

June 17, 2022

Greetings,

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

Development

- June 14 Appeal:
 - o Thank You eCard for Army birthday to Friends of Freedom identified as Army veteran or active military.
- June 17 Appeal:
 - o April lapsed reminder to nonmember donors.
- June 18 Appeals:
 - o June statement to relatively lapsed member and nonmember donors.
 - o Partners in Patriotism quarterly statement to nonmember sustainers.

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

Communications

- The next episode of #StillServing: [The VFW Podcast](#), is in final production. The episode will focus on using mixed martial arts as a way to fundraise for and raise awareness of veterans' issues, as well as highlight upcoming events.
- Communications and Public Affairs Director Rob Couture collaborated with other directors to respond to media queries on a variety of topics, but primarily about the *Honoring Our PACT Act*.
- Director Couture drafted and distributed a press release on behalf of the organization for the Army birthday and Flag Day, June 14 – [VFW Happy Birthday Army... and to the Standard You Bear](#).
- Director Couture collaborated with NLS directors in developing content to share on the VFW National social media platforms and VFW Washington Office Twitter account,

https://twitter.com/VFW_OfficeDC. Content included photos and links to congressional testimonies and various Senate votes on the *Honoring Our PACT Act*.

- 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.

- For those attending the 123rd VFW National Convention July 16-21, in Kansas City, Missouri, be sure and download the updated VFW Events App to ensure you have everything convention related at your fingertips. The app is available for download at both the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store by searching "VFW Events." Access our App Quick Guide [here](#).

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

Human Resources

- New Employee:
 - Miranda Drummond is a new National Pre-Discharge Claims Rep in the Veterans Service Department in Washington, D.C.

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

Administrative Operations

- There are currently 45 Posts under suspension, two of those are new. Over the last week, this office has one pending and completed two Post charter surrenders and has completed one Post charter revocation pursuant to Sections 210, and 212 of the National Bylaws respectively. The organization currently has 5,862 active chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 16 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, one administrative action and five pending membership eligibility challenges.
- This past week we received nine new Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review. We reviewed and approved 10 total Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions and currently have two submissions pending review and approval. Current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 14 days.
- **There are still 939 Posts with missing or incomplete election reports.** Pursuant to Section 213 of the National Bylaws, these Posts shall be deprived of all representation in County Council and District meetings, and County Council, District, Department and National Conventions. Such representation shall be restored promptly upon proper submission of their Election Report. **Per the Commander-in-Chief, Posts that have not submitted an election report by July 1 will be subject to suspension pursuant to Section 211 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure.**

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

Meetings and Events

- Convention housing pickup to date, 1,704 reservations made. Housing closed at midnight, June 13.
- On June 7, 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. – worked with Joe V/FERN Expo to do exhibit hall booth assignments. Preparing to send out exhibit services kit to all exhibitors.
- Staff and VIP housing reservations completed.
- June 11-12 – worked on KC Convention Center resume (meeting specs/meeting room assignments for convention in preparation to send to my event manager at the convention center.
- June 13 – memos out to convention chairmen & national officers' drivers with housing reservations advising each of their assigned dates for convention.
- Jun 14 – prepared office equipment/furniture/internet/electric spread sheet for convention center, sent to FERN & SMART City (internet and electric provider at convention center).
- Ongoing – working on miscellaneous convention related projects.

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

Member Services

- Please note that on Thursday, June 30, the Member Service Center will process all membership mail that it has received (physically in house) for that day, this includes membership that has been called/faxed in by close of business, 4:30 p.m. CDT.

The Online Membership System (OMS) will remain open for membership submissions until June 30 at 6:30 p.m. CDT. Please be sure to advise all Posts to submit their final membership information by then. Shortly after 6:30 p.m., all membership processing will shut down so we can begin the year-end processing reports.

As in the past, IT will require a short period of time to reconcile our final year-end processing and will keep you posted as to when the systems will be returned online in early July.

Contact: VFW Member Services Director David Prohaska, DProhaska@vfw.org.

VFW Foundation

- The VFW's longtime supporter Humana is tackling the ever-growing problem of social isolation through the innovative Far From Alone Program. For a wealth of resources and information to help people dealing with feelings of loneliness, visit the [Far From Alone website](#). Resources include suggested apps and links to other programs that can connect social isolation sufferers to professionals and communities that can provide relief. There are

veteran-specific resources that can be found within the program as well. Services provided on the website are 100% free of charge. We kindly ask that you consider mentioning their website during your Department, District or Post training events.

Contact: VFW Foundation Interim Director Richard Freiburghouse, RFreiburghouse@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service

- VFW Washington Office Executive Director Bob Wallace and VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Tammy Barlet were in attendance at the White House as President Biden signed into law three VFW-supported bills. The [*Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act*](#) will expand eligibility for VA mammography screenings to veterans who served in certain areas during specific time periods. The [*Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act*](#) will address provisions of mammograms and breast cancer treatment within VA. Lastly, [*Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act of 2021*](#) gives the VA Office of Inspector General the authority to subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses as needed. [Watch the bill signing](#).
- The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) annual reassessments have been suspended by VA. Stipends will not be discharged or reduced during the suspension period. The PCAFC program continues to review its requirements and procedures to ensure the program benefits veterans and caregivers. All other application processes, assessments, appeals, and reviews will continue while the procedures are under evaluation. [Read more](#).
- To ensure patient safety, VA has introduced COVID-19 Health Protection Levels to provide clear and accommodating guidelines regarding community spread. Low, medium, and high levels based on the local CDC's community transmission rate are monitored and updated weekly. Notifications will be placed at all facility entrances, and on the local facility website and social media channels. [Read more](#).
- Interest rates as high as 189% are impacting military-connected consumers and families who are using certain loans to pay for auto repairs and even pets. In some cases, loan terms appear to violate or sidestep existing laws like the [*Military Lending Act*](#) (MLA), which caps many consumer loan interest rates at 36% for those serving on active duty. All consumers are reminded to exercise caution when making financial choices. [Read more](#).
- The VFW currently [supports 169 bills; and opposes one bill](#) pending before the 117th Congress.

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

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