

4th quarter 2021



Department of South Carolina *SENTINEL*



An official publication of the Department of South Carolina Veterans of Foreign Wars
FOURTH QUARTER 2021

*It's not the price you pay to become a member.
It's the price you paid to become eligible!*

HAVING PROBLEMS? NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE?...The “VETERANS CRISIS LINE” is open 24/7. Just call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1. It takes an average of 8 seconds for your call to be answered. You are NOT alone!

HOT!! – The FCC has approved a new, 3 digit (988) crisis line (acts in the same principal as 911). It will connect with the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. HOWEVER, it will not become effective until sometime in 2022

VA WOMEN VETERAN HELP LINES...1-855-829-6636 or www.womenshealth.va.gov

The five signs of emotional suffering: PERSONALITY CHANGE, FEELING AGITATED, FEELING WITHDRAWN, POOR SELF-CARE AND FEELING HOPELESS.

If you are frequently in any one of those. PLEASE call one of the helplines listed above !

Want to stay current with VA & VFW issues? Go to vfwac@vfw.org and sign-up for “Action CORPS Weekly”.

Want to stay current with what is happening within the VFW in S.C.? Just go to VFWSC.org.

GET YOUR FLU SHOT !! 😊 😊 Why you are at it – Have you gotten a PNEUMONIA or SHINGLES shot. What about the COVID shot? How about the COVID Booster Shot?

Are you a veteran of Afghanistan? Or the family member of a veteran who served there? And you/they need some help. Contact 877 – WAR – VETS (877-927-8387). This is a 24/7 helpline.

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR STATE COMMANDER – DWIGHT HORA –

Hello Comrades,

Welcome back. I hope that all had a wonderful time with family and friends during the holiday season. I took a little time off for myself and it's back to work for me. My schedule is going to be busy until the end of march. I am on the road every weekend for one thing or another.

I wanted to share a few things with you. First, it's time to get ready for the Department Conference February 18 to the 20th. Our National Rep, Jr. Vice Commander N Chief, Duane Sarmiento will be arriving sometime on Thursday and be departing on Sunday. We will be visiting a post or two on Friday while he is here. I will keep the District Commanders aware of which posts. We will have a full packed weekend of classes, roundtables, meetings, and especially time for comradery. Your Department President, Kate Brock and I are looking forward to spending time with all of you and sharing some recognition, fun laughs and accomplishing a few things for the Department. We want you all to come and enjoy the weekend.

We have the winners of the Henry Riffle Drawing and the Golden Pen award, which will be presented to these winners at the conference. I ask that they attend the conference to receive their recognition. The winner for the Henry Riffle is Comrade Jeffrey Hunter, Post 6734 Quartermaster. The winner for the Golden Pen Award is Comrade Mark L. McMurray, Post 3447 Adjutant.

I want to continue to thank all of you for your hard work from the Post all the way to the Department and beyond. Veterans and their families, and communities really appreciate what we are doing as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and I can't be happier as your State Commander this year of what we are all accomplishing. Thanks again.

Yours in Comradeship,

Dwight Hora
"We Are Family"
Commander

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR DEPARTMENT COMMANDER – KATE BROCK –

I am so proud of our Auxiliary, we are 100 members away from 100% and we have made our 75% retention goal. Awesome work by our Membership & Retention Team.

The National President will be in Columbia from January 13 - 15th, 2022. She will arrive at the Columbia Airport on the 13th @ 1:49 PM, we will be going to the Double Tree. Rooms are available for \$112.00 per night and we need to fill at least 10. We will be having dinner there and a relaxing evening with Madam President Jean, PJ's optional.

On Friday we will have breakfast at the hotel in the morning, and go to the Governor's Mansion at 10:00 AM. and return to the hotel before heading to HQ for a drop in from 2:00 - 4:45 PM. President Jean wants to meet all Comrades and Auxiliary Members so we have planned for everyone to come see her. We will have Southern Style Pulled Pork / Chicken sandwiches, baked beans, coleslaw, chips and drinks. We are looking forward to seeing members from all over the Department. The food will be available for the duration but we will be asking the President to address us about 3:00 PM. Commander Dwight and I are looking forward to a successful event and look forward to having Jean witness our South Carolina Family in action.

Saturday Morning we will take Jean to breakfast before she leaves at noon. This will be by invitation only.

Taking Flight for Our Veterans,
Kate Brock,
Department President

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER- ED STEFANAK, Jr –

Happy New Years, new me, new you. Hope you all had a great Christmas. Let's finish this year strong.

Congratulations to the following posts for reaching 100% in Membership:

District 1- 3137 101.49%

District 4- 12207 345.45%

District 5- 3746 104.02% 6381 100%

District 9- 6304 113.04% 6738 100% 8166 100% 10729 105.26%

Upcoming training:

****1/8/2022-** Post Service Officers training at Dept. HQ and Zoom. 9AM to Noon

John Johnson our VSO will be conducting the training.

Please get this out to your post service officers and have them participate in the training. If you haven't received an email with the zoom link contact Kate at HQ.

Mid Winter Conference:

February 17th-20th at the DoubleTree in Columbia. After our business meeting Saturday we will be having some great classes and roundtable discussions. The Junior Vice-Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento will be the national rep for the weekend.

To reserve your rooms and register: <https://vfwsc.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=85512>)

<https://vfwsc.org/uploads/Documents/Forms/Newbookandregistrationform.pdf>)

*****URGENT :** If you are an "Annual dues paying member"? Your membership 'anniversary date' is the date you joined the VFW as a member in good standing, not January 1st. If you do not renew your membership by your ANNIVERSARY DATE? The day after, you cease to be a member in good standing and lose all rights of membership.

This is critical in that....If you are an elected or appointed official at the Post, District or Department level. You LOSE that position (the day after your dues expire).

VFW BY-LAWS, ARTICLE I, Section 105

Are you aware – That VFW National currently supports over 100 Bills that are before Congress?

MIA'S Coming Home – In 1950, when the Hawaii "Punch Bowl" Cemetery opened. 394 Sailors and Marines who died at Pearl Harbor were buried in the Punch Bowl. They were of a group

who's remains could not be identified. Recently, due to modern forensic technology, 338 of that 394, that served on the USS Oklahoma, and died, buried at the Punch Bowl, were identified.

That is a significant drop in the number of those veterans listed as MIA.

COURTESY OF DAV MAGAZINE

I DID SOME RESEARCH and DID YOU KNOW THAT – VFW POST # 1 Is located in Denver, Post 2 in Philadelphia, Post 3 Altoona, PA, Posts 5 & 7 in Minnesota, Post 9 in Maine and Post #10 in North Carolina. Posts 4, 6, 8 no longer exist, nor do about ½ of the original 50 posts. The earliest Post in Europe is #27 (Wiesbaden Germany, 1977, over 2,500 current members).

ALSO – Did you know New York's District 1 has **82 Posts** in that District? How would you like to be the Commander of that District?



I made it to VFW Post 1 in September, but unfortunately, it was closed for renovations due to asbestos problems.

+++LOOKING TO RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER? Why not take it a big step forward and try to recruit a new post? – Sound like an impossible task? Well, really, it's not when you look at the number of big towns and some counties in SC that do not have a VFW presence.

The biggest hurdle in trying to establish a new post is – WHERE DO THEY MEET? – A post needs someplace to call home. Even if it is just once a month for the monthly business meeting. So, before you go out looking for new members. It would be a good idea to scout the town and see what business, or other organization, has the space and might be willing to allow a monthly VFW meeting. A good place to start here is the local Chamber of Commerce. Then there's the American Legion's, Elks, Moose, the County Services building, etc. While you're recruiting these new members. See if they know of any place suitable for a monthly meeting.

Keep in mind that a new post does NOT need to have a canteen/bar/kitchen to be successful. It needs members willing to carry-on the VFW tradition of service for veterans, including themselves.

How do you prep for a new post recruiting event?

*First off, make sure you have a VFW, NEW POST STARTER KIT. It has all the things you need to get started. The kit costs \$55 and if your post does not have the money, I'm sure you can get your District or the State to donate the purchase.

*You should have a Membership recruiting Kit \$38.50

*And, if you're fortunate enough to succeed in putting together a new post? You'll need a new Post Charter Kit (\$310) that contains everything necessary to start/hold your monthly business meetings. Including putting together your new post charter for state and national to sign off on.

*Work with the local newspaper at least one month in advance to promote a recruiting drive.

++Most newspapers will publish this for free in their "Community News".

++f there is a local radio station that encompasses the town/area you are trying to start a new post. Work with them, they will freely advertise a 'recruiting/new post' meeting event.

*Post "New Post Recruiting Drive" flyers in businesses throughout the area.

IMPORTANTLY; Seek the help, of not only your post, but nearby posts, your district and the state. All will chip-in to help the creation of a new post become a reality.

DO YOU VOLUNTEER? – HERE'S SOMETHING FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT

There are many of us on the VA Disability List. Many of us like to do volunteer work for veterans and this includes being a VA Volunteer Services volunteer. **IF YOU ARE CLASSIFIED AS 100% DISABLED?** This implies an inability to work (paid or volunteer). If you are a VA volunteer, your personal information (including your SS #) is on file with the VA. This includes the number of volunteer hours you put in in a month.

If you volunteer numerous hours (I know several who put in over 25 hours a week) this is a matter of record. The VA Disability section has access to this information. If you are classified as 100% and working (volunteering) numerous hours. The VA has the authority to reduce or take away your VA Compensation. I know of a couple of persons who have lost/had reduced their disability rating because of this.

NOTE: The same thing goes if you are working numerous paid hours for anyone outside the VA. Your SS# is on file, and the same logic applies as above.

NOTE 2: I am a registered/trained VA Volunteer, but I carry a ZERO HOURS worked balance on my VA volunteer sheet. This, even though I do various projects for my local VA Clinic.

DID YOU KNOW – That at the height of the Mayan civilization, they played a game with teams that was similar to basketball. Two teams trying to throw a stone, ball-shaped, thing through a rock with a hole in it.

Here's the interesting part. Mayan's were known for human sacrifices to their various gods. The captain of the WINNING TEAM was sacrificed to the gods because the Mayan's thought that by giving-up a good leader. The god's would be most happy!

The Veterans Health Administration is the largest healthcare network in the United States and is made up of 1,243 health care facilities; 172 of which are VA medical centers, and 1,062 are outpatient sites with varying purpose. Among these sites are VA outpatient clinics, community-based outpatient clinics, community service programs, Vet Centers, and domiciliary care centers. These facilities are divided based on geographic location into 18 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs).

VFW SC Council of Administration – October 2021

The 4th quarter (2nd quarter in VFW years) started off with YOUR Department holding a Council of Administration meeting in early October. Most of the council was there to brief on what's happening in their VFW world. There were also a couple of delayed All American presentations and a couple of other awards/recognition given to post commanders or their representatives and one particular Auxiliary President.

Walgreens was present to provide flu and COVID shots, free of charge, to anyone who wanted one (Thank you Natalie Reynolds and Ashley Merritt). Representatives from Humana were on hand to provide an update on the good things Humana is doing in support of all our veterans (Thank you Alan Eden and Robert Elwood).

My brief summary of meeting events:

*Report of Investigation – When there is a problem at any level of the state VFW, perceived or actual, an investigation is initiated. Depending on what happens at the level of investigation. The matter, if found valid, is attempted to be resolved at the lowest level. If not possible, it goes to the District or State Commander, or even the National offices may get involved to resolve the issue. The nature of resolution depends on the level of cooperation from the VFW entity at fault.

EX: Two posts were found to be operating a canteen without a liquor license or bonding for paid employees. They both lost their VFW Charter because this was an ongoing offense.

*Budget and Finance Committee reported some minor discrepancies in their latest audit. Will be corrected.

*The National Council Member reported that a Quartermaster was knowingly and willfully certifying members for their VFW Post that were not eligible, in order to meet membership recruitment goals. This included members elected to positions in the post.

*The National Legislative Chairman advised everyone to keep on their Congressman in regards to veteran retirement income not being taxed by the state. He also advocated support for the SC Veteran Coalition Organization.

*The Conference and Convention Chairman reminded all of the upcoming ***Mid-Winter Conference, 17-20 February at the Doubletree***

*The Southern Conference Chairman reported room occupancy for the conference was well above the required quota.

*Commander Hora reminded all that they need to send their veteran support projects to the Veteran and Military Support Chairman

- *The Teacher Awards Chairperson provided an update on recognition submission time-lines
- *The VOD/PP and State Awards Chairperson provided an update on recognition time-lines and a reminder to consider those that are doing good things for their posts to be considered for state awards
- *The Department Editor reminded all that Post Newsletter Award submission are due to him by the end of December. Still time to submit your newsletters for submission.
- *A representative for the Membership Committee reported the state at 81.6%
- *Each District Commander/Representative gave an update on their District activities.
- *The Immediate Past State Commander reported the newest Post (12207) was at 200+% membership and was currently #3 in National Division 11 membership. WAY TO GO!!

ARE YOU READY FOR THE FINAL EVENT IN YOUR LIFE?

If it is your intention for you, the veteran, and your spouse to be buried in a VA National Cemetery? There are many things you need to know.

The VA has an amazing package that takes you through every step of your transition from this life. It explains everything and allows for your post-life planners and surviving relatives to efficiently and effectively cover every aspect of funeral planning.

The package is called **PLANNING YOUR LEGACY – The VA Survivors and Burial Benefits Kit.** It can be found as simply as going to the VA website.

Many of us South Carolinian's are transplants from other states. Many of us may want to be buried in a National Cemetery in our original home-state, or where most of the family resides. There is a caution here, in that even though the VA has 155 National Cemeteries in the US and Puerto Rico. There are eight (8) states that do not have a National Cemetery. Just go to the US National Cemeteries website to find out where.

****For anyone looking at being buried at Arlington?** This is NOT a US National Cemetery. It is run by the Department of the Army and you must contact Arlington directly for information and burial eligibility. Go to <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil> or call 877-907-8585.

****Want to be buried at sea?** – The US Navy still does this. The only draw-back is that the ceremony takes place at sea during a deployment. Therefore; no family members can be present. The Navy will send, to the designated survivor, the date, time and geographic coordinates that the ceremony actually took place.

To get a request kit, contact Navy & Marine Corps Mortuary Affairs at 1-866-787-0081 or go to the US NAVY Burial at Sea website.

NOTICE – That I did not say you had to have been in the Navy. The burial-at-sea is open to **ALL** branches of the US Military and select other areas.

FROM AROUND THE STATE

State Headquarters



Picture 1 & 3: The handicap parking area needed help, so a new paved section is in progress

Picture 2: Supervision is always needed, BOB volunteered

Picture 4: Flag Memorial area needed and received some TLC

From your Junior Vice-Commander – JIM FOX

Greetings brothers and sisters,

2021 was a very busy year to say the least. I want to thank everyone, including the Auxiliary for all the hard work and hours put in by each one of you.

So here we are. 2022 is before us. The programs are over with and the amount of community service each post and auxiliary has done is truly outstanding.

We now, as always, must concentrate on membership. We are all recruiters! Make sure you have that membership application every time you leave home. Post commanders, please look at your rosters and split up the duties recruitment/retention duties and work on retention.

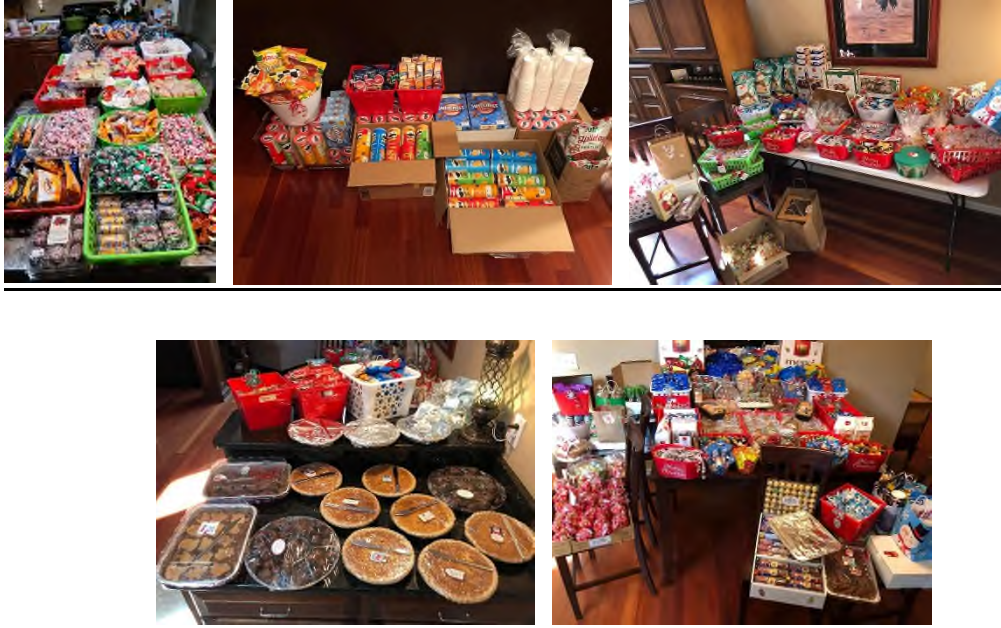
Please keep in your prayers all our post and auxiliary members who have passed on to be with their lord and savior, and pray for those that are currently struggling.

Happy New Year,
Jim Fox
Junior Vice-Commander

ALSO FROM JIM:

A friend of mine

Tanya Gann has for years headed up this great service to Army basic trainees at Fort Jackson. My wife always bakes pies for this. This year I asked the comrades and auxiliary at headquarters and District 2 to chip in and boy did they! You should have seen Tanya's eyes when she saw how many items I had to contribute to the troops.



DISTRICT 1

The D1 Commanders Special Christmas Project was for the posts and auxiliary to make Christmas Ornaments for the residents of Victory House and to improve D1's support for comrades, auxiliary and community. Ten posts participated in this project. One ornament from each post had to be of some sort of Buddy Poppy design. That contest was won by Post/Auxiliary 10624, Mt. Pleasant.

On December 4th (after the D1 meeting at the Elks Lodge) members of D1 presented almost 200 ornaments to Victory House, a veteran housing unit operated by Advantage Veterans Services. Victory House is located in Walterboro. The plan was to hand-deliver ornaments to each resident individually, but COVID restrictions prevented that from happening (ornaments were distributed by Victory House staff).



Picture 1: The winning Buddy Poppyornament
 Picture 2: Some serious judging going on
 Pictures 3,4,5: Some of the hand-crafted ornaments
 Picture 6: Presenting the D1 ornaments to Victory House

POST 3433 VA CLAIMS CLINIC

VFW Post 3433, Summerville, SC sponsored a VA Claim's Clinic October 19-20th, 2021. LTC (Retired) Ingrid Centurion organized the event and Gerry Maguire a former VFW Service Officer for the state of Massachusetts assisted along with myself in filing claims. **It was a successful event** with over 10 Veterans and spouses seeking help with their VA claims. We also spoke to several members at the post who scheduled future appointments to file their claims. Mr. Gerry Maguire extended for a week in Summerville to assist these other comrades with their claims and will forward them to our office to process their claims

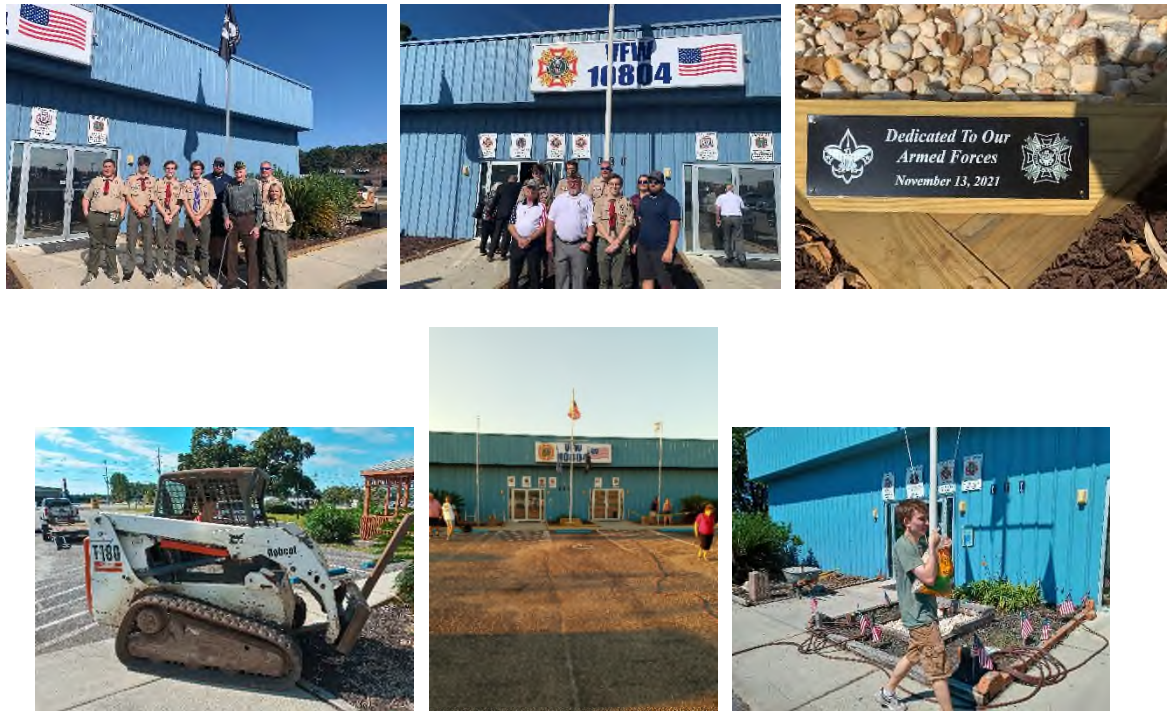


P.S. This is a great way to get non-VFW veterans into YOUR post and do some potential recruiting for those eligible veterans!

DISTRICT 7

POST 10804 N. Myrtle Beach

Post 10804 again helped an Eagle Scout candidate complete his Eagle Scout, community service, qualification. The Boy Scout's selected project was to replace the post existing, one flag-pole, with a system of three poles. This also included new landscaping across the whole front of the post.



Picture 1: Boy Scout Cole Remillard and most of his crew with WWII Veteran and active VFW member. 101 Year Bill Jagoe

Picture 2: Post Commander Mike Mishoe with construction crew

Picture 3: One of the two dedication plaques designed by Cole

Picture 4 & 6 : Putting in the labor

Picture 5: The finished project

Post 10804 also provided a Christmas for veterans in two nearby Senior Living Facilities/Nursing Homes for 13 veterans who would not have had a Christmas, if not for the VFW



CHICKEN BOG TIME IN MULLINS POST 6122



October was "Chicken-Bog" time for the Mullins VFW. It was a good day with plenty of help and a hungry crowd waiting for the finished product to be served. Even Commander Hora worked for his opportunity to enjoy some good chicken-bog

DISTRICT 9

POST 10980 Francis Marion

In late October, the post was having a 'spaghetti dinner' function. Part of the attendees that night were 10 runners and support staff from the organization "Honor-and-Remember", an organization that promotes remembrance of all of our fallen veterans. They plan to do this by presenting a 'personalized' American Flag to every family who has lost a loved one in Military Service to America. This group was doing a remembrance run from Charleston to Columbia, with a stop at the State House.

While at the post, the Honor-and-Remember group presented a flag to one of the post members who lost a brother and son.

As a thank you to the group, the post provided a free spaghetti dinner to all members of the group.

THANK YOU Commander Knouse

THE VFW AND YOU HOT-SHEET

***During the National Convention, the Rules and By-Laws Committee made some changes to the 2022 Podium Book. One of those changes is that Districts and Posts are now allowed to conduct their meetings electronically. At the start of the pandemic and over the last year and a half, electronic meetings were implied as being allowed in order to keep a District or Post meeting as required by VFW By-Laws. Now, there is no reason for a District or Post to not comply with meeting requirements. Naturally, The VFW would like to see Districts and Posts meet in person, but the VFW understands the fears and restrictions that are still in play in regards to COVID safety requirements.

NOTE: These “VIRTUAL” meetings are now a way of life within the VFW.

An example is that the FALL NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE was held in September. It was completely electronic and was ‘electronically’ attended by representatives from all 50 VFW Departments.

If your District or Post does not have electronic meeting capability. You need to establish a ZOOM or Face-Time account, or whatever electronic meeting capability currently exists, or may develop in the near future,

*****Partners in Patriotism** – Tired of all the VFW mail and email asking for help, but you still want to do your part in supporting YOUR VFW? The VFW has a program called **PARTNERS IN PATROITISM** that allows you to set-up a scheduled donation system that can be in effect as long as you want. You can donate on a monthly basis for as little as \$10 a month with the donation coming from your Credit Card or an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Besides helping your fellow veterans, the good thing for you is that you now receive only a VFW QUARTERLY Supporter newsletter and an end of year Tax Receipt.

If you might be interested in this program, you can call the VFW Development Department at 1-833-839-4483, or email them at **Partners in Patroitism@vfw.org with Partners in Patriotism Application** in the subject line.

*****Burn Pits** – There is a new presumptive list for BURN PIT claims! You must file your claim within **10 YEARS** of separating from service and you must have served in Southwest Asia from August 1990, or Afghanistan, Syria, Uzbekistan and Djibouti from September 19, 2001 to present.

The three new symptoms are **ASTHMA, RHINITIS and SINUSITIS**. There are also possible secondary issues developed from these disabilities that can also be claimed.

If you feel you have a claim? You need to contact your nearest Veterans Service Officer to file.

*****MENTORING** – One of the reasons new members don’t stay members, or don’t get involved with YOUR Post activities. Is that they don’t know what’s going on, or more importantly. What the VFW is all about and specifically, what YOUR Post VFW is about. It is imperative that for any new member who attends their first meeting, or comes by the Post, that they be heartily welcomed and be provided someone who can explain the VFW and their Post to them. Any new member approval at the post meeting should automatically be assigned someone from the post who will voluntarily assume the responsibility of MENTORING that new person. Even if that person has to be the Post Commander.

Most new members are approved at the business meeting and they are NOT present. It is EXTREMELY important that some sort of communication goes their way (email or snail-mail) welcoming them to the post. Asking if they have any questions? Providing them with a list of upcoming activities (like a monthly post calendar) and providing the name and means of communication of a post member who will help them get introduced to their new post. Don't do things like saying 'welcome to the post', would you like to be our next Jr. Vice-Commander! That is a TURN-OFF.

FOR ALL YOU OLD and NEW ARMY VETERANS – Did you know that the Army actually had a regulation that required the naming of all its equipment? Did you also know that within this regulation was a section that required that all aircraft be given “Native American terms and names of tribes and chiefs? That’s how the UH1 “IROQUOIS” (‘Huey’) helicopter got its name. This also went for the H-13 SIOUX (in the 1950’s), the UH-72 “LAKOTA” (in 2008). In 2012 Lakota Elders bestowed ritualistic blessings on the Lakota helicopters. OH YEAH! The Army Regulation was AR 70-28, established in 1969. It was eventually replaced with the new Army policies that did not mention the Native American criteria. However; the naming tradition has continued over the years.

Courtesy: VFW Magazine

KEEPING WITH ‘DID YOU KNOW’ – For all you football fans who want to win a trivia bet: William “Pudge” Heffelfinger became the FIRST professional football player when Pittsburgh’s Allegheny Athletics Association paid him \$500 to play as a ‘ringer’ in the game. The date – **November 12th 1892!**

In case you did not see this A CHANGE IN TRICARE PHARMACY PROVIDERS

As of December 15th, Walmart and SAM’S Club were NO LONGER a part of the TRICARE Pharmacy network as a pharmacy provider. CVS took its place. Walmart was a provider for three years, but TRICARE cited the retail giant’s reluctance to offer more highly competitive discounts to military health beneficiaries. CVS returns to TRICARE after a five year absence. Walmart/SAM’S have 5,300 locations nationwide. CVS has 10,000.

CONGRATULATIONS – To Comrades James Beaty and Rodney McCullough of Post 6089 (Anderson County) for getting their story told in the November/December VFW Magazine

There are currently 36 Posts under suspension nationwide. Two primary reasons why are: Improper use/accounting of Post funds, or failure to conduct meetings, even though VFW national now allows 100% electronic meetings (face-time/Zoom, etc.)

HOT ! IF YOU USE THE TRI-CARE SYSTEM FOR YOUR MEDICATIONS? THEIR CO-PAY COSTS ARE GOING UP JANUARY 1st

All beneficiaries are affected, except active duty service members (ADSM), dependent survivors of ADSMs, and medically retired service members and their dependents.

Medication Type	Retail Pharmacy 30-day Supply	Home Delivery ¹ 90-day Supply
Generic	\$14 was \$13	\$12 was \$10
Brand Name	\$38 was \$33	\$34 was \$29
Non-formulary	\$68 was \$60	\$68 was \$60

¹ Pay a single copay for up to a 90-day supply when you fill with home delivery through Express Scripts® Pharmacy compared to paying three copays for three 30-day supplies at retail.

URGENT – URGENT – URGENT

WASHINGTON — Due to supply chain and staffing shortages, the vendor contracted by the Government Publishing Office to provide printing services for the Department of Veterans Affairs is experiencing delays in printing and mailing notification letters to Veterans and claimants. The disruption may impact the ability of some claimants to meet required deadlines via written correspondence with VA.

In response to the mailing delays and to protect the best interest of claimants, the Veterans Benefits Administration is extending their response period by 90-calendar days for claimants with letters dated between July 13, 2021 and Dec. 31, 2021.

If a claimant does not reply to a time-limited notification, such as, making an election of benefits or services, or reporting for a scheduled compensation and pension examination, VBA will not take adverse action to deny, reduce or terminate benefits and services unless: 1) the claimant is contacted and there is documentation of their right to respond; 2) the requested information has been received; or 3) the response period has lapsed.

VA and GPO are proactively working to quickly address the mailing delays.

For questions on this matter, Veterans and claimants can contact VA at **800-827-1000**.

Veterans who filed an appeal with the Board of Veterans' Appeals can click [here](#) for information specific to Board correspondence, scheduled hearings at the Board and receiving your Board decision.

As more information becomes available, updates will be provided. If you have any questions or believe you were impacted by the delays, call 1-800-827-1000, as stated above.

NOTE: The VA currently has 153,000 claims that past the VA stated action response time.

SC HOSTED SOUTHERN CONFERENCE 2021

The SOUTHERN CONFERENCE is made up of the 14 Southern States and is one of four conferences that make up the VFW in the U.S.



VFW National Commander In Chief 'FRITZ' MIHELICIC & Auxiliary National President JEAN HAMIL address the conference at the Saturday night banquet and party.



Southern Conference Chairman RICHARD BELL & Auxiliary Chairman DANA FOGNER with a bit of a contrasting conference weather styling.
Southern Conference Chairman Duffy addresses the conference while Conference President Stewart (in blue to Duffy's right) looks on with the rest of the head table.



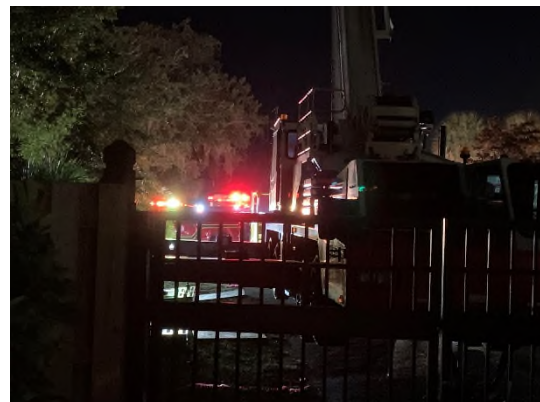
YOUR State Commander and Department President getting the word out !



These flags represent the 14 states that comprize the VFW Southern Conference

RESPECT





Nothing like a little end of conference fire chasing you outside after 1AM, and the party continues!!



IT IS OVER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**DECEMBER 7, 2021, USS YORKTOWN, PATRIOT'S POINT
Charleston, South Carolina**

*** Eighty years ago today the United States was attacked at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii by the Japanese Air Force. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post and Auxiliary 10624 Mount Pleasant held its annual Pearl Harbor memorial ceremony on the USS Yorktown at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum. Patriots Point Executive Director Larry Murray welcomed all to the Yorktown. The Master of Ceremonies this year was State Commander Dwight Hora. The opening prayer and the benediction were given by Wilton Fowler State Chaplain. The VFW State Color Guard led by Captain John Bacon posted the colors. This year's guest speaker was Brigadier General Wayne A. Wright USAF Retired. World War II Veterans in attendance were introduced by Past State Commander Robert Holsclaw. Post 10624 Commander William King read the names of the 25 Carolinians who lost their lives that day with the tolling of the bell for each. Cadets from the Jr ROTC units of Wando and Fort Dorchester High Schools formed an honor guard for the laying of the wreaths. After the laying of the wreaths in memory of the fallen, the American Legion Honor Guard performed a 21 Gun salute and played Taps.

We were honored to have Mount Pleasant Mayor Will Haney in attendance.

A reception followed at VFW Post and Auxiliary 10624 lunch was served to all.

There are so many who helped to make this another successful Memorial Ceremony and I thank them all.

Bill King
Commander Post 10624

**YOUR Department and Auxiliary members remembering Pearl Harbor aboard the
USS Yorktown, Patriots Point during ceremonies on December 7th 2021**





PHOTOS COURTESY OF BILL & DONNA KING, POST 10624 & GINGER GRAHAM POST 6740

VFW SC DISASTER RELIEF FOR TORNADO RAVAGED VETERANS OF KENTUCKY and SPECIFICALLY VFW POST 6291 of MURRAY, KENTUCKY

During the week of December 12-18, a massive tornado relief effort was conducted by the Department & Auxiliary & MOC for the veterans of KENTUCKY. Food, clothing, household goods, and cash were collected by the many Posts and Districts of the SC VFW.

LOADING UP AT STATE HEADQUARTERS





DISTRICT 1, KENTUCKY TORNAD RELIEF

From District 1, Happy New Year to all, we hope you had a safe and happy holiday season.

As we all know many states were hit with tornados in December and Kentucky was hit extremely hard. The call went out from Commander Hora the evening of December 11th for help from the Department and District 1 hit the ground running.



Figure 1 - Commander Peterson making phone calls

Commander Curtis Peterson and Auxiliary President Sharon Peterson started making phone calls letting the Posts in District 1 know what was needed and that we would be delivering donations to the Department in 6 days. Immediately we started receiving donations.

From all over the district donations started pouring in.



Figure 2 - Post 10624



Figure 3 - Post 9509

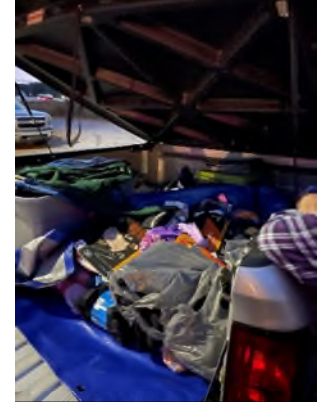


Figure 4 - Truck load Post 9509

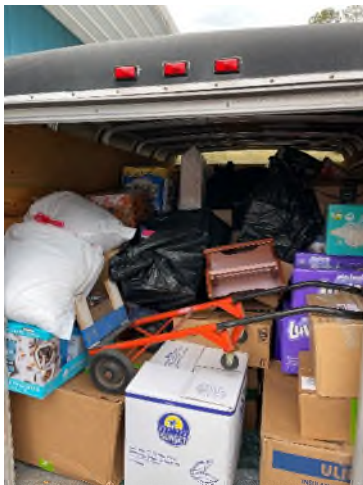


Commander Mike Labarbera agreed to make Post 3433 in Summerville a staging area for the district and quickly the ball room started filling up with donations. Since this tragedy

happened at a holiday time the posts rallied to provide not only supplies needed to maintain the families but toys and stuffed animals for the kids who lost their Christmas.



Figure 6 - Post Donations and District Staging at Post 3433.



On Friday December 17th after only 6 days PSC Ted Tufts and Post 10624 Commander Bill King left post 3433 with a full trailer of donations.

Figure 1 - Loaded Trailer





These were taken to the Department for delivery by the Department Commander to Kentucky.

Commander Peterson and Auxiliary President Peterson wish to thank every post, comrade, auxiliary member, and community members of District 1 for their support and assistance to the state of Kentucky. This is what we do!

DISTRICT 4

VFW Post 12207 partnered with the Upstate Family Resource Center, U haul, VFW members and their families. and transported over \$9000.00 of donations to disaster relief in Kentucky.. Donated items include a pallet of Huggies diapers totaling \$2,538.00, \$1000.00 in children's coats and clothes, \$2100.00 in bed mattresses, \$500.00 in food, \$120 in paper products, \$1440.00 in portable travel high chairs, \$500 in sleeping bags, comforters, blankets and pillows, \$250.00 in toys, \$360 in tarps and other miscellaneous item such as water, cleaning products, personal hygiene and feminine hygiene with no way to establish a cost. Another \$325.15 in fuel for 2 trucks. U haul donated truck and mileage at cost of \$455.82.

OFF-LOADING IN KENTUCKY



VA ELIGIBILITY GROUPS

(Where do you qualify, or not?)

Priority group 1

We may assign you to priority group 1 if any of the below descriptions are true.
You:

- **Have a service-connected disability that we've rated as 50% or more disabling, or**
- **Have a service-connected disability that we've concluded makes you unable to work (also called unemployable), or**
- **Received the Medal of Honor (MOH)**

Priority group 2

We may assign you to priority group 2 if you have a service-connected disability that we've rated as 30% or 40% disabling.

Priority group 3

We may assign you to priority group 3 if any of the below descriptions are true.
You:

- **Are a former prisoner of war (POW), or**
- **Received the Purple Heart medal, or**
- **Were discharged for a disability that was caused by—or got worse because of—your active-duty service, or**
- **Have a service-connected disability that we've rated as 10% or 20% disabling, or**
- **Were awarded special eligibility classification under Title 38, U.S.C § 1151, "benefits for individuals disabled by treatment or vocational rehabilitation"**

Priority group 4

We may assign you to priority group 4 if either of the below descriptions is true.
You:

- **Are receiving VA aid and attendance or housebound benefits, or**
- **Have received a VA determination of being catastrophically disabled**

Priority group 5

We may assign you to priority group 5 if any of the below descriptions are true.
You:

****Don't have a service-connected disability, or you have a non-compensable service-connected disability that we've rated as 0% disabling, **and** you have an annual income level that's below our adjusted income limits (based on your resident zip code), **or****
****Are receiving VA pension benefits, **or****
****Are eligible for Medicaid programs**

Priority group 6

We may assign you to priority group 6 if any of the below descriptions are true. You:

****Have a compensable service-connected disability that we've rated as 0% disabling, **or****
****Were exposed to ionizing radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, **or****
****Participated in Project 112/SHAD, **or****
****Served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, **or****
****Served in the Persian Gulf War between August 2, 1990, and November 11, 1998, **or****
****Served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987**

We may also assign you to priority group 6 if you meet all of the requirements listed below. You:

****Are currently or newly enrolled in VA health care, **and****
****Served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, **and****
****Were discharged less than 5 years ago**

Note: As a returning combat Veteran, you're eligible for these enhanced benefits for 5 years after discharge. At the end of this enhanced enrollment period, we'll assign you to the highest priority group you qualify for at that time.

Priority group 7

We may assign you to priority group 7 if both of the below descriptions are true for you:

****Your gross household income is below the geographically adjusted income limits (GMT) for where you live, **and****
****You agree to pay copays**
[View current copay rates](#)

Priority group 8

We may assign you to priority group 8 if both of the below descriptions are true for you:

****Your gross household income is above VA income limits and geographically adjusted income limits for where you live, and**

****If you're assigned to priority group 8, your eligibility for VA health care benefits will depend on which subpriority group we place you in.**

****View the criteria for the priority 8 subgroups**

****You may be eligible for VA health care benefits if we place you in one of these subpriority groups:**

****Subpriority group a**

All of these must be true. You:

****Have a non-compensable service-connected condition that we've rated as 0% disabling, and**

****Enrolled in the VA health care program before January 16, 2003, and**

****Have remained enrolled since that date and/or were placed in this subpriority group because your eligibility status changed**

Subpriority group b

All of these must be true. You:

****Have a non-compensable service-connected condition that we've rated as 0% disabling, and**

****Enrolled in the VA health care program on or after June 15, 2009, and**

****Have income that exceeds current VA or geographical limits by 10% or less**

Subpriority group c

All of these must be true. You:

****Don't have a service-connected condition, and**

****Enrolled in the VA health care program as of January 16, 2003, and**

****Have remained enrolled since that date and/or were placed in this subpriority**

Subpriority group d

All of these must be true. You:

****Don't have a service-connected condition, and**

****Enrolled in the VA health care program on or after June 15, 2009, and**

****Have income that exceeds current VA or geographical limits by 10% or less**

You're not eligible for VA health care benefits if we place you in one of these subpriority groups:

Subpriority group e

All of these must be true. You:

****Have a non-compensable service-connected condition that we've rated as 0% disabling, and**

****Don't meet the criteria for subpriority group a or b above**

Note: You're eligible for care for your service-connected condition only.

Subpriority group g

All of these must be true. You:

****Don't have a service-connected condition, and**

****Don't meet the criteria for subpriority group c or d above**

Once I'm enrolled in VA health care, will my priority group ever change?

Your priority group may change in some cases, such as if:

- Your income changes, **or**
- Your service-connected disability gets worse and we give you a higher disability rating

[Update your income or other health benefits information](#)
[File for increased disability compensation](#)

If you're currently enrolled or newly enrolled in the VA health care program, and you served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, or were discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003, you're eligible for enhanced benefits for 5 years after discharge. During this time, we'll assign you to priority group 6. At the end of this enhanced enrollment period, we'll assign you to the highest priority group you qualify for at that time.

JUST A FRIENDLY REMINDER, THAT IF I TOOK YOUR PICTURE DURING ANY EVENT. Convention, CofA, SOI, Conference, National Commanders visits? Your picture, most likely, is in the newsletter edition after that picture was taken.

THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER - I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THINGS FROM YOUR POST, YOUR DISTRICT, YOUR HQ THAT I CAN PUT IN THE NEWSLETTER

**DON'T FORGET THE NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT VISIT JAN 13-15!
Need details? Contact President Brock at state hq.**

HAVE YOU SIGNED UP FOR THE MID-WINTER CONFERENCE YET??
Don't know what I'm talking about? Go to the state web page and get the details

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**“America without her Soldiers, would be like God
without his Angels”**

Claudia Pemberton