provides myth- or-fact clarification, as well as links to additional information resources. Read more.

April 14th:

VFW Joins Domestic Military Toxic Exposures Roundtable: House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mark Takano (CA-39) convened a roundtable with more than a dozen veteran organizations and advocacy groups to discuss toxic exposures on and around domestic military bases. VFW National Legislative Associate Director Nancy Springer shared insights on military firefighter exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which stem from the use of aqueous film forming foam to extinguish fuel fires. She also stressed the need for Congress to carefully monitor the VA Presumption Decision Process that systematically evaluates presumptive conditions of service connection. Watch the roundtable.

VFW Testimony for House Subcommittee Hearing: VFW National Legislative Associate Director Nancy Springer provided a statement for the record for a House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs hearing on VA's efforts to decrease delays in processing claims. Springer explained that not fully evaluating a claimant's record and requiring unnecessary examinations or medical reviews causes delays. VA highlighted how its improved automated tools and enhanced training programs are accelerating the claims process. Read the testimony or watch the hearing.

**House Passes Six Veteran Bills:** The House passed six bipartisan bills for veterans and their families. The VFW recently testified in support of H.R. 1039, Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act, that would simplify VA notice letters to make them more understandable to recipients; and H.R. 1228, Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act, that would move the Office of Survivors Assistance to the Office of the Secretary to ensure prioritization of all survivor benefits. The VFW has supported the other bills in the previous Congress, and we will continue to monitor their progress. [Read more.](#)

**VetServe 2025:** VA will join in celebrating National Volunteer Week that takes place this year from April 20–26. As part of its VetServe 2025 campaign, VA's National Day of Service on April 23 will focus on strengthening the capacity of volunteers and highlighting their positive impact. Volunteers have made tremendous contributions to our nation's service members, veterans, and their families. This day is an opportunity across all 50 states to make a difference in the lives of those who have served.

**April 21st:**

**VFW Meets with White House Officials:** VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci and National Legislative Director Kristina Keenan met with members of the White House Office of Public Liaison to introduce our organization's goals, history, and legislative priorities. The discussion centered around the Administration's plans to organize meaningful events and roundtables to hear directly from veterans, and to find ways to promote their health and wellness.

**VFW Senior Vice Commander Conference:** The VFW held its annual three-day training conference in Kansas City, Mo., to prepare Department Senior Vice Commanders for their upcoming command year. Attendees received briefings from various business lines of the organization. VFW National Legislative Director Kristina Keenan provided information about the VFW's current legislative priorities and how to encourage participation from our members. A primary recommendation is to stay informed about legislative activism through the VFW Action Corps Weekly and periodic Action Alerts. Keenan encouraged these future commanders to invite all veteran supporters in their communities to join the VFW Action Corps.

**VA Contact Centers Migrating to Cloud:** VA is enhancing its contact centers, such as the Women Veterans Call Center and Veterans Crisis Line, by migrating to a modern cloud platform. This upgrade aims to provide veterans with faster and more personalized support. Launched in March 2025, the new system features scalable tools, AI-driven insights, and real-time responsiveness. [Learn more.](#)

**Reinstatement Opportunity for COVID-19 Discharges:** In accordance with a presidential executive order, DOD is offering reinstatement with back pay and benefits to over 8,000 former active and reserve service members who were discharged solely for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine, and request to return. The military services are directly contacting these individuals to ensure they are informed of the opportunity available through April 1, 2026. [Read more.](#)

April 28th:

**VA Announces May 1 End to Home Loan Relief Program:** On April 23, VA announced it will stop accepting submissions to the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase (VASP) program effective May 1, 2025. This includes any new VASP Trial Payment Plans (TPPs), where borrowers demonstrate the ability to make their new monthly payments for three months before the loan is fully modified. However, active TPPs will continue through Aug. 31, 2025. If you are facing foreclosure on a VA-guaranteed home loan, speak to your lender before May 1. [Read more.](#)

**Protecting Veterans from Bad Actors:** Con artists often target veterans who receive significant VA benefits, such as Purple Heart recipients and those eligible for Special Monthly Compensation, specially adapted housing grants, or VA pensions. Common scams include identity theft, fraudulent investment schemes, and fake financial services that mimic legitimate free offerings. You can protect yourself by never sharing your VA account details and by authorizing benefits deposits only into bank accounts in your own name. Suspected fraud should be immediately reported to VA at 800.827.1000. [Learn more.](#)

**VA Program Helps Veterans Manage Their Benefits:** VA's Fiduciary Program protects veterans who are unable to manage their own VA benefits due to illness, injury, or age. If medical documentation or a court establishes incompetence, VA will assign a fiduciary who is usually a family member or friend selected by the veteran. This individual must then undergo an investigation to determine suitability. Veterans may appeal VA's determination of incompetence or its selection of a fiduciary. [Learn more.](#)

Respectfully,

**Matthew J. West**

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

National Legislative Committee Member 2020-2026

## **COMMITTEEMAN'S CORNER**

Welcome to the final Countdown for the 2024-2025 VFW Year, we have less than 60 days left until the new slate of Officers for the Post, District and Department Officers take over, let's not sit back and hold membership until the beginning of the next year, continue to recruit, renew and reinstate your members.

Once again, I remind the newly elected Post and District Officers, if you are an Annual Pay Member when elected, take the time to pay your dues ASAP or become a Life Member, nothing worse than seeing an elected Officer removed for not paying dues. Strive to find ways to improve your Post or District as you proceed through your year.

Planning for the 126th National Convention in Columbus, Ohio is well underway; a tentative agenda is located on the vfw.org website. As of now, we will not be having a Louisiana/We Can Do It Hospitality Room this year due to lack of suites at the host hotel. Get your room reservations made so that you aren't put into another hotel. The Southern Conference Caucus will be held on August 9th beginning at 4:00pm, this is where the vote will be taken to select the next Designee as JVCIC for the 2026-2027 VFW Year, make your plans to be there.

I want to thank everyone who has been on this 28 month ride with me as I campaign to become the next Southern Conference JVCIC, it has been quite a long time since Louisiana has had a CIC for the VFW and I look forward to the opportunity and challenges this position will have. August 9th should be a day to celebrate the work of so many of you that have supported me and stand by my side this entire time.

Until next month, let's keep pushing forward to improve our Department and raise the numbers back up by renewing, reinstating or recruiting new members.

**Bobby Lovergne**  
Louisiana Council Member

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 25.001

Submitted by: PSC Ray Bass (current Department Quartermaster)

Description from Submitter: Amend Article 5, Section 2: *Forwarding Admission Fees and Dues* by changing the new member fee from \$2.00 to \$5.00.

Current Bylaws Content:

Sec. 2. Forwarding Admission Fees and Dues:

At least once each month the Post Quartermaster shall transmit to the Quartermaster General the fees and dues collected from each Post member during the preceding month as prescribed in the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure. New member fee is \$2.00 and must be transmitted to the Department. Department of Louisiana has Direct Dues Membership transmittals directly to VFW National.

**Proposed Amended Bylaws Content:**

**Sec. 2. Forwarding Admission Fees and Dues:**

**At least once each month the Post Quartermaster shall transmit to the Quartermaster General the fees and dues collected from each Post member during the preceding month as prescribed in the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure. The new member fee is \$5.00 and must be transmitted to the Department. Department of Louisiana has Direct Dues Membership transmittals directly to VFW National.**

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 25.002

Submitted by: PSC Ray Bass (current Department Quartermaster)

Description from Submitter: Amend Article 5, Section 3A, *Department Convention Registration Fees*: by changing the delegate registration fee from five dollars (\$5.00) to ten dollars (\$10.00).

Current Bylaws Content:

- A. In accordance with Section 222 National Bylaws, a delegate registration fee of five dollars (\$5.00) shall be paid by each Post for each and every delegate to which the Post shall be entitled based upon transmittal reports and dues covering the membership of the Post as received by the Department Quartermaster as of March 31st with such additions as may be necessary by new Posts only.

**Proposed Amended Bylaws Content:**

- A. In accordance with Section 222 National Bylaws, a delegate registration fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) shall be paid by each Post for each and every delegate to which the Post shall be entitled based upon transmittal reports and dues covering the membership of the Post as received by the Department Quartermaster as of March 31st with such additions as may be necessary by new Posts only.**

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 25.003

Submitted by: PSC Ray Bass (current Department Quartermaster)

Description from Submitter: Amend Section 3C, *Department Convention Registration Fees* by changing the described fee from \$5.00 to \$10.00.

Current Bylaws Content:

- C. A registration fee of five dollars (\$5.00) shall be paid by each and every Past Commander-in-Chief, Department Officer, Past Department Commander, District Commander and Post Commander; comprising the composition of the Department Convention on or before registering as a member of the Department Convention.

**Proposed Amended Bylaws Content:**

- C. A registration fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) shall be paid by each Past Commander-in-Chief, Department Officer, Past Department Commander, District Commander and Post Commander; comprising the composition of the Department Convention on or before registering as a member of the Department Convention.**

# VFW National Convention Formal Banquet

Join us for an elegant evening at the **National Convention Formal Banquet!** This exclusive event will celebrate our 125 years of history and to recognize some of our more prestigious awards from the VFW and the Auxiliary.

**Date:** August 11, 2025

**Time:** 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM

**Tickets:**

- The Department has purchased **30 tickets**
- \$125 per person
- Limited availability – first come, first served!

**How to Reserve Your Spot:**

- Email: [lastatevfw@yahoo.com](mailto:lastatevfw@yahoo.com)
- Submit payment promptly to secure your ticket

**Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow members and honor our organization in a formal setting. Reserve your ticket today!**

## VFW & VFW Auxiliary Bus Trip to the VFW National Home

Join a special day trip to the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, MI on August 13, 2025. See firsthand the vital work being done to support Veterans and their families.

**Trip Details:**

- Date: August 13, 2025
- Departure: 7:00 a.m. EST from the Columbus Convention Center
- Return: 7:00 p.m. EST
- Cost: \$75.00 per person (includes transportation, meals, and snacks)

**<https://vfnationalhome.org/news-and-events/events/anniversary-bus-tour/> to register today!**



**Don't Forget to register your Post for the Day of Service in May.**

**An All American Requirement**

**<https://todaysvfw.org/day-of-service>**





# DANCE FUNDRAISER

**VFW POST 4588**

1004 Jeter St., Bossier City

**FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025**

6:30pm – 10:30pm

(Doors open at 4:30pm)

## FOR THE BENEFIT OF PROJECT 4 HOPE

Project 4 Hope is a Tiny House Village Transition Program for Veterans.

Project 4 Hope offers Veterans life skills, job placement, counseling programs, housing assistance, and budget management.

DANCE TO THE MUSIC OF  
**RED CHUTE REVUE**

**\$10 PER PERSON**

**RED CHUTE REVUE**  
IS GRACIOUSLY DONATING THEIR  
TIME SO **ALL**  
PROCEEDS WILL GO TO  
O.R.V.A. PROJECT 4 HOPE



**DOOR PRIZES, GREAT MUSIC, AND DANCING...  
PLAN TO JOIN US AND SUPPORT PROJECT 4 HOPE**



2025 1st ANNUAL CHARITY

May 17, 2025 at 7:30am

2100 Coppermill Blvd, Zachary LA

[www.vfwpost4224.org/golf@vfwpost4224.org](http://www.vfwpost4224.org/golf@vfwpost4224.org)

BOOGIE DOWN THE BAYOU  
July 13th  
11 AM - 6 PM  
TICKETS - \$30 IN ADVANCE / \$35 AT THE DOOR  
NON-REFUNDABLE  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
Let's party for a purpose!



Sponsored by  
Louisiana VFW District 8

*50/50 Raffle*

*Food*

*Live Auction*

*Dancing*

*Cash Bar*

No outside food  
or drink allowed



*Live Music by:*

**Mike Broussard  
& Night Train**

*followed by*

**The Mojos  
& Guests**



**LOUISIANA 2ND ANNUAL VFW RIDERS GROUP STATE RALLY**  
**2-4 MAY 2025**  
**BOSSIER CITY**

**Registration: 0830 at 3 State HD**  
**KSU: 0930**



**FEE: \$30 Rider**  
**\$20 Passanger**  
**\$10 VFW Dept**

- 2 May – 1800ish: Drinks & Comradery @ Post 5951
- 3 May – 0830: Poker run, Music, and Lunch at 3 State H-D
- 3 May – 1800: Dancing and fun at Post 4588
- 4 May – 0900: Breakfast and send off at Post 4588

**Raffles and Silent**  
**Auction Vendors**



**Sponsored by:**

**VFW POST 4588, 1004 JETER ST., BOSSIER CITY**

**MAY 17, 2025, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR VETERANS ISSUES INCLUDING VA CLAIMS, HEALTH & WELL BEING, FINANCIAL HEALTH, AND FINAL EXPENSES. REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE ON SITE FROM THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES & ORGANIZATIONS:

**OVERTON BROOKS VA MEDICAL  
CENTER, SHREVEPORT LA**

**LDVA SERVICE OFFICER**

**BOONE FUNERAL HOME**

**TAPS (TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS)**

**GUITAR 4 VETS**

**THE BOOT**

**LIFE SHARE BLOOD DRIVE**

**VETS 4 VETS (CORVETTES) CAR SHOW**

**BARKSDALE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

**STAR PROGRAM**

DOES YOUR COMPANY WANT TO  
PARTICIPATE? CALL RANDY CAMPBELL  
AT 318-272-7291 FOR DETAILS.

Fried Fish and Shrimp Plates \$10  
Dinner includes French Fries, Cole Slaw,  
Hush Puppies, and Tea or Coffee





DREW HERNANDEZ

COMEDY SHOW

A COMBAT  
VETERAN

AUG  
02

COLE-MIERS VFW POST 3619

1115 LA-27, DERIDDER, LOUISIANA

TICKETS ON  
SALE NOW!

VIP \$50 GA \$25



[WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/DREW-HERNANDEZ-COMEDY-NIGHT-TICKETS](http://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/DREW-HERNANDEZ-COMEDY-NIGHT-TICKETS)

## EVENT SCHEDULE

Doors Open 6PM

Food and Drinks 6-8PM

Drew Takes the Stage 8PM