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OCT – DEC 2025

Commander: TODD HAVILAND Auxiliary President: MARIETTA HILL

It's not the price you pay to become a member,

It's the price you paid to become eligible



EDITORIAL

As the SENTINEL goes back in operation. I continually wonder how members are getting the word. When I tried to start a Post Newsletter many years ago. I was told by the Post Commander that the Post did not need a newsletter and that if the membership wanted to know what was happening at the Post and the VFW in-general, they should attend the monthly Post meetings. If there's one leader out there that feels this way, there has to be more!

Fortunately, Post leadership changed and I was permitted to write that Post Newsletter. Eight (8) years later, I am still writing that monthly newsletter which is **sent by email to every member in our Post that has email**. Our Post knows it is important to keep the membership (Post & Auxiliary) informed.

The #1 question VFW wise is, what is the most important thing in the VFW? Most will answer membership and recruiting. That's a WRONG answer. The #1 thing in the VFW should be mentoring and keeping the membership informed so that they feel like they are part of your post. How does your Post or District keep its members informed?

- *Some Posts and Districts have a website, but few are kept current.
- *Some rely on a Facebook page, but it is only as good as the information that goes on the page.
- *Some rely on a Monthly Calendar, but that calendar only shows upcoming activities or events.
- *Less than 10% of the State Posts have a newsletter and only one District has a newsletter.
- *How many Posts have their monthly business meeting minutes available for all members to see?

Why can't a Post provide the more important contents of the monthly business meeting within one week of the meeting? We all know the minutes aren't official until approved at the next month's meeting, but, a 'general summary' would provide Post membership current information on what is happening at the Post and the VFW.

How many Posts only provide minutes at the next business meeting and NO ONE else gets to see them?

NOTE: I put a "my version" of the Post meeting minutes in every newsletter. At least that keeps everyone informed to a certain degree.

NEW MEMBER INITIATION.

How many of you know that : During a VFW ceremonial initiation of a new recruit, within the **Presentation of Insigne** phase of the ceremony, during the Commander's welcoming speech, he/she provides a direct quote from a U.S. President's inauguration speech. Do you know what President and what quote?

ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU, ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY.

President John F. Kennedy

*****You can find the quote on page 46 of the VFW RITUAL section of the Manual of Procedure.**

IF YOU ARE RECEIVING VA DISABILITY PAYMENTS? - As of December 1st, you received a **2.7%** cost-of-living increase.

WANT TO MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTABLE DONATION TO THE VFW/YOUR POST?

THE VFW FOUNDATION:

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Foundation is the official 501(c)(3) charity of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, founded in 1996 on the legendary heritage of the VFW spanning three centuries. Our collaborative efforts with corporations, private foundations and individual supporters across the nation ensure that veterans and their family receive the support and assistance they deserve.

Embarking on a mission to create lasting positive change in the lives of America's bravest—our military veterans, service members and their families. By raising funds to help meet veterans' distinctive needs with honor and integrity when they are not able to help themselves, the VFW Foundation realizes our vision of making our appreciation known to our nation's greatest heroes.

In the spirit of service, our mission is resolute: to serve our nation's heroes and their families by securing resources for programs that facilitate enhanced life outcomes—now and for generations to come. We stand committed to transforming lives through dedication, ensuring no one is left behind.

Here's how you do it: Send a check (must be over \$200) to the VFW FOUNDATION, with an accompanying note saying what Post the money is to be sent too. If you don't designate a Post, the money goes to the National VFW Foundation treasury.

Once VFW National receives the check, they will process it and within 2-3 weeks send an Electronic Fund Transfer to the designated Post for the FULL amount of the check you sent to National (There are no processing/handling fees deducted).

SEND DONATION CHECK TO:

VFW Foundation
ATTN: Renee Martin
406 W. 34th St.
Kansas City, MO 64111

ON THE VFW NATIONAL LEVEL

*****Congratulations to BILL KING of Mount Pleasant Post 10624 for being recognized in the November-December issue of the VFW Magazine for his United to Combat Hunger volunteer time at the VFW National Convention.**

***** A belated Congratulations to the Captain John P. Monahan VFW POST 12136 and Auxiliary of Indian Land for earning a National Community Service Award.**

***** A belated congratulations to our two 2024-2025 All American District Commanders: REX BROWN of District 1 and CHARLES HOLLOWAY of District 2. And our 20 All American Post Commanders.**

445 Charles Blankin
3433 Edward Mullis II
6734 David Griffin Jr.
8738 Darren Wiseman
9539 Edward Martin
10804 Robert Sedelow
12102 Marc Jacob

1845 Steven Watterson
4262 Charles Smith
6830 Scott Sullinger
8760 Dwight Hora
10256 Kim Hamilton
10813 George Washington
12207 Michael Lancaster

3137 Bryan Brooks
5094 Kevin Archila
8346 Richard Henry
9509 Shannon Haskins
10624 William King
11079 David Spivey

Two Districts out of seven and twenty posts out of 61, we can be/are better than that.

OUT AND ABOUT THE SC VFW

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS – That is the VFW motto!.

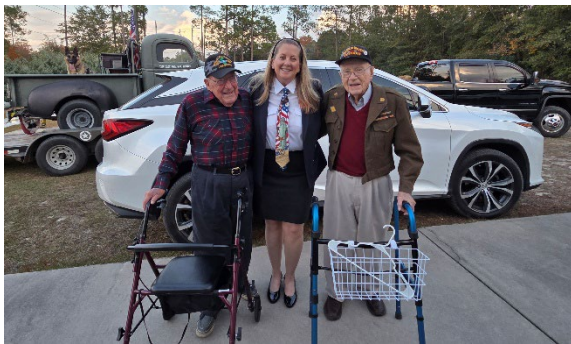


On Friday, October 17th, VFW Post 10804 and Auxiliary lived up to that motto by manning VFW Post 10804 tables and providing over \$1,300 in food, clothes, hygiene items, snacks, personal needs items, bicycle safety kits and reflective vests to homeless veterans and veterans in need during the Myrtle Beach VA Clinic's "Standdown for Homeless Veterans". This event was co-sponsored by the VWHRC. Our tables were only a small part of the overall event, as there were around 25 other organizations providing goods and services to the standdown which was co-hosted by the Veterans Welcome Home and Resources Center (VWHRC), a Little River veterans assistance organization. In picture 1 are Auxiliary President MO SEDELOW, NEW post member MIKE CARPENTER and Post Commander BOB SEDELOW. In picture 2 are BILL La MONTE and Mike and Commander Sedelow. Not pictured is Mary Lance

173 veterans benefitted from this standdown

PS: Murrells Inlet Post 10420 and Auxiliary were also there supporting veterans!

Happy Birthday BRUCE & Cousin VERN



District 2 Commander, Ginger Graham helps two veterans celebrate their birthday. One turned 99 and the other 98. One drove an ambulance in post-war Germany and the other drove a jeep during the Korean Conflict. These veterans are members of the Heritage Foundation and the Battle of the Bulge Association. In November, these two veterans were special guests at a Post 8738 hosted fund-raiser for the National Home.

Supporting this National Home fund-raiser were Military Timeline Impressions, American Heritage Foundation, Military Women's Memorial, the Batesburg-Leesville JROTC, and Comrades/Auxiliary members from VFW 6740, VFW 8738, VFW 4262 AND VFW 11079.

MICHELIN TIRES SAYS – THANK YOU VETERANS





On Veterans Day about 40 state VFW members and Auxiliary were treated to a Veteran Appreciation tour of the Michelin Plant in Lexington. Attendees included VFWSC Cdr Todd Haviland, VFWSCA President Marrieta Hill, Past Department President Kate Brock and 3 members of the VFW's VSO team, who were presented a check for \$5000 to support the needs of our VSO office. Lexington VFW 8738 Cdr. Darren Wiseman presented a plaque of appreciation to Michelin, for their support of post events.

YOUR VSO TEAM at WORK at a POST 6091 EVENT



For Veterans Day Dillon Post 6091 partnered with the town of Lake View and hosted a free "Veterans Breakfast" for attendees. Part of the activities included a briefing on veteran benefits by

our Veteran Service Officer J.J. Johnson. Along with the briefing, members of the VSO team helped 9 veterans with the VA claims.

Post 6091 hosts luncheons in Dillon and Latta and partners with the Town of Lake View during its annual Veterans Day Breakfast. This year, over 60 veterans, family members, and local citizens attended the breakfast.

These events are designed to honor Veterans and their families by offering complimentary meals and sharing information about various Veterans Affairs and South Carolina resources available for veterans. The VFW Service Officers are available to assist with military disability claims, whether it's for initial applications, upgrades, or appeals. Representatives from several agencies support these events, including the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for healthcare eligibility and enrollment, the South Carolina Department of Veterans Affairs, the Dillon County VA Officer, and various South Carolina nonprofit organizations.

NICE JOB POST 6091!!

POST 12102 FEEDING THE LESS FORTUNATE



Colleton County Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 12102 held a food drive on 22 November at the Walterboro IGA. The Post was able to collect over 1000 pounds of non-perishable food items and \$460 in cash donations. The food and cash were then delivered to the Bethel United Methodist Food Pantry on Monday, 24 November. The Pantry will also receive a matching grant from the National VFW totaling \$1,482.

SUMMERVILLE POST 3433 & AUXILIARY 1st EVER GOLF TOURNAMENT



A two hour "Frost-Delay" did not deter the 106 golfers that participated in Post 3433's first ever Veterans Day Golf Tournament hosted by the Summerville Country Club. Special thanks to Prince Roofing ,and Flooring Services for being two of the primary sponsors.

Special thanks to the 30+ Post Golf Committee members and the numerous business supporters that contributed to making this, 6 months in planning, new event for the post, such a success. We reached our goal and that was important for the post. Plans already underway for the **2nd Annual Veteran Day Golf Tournament** next year.

THE LAKE MURRAY POST 6740 CAROLERS



Members of Lake Murray Post 6740 and Auxiliary spent two days caroling at two nearby Senior Living Facilities. Not only did they sing for, but they met with and interacted with many of the senior residents, which included some veterans. Post members also gave out 120 “goodie bags”
MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

POST MEMBERSHIP: The State Commander has put out a General Order (G26-005) talking about “ASSOCIATE” memberships.

The bottom line is that there is **no such thing** as an associate, honorary, social, etc. membership in the VFW. Posts that are trying to use this method of membership to augment/increase their membership, do so at the peril of losing their Charter. VFW National is cracking down on this unauthorized means of increasing membership, or getting more people through the door to make more money.

The CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER, Section 230103 – Membership says:

An individual is eligible for membership in the Corporation (VFW) only if the individual served honorably as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and the award oates –

- 1. In a foreign war, insurrection, or expedition in service that –**
 - a. has been recognized as campaign-medal service, and**
 - b. Is governed by the authorization of the award of a Campaign Badge by the United States Government;**
- 2. on the Korean Peninsula or in territorial waters for at least 30 consecutive days, or a total of 60 days, after June 30, 1949; or**
- 3. in an area which entitled the individual to receive special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger**

2026 – Did you make that New Year’s resolution to sign-up at least one new member? Just think of all the great things YOUR State and the National VFW can do with helping veterans and influencing Congress to do more for veterans if we have a greater voice (members) for Congress to listen too.

HELP WANTED

Looking for a job, full or part-time?, or know someone looking for a job? There is a place for SC employment called **SC WORKS** that can tell you about the thousands of jobs available in SC. All you need to do is go to **jobs.scworks.org**.

SC WORKS caters to veterans and their spouses. They have a program called S.T.A.Y.S. which encourages veterans to stay in SC and work.

SC WORKS is promoting “Operation Career Fair” which is a job fair that is open to everyone, but between 9 and noon. Veterans have priority of service between 9 and 10AM. Then it goes public until noon.

To register and find out what SC WORKS can do for you, go to tinyurl.com/36cx8fdx



VA Survivor Benefits :

Are you the spouse of a veteran under VA care and you want to know what's next for you after the day you hoped would never happen, has happened?

*First, you need to know about the different types survivor benefits and services, and you need to be prepared by having the following :

- 1.The veteran's discharge paperwork, DD 214 or other separation documents
- 2.The veteran's Death Certificate (a copy of)
- 3.Proof of your relationship to the veteran (Marriage License, Birth Certificate)

How do you (the spouse) know if you are eligible for any benefits?

*You go to www.va.gov/survivors, or www.va.gov/family-member-benefits, or you can contact the VBA directly at (800) 827-1000, or you can contact the Office of Survivors Assistance at (202) 461-1077, or

You can go to a VA Regional Benefits Office for assistance. To find the nearest one to you, go to www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp

WHAT THE WW II TROOPS BROUGH BACK HOME



With the return of our troops to America, the veterans brought back many practices that, since WW II, have become a way of life in America. These practices created a social-economic change in the American way of life that exists to this day. Look around you!

*T-shirts were considered an ‘undergarment’. American troops, across both fronts, wore t-shirts as part of their uniform, it started just an under-garment, but with military approval, the t-shirt as an outer-garment became part of their uniform.

*Brushing their teeth at least once a day. Before WW II, at least once-daily teeth brushing was not considered a part of the American life-style. In an effort to combat mouth diseases

and rotting teeth, the military provided 'hygiene kits' that contained a tooth brush and a tooth powder and a mandate for all troops to brush at least once a day.

*Shaving daily (or as often as possible. This was encouraged to keep down the possibility of body-lice.

*Leg shaving by women veterans became a necessity because of the absence of nylon and nylon stockings because nylon was needed for the war effort.

*Wearing blue-jeans - Returning veterans (especially those in the Navy) found them a great fix as a work clothing item, especially for those who worked outside.

*Bright Red Lipstick – Has been around since before the war, but Hitler's hatred of seeing women wearing that lipstick, emboldened the American and British military in Europe to have all their women veterans wear Red Lipstick. The US Army went so far as to create a "Victory Red" lipstick for Army women, which was a required wear item.

*Drinking Orange Juice – As a means to help combat 'scurvy'. Where available, military troops were encouraged to drink at least one glass of OJ a day if they could get it.

*Taking vitamin pills daily – Like OJ, vitamin pills were designed to help fortify the often inadequate meals the troops were eating.

*Carrying personal family pictures in their pockets, helmet, even their weapons to have something to remind them of home and those waiting for their return. You would be hard-pressed today to show me a 'wallet' (the intent of created by those troops) that doesn't have some sort of family photo in it.

*Carrying a pack of cigarettes with them in a uniform pocket – (there was a four pack of cigarettes in every box of C-Rations) During the war, cigarettes were a form of relaxation, when offered to others, were a conversation starter amongst other GI's. They were instrumental in getting enemy troops to surrender and once captured helped get them to talk and provide vital enemy information. How many of you today use/used cigarettes to relax, or as a conversation starter?

There are many more things in today's world that were brought about by armed conflict, or just being stationed in a foreign country.



Want to be remembered by your Post or at the State/National level after you are gone?

If your surviving family's finances can afford it, put it in your will, or let your family members know, that you would like to be remembered at your Post or the State by way of a Legacy Life Membership. Your surviving spouse can notify the Post Quartermaster that they want to remember you by way of a Memorial Membership. They can join at the BRONZE level for \$400 and this will send \$6.00 in your name every year to both your Post and the State. The SILVER level for \$800 will send \$12.00 each year to Post & State and the GOLD level for \$1,200 will send \$18.00 each year, in your name to your Post and State. Along with the above, your surviving spouse will get a certificate denoting the memorial membership. Your name and Legacy level will be published in the State and National Convention programs.

National Day of Service – Has your post signed up for the May 2026 Day of Service?

“Nonagenarians” Wanted

Does your post have members 90 years old or older? If so, I would like to hear about them or from them. Their actual age, are they active in your post, their branch of service, maybe something about their military time, and where they earned their VFW eligibility and anything else you or they want to say about them/themselves.

These inputs can come from them our most senior warriors, or you. Send me a picture and a little story and I will create a page in the newsletter just for them/you

SAY HELLO TO JACK SCHONELY – A member of North Myrtle Beach Post 10804 since 1999



Picture 1 is of Jack at this year's 95th Birthday Party for him. Picture 2 is of Jack, his Shadow Box and the only remaining picture of him in uniform. The picture shows him fully decked-out for a parachute jump.

Jack was born and raised in Eastern Pennsylvania. Went to Penn State University and was a four-year member of their ROTC program. Jack graduated in the spring of 1952 and in September of 1952 he started his time in the Army with Officer training at Ft. Benning. 1953 was a year mostly devoted to various types of Army training, including earning his Jump Wings. In early 1954 Jack was off to Korea where he was stationed along the DMZ. For the 1st half of his year, he was assigned to the 2nd Division as a Platoon Leader and for the 2nd half of the year to the 7th Division where he was an instructor for the NCO Academy. Jack spent 2 ½ years in the Army and was discharged upon his return home from Korea.

Jack went back home to Eastern Pennsylvania where he became a high school teacher for five years, an insurance salesman for 21 years and the District Manager for 14 years at the County Conservation District. In 1956 he married Eleanor (the high school secretary). They had three children, eight grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. In 1999 they moved to the Myrtle Beach area. Not long after Eleanor's passing a couple of years ago, Jack moved into an Adult Living complex where he now resides.

Jack joined the VFW as a Life Member when he moved to SC in 1999. He also joined the American Legion (he was a member of the Legion in PA). Jack is no stranger to volunteering at the post. For a long time he was the post representative to, and did volunteer work at, a newly started Veteran Welcome Home and Resource Center which provides housing and help for homeless veterans and necessary help for veterans and veteran families who are down on their luck. In his younger days, Jack was a frequent supporter of post activities. He still occasionally makes a monthly business meeting.

Jack Schonely is a credit to our post and to the VFW.

LET'S MEET YOUR STATE Sr. VICE-COMMANDER



Theonis "Tony" Brown

Tony Brown was elected Senior Vice Commander of the Department of South Carolina on 22 June 2025. Tony served in the United States Army (26 Years) from 1989 to 2015. His career started as an enlisted member with a MOS 12B (Combat Engineer). After 12 years of service, Sergeant First Class Brown applied and was selected to attend Officer Candidate School, from which he graduated and earned his commission. Tony completed 14 years as an officer, retiring with the rank of Major. He earned his VFW eligibility by serving in Desert Storm, Iraq, Kuwait, and Korea.

In recognition of his service, he received the Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (6 Awards), Army Commendation Medal (5 Awards), Army Achievement Medal

(4 Awards), Good Conduct Medal (4), National Defense Service Medal (2 Awards), Iraq Campaign Medal w/ three Campaign Stars, Non-Commissioned Professional

Development Ribbon (3 Awards), Korea Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal w/ Bronze Service Star, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (4 Awards), Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait and Saudi Arabia), Basic Aviation Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, and the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge.

Tony joined the VFW in 2015 at Post 4262 in Columbia, South Carolina, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership and his Life membership with the Military Order of the Cooties. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District, and Department levels, culminating in earning All-American as a Post and District Commander. On the Department level, he served on the Budget and Finance Committee, Safety Chairman, Junior Vice Commander, and the Council of Administration from 2021 to 2023. Tony attended Methodist College (where he received his bachelor's in business administration) and Webster University (where he received his master's in public administration).

VFW Awards Earned

National Aide de Camp 2017-2018; 2022-2023
National Aide de Camp Inspector General 2023-2024
Department Quartermaster of the Year 2017-2018 Melvin L "Mel" Emore
Department Post Commander of the Year 2020-2021 Samuel U. Roach
All-State District Commander 2022-2023
All-American District Commander 2022-2023
All-State Post Commander 2020-2021; 2021-2022
All-American Post Commander 2020-2021; 2021-2022
All-State Post Quartermaster 2017-2018; 2018-2019
All-American Post Quartermaster 2018-2019
All-State District Quartermaster 2018-2019
All-American District Quartermaster 2018-2019

Affiliations

Gold Legacy Lifetime member of the VFW
Lifetime member of the Military Order of the Cooties
Annual Member of the American Legion
Lifetime Member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc

Tony and his wife Charlotte reside in Columbia, SC, where they own their property management company. They have three children, Monique, Justin, Jilissa, and one granddaughter, Jayla.

Goals for 2026-2027 Year:

I genuinely believe that a team is built through relationships and one common goal. When leaders and subordinates work together, the impossible becomes the possible. Everyone must know their role and be the best at it. The Department of South Carolina is good, but it's time that we show the entire VFW our greatness. We have flirted with coming in 2nd, 3rd, and in some cases 4th place nationally, which is good. We want to be first and I would like to focus the department on these goals.

1. **All Districts** (All-State and All-American), there is nothing better than entire team success. We will focus on being 90% complete with all task by 31 Dec and 100% by 1 Feb. Minus a few reports.
 2. **Training:** Ensure this is happening at every level and that training is available thru multiple streams, so that we are totally transparent with membership to the lowest level. When you know better, you do better.
 3. **Resources:** Outfit the department with all the resources needed to ensure that each committee can do its job without constraints.
 4. **Communication:** We will work hard at breaking the code of the lack of information, getting down to all the comrades. This is vital to our success.
No Excuses: Excuses are tools of the incompetents that build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothing.
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***Do you know that:** In 2023 the Nation of Turkey officially petitioned the United Nations to change the spelling of its name to **TURKIYE**. This to better align the country name with its culture and to get away from the association with the Thanksgiving & Christmas bird – TURKEY!

***Concerned about your weight and what you eat?** – The VA has a program to help you manage the food you eat and control your weight. It is called **MOVE Weight Management Programs for Veterans**. It emphasizes the need to eat right and combine that with a physical activity program. For more info go to www.move.va.gov

WRITE YOUR CONGRESSMAN NOW

Got a VA claim in the works, or are you planning to submit a VA claim? YOU need to write your Congressman NOW and tell them you are opposed to this Bill.

H.B. 3132, also known as the CHOICE for Veterans Act of 2025, aims to amend Title 38 of the United States Code to allow for certain fee agreements for services rendered in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of initial claims and supplemental claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

\$The bill was introduced on May 1, 2025, and has been referred to the House Committee on VETERANS' Affairs.

\$It seeks to promote the availability of assistance from individuals recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for these claims.

\$The bill includes provisions regarding the recognition of agents and attorneys for preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims, as well as penalties for certain acts during the claims process.

If passed, it would allow unaccredited companies and individuals to charge you up to \$12,500 for them to help you prepare and/or process your VA Claim.

For more detailed information, you can refer to the official legislative documents available on the respective websites. 🌐 **Courtesy of DAV Magazine**

HURRY – HURRY -HURRY

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE – Registration is now open and you have until January 12th to register. The conference will be held at the Myrtle Beach Hilton from January 22 to 25. Registration fee is \$75 if you plan on attending the banquet dinner. If you're just attending the conference, the registration fee is \$20. For Hilton room reservations call 843-449-5000

DID YOU KNOW THAT – At the Post & District level, you can wear a baseball style hat (an **Alternative Cap**) at a meeting as long as you are NOT an elected or appointed officer and, as long as: **It is black in color, lettered with VFW initials, post numerals, state, bearing the Cross of Malta and all lettering in gold.**

Manual of Procedure, ARTICLE VIII – Uniforms, Badges, Etc, **Section 803, Paragraph 5**

NOTE: This hat can be found on page 19 of the current VFW Catalog. It went on sale starting December 2nd.

SOME OTHER THINGS HAPPENING WITHIN THE VA



*The President has signed authorization that allows former military discharged because they refused the COVID shots, the opportunity to re-apply for VA GI Bill benefits, IF their discharge was listed as honorable or upgraded to honorable.

*The backlog for veterans waiting for benefit approval has been reduced by 57% so far this year.

*In FY 2025 the VA says it has housed over **51,900+** previously homeless veterans.

*The VA has terminated the mandate to install \$77 million in EV charging stations at VA facilities. The money will now be used for critical healthcare construction projects.

VA Resources, we're here for you.

- For any questions or requests, [1-800-MyVA411](tel:1-800-MyVA411) ([1-800-698-2411](tel:1-800-698-2411)) is always the right number.
- [Veterans Crisis Line: 988](#) and press 1, [Chat](#), or Text 838255
- [Vet Centers: 1-877-927-8387](#)
- [Homeless Veteran Resources: 1-877-424-3838](#) or [Chat](#)
- [Ask VA](#)
- [Schedule a 1-on-1 Appointment with a VA Benefits Expert](#)

Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service (VAVS)

Want to get more involved in volunteering? The VFW and VA have just the program for you. It is Called VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTEER SERVICE (VAVS) volunteer program. It is a volunteer program that lets you get/encourages you to get more involved in helping veterans . Got a few hours you can spare each month and want to put them to good use?

Contact : [VFW.org/volunteer services](https://www.vfw.org/volunteer-services)

I WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN MY POST/DISTRICT

It is almost that time again, POST ELECTIONS. For most Posts, the nominating process starts in March, elections in April, but right now is the time for you to think about getting more involved in YOUR Post.

There is a myriad of choices as to just how far you want to get involved? How much you want to apply yourself to help make YOUR Post a place worth coming to, supporting and helping it keep its rightful place as an avid supporter of all veterans, locally and worldwide.

At the Post level, at election time, EVERY elected/appointed position is open for your consideration. Want to find out more about the job/position? The Manual of Procedure, ARTICLE II – Posts, Section 218 Article (a)(1) thru (a)(12) gives a brief, but thorough, description of what is expected at that position.

Maybe you are thinking of a bigger picture and you want to get involved/more involved at the District level. The same process, as the Post level, applies at District. The exception being that there may or may not be a District meeting in 2026 before your District's Convention. If you are thinking of running for an elected or appointed office? Contact your District Commander and let them know you are interested in a District position.

NOTE: Not sure what you want to do? Here's what I have done for years. Every election is supposed to fill all the elected/appointed positions on an Election Report. Without fail, there is always a position or two that does not get a candidate at both the Post and District levels. What I do is, when it appears there will be a vacancy, I will nominate myself for that position and I always get elected or appointed. I currently hold an elected position at the District level and two appointed positions at the Post level.

NOTE 2: A member can hold only 1 elected position at any level, but you can hold two appointed positions, or one elected and one appointed position at any level.

You do NOT need to be a long-standing member to seek a position. All you need is a desire to do more for your Post or District!



This Photo by Unknown

Bayer Aspirin – A staple of American made pain relief for over 100 years. American made - **WRONG!!!** Every Bayer product is made in SPAIN and 'distributed' through a town in New Jersey. Don't believe me?? Every Bayer bottle has a peel-off part of its label on the back of the bottle. Peel-off that top label and part of the information on the remaining label verifies what I have said above.

India makes almost all of the Cancer and Diabetes drugs used in America.

VFW Chain of Command – Yes, there is one and it follows the same guidelines as the one you had while you were in the military. Any Post issues should be resolved at the Post level, if at all possible. If resolution is not achieved at the Post level, it can then be up-channelled to your District Commander. No resolution, then you advise your Post and District Commander that you are up-channeling your issue to the State Commander. If you have "legitimate" issues and still no resolution. **Then, and only then**, should you consider taking the issue to the National level, IF it is that serious a situation that warrants their involvement.

HAPPY 126th BIRTHDAY VFW POST 1 DENVER COLORADO



Some of you may be thinking?, whoa, just a minute, the VFW was started in Ohio! How did Denver get Post 1? On December 1, 1898 a group of veterans held their first meeting in the Capital Building in Denver Co. This is what would be the beginning of the VFW posts and the VFW in Colorado.

Me standing in front of VFW Post 1

The SOUTH CAROLINA FLAG



Although it can be traced back to an earlier design from 1775, the current South Carolina flag was adopted in 1861. It has a white crescent in the upper left corner on a dark blue background, which pays homage to a similar flag used by Colonel William Moultrie and his troops during the American Revolution. The design of the flag was based on the blue uniforms and white crescent badges on the caps of the fort's patriot guards. In 1861, a palmetto tree, the official state tree of South Carolina, was

added to the center.

Since 2020 there have been several attempts to amend the design of the flag by State Legislators. So far, all those attempts have been rejected before coming to a vote

NOTE: You may be happy to know your State Flag is rated 6th in the nation for quality of design.

MEMBER TRANSFERS INTO YOUR POST

How many Post Membership Committees/Commanders out there are complying with **Manual of Procedure ARTICLE I, Section 107 – Transfers** when deciding to accept a member transfer into their post?

The “Member Declaration” is there to protect your post by making sure the transferring member is not indebted to their former post and that there are no known charges pending against the perspective member.



‘REAL ID’ IS HERE - and if you don’t have the right form of TSA approved identification? You might not be flying anywhere! If you don’t have REAL ID, a valid PASSPORT (not expired), or ACTIVE/RETIRED military ID and you show up at a TSA screening point to be pre-cleared for your flight. TSA will charge you \$45 to do a form of vetting process to make sure you are who you say you are. The process could take up ½ hour. If you refuse to pay

the \$45, you ARE NOT getting on your flight.

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DECEMBER 7, 2025 (USS Yorktown)



Some of the pictures from the State FB Page. THANK YOU! Post 10624 & Auxiliary for your efforts in creating this memorable moment.

VETERAN BURIALS

Your funeral director has the responsibility to coordinate with whatever agency/location you want your final resting place to be (you and/or spouse). Make sure your survivors are aware of your intentions. Putting your desires in a WILL is ALWAYS a good thing.

ARLINGTON – Is a US Army run facility and not part of the National Cemetery System. To be buried at Arlington:

It's best if you pre-coordinate with them at 1-877-907-8585

Arlington will want:

*A DD 214

*Certificate of Death

If cremated, a certificate stating that ALL the persons remains (they will not take partial) are in 'sealed' urn (none distributed to relatives who might later want them added to your urn which CAN'T be done)

FAX or email requested info to ArlingtonCemetery.isb@mail.mil

VA NATIONAL CEMETERY (at least one in every state)

You can fill-out a VA Form 40-10007 which is a pre-need burial determination.

And anxiety

*You can contact the Scheduling Office, PO Box 510543 St. Louis MO 63151 for scheduling a burial at **any** VA Cemetery.

NOTE: In S.C. they are in Columbia, Beaufort and Florence

STATE VETERANS CEMETERY or MILITARY BASE (not all states have a Veterans Cemetery and most military bases do not have an on-site cemetery).

To be buried at either, if the state/base has one, you need to pre-coordinate with that controlling agency.

NOTE: In S.C. that is the M.J. Dolly Cooper Cemetery

VETERAN'S SECTION in a Private/Public Cemetery: You must coordinate with the agency owning/controlling that facility.

BURIAL AT SEA: At the present, still an option, with several restrictions. Contact the Navy for eligibility requirements and rules.

NOTE: If you are deemed eligible to be buried in the VA National Cemetery system? You have another benefit, that if you do it, it will leave a lasting legacy of you, readable by anyone.

It is called the VA VETERANS LEGACY MEMORIAL. Here's how it works - Privately share your unique military and personal journey by submitting images, military and life milestones, autobiographies, and historical documents that will be saved by the VA. When you pass away, all the content you shared will be showcased on your publicly visible VLM memorial page.

If you have any questions, please contact VLM Customer Support at 1-866-245-1490 or vlm@va.gov.



MARIJUANA - In a previous edition of the Sentinel, I reported that the VFW voted down supporting any form of this treatment for PTSD.

You may be interested to know that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been working with some drugs that show promise for veteran help. NONE of this has been formally

approved by the FDA and there is no information on where the VA stands on this research.

*So far, only KETAMINE Nasal Spray has been approved by the FDA for treatment of depression.

*PSILOCYBIN – A “Magic Mushroom” is showing promise for treatment of depression.

* An LSD similar drug has shown promise in that a single dose can ease the burden of anxiety and depression for MONTHS.

*IBOGAINE – a psychedelic compound derived from the roots of an African iboga plant helps treat TBI. A test of dozens of Special Ops veterans showed it lessened depression and anxiety and improved the functioning of those with TBI.

I have no idea where these stand with the VA, but it is reported that Texas has committed \$50 million to research. COURTESY: DAV Magazine

FOR OUR GULF WAR VETERAN BRETHREN

GW I – GULF WAR ILLNESS. This is the official designator that the Centers for Disease Control and Illness has finally placed on the diagnostic code that becomes a big step for medicine, research and the health of our military community.

GW I encompasses a variety of illness symptoms that include FATIGUE, RESPIRATORY ISSUES, JOINT PAIN, and GASTROINTESTINAL PAINS. RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS or SKIN CONDITIONS
These symptoms have regularly been dismissed as psychological in the past. It is estimated that about one-third of the 700,000+ troops that served in the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991 are effected with these symptoms.

YOU CAN GET HELP BY GOING TO: www.vfw.org/assistance/va-claims-separation-benefits or www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar

Looking for VA help and don't know where to go?? [1-800-MyVA411](tel:1-800-MyVA411) ([1-800-698-2411](tel:1-800-698-2411)) is always the right number



For WOMEN SPECIFIC issues call 855-829-6636

If you are a Veteran who is experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 877-4AID-VET (877-424-3838). Visit the [VA Homeless Programs](#) website to learn about housing initiatives and other programs for Veterans experiencing homelessness.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK

(It could help your heart)

Night-Night: One of the key ingredients to a good night's sleep is a dark room. Recent research presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions has found sleeping in total darkness isn't just good for catching zzz's — **it may also protect you from a heart attack or stroke.**

The Study: Researchers reviewed PET/CT brain scans of 466 healthy adults, and then looked at satellite imagery of their homes to estimate their exposure to artificial light at night (LAN). **Researchers tied increased exposure to LAN to an increased risk of heart disease:** 35% higher over five years. The risk rose even more in people who lived in lower-income areas and were exposed to more traffic noise.

***There is another study out there that shows that those who **cook with gas** have an increased risk of illnesses like CANCER and ASTHMA. By switching to electric, you increase your chances of not getting these ailments by 50%.

NOTE: The smaller the home, the greater the chance of getting one of these diseases.

SUPPORT YOUR VFW STORE

USA, HAPPY 250TH!
THE ANNIVERSARY IS JULY 4, 2026

VFW
VFWSTORE.ORG

NEW



Back

Front

NEW! MEN'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY T-SHIRT Navy blue 100% preshrunk cotton. Screened design on back. VFW logo screened left chest. U.S. flag screened left sleeve. Imported; decorated in the USA. 7499 S-3XL \$24.00

NEW



NEW! LADIES' 250TH ANNIVERSARY V-NECK T-SHIRT Navy blue 100% preshrunk cotton. Screened design on front. VFW logo screened right sleeve. Imported; decorated in the USA. 7450 S-3XL \$24.00



NEW

NEW! 1776 FLAG CAP Five-panel, structured, with hook-and-loop closure. Woven loop label on closure "EST 1899" for the year the VFW was founded. Imported; decorated in the USA. 7201 \$20.00

NEW



NEW! NAVY USA CAP Embroidered USA on front. Six-panel, structured, low profile, 100% cotton. Printed stars and stripes. Adjustable hook-and-loop back closure. Imported. 7121 \$16.95

NEW



NEW! 250TH ANNIVERSARY FLAG Navy blue 3 x 5' nylon single reverse flag, reads correctly from one side. 250th America Anniversary logo printed in red, white and blue. Made in the USA. 2525 \$45.90

The AMERICA 250 word mark and logo are trademarks owned by the United States Semiquincentennial Commission and any use of such marks is under license.

NEW



NEW! SUMMER FIREWORKS PUZZLE 500 pieces. Finished size: 20 x 20". Average time to complete: 4-6 hours. For ages 7+. Made in the USA with non-toxic ink and recycled materials. 1247 \$20.00



VFW WEEKLY CALENDAR 3 7/8 x 6 1/2", 13-month, one-week at-a-glance format. Room for daily planning. Pages for addresses and phone numbers. 1283 \$10.00

Prices valid through 8/31/2026

To place your order, call 1.833.839.8387 or go online to VFWSTORE.ORG



THAT'S A NO – NO – many of us travel and many of us use a rental car to get to our destination, or to drive once we get to our destination area. Your phone is low on power, so you pair your phone to the car via Bluetooth or plug it into the car rental system. It asks you if you want to sync contacts, or if you want to use the car play or Android Auto system. You click YES. Congratulations, you just gave that rental car agency your contacts list, call history, text messages and navigation history. If you don't do the following BEFORE you hand over the keys when you return the vehicle. Your info stays with the car.

1. You can correct most, if not all the wrong, by:
 - Go to **Settings** on the infotainment screen.
 - Find **Phone, Bluetooth** or **Device List**.
 - Find your phone's name.
 - Hit **Delete** or **Forget Device**.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR STATE AWARDEES

1st Place Winner:

KRRISTINE ADAMS (6-8)
Lugoff-Elgin Middle School
District 2
VFW 11079

2nd Place Winner:

MSgt JOHN CLEMENS (9-12)
Clover High School
District 5
VFW 6732

3rd Place Winner:

SHANA TAYLOR (K-5)
Westview Elementary School
District 1
VFW 10256

THANK YOU! **Ginger Graham** for another great State Awards Program. Congratulations to our winners. Thank you to all the Posts that submitted entries and thank you to the judging panel.

*****Make sure you check your current post newsletter or calendar or web page or facebook page and get out there and support your various post activities. Some events at your post are fund-raisers designed to bring revenue into the post which helps keep your post in business. If you have some ideas, especially family friendly activities, that you think would be great for your post. Make sure you get them to your post commander.**

##CONGRATULATIONS to the following posts for reaching 100% before December 31st:

8760 – 10256 – 12102 – 8738 – 10813 – 12207 – 3447 – 3096 – 11251 – 11078 – 6738 and 8166.

Note: Numbers are as listed on the Department December 29th Memstats Reporting

Bill La Monte (Post 10804)

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MARINE CORPS STANDARDS – I have used this picture in the past, but it is just too good an example of emphasizing a “standard”. In this case, Marine Corps height standards for enlistment in the Marines.

The tall one is one inch shorter than the Marine Corps maximum and the short one is one inch taller than the minimum height restrictions. Both are Marines (there is no such thing as a ‘former’ Marine) and both are VFW members.

