



Department of South Carolina  
***SENTINEL***



Commander – JIM FOX



**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.**

South Carolina



Auxiliary President – LAURA "JO" SWEETSIR

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FIRST QUARTER (JAN - MAR) 2024

**"Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world. A veteran doesn't have that problem."- Ronald Regan**

***"Moving Forward"***



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**I'VE GONE HOME –** The Battle Ship **NEW JERSEY** left its home for the last 20 years, Camden New Jersey, and was towed to the North Atlantic Ship Repair facility at the Philadelphia Ship Yard, drydock berth #3 for routine maintenance, repair and painting (mainly on the bottom of the ship).

The irony of this is that the New Jersey is going back to the same

berth where it was born in 1940 and launched from on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1942. This is the first time in 32 years that the New Jersey has been drydocked for repairs, even though Navy maintenance guidelines for inactive ships call for dry-docking every 20 years. No estimate given on how long it will be in Philadelphia.

What a majestic/nostalgic sight this had to have made as the New Jersey traverses the Delaware River.



Top picture, the NEW JERSEY in 1942, bottom picture in 2024

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**A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION –** This is something that every VFW member and every Auxiliary member in the state should make – **In 2024, I am going to recruit at least one new member, or re-instate one previous member!**

**The peak of the VFW membership was in the 1991-1993 time-frame when there were 2.1 million veteran members. YOU could make something close to that happen again in 2024.**

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**Want to contact the State Headquarters? –** Do you want to send a message, ask a question, provide some information, or do you need to change your name or mailing address with VFW State Headquarters? It is a simple process. Go to [fwsc.org](http://fwsc.org), scroll over to contact, scroll down

to get the business hours of the HQ, be able to send an email message to the HQ, or change your mailing address or your name. The forms are there for all three processes.

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**Tired of carrying your VFW ID in your wallet?, you can now carry it on your phone**

For your convenience, a digital membership card can be obtained by completing the following steps:

- Download the VFW app to your mobile device.
- Login to the VFW app from your mobile device.
- If you have Apple Wallet, click on the “Add to Apple Wallet” button and your card should appear on your smartphone screen.
- If you are an Android user, you will need to click on “My VFW” at the bottom of the screen. Next, click on “Add to WalletPasses.” If you do not have the app, you will need to download WalletPasses in the Google Play Store first, then go back to your online account and click on “Add to WalletPasses.”

**MEMBERSHIP – WHICH WAY DO I GO“? CONTINUOUS” (annual renewal), or “LIFE MEMBER”? When it comes to saving \$. There is a BIG difference between the two.**

**Let’s say you joined at:**

40 – and are planning on living till at least 80. You would pay \$1,800 in Annual Dues, or \$410 Life Membership

50 – and are planning on living till at least 80. You would pay \$1,350 in Annual Dues, or \$375 Life Membership

60 – and are planning on living till at least 80. You would pay \$900 in Annual Dues, or \$335 Life Membership

70 – and are planning on living till at least 80. You would pay \$450 in Annual Dues, or \$290 Life Membership

\*The advantage of Life Membership is that no one from the VFW will be contacting you every year to renew your ‘continuous’ membership. You can pay the Life Membership in 11 monthly installments. All less than the \$45 annual fee.

\*If the ‘continuous’ membership fee goes up, to stay current, you have to pay the increase. A Life Member is done paying.

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**Many of us travel with our computers and phones. Many times, while traveling, you have to find a place to charge up those devices. Here are some helpful hints:**

**5 computer/phone charging don’ts for travel and everyday life**



The airports? Crazy. The weather? Unpredictable. Travel is tough enough. But the FBI threw a wrinkle in the sheets with a warning to avoid public phone charging stations.

Those charging kiosks in airports, hotels and malls can be big timesavers, especially for a family on the move. Their owners promise they're safe. The government disagrees.

Welcome to the newest phase of juice jacking. The phenomenon has been around for more than 10 years. Hackers use public phone charging to upload malware to your devices. Then, they ransom your phone or steal your passwords..

Have no fear. When your batteries hit the *low-low* point in your travels, just follow these charging safety tips:

### **Don't use public USBs – just outlets**

Fortunately, actual cases of juice-jacking are rare or nonexistent in America. But they can happen through USB connections. How can you avoid malware? If a kiosk has actual power outlets to charge your phone with your own adapter, there's no fear of hacking.

For 100% protection, stay away from USB ports of any size, especially when traveling overseas. While USB standards are international, foreign hackers can target popular hotel room USB ports to steal data, even if you're not using a kiosk.

### **Don't use a cable at all**

Use wireless charging pads instead of USBs when possible. More and more public kiosks are using wireless charging. This method doesn't exchange data directly with your phone, so it's virus-free by default.

### **Don't use a data cable**

If you're desperate for juice, you can use a USB connection safely ... with the right cable. Pack a **charge-only cable** for your trip. They're cheap, compact and don't allow for data transfer.

### **Don't choose the 'trust' option**

Newer phones are smart enough to be wary of an unknown USB connection. (Some humans could learn a thing or two). They'll ask if you want to "trust this device" or "share data."

Always say "No" to these options when traveling! Both allow data communication between your phone and the charging hardware, which may have implanted malware. Choose the "charge-only option." If that's not available, keep walkin'.

**FYI:** This works with most phones a few years old or newer. It may not offer the choice if you have a particularly old phone.

### **Don't forget your external battery**

They're slim and durable, and you'll never regret packing one. Drop your [external battery](#) into a suitcase side pocket or laptop bag and keep it close. Just remember to charge it back up when you stop at a hotel or airport, and you're good to go.

**Going on a big trip?** I really, really suggest checking out my [recommendations for international charging adapters](#) before you leave, as well as my [travel prep cheat sheet](#).

THANK YOU KIM KOMANDO!

**THE SILENT HEROES AMONG US – Throughout the VFW world, and I'm sure this goes for just about every other philanthropic organization or group. There are those "silent heroes" who walk amongst us doing whatever good they can, without seeking recognition or notoriety. They do good for the sake of doing good! They epitomize the VFW slogan of "No one does more for veterans".**

**My post has such a husband-and-wife team. I will not mention them by name because they seek no personal recognition. They just want to do their small part in helping area veterans. I work closely with the Myrtle Beach VA Clinic and their veteran assistance programs that include food and clothing distribution to veterans in need, including their families, if they have one. The Clinic maintains a food pantry (of non-perishable food items) to support their United to Combat Veteran Hunger programs. I do various fund-raising things throughout the year to be able to help keep this food pantry supplied. Every month, this 'silent-hero' couple, gives me a check for \$200 to help buy food items necessary to support the clinic needs. They just want to help in a way they can afford.**

**To all of you silent hero's out there. THANK YOU!!**

**ARE YOUR ACCOUNTABLE OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES BONDED? – You future leaders of Post's, or Districts want to know why VFW National is so vocal on this required process? – Back in mid-January, The former Post Commander of a Post in Oklahoma was convicted of embezzling post funds to support his gambling habit. How much? \$40,000. Can your Post or District afford to take that kind of a hit because the necessary people were not bonded? I doubt it!**

**BONDING is the responsibility of the respective commanders. Failure to have your 'accountable officers' adequately bonded could cost you a post.**

**NOTE: Apparently the post in question did not have the proper bonding because it had to combine with another post.**

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**\*\*\*What is the VFW and what do you do?** While visiting some veterans at an assisted living facility in January. I was asked this question by a four year veteran of the military who served from 1963 to 1967. Mostly at a couple of European locations (not VFW eligible). For the next 15 minutes or so, I discussed my version of the VFW. How would you have answered this question??

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**SOME OF THAT LEGAL STUFF**

**Suspension from Office** – For all you Sr. Vice Commanders out there. Should your Commander be **suspended** for any reason. YOU automatically, temporarily, assume the duties and responsibilities of the Commander (you do not become the Commander).  
VFW BY LAWS ARTICLE IX, Section 905.

**Do You Know** – That as a member, you get suspended from your Post by sentence of Disciplinary Action, properly executed. You will be transferred to the Department Member-At-Large membership status (you are no longer affiliated with your post). Upon completion of your suspension, you have the right to transfer your membership back to your post according to Section 107 of the National By Laws. (there are other circumstance that are considered)  
VFW BY LAWS ARTICLE IX, Section 908

**\*\*Are you aware of those offenses you could be punished for under the VFW ARTICLES OF DISCIPLINE ?** VFW BY LAWS ARTICLE IX, Section 902

#### **OUR DECLINING VETERAN POPULATION**



As of the end of December 2023, some of our surviving veteran population numbers look like this:

**WORLD WAR II – 119,500 out of 16 million**

**KOREA – An estimated 1 million “era” veterans. No in-country estimates since 2020. It is estimated by the VA that there are 19,000 Korean War veterans living in SC.**

**NOTE: The VA nor DoD provide any accurate in-country numbers.**

**VIETNAM -Around 600,000 of a served in-country population of just under 3 million**

**GULF WAR ERA – No numbers provided here, other than approximately 7.8 million “era” veterans served.**

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**HAPPENINGS AROUND THE MID-WINTER CONFERENCE JAN 25-28 2024**  
**Myrtle Beach Hilton**



**WELCOME TO OUR NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**



**National Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief CAROL WHITMORE  
National Guard 2023-2024 SANDRA UZELL**

**The unofficial start of the conference happened on Thursday night at North Myrtle Beach Post 10804. A Taco Party was arranged for anyone who was attending the conference. About 40+ decided to join the Post membership and have a good time at Post 10804.**



Friday was filled with lots of activities and training. The VSO Office was meeting with veterans to help answer questions or help with filing VA Claims.

Training included sessions in District leadership, Commander, Quartermaster, membership, the VFW web-sites, and a new comber, OIE & OIF get-togethers.

The day ended with the famous “Quarter Auction” and the ever-appreciated ‘Hospitality Suite’.

Saturday started with a “Joint-Opening” Session followed by separate business meetings for the comrades and auxiliary.

**The following are some of my (unofficial) notes from the comrade meeting:**

- \*There were 238 comrades and auxiliary registered for the conference.
- \*Jan Owens spoke on behalf of the National Home. Along with other comments, she did say the home is currently FULL!
- \*Tia Jones spoke on behalf of the Gold Star Mothers
- \*The Friday Night Quarter Auction raised \$2,100
- \*The State QM, Dennis Hamilton, stated the SC VFW was financially sound.
- \***SC is at 95% in membership and ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the Nation & #1 in the Southern Conference.**
- \*National Council Representative Ted Tufts reminded everyone to watch their electronic communications and don't leave avenues open that could result in state, district, or post's being hacked.
- \***District 2 maintained possession of the Membership Trophy. Their Post 5740 has 116% membership.**



\*Don Criscoe, Conference Chairman reported that the conference was going great and that the Hilton has gone out of its way to accommodate us. The CofA voted to keep the Mid Winter Conference at the Myrtle Beach Hilton for the next two years.

\*Community Service Chairman Nick Camera reported that so far this year the SC VFW has volunteered over 29,500 hours with a value of \$1,328,000.

\*Surgeon Gene Bryant reported that a recent state hq blood drive netted 17 units.

\*Closing remarks by Commander Fox included the fact there are some posts in trouble in the state . That ALL posts need to work to stay operational and all posts must comply with VFW National Policy.

\*There were several announcements for state jobs. Some to keep their present ones and some seeking election to certain positions. There were three announced for Jr. Vice position, three for Surgeon and two for JAG.

Of course, there is our own DWIGHT HORA running for the 2026 Jr. Vice-Commander-in-Chief. Do what you can to support him.



POPPY'S



**Teacher of the Year: MARK A. NADOBNY**  
**Voice of Democracy, 1<sup>st</sup> Place: AMRITHAA BALACHANDRAN**  
**Patriots Pen, 1<sup>st</sup> Place: ANTONIO SINGLETARY**

**A Special Thank You to this year's vendors and information providers**





## **PEOPLE AND POSTS RECOGNIZED DURING THE CONFERENCE**

### **COMMUNITY RECOGNITION**

**\*Firefighter of the Year: ALEXANDRA LUCIANO. Nominated by Post 3137**

**\*Outstanding JROTC Cadet: CSM ANAYLAH MOUZON, Hanahah High School. Nominated by Post 5091**

**\*Patroits Pen 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner: CATHERINE COLE, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Woodruff Middle School. Nominated by Post 9539**

**\*Patroits Pen 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: AVA WATSON, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Batesburg-Leesville Middle School Nominated by Post 641**

**\*Voice of Democracy 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner: JIMMY BATES Jr, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, Strom Thurman High School. Nominated by Post 6932**

**\*Voic of Democracy 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: JACKSON PEARCE, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, James Island High School. Nominated by Post 445**

**\*Teacher of the Year, Grade K-5: Mr PATRICK SEITZ, Riverview Charter School. Nominated by Post 8760**

**\*Teacher of the Year, Grade 9-12: Mr JONATHAN BLEVINS, Lugoff-Elgin High School. Nominated by Post 11079**



**THANK YOU to all the posts that participated in this years programs!**

**\*Henry Rifle Winner: JAMES MOORE from Post 10980**

**\*Golden Pen Winner: GINGER GRAHAM from Post 6740**

**Membership Award Winners:**

**FERNANDO ROLAND, DWIGHT HORA Post 8760, BILL KING Post 10624, GUS SINGLETON, JAY HART Post 4262, CHARLES STEC Post 2889, SCOTT SALZMAN BAUSMAN Post 3034, GENE BRYANT, HUGH GUNTER Post 8738, CHARLES HOLLOWAY, GINGER GRAHAM Post 6740, TODD HAVILLAND Post 10420, ED STEFANAK Jr Post 9539, BOB FAZEN Post 10804**



**Earlybird Award Winners:**

**Lake Murray Post 6740  
Lake Wateree Post 8346  
Berea Post 10330  
Clover VFW Post 6732**

**Social Media Awards:**

**\*Outstanding Post Media: Post 6740  
\*Outstanding District Media: District 2  
Outstanding Website: Post 9273**

**Communications Award:**

<b>*Post 445</b>	<b>Post 6091</b>	<b>Post 10804</b>
<b>*Post 3433</b>	<b>Post 6740</b>	<b>Post 12102</b>





**THANK YOU to the Myrtle Beach High School JROTC Honor Guard**

**AND THEN THERE WAS THE MWC POLAR PLUNGE**





**A SPECIAL THANK YOU!! To all the “plungers’ and everyone who came out to support them. Y’all helped SC raise thousands of dollars for the National Home.**

## **VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA (VVA) – THE END???**

Some of you may remember that about a year ago I reported on the pending demise of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). For those of you that may be a member of this organization. Here is the latest.

The VVA organization is on the verge of possibly dissolving by the end of 2025. With a membership of 92,000, they are on the decline eventhough they continue to offer Life Memberships for \$50. The VVA has new chapetrs starting, but they have even more shutting-down or combining with another chapter because of declining membership. They have no 2024 National Convention, opting for a 2025 convention in August, in New Orleans and there, they will apparently decide the future of the VVA. The VVA budget and fully operating capability only runs through February 2025.

The VVA was partially started because of the many Vietnam Veterans who said their attempts to join their local VFW’s was thwarted by local post memberships because Vietnam supposedly did not meet

the criteria for eligibility to join the VFW. Being turned away, Vietnam Veterans turned to the newly formed VVA. South Carolina is part of VVA Region 3. It's Director is Rossie M. Nance (I could find no contact info on him). There are 10 VVA Chapters in SC. Right now, VVA National is saying that local Chapters can continue to use the VVA name, if and when the National organizations ceases to exist.

**If you are a VVA member? It might behoove you to contact the Regional Director or the Chapter you belong to, or the local VVA Chapter in your area, to find out your future with this organization. You can research necessary contact info through the VVA web site.**

**Information courtesy of The VVA Veteran Magazine**

### **IT'S STEP UP TO THE PLATE TIME**

By the time you read this, the election process for the 2024-2025 year will have begun. At the Post level, the nominating process has started and will culminate with the election of new officers in April. Districts will do their nominating and electing at their District Convention (mostly in April) and the State will nominate and elect its new officers at the State Convention in June.

Any member, in good standing, can run for any elected position! This goes for all levels. At the Post level, you must be a member of that Post. At the District level, you must be a member within that District. State positions are open to anyone who is a member of any Post in the state.

**MEMBERS AT LARGE are NOT eligible to run for any elected/appointed position. Nor are they allowed to vote in any Post election.**

You have right, up to the nomination and election of a particular office, to announce your candidacy for that position.

ALL Appointed positions are done so by the Commander at each level of authority. Some are offices and most are Committee Chairperson's. If you are interested in this area. Let your newly elected Commander know as soon as possible.

CAN'T BE THERE at election time, but still want to be nominated for a position. All you have to do is send the appropriate level Adjutant a letter/email stating your wanting to be nominated for a certain position. He/she will place your name into consideration when that position comes up for election. Normally, at an in-house election. If someone else places your name in nomination consideration, you would be asked if you would accept this position when elected. You're write-in for a particular position automatically says you would accept the position. Your letter cannot be used to nominate you for any position, other for that which you seek.

### **RECRUITING**

Its getting towards the end of the year and you have not recruited anyone yet, BUT you have a person or two on the fence and you just don't what it will take to close the deal and get them signed up in the VFW and preferably your post. Maybe they would make the leap and join if they



could see more of what the VFW is about and how it operates. Maybe, you as the Committee Chairman would like to have this person on your committee because they are a perfect fit.

**TAKE THEM TO ONE OF YOUR UPCOMING POST BUSINESS MEETINGS or COMMITTEE MEETINGS! Can you do that? YES, you can!**

As much as Posts treat their monthly business meetings as a closed/restricted gathering. **National By Laws ARTICLE II, Section 203 – Guests**, allows ‘guests’ to be brought to a Post meeting. With the approval of a Post Commander or Committee Chairman, a guest can be brought to a Post meeting or a Committee meeting. Unless recognized by the Post Commander or Committee Chairman during the meeting, the guest has no voice in the meeting and has no voting privileges.

*PS: If you bring a guest to a monthly business meeting. Besides introducing them around. Make sure you explain the ritual of what is happening as the meeting moves forward. Who knows, you may have recruited a new member before the meeting is over.*

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**\*\*\*The 2024 National Defense Authorization Act has authorized DoD an “Active Duty” end strength of 1,283,700 personnel which consist of:**

Army – 445,000

Navy – 337,000

Air Force – 320,000

Marine Corps – 172,300

Space Force – 9,400

COURTESY: VFW Magazine

Based on the less than required recruitment levels for most branches of the Military Service over the last two years. There is a good chance that the above numbers may not be reached.

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VIETNAM VETERANS – 50+ years after the end of the Vietnam Conflict, we, at all our meetings, still ask for the return of our Missing In Action. As of January 2, 2024. There are 1,577 still classified as MIA from Vietnam and surrounding territories. They include: MIA Vietnam - 1,237, MIA Laos - 285, MIA Cambodia - 48, MIA Peoples Republic of China Territorial Waters – 7.  
COURTESY: The VVA Veteran Magazine

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**\*\*\*Ever wonder what all this generation classification stuff is about and who fills what’s bill? Well :-**

The [Pew Research Center](#) periodically updates the age ranges it uses to define the generational groups, and that includes the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, [Generation X](#), and [Millennials](#). In 2019, the organization officially added the birth years for [Gen Z](#). Since then, other [sources](#) have weighed in on the suggested age ranges for [Gen Alpha](#). Check out the latest definitions for each generation below:

- \***The Silent Generation:** Born 1928-1945 (78-95 years old)
- \***Baby Boomers:** Born 1946-1964 (59-77 years old)
- \***Gen X:** Born 1965-1980 (43-58 years old)
- \***Millennials:** Born 1981-1996 (27-42 years old)
- \***Gen Z:** Born 1997-2012 (11-26 years old)
- \***Gen Alpha:** Born early 2010s-2025 (0-about 10 years old)

**Believe it or not, there is a complete explanation of just what each of these groups does/is involved with/how they have influenced the country since the late 1920's. This info can be found on your search engine by going to Pew Research Center, or typing in any one of the categories listed above (Ex: Gen Z).**

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**THINKING OF GOING TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION THIS YEAR? If so, there is something your Post must do in advance:**

**\*\*CONVENTION REGISTRATION – Section 222 of the Manual of Procedure states 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 VFW National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee provided the Post has paid the mandated \$25 advance registration fee. All advance registrations should be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111. ATTN: Convention 4 Registration, Quartermasters are strongly encouraged to register delegates utilizing the on-line membership system (OMS).**

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**\$\$\$Want to support YOUR VFW by donating, but can't right now due to your financial situation? Here's a simple solution:**

*Save Your Money Today, Make a Difference Anyway – Did you know you can make a gift to the VFW without affecting your daily budget? You can include us as a beneficiary on your retirement account or insurance policy. This way, you support tomorrow's veterans without eating into your bottom line: <https://vfw.planmylegacy.org/save-money-make-difference>. The VFW Planned Giving Office is here to help if you have questions. Call us at 816.968.1119 or email us at [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org).*

*P.S. You can also donate a house, land, car, boat, RV*



**ARMY & AIR FORCE  
EXCHANGE SERVICE**

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The Department of Defense is proud to expand on-installation Exchange, commissary and morale, welfare, and recreation program retail eligibility to:

\*All Veterans with service-connected disabilities

- Purple Heart recipients
- Former prisoners of war

Individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans enrolled under the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

\*\* Additionally, the Exchange's Veterans Online Shopping Benefit allows all honorably discharged Veterans to shop tax free for life.

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## Earned any of the "Early Bird Recruiting" Money? – Dillon Post 6091 has



DILLON VFW GROWS MEMBERSHIP – VFW District 7 Commander Ed Valentin was at the 2/8/2024 Dillon VFW meeting to recognize its EARLY BIRD growth in new members. Commander Valentin is the District Commander for Georgetown, Kingstree, Little River, Mullins, Murrells Inlet, Summerton, and Dillon. In the picture, Dillon Post Quartermaster Joey Williams holds the \$200 check given to the Dillon VFW for its EARLY BIRD status in reaching new member goals for 2024-25. Also pictured is Post Senior Vice Commander Chris Norris and Post Surgeon Stephanie Maza

accepting a separate award for Post communications in social media. Commander Valentin congratulated the Dillon Post on its past and continued work through using social media to help grow membership and to keep Veterans informed about VA benefits and services they have earned and deserve.

Pictured L-R are Post Commander John Harlow, District Commander Ed Valentin, Post Senior Vice Commander Chris Norris, Post Surgeon Stephanie Maza and Post Quartermaster Joey Williams.

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## HERE'S SOME MORE OF THAT ELECTION STUFF (for Posts)

**\*\*Election Reporting** – If your Post does not use the Online Membership System (OMS) to report your election results (I can't imagine why you wouldn't)? Your Post Installing Officer is responsible for completing the Post Election Report and mailing a copy of the report to the District, State and National Adjutants. The Installing Officer is also responsible for verifying the

eligibility of each person on that election report. Most important to National headquarters is receiving the proper names and addresses of Post Commanders and Quartermasters.

**NOTE:** In a February letter addressed to all Quartermasters by the Adjutant General. He encourages all Quartermasters to use the OMS System to record and transmit Post election results to National. Post's are reminded that if they do not have a properly completed election report to National by **June 1st**, that the Commander-In-Chief has the authority to suspend your Post Charter.

### FROM THE CHAIR OF YOUR STATE COMMANDER



With our just returning from a very successful legislative conference and VOD awards program. My year as State Commander is coming to a close. Before we know it we will be at the state convention and starting a new VFW year. South Carolina has had a fantastic year starting with honoring our in-state POW'S from the Vietnam War. I cannot thank the committee enough that put together this once in a lifetime event. Also the money raised for our DSO Office was beyond everyone's expectations. Next we actually brought on a new VSO officer Jeri Williams she has been a great needed addition.

The Pearl Harbor event held every year on Dec 7th was fantastically organized and very well attended by our comrades and our auxiliary. Retired Major General Julian Burns was the guest speaker and did an outstanding job with his message for the audience.

The Midwinter Conference was held in Myrtle Beach. We had excellent participation from the comrades and auxiliary. The 'Polar Plunge' was a huge hit and an excellent funds raiser for the National Home. It was our honor to recognize our youth and teacher award winners. Overall it was a great conference and lots of fun was had by all.

In closing I would like to recognize my counterpart Laura Jo Sweetsir, Department Auxiliary President. Her and I have had a very good working relationship and we have done well in supporting each other all year. The Auxiliary should be proud of the work it has accomplished so far this year.

My immediate support staff is just simply amazing. I cannot thank them enough for all of the hard work and support they have provided during the course of this entire year.

We have one more quarter to go. Let's continue to do all those good things that will make South Carolina an All-American State. Let's continue to recruit and mentor new members. Let's continue to do all those good things our Districts and Posts are renowned for, and most importantly, let's continue to foster and promote the great Veterans of Foreign Wars name and ideals.

I wish all of you continued success and I will be right there with you helping the S.C VFW succeed next year and for the years to come.

God Bless!

Jim Fox  
Commander

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**Does your community know about your post? Does your post know about your community? Are you/your Post involved?**

North Myrtle Beach Post 10804 just spent part of St. Patrick's Day participating in the city's annual parade. There were 27 Post & Auxiliary members who participated both in making/decorating a Post Float and participating in the parade (some rode a float, some walked). **We even had a 102 year old WW II Veteran with us.**

The point is that Post 10804 was extremely visible to a spectator audience of tens-of-thousands, a TV audience and local print media.





**LETS TABLE THAT MOTION:** - This happens from time to time at a Post meeting when a reasonable resolution cannot be achieved and it is tabled until the next meeting. **Did You Know** – That at the next Post meeting. The item you tabled at the last meeting must be the **FIRST** item of business under New Business. *Robert's Rules of Order 14:30*

**DISTRICT CHAPLAINS** – Did you know that at your District Convention (April), you are required to provide a fitting tribute to all your departed comrades?

Manual of Procedure Section 418, (a)(8)

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE**

As a verteran, we have all heard this from time-to-time. How do you respond? I ALWAYS respond by looking right at the person and saying 'Thank You'. I know those who don't respond at all, or just give a hand-wave. Some of us are just uncomfortble hearing those words. Some responses I have heard that I do not think appropriate are: "You're welcome, I did it so you could be here today" , or "You're welcome, you were worth dying for", or "I was just doing my job".

My thought is that if you can't respond with decency and respect, don't respond at all!

**For all of you Gulf War Veterans who might be suffering from any types of illnesses. This might be for you?**



The Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (RACGWVI) Subcommittee

## Veteran Engagement Sessions for 1990-91 Gulf War Veterans

Are you or a loved one a 1990-91 Gulf War Veteran struggling with health consequences following your military service? Help guide VA research on Gulf War Illnesses by sharing your story with the RACGWVI Subcommittee on Veteran Engagement.

### April 23, 2024: 4 to 6:30 p.m. MT

Hilton Phoenix Resort at The Peak, Sedona Conference Room # 4  
7677 North 16th Street, Phoenix, AZ. 85020 (Free parking and handicap accessible)  
**Join online:** <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/j.php?MTID=m54c8a7bb2e8e7818f679b345377a22e1>  
**Password:** GWVET1991! (Case sensitive)  
**Join by phone:** (Toll-free) 1-833-558-0712, Access code is 2826 178 2537  
**Time Zones:** 7:00-9:30pm ET / 6:00-8:30pm CT / 4:00-6:30pm PT

### April 24, 2024: 8 to 10:30 a.m. MT

Phoenix 32nd St. VA Clinic, Conference Rooms 5C107/5C108  
400 N. 32nd St., Phoenix, AZ. 85020 (Free parking and handicap accessible)  
**Join online:** <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/j.php?MTID=md762d96d33c51c5e03bfaf7fd56e29d>  
**Password:** GWVETS1991! (Case sensitive)  
**Join by phone:** (Toll-free) 1-833-558-0712, Access code is 2824 521 1053  
**Time Zones:** 11:00am-1:30pm ET / 10:00am-12:30pm CT / 8:00-10:30am PT

**RACGWVI meetings are free and open to all. For more information visit: [WWW.VA.GOV/RAC-GWVI/](http://WWW.VA.GOV/RAC-GWVI/)**

The Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (RACGWVI) provides advice and makes recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on proposed research studies, plans, and strategies related to understanding and treating the health consequences of military service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the 1990 - 1991 Gulf War.

**Speaking of Veterans Aid –** Many of your State leadership and veterans Service Officers participated in the **Veterans Experience Action Center** event held in Columbia this past March 21-23. Over **400** veterans attended day one and received help with their various issues. This is such an important veteran aid event that even the Commanding General of the South Carolina National Guard was in attendance. YOUR State VFW recruited 10 new members and presented all Vietnam veterans with a Commemorative Pin.





THANK YOU Ginger Graham for the pictures and information!

**Did you know: That Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup> was Medal of Honor Day. A day to honor the 3,517 veterans who earned the highest-of high military recognition!**

**\*\*\*Ever see the VFW National Payout Plan for Life Members and not know what they are talking about? . Well here it is direct from VFW Quartermaster General. It shows how Life Member funds are dispersed.**



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

As a member of the Board of Trustees of the Life Membership Fund, also known as the Life Membership Committee, I have reviewed the data prepared by VFW, investment consultant's report, and correspondence from CBIZ/Cottonwood, actuaries, calculating the amount of payout that the Life Membership Fund can support.



I understand that in order to maintain the long-term financial security of the funds, the Annual Payout

Amount should be set so that the associated liabilities do not exceed the value of the trust assets. At the 2008 National Convention the VFW By-Laws were amended to provide that in the event that professional actuaries advise that Plan assets are insufficient to support the payout specified for any such Plan, the Life Membership Committee, with the concurrence of the National Council of Administration, may authorize a lesser payout with respect to such Plan, consistent with the actuaries' recommendations.

Therefore, for the year 2024-2025, I agree that:

- Plan A, B and C Life Membership Fund can support a total payout of \$10.50 for each Life Member in Plans A, B and C. I understand that a payment in the amount of \$3.50 for each Life Member in Plans A, B and C will be made to their Post, Department and National Headquarters.
- Plan D Life Membership Fund can support a total payout of \$11.46 for each Life Member in Plan. I understand that a payment in the amount of \$3.82 for each Life Member in Plan D will be made to their Post, Department and National Headquarters.
- Plan E Life Membership Fund can support a total payout of \$22.62 for each Life Member in Plan E. I understand that a payment in the amount of \$7.54 for each Life Member in Plan E will be made to their Post, Department and National Headquarters.

**APRIL is Post and District Elections – Is it time for you to step-up? – If not, at least attend your Post meeting & District Convention and vote for/support your future leadership**

**April 6:** State Council of Administration meeting at State HQ at 10AM. Come see your State leadership in action.

**April 20-21:** Joint Base Charleston Airshow

**REMEMBER:** This is **YOUR** Newsletter. It exists to keep you informed on all items veteran related. To herald your Personal, Post, District, State accomplishments. To support the COOTIES and the Auxiliary. The next SENTINEL will run from April 1 to June 30. You have plenty of time to send me the great things you are doing.

**Bill La Monte**  
**Writer/Editor**

[4william6@gmail.com](mailto:4william6@gmail.com) or 252-308-3507



NEED TO TALK? – the Veterans Crisis Line is there 24/7. You can **call 9.8.8** and press **OPTION 1**, or **1-800-273-8255** and Press **OPTION 1**

**WOMEN VETERANS** – The VA Helpline is **1-855-829-6636**, or **www.womenshealth.va.gov**