



MAIL CALL



JULY 2026

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

NATIONAL CONVENTION

July 24-30, 2026
Reno NV.

School of Instruction Council of Administration

August 28-30, 2026
Hotel Bentley Alexandria

POW-MIA Day
September 18, 2026

State Presidents Testimonial

October 17, 2026
VFW Post 3619
Deridder, LA

IRS Deadline to file 990s

November 15, 2026

Mid Winter Conference

January 28-31, 2027
Hotel Bentley Alexandria

State Commanders Testimonial

March 20, 2027
VFW Post 5951
Bossier City LA

State Convention

June 17-20, 2027
Hotel Bentley Alexandria

DISTRICT MEETINGS

DISTRICT 2 MEETINGS:

August 13, 2026 Post 3750
 Registration 5:30 pm
 Joint Meeting 6:00 pm
 Dinner (\$7) 6:00 pm

Apr XX, 2027 Post
 Registration 5:30 pm
 Joint Meeting 6:00 pm
 Dinner (\$7) 6:00 pm

DISTRICT 3 MEETINGS:

Sept 13, 2025 Post 3665
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

Jan 10, 2026 Post 3665
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

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

DISTRICT 4 MEETINGS:

Sept 12, 2026 Post 3793
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

Feb 20, 2027 Post 1982
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

May 22, 2027 Post 5158
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 5 MEETINGS:

Sept 26, 2026 Post 3619
 Registration 8:00 am
 Meeting 9:00 am
 Pancake Breakfast 8:00am
 \$10.00

Nov 14, 2026 Post 2130
 Registration 8:00 am
 Meeting 9:00 am

March 20, 2027 Post 4759
 Meeting 11:00am
 End 1:00pm
 Business Session if required

DISTRICT 5 MEETINGS:

April 29, 2027 Post 9854
 Registration 5:30pm
 Meeting 6:00pm
 Dinner 5:30pm

DISTRICT 7 MEETINGS:

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

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

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

DISTRICT 8 MEETINGS:

September 05, 2026 Post 3784
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$7) 12 noon

January 16, 2027 Post 3785
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$7) 12 noon

April 17, 2027 Post 3693
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$7) 12 noon

DISTRICT 9 MEETINGS:

September 27, 2026 Post 8290
 Registration 5:30pm
 Meeting 6:30pm
 Meal will be provided

January 21, 2027 Post 3652
 Registration 5:30pm
 Meeting 6:30pm
 Meal will be provided

April 29, 2027 Post 8720
 Registration 5:30pm
 Meeting 6:30pm
 Meal will be provided

DISTRICT 10 MEETINGS:

Sept 19, 2026 Post 1736
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

Feb 20, 2027 Post 3841
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

Apr 25, 2027 Post 8852
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

DISTRICT 11 MEETINGS:

Sept 12, 2026 Post 1809
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am

Jan 9, 2027 Post 3615
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am

May 16, 2027 Post 1809
 Registration 9:30 am
 Meeting 10:00 am

DISTRICT 12 MEETINGS:

Sept 26, 2026 Post 5187
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

Jan 16, 2027 Post 5951
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

May 22, 2027 Post 4588
 Registration 9:00 am
 Meeting 10:00 am
 Lunch (\$10) 12:00 noon

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 **June** is **Brent Gautreau** from **Post 3693!** Congratulations !

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-State Post Criteria

The 2026 – 2027 All-State Program for Posts is designed to reward Posts based on the following:

Post must be in Good Standing Good Standing requirements are:

- The Post Election Report for 2026 – 2027 must be received at Department Headquarters.
- Post Quartermaster and/or all accountable officers must be bonded.
- Post's current copy of IRS 990/990n to the Department.
- All posts must be inspected.
- Any/all deficiencies noted on the Post Inspection Report shall be corrected.
- All properly signed and correct Trustee's Report of Audit must be received at the Department within 30 days following the end of the observed quarter.
- Posts must have their Annual Secretary of State Filing.
- The Post shall have no arrearages with District, Department, or National as of June 1, 2027.

ALL STATE POST BASIC REQUIREMENTS

Post must participate in the Buddy Poppy Program.

- The Post must purchase 3 poppies per member on roster as of 30 June of the prior year. Or the Post, with less than 100 members must purchase a minimum of five hundred poppies.
- The Post must conduct two Buddy Poppy drives and report it via the Department online reporting system.

Post must, at minimum, participate in the following VFW Programs:

- Submit at least one Voice of Democracy entry to your respective District NLT November 15, 2026.
- Submit at least one Patriot's Pen entry to your respective District NLT November 15, 2026.
- Submit at least one Teacher of the Year (any category) entry to District NLT November 15, 2026. And/or submit at least one Law Enforcement/Firefighter/EMT/EOD Technician and/or Dispatcher of the Year entry to Department NLT January 1, 2027.
- Post must make the minimum donation of \$75.00 to Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).
- National Veterans Service Programs – must donate \$125 via the Programs Dashboard NVS Donation link, designated to support the VFW National Veteran Service operations.
- Post must report at least one Community Assistance Event quarterly via the Department online reporting system.

Post Membership Goals:

- Post must conduct at least two (2) membership drives/recruiting events for the 2026-2027 VFW year.
- Post must achieve the membership goal of 100% +1.
- Greater than 35 members on May 30, 2027.

All-State Extra:

- Community Service Record Book for State judging (electronic or physical book).
- Safety Entry submitted to respective chairperson NLT December 10, 2026.
- Post conducted a hospital or Veterans home visit.
- Donation to the VFW National Home.
- Post Commanders and/or their representatives (SVC or JVC's only) shall attend all District meetings.

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:

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:

Sharee Arends

Email: sharee.arends@gmail.com

COMMANDERS PROJECT



NSO is a Veteran family ran 501(c)(3)non-profit. What that means: we rely solely on donations to operate - to move forward with our mission: bringing HOPE into the lives of Senior Citizens & Veterans & bringing HOPE during natural Disasters

From the desk of the State Commander...

Comrades,

As we begin a new VFW year, I first want to pause and recognize the tremendous work accomplished across the Department of Louisiana during the past year. Because of the dedication of our Posts, Districts, and Department leaders, we finished the membership year strong by achieving our Commander-in-Chief's goal of 101% membership. Reaching that milestone is no small feat. It represents countless hours of recruiting, reinstating, retaining members, and demonstrating to veterans why the Veterans of Foreign Wars continues to be the premier veterans service organization in our nation.

Thank you to every Member who made phone calls, visited veterans, held events, and never stopped working toward our common goal. Your efforts made the difference.

I also want to commend every Post for completing your annual election reports and submitting them on time. Completing these reports promptly ensures a smooth transition of leadership and allows the Department and National Headquarters to begin the new year with accurate records. Your professionalism and commitment are greatly appreciated.

This year, our focus is simple: build a stronger Department by building stronger Posts. That starts with every member doing their part to ensure their Post remains active, engaged, and in Good Standing. Being in Good Standing is more than meeting deadlines or checking boxes. It means maintaining accurate reporting, submitting required audits and trustee reports on time, conducting meaningful meetings, supporting our community, and ensuring our members receive the benefits of belonging to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. A Post in Good Standing is a Post that is positioned to grow, serve veterans, and remain a respected voice in its community.

I encourage every member to become involved. Attend your meetings, support your community, mentor future leaders, and never lose sight of why we wear the Cross of Malta. Together, we will continue Fighting for Veterans' Rights while honoring those who served before us and ensuring those who serve today always have a strong voice.

Thank you for your continued dedication, and I look forward to serving alongside each of you during the coming year.

Yours in Comradeship,

Sharee' Arends



**State Commander
Sharee Arends**

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

Comrades,

First off congratulations to our newly elected State Commander Sharee' Arends! Team Louisiana is looking forward to support Commander Arends in carrying out the mission of the VFW. Congratulations also goes out to now PSC James Prestenback on a great year he has had. It was great seeing everyone at State Convention, and celebrate this past year's accomplishments.



**Sr. Vice Commander
James Bourque**

As the 2026-2027 year begins it is time to take a look at our membership rolls, let our membership know what has been going on this past year, and encourage them to ensure their dues are up to date. Membership is the life blood of our organization. Membership is especially important as veteran benefits are a hot topic again. We are a voice in numbers, and congress does take what we as the VFW say seriously. Let's get the 2026-2027 membership year rolling early!

Nationals is a few weeks away, and I look forward to seeing those who are going. For those who may still be considering attending, it is a great opportunity to see the big picture of the VFW. It is also a great learning opportunity as there are lots of training. I highly encourage members to attend, you won't regret it.

In closing, I want to thank the membership for the opportunity to serve along side you as your Sr. Vice Commander for the 2026-2027 year. I look forward to another exciting and productive year serving our veterans and community.

In Comradeship,

**James Bourque
State Senior Vice Commander**

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



Jr. Vice Commander

Larry Koons

Comrades,

I am deeply honored and humbled to have been elected as the Junior Vice Commander for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Louisiana. I would like to sincerely thank the delegates, comrades, and auxiliary members who placed their trust and confidence in me to serve in this important leadership position.

As a 24-year veteran of the United States Air Force and a proud VFW Life Member, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication, sacrifice, and commitment that define our organization. Throughout my years of service at the Post, District, and Department levels, I have come to appreciate that the true strength of the VFW begins at the Post level. It is there that veterans find camaraderie, support, and opportunities to continue serving their communities.

As I begin this journey as your Junior Vice Commander, I remain committed to three guiding principles: Service, Unity, and Advocacy.

Service means ensuring that our Posts have the resources and support necessary to thrive and meet the needs of veterans and their families.

Unity means working together as one Department, recognizing that every Post, District, and member plays a vital role in our collective success.

Advocacy means continuing to fight for all veterans at every level of government, ensuring that their voices are heard and their sacrifices are never forgotten.

Membership remains the lifeblood of our organization. We must continue to recruit new members, retain existing members, and engage younger generations of veterans to ensure the VFW remains strong for years to come. Growth is not simply about numbers; it is about building a stronger organization capable of serving more veterans and their families.

Over the coming year, I look forward to visiting Posts across Louisiana, listening to your concerns, sharing ideas, and working together to strengthen our Department. Every member's voice matters, and every Post deserves the support necessary to succeed.

Thank you again for the confidence you have placed in me. Together, we will continue to honor our traditions while embracing opportunities to grow and improve. I am excited about what we can accomplish as one Department working toward a common mission: serving veterans, their families, and our communities.

In Comradeship,

Lawrence "Larry" Koons

Junior Vice Commander

MEMBERSHIP

JULY TOP RECRUITER



A 1/100 scale diecast model aircraft of a US Air Force Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II (Also known as the Warthog or Hog).

A single-seat, twin turbofan engine developed for the United States Air Force, designed for close air support, attacking armored vehicles and tanks along with quick-action support against enemy ground forces.

Includes a display stand.

This model has a nose-to-tail length of 7" and a wingspan width of 6.5".

MONTHLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Louisiana Legislative Report June 2026

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.

June 1st:

House Passes Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act: The House has passed VFW-supported H.R. 1041, Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, which would prevent VA from transmitting a veteran's name to the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System solely because the veteran has a fiduciary appointed to manage VA benefits. The VFW has provided testimony in support of this legislation during hearings before the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs, emphasizing that veterans should not lose a constitutional right without a judicial determination that they are a danger to themselves or others.

Policy Breakthroughs and Normandy Jumps Highlighted in VFW Podcast: Key Washington Office leaders and Still Serving Spotlight special guest Toni Lavery of Fox Force Foundation joined co-hosts Rob Couture and Brittany Dymond Murray for an extended segment spanning policy developments and wins, as well as a growing movement among women service members, veterans and first responders to bring awareness, camaraderie and empowerment to women who have served their communities and nation. A major win against Claim Sharks, significant movement on the Major Richard Star Act, and VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore's upcoming commemorative tandem skydive into Normandy, France, with Fox Force Foundation anchor the discussion. Listen to episode 65, "Fight the Good Fight," on your favorite podcast platform or watch it on YouTube.

VA Launches New Mental Health Therapy Trial: VA has announced a new clinical trial to evaluate MDMA-assisted therapy for veterans with severe mental health conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder and alcohol use disorder. The trial, which is aligned with the VFW's advocacy efforts, follows a recent executive order to accelerate the evaluation of new treatments for serious mental illnesses. It will compare MDMA-assisted therapy to identical psychotherapy with an active placebo. Approximately 80 veterans will be enrolled from the VA Providence Healthcare System and the VA Connecticut Healthcare System. This study will be conducted under strict safety protocols and in coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Read more.

House Committee Releases Defense Bill: The House Committee on Armed Services has released initial text for H.R. 8800, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2027, ahead of a committee markup on June 4. The proposal authorizes nearly \$1.15 trillion in national defense spending, including \$28.4 billion for military construction, family housing and base closure programs. Personnel and quality-of-life provisions include continued investment in military family housing, workforce development initiatives, and efforts to strengthen support systems tied to readiness and retention. The legislation also includes a provision that would designate a senior official for military-to-civilian transition, which is a legislative priority for the VFW. Congress will continue debating the legislation as the House and Senate develop their respective defense authorization packages for fiscal year 2027.

VFW Participates in Day of Service and Grand Ole Opry Salute the Troops: VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore and VFW staff members joined Humana, CenterWell, USAA and Volunteers of America on May 19, 2026, for the fifth annual VFW Day of Service project in Madison, Tennessee. Volunteers assembled more than 2,500 hygiene and essential care kits in support of local outreach efforts to veterans experiencing homelessness. The project reflected the VFW's ongoing commitment to helping veterans through direct community service. Following the volunteer event, participants attended the Grand Ole Opry's annual Salute the Troops celebration in Nashville, Tennessee, which featured performances by music artists and the 100th Army Band honoring America's veterans, service members and military

families. During the event, Humana announced an additional \$100,000 donation in support of the Uniting for Veterans initiative, reinforcing its continued partnership with the VFW and commitment to the military community.

VFW Backs Push for Justice for Camp Lejeune Victims: The VFW is standing alongside Camp Lejeune veterans and their families as they gather on Capitol Hill June 3-4, beginning at 9 a.m., to demand action on H.R. 4145, the Ensuring Justice for Camp Lejeune Victims Act of 2025. Although Congress passed the Camp Lejeune Justice Act in 2022, fewer than 1% of the more than 408,000 claims filed by victims of toxic water exposure have resulted in compensation. Advocates say delays and legal challenges have left many veterans and family members waiting while serious health conditions worsen. H.R. 4145 seeks to streamline the claims process, clarify congressional intent, and improve access to justice. The VFW supports the legislation and remains committed to ensuring the government fulfills its promises to Camp Lejeune victims.

June 8th:

VFW Joins Camp Lejeune Rally on Capitol Hill: The VFW stood united with Camp Lejeune veterans and their families as part of a two-day rally on Capitol Hill calling for congressional action on H.R. 4145, the Ensuring Justice for Camp Lejeune Victims Act of 2025. VFW General Counsel John Muckelbauer shared the powerful story of his brother, Matt, a fellow Marine who died of cancer resulting from exposure to toxic water while stationed on Camp LeJeune. His personal and poignant testimony underscored the human cost of the decades-long contamination and the VFW's urgent call for justice. Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci and National Legislative Committee Chairman Jason Johns also spoke in support of Camp LeJeune victims and urged Congress to act. Although Congress passed the Camp Lejeune Justice Act in 2022, fewer than 1% of the more than 408,000 claims filed by victims of toxic water exposure have resulted in compensation. Watch their remarks.

VFW Discusses Priorities with White House: VFW National Legislative Committee Chairman Jason Johns joined Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci and National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan at the White House for a meeting to discuss the VFW's priority goals. The delegation provided Trump Administration staff with updates on its major policy priorities for the year, like the Major Richard Star Act, improving military transition, justice for victims of Camp LeJeune toxic water, safer prescribing of psychiatric medication, and the President's recent executive order on alternative treatments for mental health. Johns also left behind his challenge coin from his term as VFW Wisconsin state commander for the White House's military and public service challenge coin display in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Dental Care for Veterans Hill Day: The VFW joined the Oral Health Progress & Equity Network (OPEN) Hill Day 2026 advocating for veteran oral health. Of the more than 9 million veterans eligible for medical care through VA, only 26% are also eligible for dental care. During the event, advocates met with House Veterans' Affairs Health Subcommittee Ranking Member Julia Brownley to illustrate the connection between consistent access to dental services and a veteran's overall health. "Dental care is health care that can impact well-being and quality of life. The VFW supports efforts like H.R. 210, Dental Care for Veterans Act, to make dental care a standard benefit for all veterans enrolled in VA," commented VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Meggan Coleman, who leads the VFW's VA health care legislative efforts.

Nevada VFW Members Participate in Radiation Exposure Roundtable: VFW Department of Nevada Commander Candace Lopez and National Legislative Committee Member Daniel Sanders participated in a roundtable at the National Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas organized by House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mark Takano. Sanders presented input from VFW members including that veterans exposed to radiation in the United States are not currently covered by the PACT Act. He reminded attendees that contaminated areas were left open to winds and spread beyond the local sites. He also noted that the Department of Energy publicly acknowledged certain contaminations and has taken care of affected people, while the Department of Defense still has not acknowledged that people worked at these same locations.

VFW-pushed Foreclosure Avoidance Program Available Soon: Coming just weeks after VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Joe Grassi urged its implementation, VA has introduced a Partial Claim program in accordance with the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act (Public Law 119-31). This VFW-supported legislation provides a new option to help veterans who are at least three months delinquent on mortgage payments to avoid foreclosure. The program is a part of the VA Loss Mitigation Waterfall process in which a loan manager or lending

institution may advance funds to bring a loan current with VA reimbursing that amount. The remaining balance is repaid interest free when the loan is paid off, sold or transferred. Veterans must complete a three-month trial payment plan to demonstrate they can resume payments before receiving assistance. Applications for the program will open on June 15, 2026. Learn more.

Strategies for Grassroots to Grasstops Advocacy: VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Gabriella Kubinyi presented the VFW's viewpoints during the 2026 Buzz Advocacy Summit in Annapolis, Md., highlighting how strong advocacy organizations are built through long-term investment in people, relationships and local leadership. During the session on developing strategies for grassroots advocates to engage at a higher grasstops level, Kubinyi explained how the VFW develops trusted community advocates who are equipped to build lasting relationships with lawmakers and congressional staff. Drawing on the VFW's nationwide advocacy structure and member-driven approach, she emphasized that meaningful influence is built over years of consistent engagement, training and credibility within local communities.

VA Streamlines Prosthetic Limb Delivery for Veterans: VA has taken steps to speed up the delivery of prosthetic limbs for veterans by implementing a new policy announced by VA Secretary Doug Collins. Previously, all prosthetic limb purchases required a review by a contracting officer, delaying the process. Under the new policy, about 95% of prosthetic limb orders no longer need contracting officer reviews while some purchases by local purchasing agents can now be made directly with local suppliers. VA reports these changes have already reduced wait times by 10 days. Once the new process is fully implemented across VA facilities, average delivery times are expected to drop from 94 days to 54 days. Annually, more than 45,000 veterans with major limb loss rely on VA prosthetic care. This new process aims to ensure they receive the high-quality prosthetic care they need as quickly as possible. Learn more.

June 15th:

VFW Strongly Opposes Cuts to Veteran Disability Benefits: Congress is considering the Take Care of America's Veterans Act, legislation that would fund new veterans' benefits by cutting disability ratings for tinnitus and sleep apnea, which by VA's own numbers would affect up to 1.5 million veterans and remove \$57 billion from veterans' disability compensation over ten years. The VFW strongly opposes the bill as currently drafted. "Veterans' benefits are an earned obligation of the nation, a promise made through the military service contract, and should not be financed through offsets, fee increases or reductions that place additional burdens on veterans, military families and survivors," said VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore in her statement condemning the bill's funding mechanism. "A grateful nation pays its debts to veterans; it does not send them the invoice." The VFW urges all advocates to contact their members of Congress and demand they Honor the Contract. Take action now.

House Lawmaker Featured Guest on Podcast: House Committee on Armed Services member Rep. Chris Deluzio, D-Pa., a VFW Life member of Sharpsburg, Pa., VFW Post 709, joined co-hosts Rob and Brittany, as well as VFW National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan and Associate Director Joy Craig, for a brief conversation spanning life in Congress as a veteran, VA health care and diverse challenges facing service members like family well-being, repairing equipment in the field, and military transition. VFW staff also provided in-depth Capitol Hill updates on the fiscal year 2027 National Defense Authorization Act, the Major Richard Star Act, justice for Camp Lejeune water contamination victims, and the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act. Listen to episode 66, "The Mission Came First," on your favorite podcast platform or watch it on YouTube.

House Press Conference on Major Richard Star Act: The VFW joined fellow veteran and military organizations, lawmakers and advocates at a press conference on Capitol Hill supporting the Major Richard Star Act. This legislation would end the offset that prevents many combat-injured veterans who were medically retired from receiving both their full military retirement pay and VA disability compensation. During the event, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mark Takano, D-Calif., and supporters called for additional signatures on a discharge petition that could bring the bill to the House floor for a vote. The VFW remains committed to ending this long-standing inequity and ensuring combat-injured veterans receive the full benefits they earned through their service and sacrifice. Watch the press conference.

Service Does Not Stop: VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Gabby Kubinyi participated in a Flag Day panel discussion in Washington, D.C., hosted by We the Veterans and Military Families. Along with leaders from veteran and military family organizations, Kubinyi, who is a military widow, discussed how VFW members, military

families and surviving spouses continue serving their communities after military service and loss. The panel highlighted the role service organizations play in fostering civic engagement, volunteerism and community connections across America.

Chapter 35 Benefit Ending for Secondary Education: Beginning Aug. 1, 2026, the VA Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA or Chapter 35) program will no longer cover high school coursework, GED preparation, tutoring or academic remediation. This change as required by Public Law 117-328 limits DEA to post-secondary education. Students enrolled before Aug. 1 may finish their current term, but no additional secondary-level terms will be covered. VA announced it is notifying affected beneficiaries and will provide guidance to schools. Read more about DEA benefits or submit questions to Ask VA.

June 22nd:

There is Still Time to Take Action to Oppose Veterans' Benefit Cuts: Congress is considering the Take Care of America's Veterans Act that would fund new veterans' benefits by cutting disability ratings for tinnitus and sleep apnea. By VA's own numbers this would affect up to 1.5 million veterans and remove \$57 billion from veterans' disability compensation over ten years. The VFW strongly opposes the legislation as currently drafted. Condemning the bill's funding mechanism, VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore stated, "Veterans' benefits are an earned obligation of the nation, a promise made through the military service contract that should not be financed through offsets, fee increases or reductions that place additional burdens on veterans, military families and survivors. A grateful nation pays its debts to veterans; it does not send them the invoice." The VFW urges all advocates to contact their members of Congress and demand they Honor the Contract. Take action now.

Strengthening Support for MST Survivors: A new report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine highlights persistent barriers veterans face when seeking disability compensation for military sexual trauma (MST), including inconsistent processes, burdensome evidentiary requirements and a claims procedure that can be re-traumatizing. The VFW strongly supports H.R. 2576 and S. 1245, *Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2025*, which would address these issues by eliminating bureaucratic hurdles, requiring VA to consider non-Department of Defense evidence for MST claims, expanding this standard to all MST-related mental health conditions and ensuring National Guard and Reserve members have access to MST-related care and counseling. This legislation reflects critical reforms needed to ensure survivors receive the care and benefits they have earned and the VFW urges Congress to pass it without delay. Read the report.

Global War on Terrorism Memorial Design Released: The Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation has unveiled its initial design concept for a permanent memorial on the National Mall to honor those veterans who served and sacrificed since Sept. 11, 2001. The VFW played a leading role in advancing legislation to secure its placement alongside memorials for the wars in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. The foundation stated it received design input from more than 20,000 Americans across the country, including veterans from every military branch and conflict since 9/11. However, some lawmakers have expressed dissatisfaction and are telling the foundation to start over. Read more or provide feedback about the design.

VA Launches Partial Claim Program: Veterans facing financial hardship now have another option to help them avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. VA recently launched the VA Partial Claim Program, authorized by the VA Home Loan Reform Act signed into law on July 30, 2025. "This is great news for veterans and their families," said Deputy Director of the VFW National Veterans Service Chris Macinkowicz. "Financial setbacks can happen to anyone and this program offers veterans another chance to get back on track and remain in their homes. We're encouraged to see VA taking meaningful steps to ensure veterans have the support they need during difficult times." Veterans having trouble making mortgage payments should contact VA at 877-827-3702, option 6, for assistance. **Learn more.**

Respectfully,

Matthew J. West

Matthew J. West

VFW, Department of Louisiana

LOUISIANA COUNCIL MEMBER

COMMITTEEMAN'S CORNER

As I write my final article as the elected National Council Member representing the Department of Louisiana. I hope that over the last 4 years I have kept each of you informed as to the workings of National and things affecting our membership.

When I ran for this position my promise to you was to communicate and represent our Department at all Council Meetings. During my four years I have made every meeting and been there to vote on all motions whether for or against on items brought up that affected the direction our organization proceeded. My biggest accomplishment was to make the motion that moved the Voice of Democracy Parade of Champions to the Freedom Foundation in Philadelphia, after traveling through five Departments this convention season all of the response to the change has been positive. The young lady from Kentucky summed it up as being the best trip of her life!

I wish my replacement on the Council PDC Jamie Prestenback the best of luck and hope he enjoys his tenure on the Council as much as I have. Continue to represent Louisiana with pride and make the decisions that are best for the organization. I look forward to working with you for the upcoming years as I move through the chairs to help move our organization forward and into the next 100+ years of existence.

Thank you to all the members who elected me to represent the Department on a National level as a member of the Council of Administration, your support throughout the years has been great and I appreciate all of you for entrusting me to represent you.

I look forward to the July 25th when I will introduce Jamie as my replacement and then July 29th when he officially takes his seat on the Council. See all of you in Reno.

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



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!

