



MAIL CALL



September 2025

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

POW-MIA Day
September 19, 2025

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

IRS Deadline to file 990s
November 15, 2025

Mid Winter Conference
January 22-25, 2026
Hotel Bentley Alexandria

**State Commanders
Testimonial**
March 21, 2026
VFW Post 3665
127 St. Phillip St.
Raceland La 70394

State Convention
June 18-21, 2026
Hotel Bentley Alexandria

“One Team, One Fight”

DISTRICT MEETINGS

DISTRICT 2 MEETINGS:

Jan 29, 2026 **Post 3750**
 Registration 5:30 pm
 Joint Meeting 6:00 pm
 Dinner (\$7) 6:00 pm

Apr 23, 2025 **Post 3750**
 Registration 5:30 pm
 Joint Meeting 6:00 pm
 Dinner (\$7) 6:00 pm
Rep: Adj Carl Karnish

DISTRICT 3 MEETINGS:

Sept 13, 2025 **Post 3665**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon
Rep: Surgeon Joseph Dufrene

Jan 10, 2026 **Post 3665**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

Apr 25, 2026 **Post 3665**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 4 MEETINGS:

Sept 6, 2025 **Post 9822**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$8) 12:00 noon
Rep: Jr Vice James Bourque

Nov 15, 2025 **Post 1982**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$8) 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

May 18, 2026 **Post 9822**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$8) 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 5 MEETINGS:

Sept 6, 2025 **Post 3619**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

Nov 15 2025 **Post 2130**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon
Mar 14, 2026 **Post 3106**

Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 5 MEETINGS:

May 2, 2026 **Post 3802**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 7 MEETINGS:

Sept 6, 2025 **Post 9903**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
Rep: QM Ray Bass

Oct 25, 2025 **Post 5153**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

May 9, 2026 **Post 2483**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 8 MEETINGS:

September 13, 2025 **Post 4224**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$7) 12 noon
Rep: Chief of Staff Jared Nolen

January 17, 2026 **Post 3693**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$7) 12 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

April 25, 2026 **Post 3785**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$7) 12 noon

DISTRICT 9 MEETINGS:

September 27, 2025 **Post 3652**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12 noon
Rep: Adj Carl Karnish

January 17, 2026 **Post 8290**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12 noon
April 25, 2026 **Post 8720**

Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

DISTRICT 10 MEETINGS:

Sept 6, 2025 **Post 1736**
 Registration 10:00 am
 Meeting 10:30 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

Rep: Sr Vice Sharee Arends
Feb 21, 2026 **Post 3139**
 Registration 10:00 am
 Meeting 10:30 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

Apr 25, 2026 **Post 8852**
 Registration 10:00 am
 Meeting 10:30 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 11 MEETINGS:

Sept 13, 2025 **Post 4317**
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

Jan 17, 2026 **Post 3615**
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
May 16, 2026 **Post 1809**

Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 12 MEETINGS:

Sept 6, 2025 **Post 5187**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
Rep: JA Max Arends III

Jan 10, 2026 **Post 4588**
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
May 9, 2026 **Post 5951**

Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon
Rep: Cmdr James Prestenback

BUDDY POPPIES:

The distribution of VFW "Buddy"® Poppies will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in Sections 711 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure.

Post should arrange now for the distribution of "Buddy" Poppies in their respective areas.

All profits accruing from the distribution of "Buddy" Poppies shall be used in accordance with Section 704 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure.

<https://form.jotform.com/90284411473151>

Order your Buddy Poppies today!

POST TRUSTEE'S REPORT OF AUDIT:

Attention Post Commanders:

In accordance with **Section 218(a)(11)(b) of the VFW Manual of Procedure**, **Post Trustees** are required to **prepare and submit quarterly Post Trustees' Reports of Audit** (VFW Store Product #4214) **through their Post Commander** to the **Department Quartermaster**

Attention of District and Post Commanders:

Section 703 of the National Bylaws requires that each accountable officer be bonded with an indemnity company in the sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which he may be accountable. **Post bonds are considered past due on September 1st!**

Visit <https://vfwdeptla.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=147223> to renew your Post Bond today!

SCHOOLS IN & IT'S SCHOLARSHIP TIME!

It is the perfect time to be contacting local schools, youth groups, parent organizations and others with information about Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen. Schools are making curriculum decisions now and parents are thinking about scholarships. Visit <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships> to get all the resources needed for both Programs!

MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE WINNER:

The top recruiter for the month of **August** is **CHRIS ISAAC** from **Post 3977!** Congratulations **CHRIS!**

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>

ALL-AMERICAN POST LEADERSHIP CRITERIA

- Membership must be at least 101%
 - Post-Election Report must be submitted to National Headquarters and be in good standing
- Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria by January 31st, 2026:**
- Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging
 - Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging
 - Donate to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$125
 - Must participate in the VFW Day of Service event held during the month of May and registered at todaysvfw.org/day-of-service/ no later than May 15th. Participation may count as community service for All-American quarterly requirements. The event must meet certain criteria aimed at making a meaningful difference in the community. The criteria and more information can be found here: <https://todaysvfw.org/vfw-day-of-service-faq/>
 - Post must submit a community service report quarterly to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard. The quarters are July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March, and April-June.
 - Must purchase a minimum of 500 Buddy Poppies

ALL STATE POST BASIC REQUIREMENTS

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS:

- Greater than 35 members on May 30 of the current year
- Membership greater than 100%

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

- Two Recruiting Events
- Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District Judging
- Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging
- Safety – one entry submitted to the State Chairman
- Buddy Poppy- must purchase Buddy Poppies (3 per member on roster as 30 JUN prior year. Post with less than 100 Members MUST order at least 500 Buddy Poppies)
- Donate a minimum of \$125.00 to VFW National Veterans & Military Support (VMS)
- Donate a minimum of \$100.00 to the State Commander's Special Project
- Submit quarterly Community Service reports in Program Reporting (Members Only)

Post must be in good standing:

- Post is bonded
- Post submitted all four Trustee Reports for the 2025-2026 year
- Post inspection completed and all discrepancies corrected
- Post submitted election report for 2026-2027 year
- Current 990 Filed
- Annual Secretary of State Filing
- Current Bylaws

Department of Louisiana

Commanders 90 Day Challenge!

Win \$250 for Your Post and a
Special Commanders award

Between July 1 and
September 30, the Post with
the **highest annual
membership renewal
percentage** and the Post
with the **highest number of
membership renewals** wins!
In case of a tie, the winners
will be determined by the
most new members.



Get ready to compete!

**Renew now
and win!**



Exciting prizes

Support your Post

Strengthen our
community



STATE COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT



PROJECT 4 HOPE

Project 4 Hope is a Veterans tiny house community in
Arcadia, LA.

**GOAL: RAISE \$10,000 TO BUILD A TINY
HOME FOR VETERANS NAMED AFTER
VFW DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA**

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE USING THE QR CODE OR
BY MAILING A CHECK TO VFW DEPT OF LOUISIANA
HEADQUARTERS: 10185 MAMMOTH AVE., BATON
ROUGE, LA 70814



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@vfwla.net

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!

Future National Convention Dates:

July 24-30, 2026

Reno, NV

July 31-Aug 4, 2027

Milwaukee, WI

Aug 5-10, 2028

San Antonio, TX

Department Conference/ Convention Dates:

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

VFW Department of Louisiana Headquarters CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office- 225-928-5025 | www.vfwdeptla.org

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

State Quartermaster

Elvin R. Bass

Email: qtm@vfwla.net

State Adjutant

Carl Karnish

Email: adj@vfwla.net

State Administrative Assistant:

Tori LeBlanc

Email: admin@vfwla.net

State Commander:

James Prestenback

Email: jprestenback302@gmail.com

From the desk of the State Commander...

Comrades,

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to all who attended our recent School of Instruction and Council of Administration. The turnout was outstanding, and the success of these events is a direct reflection of your commitment to our mission and your dedication to learning, sharing, and growing together as leaders within our great organization. Your willingness to give your time and talents ensures that our Department is prepared to meet the challenges of the coming year and continues to provide the highest level of service to our veterans, their families, and our communities.



**State Commander
James Prestenback**

As we look ahead, I want to remind everyone of two important days of remembrance in September: Patriot Day on September 11th and POW/MIA Recognition Day on September 19th. These solemn occasions provide us the opportunity to pause and reflect on the sacrifices made in defense of our nation. On Patriot Day, we honor the lives lost on September 11, 2001, and reaffirm our resolve to never forget the events that shaped our nation's history. On POW/MIA Day, we remember the heroes who were taken prisoner or remain missing in action, and we recommit ourselves to ensuring their sacrifices are never forgotten. I encourage each Post and District to hold or participate in observances to honor these days and to educate our communities about their importance.

In the weeks ahead, I am very much looking forward to attending our upcoming District meetings. These gatherings provide a vital opportunity to connect, share information, and work together to strengthen our Posts and programs. They also serve as a reminder that our strength lies in our unity, and that by supporting one another, we can accomplish great things for the veterans we serve.

Finally, I want to commend each of you for the tremendous work you are doing in the area of membership. Your recruiting efforts have been outstanding, and it is clear that you recognize the importance of bringing in new members to secure the future of our organization. Every new member represents a new voice, a new set of skills, and a renewed commitment to our mission. Let us continue this momentum and make membership growth one of our top priorities.

Thank you, comrades, for your dedication, your hard work, and your passion for service. Together, we will continue to strengthen our Department, honor our traditions, and uphold the values of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

In Comradeship,
Jamie Prestenback
State Commander

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

Comrades,

August has come and gone in a flash, with a stunning turn of events at the National Convention and a fun filled and fully educational C of A. Thank you to those of you who were trainers and those of you who attended. My apologies for not being able to train on the District Commanders responsibilities. I appreciate Bobby Lovergne for stepping in and training in my place.

We have started the year strong in membership—excellent job! But do not let that momentum slip away. Many of us are waiting for Life Memberships to hit the system, and when they do, where will your Post, your District, and our Department stand? Remember, it isn't always about the numbers if we do not keep them engaged and committed to the VFW. We need them to be involved.

I hope that everyone has had the opportunity to get the Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Patriotic Art Contest, and Illustrating America Art Contest into their schools already, if you haven't, you are behind the curve and will hinder your Post and District from obtaining All American and All State.

Now is also the time to begin planning for the holidays. Form a committee and start organizing a holiday event that includes your community. The more we open our doors, the more we grow. When people see who we are and what we do, they will want to be part of it.

I look forward to seeing more friendly faces as I go around the state to District meetings. It is always an honor to stand alongside Veterans who are *Still Serving*.



**Sr. Vice Commander
Sharee Arends**

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

Comrades,

August has come and gone! What a month for our organization as a whole. We had a great attendance from the Louisiana delegation at the National Convention. The National Convention was busy with 3 roll call votes showing that the membership truly has a voice in our organization.

Thank you to everyone who attended Council of Administration and School of Instruction. There were lots of new faces in the crowd which is great for our organization. There was lots of great training with members engaged and ready to put our best foot forward this year. Thank you to State Commander James Prestenback for putting together an efficient and effective agenda, and running a smooth Council of Administration meeting.

A big shout out to Post 3665 for cooking a great lunch at C of A. Also, thank you to Mike Parfait (3665) and Mike Liles (Mike Liles) for working the Hospitality Room. A great team effort to keep our members watered and fed!

With September being upon us it's time to start working the Americanism, Patriot's Pen, and Voice of Democracy programs. These programs are vital in teaching our youth what it means to be patriotic and gets the VFW engaging with the community. These programs are due to the Post by 10/31 so don't wait to present these programs to your communities.

Lastly, and most importantly take some time this month whether it be at your post meeting or during a separate ceremony to recognize and remember those still Missing in Action and those held as Prisoners of War.



**Jr. Vice Commander
James Bourque**

A message from our State Adjutant....

How Important are POST Delegate's?

Sec. 222 - Delegates, District Convention & Meetings, Department and National Conventions.

- Delegate strength shall be one for every thirty members or fraction thereof in good standing. Delegates and alternates shall be elected in accordance with the Manual of Procedure.
- Delegates elected under this section shall not be considered instructed and may exercise full authority in the duty to be performed.
- Each Post will pay, in accordance with its Department Bylaws, a delegate registration fee for each and every delegate to which the Post shall be entitled.
- 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 .

At the National Convention this month the importance of each Post Delegate Strength became abundantly clear. There were multiple roll call votes. In the case of Louisiana we had a possible 132 votes. The voting strength is all tide to who is a registered delegate and are they there representing their Post. In my case, VFW Post 7017 voting strength was 6. Our vote was added in because the Commander of our Post was present during the entire process. Not all Post were represented by a physical person, there for that Post delegate votes are not counted in. In the roll call votes Louisiana was reduced from 132 delegates down to 128 delegates. No big deal right? Wrong, if every Post had their total delegate strength count the results of the votes could have, would have changed.

EVERY DELGATE VOTE NEEDS TO COUNT. MAKE SURE YOUR POST IS REPRESENTED AT ALL CONVENTIONS.



**State Adjutant
Carl Karnish**

A message from our State Quartermaster....

Comrades,

Thank you to everyone who attended our Council Meeting and Training Sessions this past weekend at the Hotel Bentley. Your dedication to learning and growing helps strengthen our Posts and Department.

As our department continues to evolve and adapt, we know not every decision will be met with full agreement, but please remember that every decision is always made in the best interest of our members, our Posts, our staff, and our volunteers. It's important that we treat one another, and especially our headquarters staff and volunteers, with kindness, patience, and respect. Remember a little understanding goes a long way.

Posts should begin filing their 2024-2025 IRS Form 990s. The deadline to file is November 15, 2025.

Posts should also check to make sure they have filed their annual report with the Secretary of State. If you are a new post quartermaster this year and you need help filing, please contact Department Headquarters as soon as possible for assistance.

Together, as ONE TEAM, we'll continue moving forward, supporting each other, and serving Louisiana's veterans with pride and excellence.



**State Quartermaster
Elvin Ray Bass**

A message from our State Surgeon....

Comrades,

It was great seeing everyone at COA in Alexandria this past weekend. Thanks to cook for the awesome pastalaya on Saturday.

On August 22 while I was traveling to COA, one of the members of Metry Post 6640 had a great honor bestowed upon him. Mr. Lincoln Brennan, who served in WWII & Korea celebrated his 100th birthday and had a portion of the street he lives on renamed Lincoln Brennan Way.

Joseph Dufrene
State Surgeon



**State Surgeon
Joseph Dufrene**

A message from our State Chaplain....

September marks Suicide Prevention Month—a time to pause, reflect, and take action in protecting the lives of those we serve beside. Within our veteran and military community, the challenge of suicide is not distant; it is deeply personal. Each loss is one too many. One of the most powerful tools we have is simple but profound: the Buddy Check.

Scripture reminds us in Ecclesiastes 4:9–10: “Two are better than one... If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.” This truth speaks directly to the heart of suicide prevention. A timely phone call, a cup of coffee, or just asking “How are you—really?” can be the difference between despair and hope.

Buddy Checks should not only be for those who are most visible or active in our Posts. Often, it is the inactive members—the ones we haven’t seen in a while—who may be carrying silent burdens. A simple outreach to them can remind them they still belong, they are not forgotten, and they are still part of the family we all share. Christ commands us to “love one another” (John 13:34), and that love should extend equally to every comrade, whether present at every meeting or absent for years.

As veterans and comrades, we are bound by a sacred duty to watch over one another. Buddy Checks are not just monthly reminders on a calendar; they are lifelines. In doing them faithfully—active or inactive—we answer God’s call to bear one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2). A small act of care may become the very hand that lifts someone out of the darkness. Together, through faith, fellowship, and vigilance, we can bring healing and hope.



**State Chaplain
Paul Stone**

MEMBERSHIP

TOP RECRUITER SEPTEMBER

Thompson Submachine Gun Model



This Submachine Gun is a historic firearm developed in the United States during the 1920s. It's chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge and is known for its distinctive appearance with a drum or box magazine. Widely used by American troops during World War II.

MONTHLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Louisiana Legislative Report August 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.

August 4th:

Columbus Welcomes VFW National Convention: The 126th VFW National Convention is taking place Aug 9 – 13, 2025, in Columbus, Ohio. Every year, thousands of VFW and Auxiliary delegates gather to represent the organization's more than 1.4 million combined membership. The focus while there is to elect new VFW leadership and approve resolutions to guide our priorities in Washington, D.C., as we advocate for our nation's veterans, service members, and their families. Be sure to search #VFWConvention on social media, view vfw.org, and download the [VFW Events App](#) for helpful information and convention news.

VA Home Loan Program Reform Act Now Law: The president has signed VFW-supported [H.R. 1815](#), *VA Home Loan Program Reform Act*, into law. *Introduced by VFW member and House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Chairman Derrick Van Orden, this law will establish a permanent partial claim program to assist veterans using the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program who are facing foreclosure by covering missed mortgage payments and helping them remain in their homes. Thanks to everyone who responded to the VFW Action Alert to advocate for this law that passed both the House and Senate unanimously. Please [send a message](#) to your members of Congress and the president to say thank you for passing this legislation.*

Major Richard Star Act Filed as Amendment to Senate FY26 NDAA: Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Mike Crapo (R-ID), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) have filed the bipartisan [S. 1032](#), *Major Richard Star Act as an amendment to the Senate's draft version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. If adopted, the amendment would eliminate the dollar-for-dollar offset that currently denies more than 50,000 medically retired combat veterans -- many with fewer than 20 years of service or disability ratings below 50% -- their full DOD retirement and VA disability compensation. The bill was named in honor of Major Richard A. Star and addresses an enduring inequity in veterans benefits. The amendment to the FY26 NDAA is currently attracting bipartisan cosponsors. [Read more.](#)*

Congress Passes Aviation Cancers Study Bill: The House has passed [S. 201](#), *ACES Act of 2025, which was passed by the Senate in June. This legislation -- introduced in three successive congresses -- would authorize a comprehensive study into the prevalence, morbidity, mortality, and potential causes of specific cancers that disproportionately affect military fixed-wing aircrew.*

VFW-Supported Legislation Advances: Just before the August recess, the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs held markup sessions and advanced dozens of pieces of legislation.

Many of these bills are VFW-supported, including [H.R. 740/S. 275](#), *Veterans' ACCESS Act of 2025, to improve the delivery of VA community care and address coordination needs within VA's Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program; [S. 1245](#), *Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2025, to improve the VA disability claims process and health care access for survivors of military sexual trauma; and [H.R. 2605](#), *Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act, to create a five-year pilot program for VA to provide grants to nonprofit organizations to furnish eligible veterans with service dogs and veterinary insurance. The VFW encourages veterans and advocates to attend town hall meetings held by members of Congress in their districts in August, and make your voices heard by advocating for these and other [VFW legislative priorities.](#)***

August 11th:

No Action Corps Weekly due to National Convention. 13

August 18th:

First Woman Veteran Elected to Lead VFW: Career Army veteran Carol Whitmore was elected as the new national commander of the VFW at the 126th VFW National Convention held this year in Columbus, Ohio. "I may be the first veteran to have been elected VFW commander-in-chief while wearing a dress ... but I will NOT be the last! ... I am your comrade by mud, by blood, by dust, by dirt, by sand, by land, by sea, by air ... I am a veteran first!" said Whitmore. Initially enlisting in the Women's Army Corps in 1977, she earned her VFW eligibility by serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Throughout her 36-year military career, she received the Legion of Merit Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal (six), Iraq Campaign Medal and the Combat Action Badge, among many others. She joined the VFW in 2012 at Post 9127 in Des Moines, Iowa, where she maintains her Gold Legacy Life membership. [Watch her speech](#), which begins at the 3:41:00 mark.

Action Alert to Keep VFW Priorities in the NDAA: Congress is in recess, but staff are tracking what matters to constituents. Now is the time to act. Two key VFW priorities are included in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2026 and must stay in the final bill. The Major Richard Star Act (Senate Amendment 2968) ends the offset that denies combat-injured, medically retired veterans the full benefits they have earned. The TAP Promotion Act (Section 551 of the House NDAA) improves the transition process by giving service members direct access to accredited VA claims assistance. Your voice matters, so [take action now](#) and tell your congressional members to keep these priorities in the NDAA.

Apply Now for 2025-2026 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship: The application process for the 2025-2026 class of VFW-SVA legislative fellows is now open. VFW members who attend an accredited institute of higher learning will be chosen for the semester-long program that focuses on real policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The capstone of the program is participation in the 2026 VFW Washington Conference in our nation's capital. Alumni of the program have become more active at all levels of the VFW and SVA, and have been instrumental in changing laws to improve care and benefits for veterans. [Learn more](#) and [apply for the fellowship](#).

Community Care Authorizations Extension: VA has announced it is extending community care authorizations to one year for 30 standardized types of care, providing veterans with 12 months of uninterrupted treatment before requiring reauthorization. This change aims to improve continuity of care, reduce administrative burdens for both veterans and providers, and enhance health outcomes. The new policy applies to an array of specialty referrals for services including cardiology, dermatology, eye care, mental health outpatient, neurology, oncology, orthopedic and pulmonary. [Read more](#).

Update on Fort McClellan Study: The Honoring Our PACT Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-168) authorized a comprehensive epidemiological study of veterans who served at the Fort McClellan Army base in Alabama, which operated from 1917 to 1999. Phase I of the study is complete, identifying and cataloging toxic substances at the installation, while also evaluating the feasibility of further research into the potential health effects. VA is now seeking a research partner to conduct Phase II to assess morbidity and mortality associated with the identified toxins. This next phase could yield critical scientific evidence to support future determinations regarding presumptive service connection for affected veterans. [Read more](#).

August 25th:

Aviation Cancers Study Bill Becomes Law: After being introduced in three successive congresses, the VFW-supported ACES Act of 2025 was finally signed into law on Aug. 14, 2025. [Public Law 119-32](#) mandates a comprehensive study of cancer prevalence, morbidity, and mortality among military fixed-wing aircrew, with a focus on potential links to occupational toxic exposures. Targeted cancers include brain, colorectal, melanoma, and prostate.

Successful Claims Clinic Held at VFW Convention: The VA claims clinic held at the 126th VFW National Convention was a tremendous success. Nearly 200 veterans received on-the-spot claims assistance from either an accredited representative or a VA employee. Of these, 49 received examinations in a VA Mobile Medical Unit van, and almost \$55,000 in benefits was granted. Two people received permanent and total ratings, which now gives

Afghanistan War Commission Update: VFW voices were front and center in Columbus, Ohio. The bipartisan Afghanistan War Commission (AWC) held an emotional and powerful listening session during the 126th VFW National Convention during which more than 20 veterans shared their deeply personal stories about serving in Afghanistan with many expressing frustration about the war's legacy. The AWC just released its [second interim report](#). While it does not yet draw final conclusions, it highlights emerging themes such as strategic drift, interagency incoherence, and the disconnect between Afghanistan-based operations and broader global counterterrorism goals. The final report remains on track for completion and submission to Congress in August 2026. This report is designed to reflect the full breadth of experiences, and veterans are still invited to [share their stories](#) directly with the ACW.

TRICARE Weight Loss Medication Coverage Update: TRICARE has announced a change beginning Aug. 31, 2025, that will affect some beneficiaries. Weight loss medications will no longer be covered for individuals who are not enrolled in TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Select, or receive benefits from a premium-based plan. Coverage will remain available for certain medications when prescribed to beneficiaries with a diagnosis of diabetes, but will not be available if obesity is the primary condition being treated. Meeting clinical criteria, having a prescription from a TRICARE network provider, and submission of prior authorization are also factors. [Read more](#).

PACT Act Performance Dashboard Update: Aug. 10, 2025, marked the third anniversary of the passage of the *Honoring our PACT Act of 2022*. Public Law 117-168 is one of the most consequential pieces of benefits legislation in American history. It expanded health care access and streamlined the disability claims process for thousands of veterans and service members exposed to toxic substances. Since the law's enactment, VA has approved nearly two million related benefits claims, while more than a million veterans enrolled in VA health care for the first time. In commemoration of this significant milestone, VA released a special three-year anniversary edition of its monthly [PACT Act Performance Dashboard](#), featuring a graphical look at the law's impact.

Respectfully,

Matthew J. West

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

National Legislative Committee Member 2020-2026

LOUISIANA COUNCIL MEMBER

COMMITTEEMAN'S CORNER

What a start to the new VFW Year, August 9th was the day WE have worked for over the last 30 plus months, around 4:30pm the Official Vote was taken and by a total of 55,10,5 I was elected as the Southern Conference Designee for JVCIC for the 2025-26 year. I want to thank all the individuals who bought the raffle tickets and t-shirts we sold, the Posts and Districts who donated to the campaign and everyone for the support you have given me during this campaign. I look forward to the day when I get to represent our Department as the Commander in Chief of our organization.

This year's National Convention proved to all members that YOUR voice matters with the numerous Roll Call votes as well as the change of Leadership of the SVCIC position. The members spoke loud and clear about not wanting backroom deals and prearranged agreements to dictate the course the VFW would be going. It goes to show that if your Posts does not have a representative at the Convention then your voice is not heard. Make plans to have someone represent your Posts at all National Conventions to learn what is going on so that the information can be communicated back to your Post members.

Congrats goes out to our Department Commander Jamie "Where's My Tie" P'back and his ringer partner that National Program Chairman Lynn Rolf brought in to dethrone myself and Larry Coons, Jamie gave it his best shot to at least hit the boards maybe 30% of the time just to help his partner out a tiny bit.

I will be attending the National Council of Administration Meeting beginning on 18 Sept to approve the budget for National and discuss the issues going on within the VFW that needs to be addressed. If you have anything that you think I need to bring up please forward them to me ASAP.

The challenge to each Post to donate a minimum of \$75.00 to the NDSWM fundraiser continues. The Department is nearing the \$5000.00 goal we set and challenged other Departments to match, if your Post has not made your contribution please send the \$75.00 to our Department Quartermaster Ray Bass.

Our Departments School of Instruction and Council meeting was loaded with information for all Programs, Post and District Commanders and Adjutant/Quartermasters, folks I cannot stress to you the importance of having someone represent your Post at this event. The majority of your questions will be answered during the training and will help guide you for a successful year, if no one from your Post attended get with your District Commanders to get the information they have for you. Take part in the Departments events and maximize your ability to be part of your communities through the many programs we have throughout the year.

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



Department of Louisiana VFW Desert Storm War Memorial Fundraiser 2025

As the construction of this Memorial has begun with an anticipated completion date in 2026, let's step up once again and do our part to help honor those who served during this War.

The goal is to raise another \$5000.00 from the Department to bring our total to \$20,000.00. To accomplish this the Challenge is for each Post in the Department to donate a minimum of \$75.00 earmarked for this fundraiser, Auxiliaries are also welcome to donate as well. Send all donations to the Department Quartermaster earmarked for the Memorial.

We are also going to issue a challenge to all the other Departments to match or beat our donation to help the VFW be recognized as a Million Dollar donor on the memorial.

CANDIDATE FOR NATIONAL COUNCIL 2026 - 2030



A PROVEN LEADER
WITH OVER FOURTY
YEARS OF EXECUTIVE
EXPERIENCE, STANDING
READY TO CONTINUE
SUPPORTING THE LOUISIANA
VFW

DON REBER

TRIPLE CROWN
PAST STATE COMMANDER 22-23

As a member of this great organization, I would like your support to become our next Junior Vice Commander for the Department of Louisiana 2026-27.

As a proud 24-year veteran of the United States Air Force and a dedicated member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, my vision as Junior Vice Commander of the Department of Louisiana is to strengthen our foundation of **Service, Unity, and Advocacy**. I will work tirelessly to ensure every veteran's voice is heard, every post is empowered, and every member feels valued. Together, we will preserve the traditions of the VFW while embracing innovative ways to grow, engage, and lead—ensuring our organization remains a powerful force for veterans and their families across Louisiana and beyond.

Lawrence (Larry) S. Koons

President, Cole-Miers VFW Riders

Commander, District 5 Louisiana VFW

VFW Riders Chairman,

Department of Louisiana VFW.

"No One Does More For Vets"

Mental health is one of our most crucial fights!

VOTE



For

David B. Fields

State Junior Vice Commander 2026-2027

- A proven Leader with over 26+ years of Military Service
- Two-time Cootie All-Star Grand Commander
- Six-term State Chaplain
- Two term District 12 Commander & All-State / All-American Post Commander
- Dedicates countless hours each month to his post, church, and his community
- Life member DAV and National Infantry Association
- Silver Legacy lifetime member VFW post 5951



COMBAT TESTED GAMING

By the **VFW**
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

THE VFW'S INAUGURAL GAMING LEAGUE EXCLUSIVELY FOR VETERANS.

Join the community!



Combat Tested Gaming (CTG) has become the fastest-growing veterans gaming community in America. We are approaching 2,500 veteran gamers on our Discord server and streaming gameplay on our Combat Tested Gaming Twitch channel. Join our Discord community to connect with other veterans and active duty server members who play your game of choice! Subscribe to our Twitch and YouTube channels to watch our gameplay and experience the thrill and camaraderie of our gamers.

GAMES

- Rocket League
- Call of Duty
- Call of Duty: Warzone
- World of Warcraft
- Valorant
- Madden
- MLB: The Show
- Rainbow Six Siege
- NBA 2K
- Helldivers 2
- Apex Legends
- Fortnite
- League of Legends
- The Finals
- EA Sports FC
- And more! We are adding games consistently.

IMPACT OVERVIEW

2,250+
Veteran gamers.



DEDICATED VFW SERVICE OFFICER



answering VA benefits questions daily.

4 VFW POSTS



have leveraged CTG to start gaming nights – one building a gaming room to support student veterans.

5 VETERANS' LIVES SAVED



during crisis by using connections made through CTG.

CTG has quickly succeeded in reaching its early objectives. Now, as we look to the future, we set our sights on becoming THE leader in the veteran gaming space by continuing to promote the program and through partnering with a veteran-owned company which specializes in building the gaming infrastructure needed to support our growth and long-term success.

PANCAKE Breakfast

\$10

INCLUDES
Pancakes
Ham
Juice or Coffee



**6
SEP
8AM-11AM**

**SUICIDE PREVENTION
FUNDRAISER FOR**



LifeShare
BLOOD CENTER



Sign Up!

VFW POST 3619; 115 LA 27, DERIDDER LA



RECOGNITION DAY
POW MIA
Vigil

24
HOUR



START
19 SEP
5PM



END
20 SEP
4PM

PRESENTED BY VFW POST 3619 & AUXILIARY

POW MIA MEMORIAL, CORNER OF HWY 190 & WASHINGTON STREET DERIDDER LA

We take 24 hours to recognize the 24 POW/MIA Service Members from the State of Louisiana during Vietnam. Every hour at the top of the hour, 1x Bio from a POW/MIA will be read.

FLAG ESCORT BY THE COLE-MIERS RIDERS
OPENING CEREMONY 9/19 @ 5PM
CLOSING CEREMONY 9/20 @ 4PM

2025 OPERATION DAILY BATTLE



MOTORCYCLE RALLY & BBQ COOK-OFF

SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2025

Motorcycle Ride

\$75 per person

Ticket includes:

- Annual T-Shirt
- Lunch and Dinner 9/13
- 2025 Annual Patch



REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!

BBQ COOK-OFF

*Mandatory Cook's
Meeting Friday @ 8PM*

100 % PAYOUT

plus

\$500

Grand
Champion
Prize

Sponsored By:



Hosted at ~ Fort Smith AR VFW Post 8845 - 3005 Tilles Ave

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2483 and American Legion Post 45



3rd Annual TURKEY SHOOT



September 27th 2025
Registration 07:30 AM

Fuselier Range Complex
301 Ismael Rd.
Arnaudville, LA 70512

Save 5 dollars
Per Person
By Doing a
Pre-Registration



Four different categories of competition

- ❖ Ages 8-12 -----(Free admission)
- ❖ Ladies course of fire -----\$25 per person
- ❖ VFW/Am Legion Amateur fire -\$25 per person (Do Not have to be a Vet to participate)
- ❖ Professional series fire -----\$25 per person

Competition will require .22 caliber long riffles and 100 rounds of ammunition.

- ❖ Loaner rifles will be available. Please check the box on the registration form if you need borrowing a loaner.
- ❖ Ammunition will be available for purchase.

Winner in each category will receive:

- 1st place...20lb Turkey
- 2nd place....15lb Turkey
- 3rd place.... 10lb Turkey

All proceeds will go to:

VFW Post 2483 and American Legion Post 45 Questions Please contact 337-298-3747 or 337-945-8988.





LAPLACE VFW POST 3337

**VETERANS DAY
GOLF TOURNAMENT**



**BELLE TERRE COUNTRY CLUB
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2025**

111 Fairway Dr, LaPlace, LA 70068

7:00 AM REGISTRATION

8:00 AM SHOTGUN START

QUESTIONS OR SPONSOR DONATIONS CONTACT

Ray Bass (504) 273-3622 or Wesley Mitchel (985) 788-8807

YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

