

March 25, 2022

Greetings,

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

Development

- March 24 Appeal:
 - March acquisition reminder package with coasters and check.
- March 25 Appeal:
 - February lapsed reminder to nonmember donors.

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

Administrative Operations

- There are currently 39 Posts under suspension, four of which are new. There were no Post consolidations processed pursuant to Section 209 of the National Bylaws. The organization has 5,900 chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 22 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, four administrative actions and four membership eligibility challenges.
- We have 12 Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review, 12 of which are new; current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 14 days.

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

Communications

- Communications and Public Affairs Director Rob Couture served as the public affairs advisor and escort officer for the Senior and Junior Vice Commander's weeklong trip to Hawaii visiting military units. Command visits included leadership meet and greets, unclassified briefings, and tours of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Army Pacific Command, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, U.S. Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Army's 25th Infantry Division, U.S. Coast Guard's District 14

Headquarters, Sentinel-class cutter CGC Oliver Berry (WPC 1124), and the U.S. Navy's newest Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Daniel Inouye (DDG-118). The group also visited the Pearl Harbor National Memorial, the Oahu Veterans Center, and VFW's Department of Hawaii leadership during the course of the trip.

- Director Couture collaborated with the NLS director in developing content to share on the VFW National social media platforms and VFW Washington Office Twitter account, https://twitter.com/VFW_OfficeDC.
- Director Couture collaborated with other directors to respond to media queries on a variety of topics.
- Director Couture continued to coordinate for guest interviews for future episodes of the podcast.

Contact: VFW Communications and Public Affairs Director Rob Couture, RCouture@vfw.org.

- Remember to mark your calendars for the VFW's Voice of Democracy Virtual Parade of Winners, streaming live on Facebook, April 7 at 7 p.m. CDT.

Be sure to [visit the VFW Facebook page, select the Virtual Parade of Winner event, tap "interested," then "going" to ensure you stay up-to-date and receive all event notifications and reminders.](#)

Contact: VFW Communications Director Randi Law, RLaw@vfw.org.

Meetings and Events

- Convention housing pick up to date, 767 reservations made.
- Ongoing – receiving exhibitor registrations back (deadline April 25, 2022) to receive paperwork to secure space. After that it will be on a space available basis.
- Finalized billing from Hyatt Regency Crystal City for DC Legislative Conference (modified) meeting. Submitted to accounting for payment.
- Secured dates for 2023 – National Officer Implementation, SRVICE & JRVICE contracts with legal for review and to finalize w/signatures.
- Rooming list and meeting specs to hotel (Westin) for upcoming National Officer Implementation meeting April 10-13.
- Update Power Point presentation for National Officer Implementation meeting due on April 1, 2022.

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

VFW Foundation

- The Veterans of Foreign Wars is excited to announce that it is teaming up with TopCoat® Products to bring their top-of-the-line automotive detailing products to VFW members. The company offers a special VFW members-only 20% discount on a uniquely crafted [VFW Starter Kit](#). TopCoat also supports the VFW Unmet Needs program through a donation program at checkout in their online store.

Contact: VFW Foundation Administrator Richard Potter, RPotter@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service

- House Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Mike Bost (R-Ill.) held a mock hearing with this year's VFW-SVA Legislative Fellows. Each fellow had the opportunity to testify on their proposal and answer questions. Topics included work-study parity, preventing toxic exposure, ensuring non-VA health care provider awareness of veterans, VA health care services, and extending the Forever GI Bill to include all veterans who left service after Dec. 2001. [Read more about the fellowship](#).
- The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health held a hearing to discuss pending health care legislation. VA representatives responded to questions on its policies and procedures regarding non-VA emergency care reimbursement, long-term care alternatives, lactation stations, and an increase in the structural alterations amount for disabled veterans. In a statement submitted for the record, VFW National Legislative Deputy Director Tammy Barlet commented on [H.R. 5754](#), the *Patient Advocate Tracker Act*, which stemmed from a proposal by 2021 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellow Cameron Zbikowski. [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).
- The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing to review legislation regarding education, employment, transition, and housing. Proposals included creating permanent policies to protect VA education benefits in cases of national emergency, expanding eligibility of the self-employment track within Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E), and making it easier for veterans facing housing insecurity to receive rental assistance. In a statement submitted for the record, VFW National Legislative Associate Director Emily DeVito commented, "The COVID-19 pandemic's massive impact on higher education and training, including unforeseen closures and rapid changes to modalities, brought to the forefront the urgent need for permanent legislation that would direct VA in these times of crisis." [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).
- The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs conducted a hearing to address VA health care workforce recruitment and retention challenges. VA highlighted steps it is taking to attract and retain employees, such as maximizing bonuses, increasing opportunities to advance, and investing in programs like VHA Reduce Employee Burnout and Optimize Organizational Thriving (REBOOT) to ensure employee well-being. [Watch the hearing](#).
- The VFW currently [supports 159 bills; and opposes one bill](#) pending before the 117th Congress.

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

National Veterans Service

- NVS VFW's Pre-Discharge Claims Representatives hosted a series of benefit briefings for separating service members around the country this week to include Fort Hood, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Joint Base Andrews, and Joint Base Myer VA. NVS also participated in a Navy General Officer TAP course, discussing benefits assistance to retiring flag officers.
- NVS Health Care team participated in a forum with Veterans Health Administration on proposed national standards of practice for VA care providers, which would allow VA to more easily respond to care needs of veterans across state lines.
- NVS and NLS met with VA Inspector General Michael Missal to discuss the IG's priorities and to share areas of concern for the VFW, like suicide prevention, predatory claims practices, military transition, and the affects of COVID-19.
- NVS met with VA's Veterans Experience Office to share our insight on the military transition assistance program and the service members we assist through the Pre-Discharge program on more than 20 military installations.

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

Veterans of Foreign Wars
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64111
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