

November 18, 2022

Greetings,

We hope you enjoy this week's National Council Weekly Update on the pertinent happenings of your VFW departments.

Development

- Nov. 15 Appeal:
 - o October acquisition reminder #2 package with check.

Contact: VFW Development Director Kelly Jones, KellyJones@vfw.org.

Communications

- This week we launched PACTActInfo.org to streamline referrals to our cadre of VFW Accredited Service Officers. Through a short series of questions, veterans can determine whether they're likely eligible for VA benefits and our system will capture their answers and generate a referral. The veteran will then be contacted by a VFW Service Officer within one week. Phase II of this project will include large scale promotion and advertising of this site and our services, and securing earned media. We will also develop a toolkit for Departments, Districts, Posts and members to ease their efforts to help in ensuring we reach every veteran with this information. More communication is to come on this initiative.
- We recently announced the 2023 VFW Day of Service. Last year — in its pilot year — the event gained participation from over 400 Posts. These efforts showcased the best of our organization, gaining much media exposure, furthering goodwill in communities and bringing in new members. [Here's a look](#) at the number of events hosted by state last year. We expect the coming year's event will be even bigger! The 2023 VFW Day of Service kicks off May 6, with events taking place throughout the month of May. Please encourage the Posts in your state to start planning now – May will be here before we know it.

Contact: VFW Communications and Public Affairs Director Randi K. Law, RLaw@vfw.org.

Human Resources

- New Employees:

- o Meredith Dawson is a new Administrative Assistant in the Veterans Service Department in the D.C. Office.
- o Sharon Hogan is a new Administrative Assistant in the Veterans Service Department in the D.C. Office.
- o Devon St Louis is a new VFW NVS Pre-Discharge representative Veterans Service Department at Joint Base Myer, Virginia.

Contact: VFW Human Resources Director Sari Maple, SMaple@vfw.org.

Administrative Operations

- There are currently 55 Posts under suspension; two of which are new with two suspensions lifted since last week. We have completed one and are working one Post consolidation; we have completed one charter surrender; we are working two charter revocations pursuant to Sections 209, 210 and 212 of the National Bylaws. The organization has 5,779 chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 15 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, 26 administrative actions and eight membership eligibility challenges.
- We have 67 Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review. Current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately three weeks. Administrative Operations is readjusting our review process as we account for a recent staff shortage – thank you for your patience.
- In effort to reduce paper and expedite our process, Departments are encouraged to submit Post, District, and Department bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to Administrative Operations via email to our Post Records Coordinator April Ferreira (AFerreira@vfw.org). Additionally, submitted bylaws or articles in conflict with the National Bylaws will be returned to the unit (Departments will be cc'd) with a list of amendments and a digital copy of our template for resubmittal. For any questions regarding this change, please contact the Director below.

Contact: VFW Administrative Operations Director Johnathan Duncan, JDuncan@vfw.org.

Membership

Greetings from the Membership Department,

We have multiple events happening this month focusing on new member acquisition, retention and lapsed member renewals and reinstates.

- Earlier this month we launched a mobile social media new member acquisition campaign to attract active-duty personnel. We are currently geofencing our efforts around the following military installations: Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, Ft. Hood, Texas, Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia, and Camp Humphreys, Korea.

- Commander-in-Chief Borland has put out a challenge to all Posts. This month the Post that leads each membership division with renewals and reinstates will receive \$500 to be deposited into the Post account. If a continuous or lapsed member pays their dues - whether for annual or Life membership - they will be counted for this contest. You can monitor the challenge this month while logged into your OMS account under the “Reporting” tab where you will find “Commander Challenge.”
- We also kicked off a lapsed member reactivation campaign this past week. All lapsed members who have a valid email and/or cell phone number will receive both an email and text message with a link to a video narrated by Adjutant General Dan West asking all lapsed members to take a second look at our organization with a call to action to reactivate their memberships.

We want to wish all of you a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday.

Contact: VFW Membership Director Rick Butler, RButler@vfw.org.

Meetings and Events

- Successful convention preplanning site visit in Louisville, Kentucky, Nov. 7-9, 2022, accompanied by Auxiliary National Secretary Treasurer Ann Panteleakos. The purpose of the trip was to identify hotels for the 2024 VFW National Convention and to get hotel and convention center contracts started to be finalized 18 months out (Jan. 31, 2023). Site included meeting with convention center (new building since 2013).
- Coordinating with Hyatt Regency Phoenix for planning of 2023 local convention committee meeting scheduled for Dec. 8 in Phoenix. Site will include review of center space with production and general services contractor to begin diagramming/floorplans for 2023 VFW Phoenix National Convention – July 22-27, 2023.
- Forwarded housing forms to Phoenix housing coordinator for revisions for 2023.
- Updating housing history spreadsheet in preparation to do 2023 housing assignments for Phoenix convention.

Contact: VFW Meetings and Events/Exhibits Director Vanessa Kane, CMP, CMM, VKane@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service

- VFW National Commander Tim Borland took part in two ceremonies in the Washington, D.C., area on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2022. He represented the VFW at Arlington National Cemetery where he laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Borland and VFW Auxiliary National President Jane Reape laid a wreath at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial during an afternoon ceremony.
- Section 804 of the VFW-championed *Honoring our PACT Act of 2022* authorizes veterans and military families who were exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune from August 1953 to December 1987 to file a federal tort claim for harm caused by such exposure. “Since the PACT Act added another recourse for veterans and their families suffering the effects of

toxic exposure at Camp Lejeune, getting the right legal advice is crucial,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland. “That’s why we turned to our long-trusted relationship with Bergmann & Moore to provide counsel for those we assist.” The VFW encourages anyone who wishes to join the Camp Lejeune Justice Act lawsuit to visit vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp or call 800.898.9450.

- TRICARE Open Season will run from Nov. 14 to Dec. 13, 2022. This is your chance to enroll or change your health care plan for the next year. If you are satisfied with your current plan then your coverage will continue automatically for 2023, as long as you remain eligible. It is important to note that new retirees have only one year to enroll for TRICARE Prime. Enrollment in TRICARE Prime or Select is not automatic for retirees. [Learn more.](#)
- With the passage of the VFW-supported *Alexander Lofgren Veterans in Parks (VIP) Act* that passed into law last December as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, service members, veterans, and Gold Star Families are now eligible for the National Park Service Lifetime Pass. The passes provide access to U.S. national parks and other federal recreation areas, include access for up to three guests, and may cover some parking fees. [Learn more.](#)
- The VFW currently [supports 175 bills; and opposes one bill](#) pending before the 117th Congress.

Contact: VFW National Legislative Service Director Patrick Murray, PMurray@vfw.org.

National Veterans Service

- VFW’s NVS Pre-Discharge representatives are briefing transitioning service members on VA benefits at Joint Base Myer, Virginia, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, D.C., Fort Bliss, Texas, Fort Hood, Texas, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and Fort Riley, Kansas, and will also conduct a leadership briefing Navy flag officers at their transition course.
- NVS leadership is meeting with the ETS Sponsorship organization who assists transitioning service members connecting with local sponsors to facilitate the return to civilian life.
- NVS health leadership is meeting with the Well Hive organization to discuss their partnership with VA in improving scheduling community care.
- NVS benefits staff met with their VSO counterparts and organizations to discuss PACT Act implementation, the scheduled HVAC PACT Act hearing for Nov. 16, and VA plans for claims automation.
- NVS will hold a regularly scheduled all-hands staff meeting on Nov. 17, 2022, at 3 p.m. EST to check in with staff, discuss upcoming events and the holiday schedule.

Contact: VFW National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci, RGallucci@vfw.org.

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