

# THE PACIFIC TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS



No One Does More for Veterans  
Veterans First, Comrades Always

Volume XXVIII, Number 2

September/October 2024

FREE

## PATRIOT DAY & POW/MIA DAY



By a joint resolution approved December 18, 2001 (Public Law 107-89), Congress designated September 11 of each year as "Patriot Day," and by Public Law 111-13 (April 21, 2009), Congress has requested the observance of September 11 as an annually recognized "National Day of Service and Remembrance."

A Presidential Proclamation each year calls upon all departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the United States to display the flag of the United States at half-staff on Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on September 11, 2001. Americans are encouraged to participate in community service in honor of those our Nation lost, to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor the innocent victims who perished as a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day was proclaimed by the United States Congress in 1998. It is one of the six national observances when the POW/MIA Flag can be flown. The other five observances are Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day. The POW/MIA flag was created by the National League of Families in 1972 and was officially recognized by the Congress in 1990. It is a symbol of concern about United States military personnel taken as POW or listed as MIA. The POW/MIA flag should be no larger than the United States flag. It is typically flown immediately below or adjacent to the national flag as second in the order of precedence. On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the flag is flown on the grounds of major military installations, veterans memorials, government agencies, federal national cemeteries.

In the armed forces, a single table and chair draped with the POW/MIA flag are displayed in mess halls and dining halls. Such installation symbolizes the hope for the return of these who are missing in action.



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# COMMANDER'S CALL

Fellow Comrades and Auxiliary Members,

The 125th VFW National Convention wrapped up Louisville, Kentucky 1 August 2024 after a good week of convention events, meetings and committees. While this led to a few contentious moments during the business session (which required a roll call vote on the floor, the likes of we have not seen in a while), the work of our National Organization was completed professionally and IAW with bylaws, manual and ritual.

Before I touch on some of the highlights and takeaways of the 125th National Convention, I'd like to congratulate Immediate Past Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento (and his lovely bride Ellen) on a fantastic year of hard work and accomplishments in meeting the aims and goals of our organization. I, along with SVC Jack Farrell, West Coast Roving Ambassador Lauren Wanzer and 6 other Navy (HOOYAH!) Comrades from other States participated as side boys and rendered honors as the Bo'sn Piped the Past Commander In Chief ashore. CHALLENGE MET!

Huzzah to our new Commander in Chief Al Lippardt and his lovely bride Carol. If you have not had a chance to listen to Al's remarks, please do so. The man is well spoken and CARES about us AND the VFW. He stated during his remarks, "You elected me to lead this organization in accordance with the national bylaws, manual of procedure and ritual to which is installed. LEAD I SHALL!" He ended his remarks with "FOLLOW ME!" Trust me when I say, SO SHALL WE ALL.

THANK YOU to all the Comrades who were able to attend. It was one of the BEST showings by the DPA in a long time and I think we were well represented. **WOOOOO!**

## Highlights and Takeaways:

### 27 JULY 24 – COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

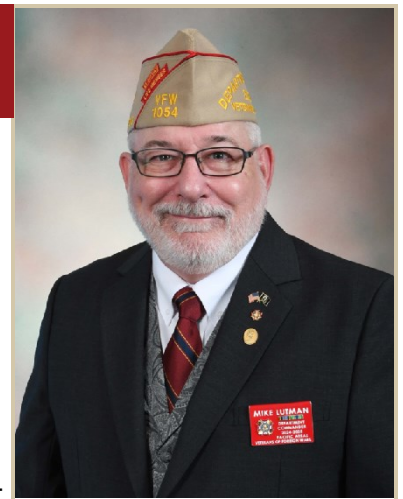
VFW CinC Duane Sarmiento opened the National Council of Administration and thanked first-time attendees and commended the Council for its dedication and role as the organization's key decision-makers.

The Council approved a change to Sec. 218 of VFW's Manual of Procedure. Post service officers will now be required to refer veterans wanting to file a VA claim to a VFW Department service officer. A VFW Post service officer will now be considered an "information or resource" officer for claimants.

### 28 JULY 2024 – MEMORIAL SERVICE

Retired Kentucky Army National Guard Col. Chaplain J. Roger Dill delivered the address.

Dill shared an emotional story from his time as a Methodist pastor on Hatteras Island, N.C. While there, he befriended a Vietnam veteran suffering from PTSD. "When we met, he talked, I listened," Dill said. "When we would depart from one of his visits, my parting comment was 'Charlie Mike.' For a few of you that have not heard the term, it is military radio talk for 'Continue the Mission.' Sadly, I lost contact when I left the island. People at the church did not know the depth of our 'old soldier' talks, thus no one called regarding his death. He is one of my forever memories I will remember and honor."



Commander

**Michael Lutman**



# COMMANDER'S CALL

## 29 JULY 202 – JOINT OPENING SESSION

1. Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) addressed key issues such as national security and foreign policy.
2. FW CinC Sarmiento paid tribute to VFW and Auxiliary members, including the work of VFW's accredited service officers for recovering \$13 billion for veterans filing claims each year. He also noted that for the first time in 32 years, VFW has shown growth in membership for two consecutive years. "While we have much to celebrate, our work is never done," Sarmiento said. "Success is a continuous journey, not a destination."

Awards were presented:

- a. Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) received the Commander-in-Chief Medal.
- b. Twisted X CEO Prasad Reddy, awarded the VFW Commander-in-Chief Gold Medal of Merit.
- c. VFW National Auxiliary President Carla Martinez received the VFW Commander-in-Chief Gold Medal of Merit.
- d. National Voice of Democracy first-place winner Sophia Lin from Scottsdale, Ariz., read her essay. She received a \$35,000 Scholarship.
- e. Four VFW Posts were recognized as Outstanding Community Service Posts of the Year.
- f. The Vice Minister of Taiwan's Veterans Affairs Council Wu Chih-Yang presented Sarmiento with a Gold medal of honor.
- g. Membership Trophy was presented to the Southern Conference.
- h. All-American commanders were recognized.

## 30 JULY 2024 – BUSINESS SESSION

VA Secretary Denis McDonough Touted the VA Claims Clinic at the VFW Convention. He addressed the need to get Veterans accredited service officer support and not "feed the sharks."

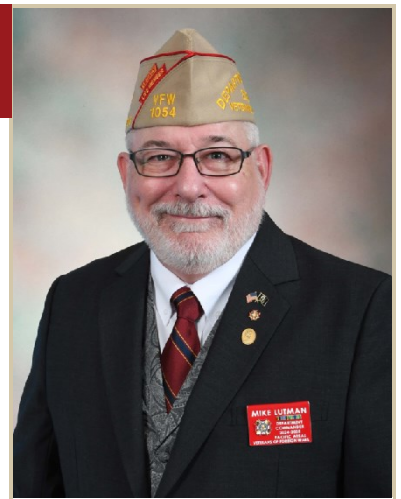
Medal of Honor recipient David Bellavia roused VFW members while speaking of his love of country and proclaimed: "We are rocking the garrison cap for life." His remarks were inspirational.

Kelly McKeague, director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, provided an overview of efforts to account for 81,226 missing Americans.

Mike Wilson, executive director of the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Mich., noted the upcoming 100th anniversary on Jan. 7, 2025.

Additional Awards were presented:

- a. Past VFW Commander-in-Chief Timothy Borland received the Distinguished Service Award.
- b. VFW Department of Kentucky Service Officer Jerry Kayrouz was awarded 2024's John A. Biedrzycki Accredited Service Representative of the Year Award.
- c. Past Adjutant General Kevin Jones was awarded the Distinguished Service Award.
- d. Vietnam veteran James "Gunny" Gregory accepted the Distinguished Service Award for being the creator of the Run for the Wall.
- e. VFW Post 9675 Commander Sarah Lively of Papillion, Neb., earned the



Commander

**Michael Lutman**



# COMMANDER'S CALL

- 2024 VFW Member of the Year Award.
- f. World-renowned chef, restaurateur and TV host Guy Fieri was honored with VFW's Gold Medal of Merit. Fieri's support of veterans and first responders through his Guy Fieri Foundation.
  - g. Duncan Aviation was named Employer of the Year.
  - h. Aaliyah Jones of Oxon Hill High School in Oxon Hill, Md., received this year's JROTC Cadet of the Year award.
  - i. VFW Distinguished Citizenship Award was presented to former NFL defensive end Jared Allen.
  - j. Eugene V. Struzik III won the VFW's Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award for grades K-5.
  - k. Monica Galloway won the VFW's Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award for grades 6-8.
  - l. Army veteran Edward M. Graf received the VFW Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award for grades 9-12.
  - m. Steven Woodward was named 2024 VFW National Recruiter of the Year for recruiting 913 new or reinstated members.
  - n. Several Posts were inducted into the Legacy Society, including our very own Post 2485 in Angeles City, Philippines, with 175 Legacy Life members.

That is quite a lot to unpack and I tried to keep it brief. Hopefully, for some of you that have never had the chance to attend a National Convention, it gave you a small insight into what goes on there. Trust me when I say there are many other committees that happen as well but if I include them, the global owl population will drop significantly. As you will see if you go the 125th VFW National Convention page online at the VFW.ORG site, you can review the daily events articles they have listed there as well as watch videos from the convention.

As for the road ahead, our AS and AA programs are in the air for this term. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. That said, these programs are not who we are underneath, because it is what we do that defines us. If we do those things that we should in support of our organizations aims and goals, the AS and AA accolades will come easily. In looking at the AA Dashboard today, we are coming out of the chute pretty good with only a few bonds and audits to get caught up on. CSRs are being submitted and Buddy Poppy sales are underway. Commanders, thank you for getting after it.

Now is also a great time to get that low hanging fruit taken care of. Items like VMS donations and other items can and should be taken care of now. You need only ONE VOD or PP entry to avoid having to make a donation. Please take the opportunity to reach out to your local schools (if available) to get the word out about our VFW and PATRIOTS PEN Scholarship programs. Scout of the Year is a big program as well that take much more effort to craft in order to have a good submission. Please consider working with your Scouting leaders to get that program kicked off. Lastly, but no less important, are our Teachers Recognition Programs. While NOT a requirement this year for AS or AA, recognizing our hard working Teachers is just as important as it ever was and I strongly encourage you to submit packages for those deserving educators and mentors.

Membership, as it always is, must be a focus of effort and the challenge is no less than it was last year. Thus we have the opportunity to establish an unprecedented 3rd year in a row for membership growth. Please join me as we get after it and engage new members to join our organization and retain the ones we have.



Department of Pacific Areas

Commander

**Michael Lutman**



# COMMANDER'S CALL

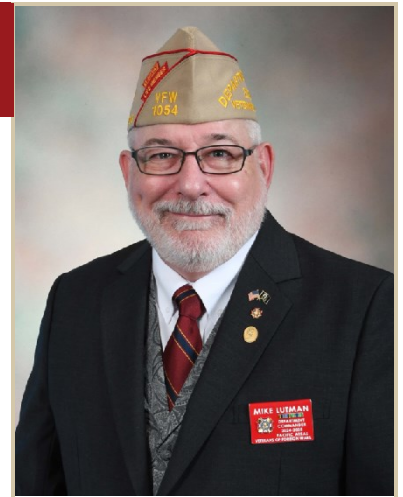
Note that I have also “doubled” the recruiting rewards for this term. Hopefully, we will see a fully populated MEMSTATS by the middle of September.

Comrades, I appreciate all you do for your Posts, your Districts, our Department and our National Organization. DPA remains a leader in Conference and throughout the National Organization. Please continue to improve on what we do. It is up to us, each and every one of us, to do better. To be better. Good, better, best. Never let it rest. Until your good is better, and your better is best.

God Bless each and every one of you and thank you all for your service and my freedom.

Yours In Comradeship and Service,

Michael D. Lutman  
Commander  
Department of Pacific Areas  
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States  
"Veterans First, Comrades Always"



Commander

**Michael Lutman**



Success isn't  
always about  
'Greatness',  
it's about  
**consistency.**

Consistent,  
**hard work**  
gains success.  
Greatness  
**will come.**

- DWAYNE JOHNSON  
FEARLESSMOTIVATION.COM

# SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

Comrades,

I hope this finds each of you and your families doing well. What an outstanding convention we had in Louisville, Kentucky. It was great to each of you there, and that is what made this such a great event.

As we enter this new VFW year, we have the task of meeting the goal of 102% once again. Membership growth is always a high priority, and making those numbers is what happens each year. But as we have done in the past, we continue to show National that no mountain is too high to climb for the Department of Pacific Areas.

As we head down the 102% highway, please remember that you are not alone in accomplishing your requirements. Under your leadership team headed by Commander Mike, we are only a phone call or an email away. Don't hesitate to reach out. And of course, we have the most competent recruiter available in the VFW. Our Certified National Recruiter Larry Lions his astute knowledge in recruiting is there for us to draw upon. As you are developing your recruitment plans for your districts and posts. Please keep us informed. We will make every attempt to get you what you need to be successful.

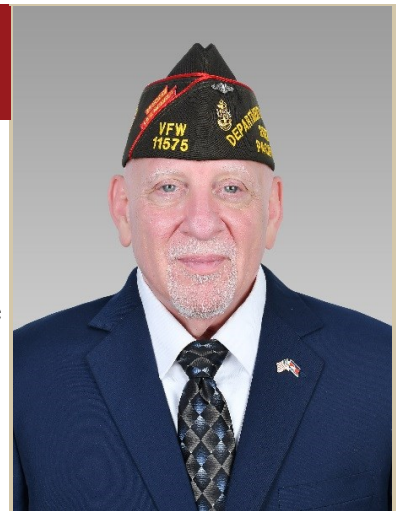
Another important part of our membership program is Legacy Life. Not only can it Increase annual funds into our posts for life, but more importantly it serves to remember those comrades who made that membership commitment. We stand at the ready to assist any, and all Comrades who would like to become a Legacy Life Member.

As a reminder, this is also a way for your post to recognize and remember the legacies of our past Comrades.

In closing, interface with your program Chairman and report your progress and accomplishments to them. This will allow them to update your ALL STATE and ALL AMERICAN dashboards. I will be working with them closely as we track the progress of our Posts and Districts in meeting this year's requirements. Set your goals and milestones and ensure your members are kept updated regularly as we work together in true unison to assist Veterans and their family members.

Yours in Comradeship and Service to Veterans,

John "Jack" Farrell  
Senior Vice Commander  
Department of Pacific Areas  
**Veterans First, Comrades Always**



Senior Vice Commander

**John "Jack" Farrell**



**Sr. Vice Commander**



**SERVICE DOESN'T STOP  
WHEN WE'RE DONE SERVING.**



**Today'sVFW.org**

The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) visual information does not imply an endorsement.

# JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

Comrades,

In this issue, I would like to get to the basics of Community Service Reporting. Here is some information, straight from the VFW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE BEST PRACTICES.

How a VFW Post interacts with its community determines the relevancy of the VFW. Someone once said, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

**Definition of Community Service** – The National Community Service Trust Act defines community service: “encompasses any human act serving the common good; in the interest of the community.” Community service is further defined as “a service that is performed for the benefit of the public or its institutions.”

**Reporting** – For the purposes of volunteer recognition, VFW community service hours must be performed by and as a representative of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. As it is the intent of VFW community service to impact a broad spectrum of the local community, the work must also be performed for an organization outside of the VFW and its Auxiliary and must be verified by an authorized representative of that organization. Events should be reported 365 days a year and not weekly, monthly, or quarterly. This will prevent forgetting the specific details of what events happened.

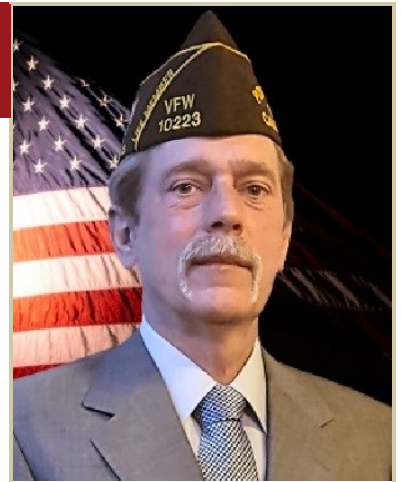
**Total Impact** – According to its Value of Volunteer Time report, Independent Sector, together with the Do-Good Institute, announced in April 2022, that the latest value of a volunteer hour is estimated to be \$29.95. The rate for mileage in service or charitable organizations is \$0.14 per mile. VFW National calculates these figures based on your hours and milage inputted on your CSRs. With that being said, the amount you input for dollars should only reflect the value of your donation.

## Examples of Good Community Service

- Assisting of veterans within the community
- Scholarships to youth
- Sponsoring of youth teams
- VA hospital work on behalf of the VFW
- Blood drives
- Legislative town halls
- Care packages for troops, homeless etc.
- Register to Vote campaigns
- Food Bank support
- Building of ramps for disabled veterans
- Hosting job fairs
- Visiting VA Homes & nursing facilities
- Community Clean Up activities
- Natural Disaster Relief support
- Clothing Drives
- Donations to civic organizations within the community that align with our value

## Examples of Non-Qualified Community Service Events

- Flying the US Flag
- Flying the POW Flag
- Post dinners
- Bingo



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

**Don Kelley**



**Jr. Vice Commander**

# JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

- Building memorials
- Paid VFW Service Officer work
- Personal efforts of a member volunteering at a church or other non-profit organizations
- Buddy Poppy Drives
- Membership Drives
- Anything that directly benefits the post
- Reciting the pledge of allegiance at a post meeting
- Charging, Renting or loaning the Post Hall to their Auxiliary or Cootie Pup-Tent

Please note: These lists are not all inclusive but rather a frame of reference of what is good to host and report versus what events should not be reported.

So, let's clean up our CSRs to reflect the true value of caring and impact we have on our communities.

**PROGRAMS:** Like I said in the last issue, let's also get an early start on our programs. GREAT JOB to the 6 posts that have already completed their Program Requirements for All-American. It is our duty as VFW members to support these programs. Get with the Schools, Scouts, ROTC, and Emergency Services now and promote the scholarships and awards that the VFW offers.

- Voice of Democracy/Patriot's Pen Essay Competitions
- Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award
- Public Servant and Safety Award
- Scouting and ROTC Awards

**Awards:** Most of all, don't forget our own comrades. Every Post has members that excel in what they do and deserve the credit for it. I suggest every Post appoint an Award Chairman to keep track of accomplishments throughout the year and ensure Awards don't get overlooked. I am looking forward to seeing award submissions from every Post this year.

Believe in what you do, do what you believe in while being a Veteran First, Comrade Always.

Don Kelley  
Junior Vice Commander  
[jvedpa@vfwpacific.org](mailto:jvedpa@vfwpacific.org)

**Veterans First, Comrades Always**



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

**Don Kelley**



**Jr. Vice Commander**



# In the SPOTLIGHT

In the VFW, we know our veterans are #StillServing and rising to meet the challenges of this uncertain time. We want you to share your stories and maybe even inspire others across our Department to do the same. Click here to tell us your story. [pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org](mailto:pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org)



*In conjunction with the local government, Post 12146 provided food stuff to the poorest of the poor in Banchang. In addition, they provided adult diapers to bedridden citizens who are unable to afford the diapers. This community service was provided to 16 families.*



## In the SPOTLIGHT



*DPA ADJ Mitchell visited Vietnam Veteran Comrade Linus Travers, Sr. in the TMCC Hospital in Angeles City.*

**Your  
Input  
is Needed**

**Use this space to showcase  
your Post or District!**

Your feedback is important to us. Please submit your Letters to the Editor or Suggestions by clicking [pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org](mailto:pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org)

# DPA QUARTERMASTER

Comrades,

All Quartermasters should have received their Bond for the new year. Please look it over and ensure that all the information is correct and has been signed. If there is a discrepancy send me an email with the needed change.

The Department Quartermaster and Adjutant position is now held by two people. With that, when sending me email please use the qmdpa email address. Otherwise, Kevin will have to forward me your email. This is important to remember. If you need to send your quarterly reports in, order buddy poppies, or any other QM services, please use the qmdpa email address. This will avoid delays.

I want to talk about the monthly and quarterly audits and the role of the Trustee. Monthly audits are used to let the Post and District members know the situation about the Post/District money. Trustees verify the entries on the Monthly/Quarterly audit to ensure that the numbers are accurate. For this to happen, there are several other documents that need to be verified. These are the bank statement, cash on hand (if required), and Post/District minutes. Why should the Post/District minutes be checked? That is a good question! The Post/District minutes would have information from the Post/District Meeting, where the Post membership voted to spend money that might be outside of the Post/District approved Budget. The trustees not only check to ensure that the bottom line matches the bank statement but should also be checking each line item of disbursement and receipts. This is to ensure all monies being spent are approved by either the approved budget or a vote from the membership. This covers only a portion of the trustee's duties. Bottom line, if you are a trustee and you see something on an audit that you are unsure of, ASK the question of the Quartermaster.

If you have any questions on any aspect of the quartermaster duties, please reach out to me. I am here to help.

Shawn Watson  
DPA Quartermaster



Quartermaster

**Shawn Watson**



Quartermaster

Let's eat, Timmy.

↳ Correct at the  
dinner table

Let's eat Timmy.

↳ Correct on a raft  
in the ocean

# DPA ADJUTANT

Hello fellow Comrades,

It is amazing that a little over two months have passed since our DPA Convention in June, so time is flying by. A brief check of the Dashboard shows that several Posts are already in position to go for All-American this term. Also, by the time the Pacific Times is published, our Posts should know where they stand with membership on their way to 102%.

Right now, DPA leadership is aggressively working on our C of A with the hopes that we can go online for registration by late September or early October. We are also working on the annual Aide de Camp selections and other suspense's from National. Selected members for Aide de Camp will be notified by DPA Commander Lutman through National.

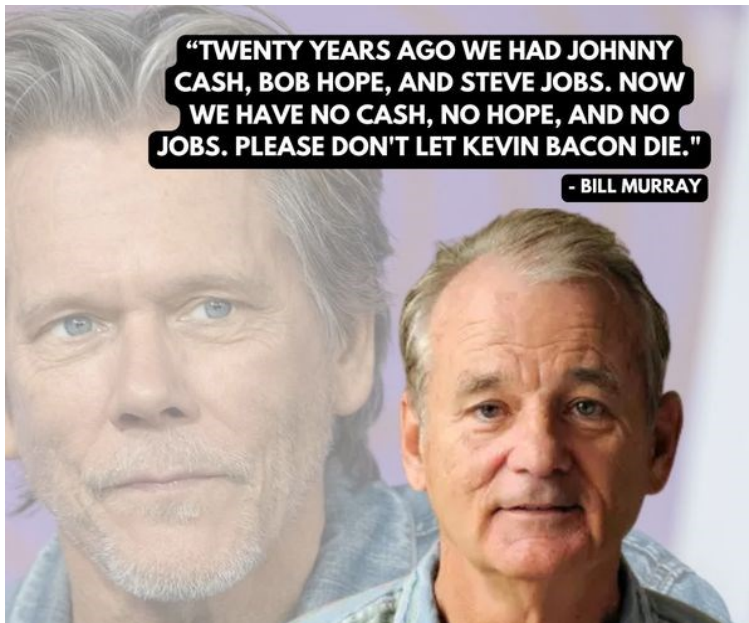
Also, as a reminder from my last Pacific Times Article, Commander Lutman has appointed an outstanding group of Comrades for our appointed positions. He has the upmost confidence that they can assist you in any way possible. Please go to the General Order first for any questions. If you have not been to the DPA Website before; [www.vfwpacific.org](http://www.vfwpacific.org). Click on "Members Only." Your login is your Member ID and your password is your last name. Then click on "General Orders."

At the beginning of the term our DPA website had issues concerning our passwords. Our Webmaster Augie through the National Solutions Office has fixed the issue, and this situation is corrected. If you are still experiencing login issues, please contact Augie at [AugieSt@gmail.com](mailto:AugieSt@gmail.com) or [webdpa@vfwpacific.org](mailto:webdpa@vfwpacific.org)

Whether you are still working or retired, I would like to wish you a very happy and safe Labor Day!! Also, let's continue to look after each other, our families, and communities! Always wishing you the very best!!!

Yours in Comradeship and Service,

Kevin E. Mitchell  
Adjutant  
Department of Pacific Areas  
**Veterans First, Comrades Always**



Adjutant

**Kevin Mitchell**



Adjutant

**2024 DPA Mid-Term  
Council of Administration Meeting  
6-8 December 2024  
Taipei, Taiwan**



**Registration for the event will open soon in DPA website.  
Event Polo shirt will be available for order during registration.**

Hotel Rooms limited. **Make your Reservation early !!!**

Taipei Riviera Hotel. Event manager: Amanda Ku

To book room, e-mail Amanda at: [rivbook@rivierataipei.com](mailto:rivbook@rivierataipei.com)

Deluxe (one King bed or 2 Twin beds) NT3800 (appx \$118.75)

Executive (separate living area) NT4100 (appx \$128.13)

Hotel offers special one-day or multi-day tour packages

# NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

Hello Comrades,

Our recent National Convention was a great success. The supreme power of the VFW is lodged in the National Convention and the approximately 2800 delegates voted on many resolutions, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure, and Ritual amendments. Most importantly we had a week of outstanding camaraderie with our brothers and sisters from all fifty two Departments throughout our great organization.

There is quite a bit of good news affecting our Department. We now have two sponsors for a bill that has been forwarded to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs.

The bill HR 9177 if put into law will amend Title 38, United States Code, eliminating the requirement of a service-connected disability to furnish veterans with medical care outside of a State, and for other Purposes. The proposed bill was referred to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs on 25 July 2024 by the U.S. Representative from New Jersey, District 2, Mr. Jefferson Van Drew.

The Act will be known as the “Foreign Medical Program Modernization Act of 2024”. This bill has three goals:

- Expand care beyond just service connected care for all veterans overseas. It's not tied to a percentage in the legislation.
- Reimburse through electronic fund transfer
- Explore the feasibility of using a third party contractor to coordinate overseas care, like TRICARE overseas.

We have been working for many years to achieve the above goals, and we now have a sponsor in the Congress that will be supporting our efforts. Hopefully we will be able to ensure through legislation that veterans residing overseas receive the same benefits as those veterans residing in CONUS, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Other good news as it relates to FMP is they have arrived at projected dates to begin direct deposit for those beneficiaries’ awaiting reimbursement for medical care. *Tentative* Direct Deposit implementation projections:

- Veterans with Domestic Bank Accounts (US) is January – March 2025
- Veterans with Foreign Bank Accounts is January – March 2026
- Provider's Foreign Bank Accounts is October – December 2026

An additional policy change adopted at the Convention which affects us here in the Pacific Areas concerns Post Service Officer duties. This change was proposed by the NVS Committee and approved by the National Council. It is expected at next years National Convention there will be a Bylaw amendment changing the name Post Service Officer to something that more accurately reflects the new assigned duties. Let’s continue to support our DPA Commander Mike Lutman and his *Veterans First, Comrades Always* team. There is no questions that under Mike’s leadership the Pacific Areas will continue to be a high performing Department and demonstrate as always we are the *Best in the West*.

Yours always in comradeship and service,

Kenneth A. Stein  
National Council Member 2022-2028  
Department of Pacific Areas



National Council Member

**Ken Stein**



## Post Service Officer

“The specifics of the new Post Service Officer duties has been sent to all Post and District Commanders.”



# NATIONAL CERTIFIED RECRUITER

Good Morning Pacific Areas,

As some of you have already heard that I transferred my membership to Member at Large. The reasons being are my own and not warranted in this letter. Commander Mike has asked me to continue as the Certified National Recruiter for the Pacific Areas. I have agreed to his request. To tell you the truth I feel not being assigned to a particular post allows me to not to be loyal to one post. In which I could then recruit for all Posts if they request help.

Past National Commander Tim Borland has received permission to return to Korea for an extended trip compared to last year. Tim came last year to Yongsan for the Octoberfest and that weekend we recruited over 140 members.

Commander in Chief Al Lipphardt stated he wanted to make this trip worthwhile so Tim will be in country recruiting with us from 22 September till he leaves on 4 October. We have VFW Information Tables being set up at Camp Casey, Yongsan's Dragon Hill Lodge for their Octoberfest the also at Osan Air Base and Camp Humphreys. The Chief also set a goal of 500 members, and we will do our best to make that goal. So, if your post would like us to recruit for your Post please send me an email at PDCLyons935@gmail.com also please copy Senior Vice Jack on the email. We will process these members on site one to make sure they go though, and I will scan or mail you their application to you and your Post can vote on them after the fact.

Hopefully by the time you read this National Memstats will be back online with your Life Members. You will then be able to find those Life Members that have transferred or have been taken off your rolls after being transferred to the Pearly Gates up in heaven. The norm is once our Life Members are posted we should be leading National once again in membership.

Commander Mike has asked that everyone do their fair share in recruiting, and we know that some of you will say there's no one available in their area. Thus, I will make this offer. Send me \$45.00 per member and I will sign them up for a post of your choosing and you will receive credit for that member. This will make our big drive here in Korea more viable if we could offer a free membership to Active Duty Members!!! I will take your email as a request till funds can be sent to me.

I am here to help, just let me know what you need. We are all here to help you achieve your goals this year.

Yours Always in Comradeship,

Larry "L3" Lyons  
Certified National Recruiter  
Past Department Commander 08/09  
Department of Pacific Areas



National Certified Recruiter

**Larry Lyons**



**RECRUITER SUCCESS  
POCKET GUIDE**

Best practices for recruiting  
new members into the VFW.



## MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

**Earl D. Plumlee** (born April 6, 1980) is a retired master sergeant in the United States Army. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in Afghanistan that took place on 28 August 2013 and presented to him by President Joe Biden on December 16, 2021; awarded the same day, posthumously, were Alwyn Cashe and Christopher Celiz.

Staff Sgt. Earl Plumlee was a Special Forces weapons sergeant deployed to Forward Operating Base Ghazni in August 2013. He had a long military career before then, serving in the Oklahoma National Guard before graduating from high school and then joining the Marine Corps in 2000. He had even spent a year deployed to Iraq's Anbar Province as a Marine before he joined the Army Special Forces.

So when a large explosion from a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device shattered the perimeter wall at FOB Ghazni on Aug. 28, 2013, Plumlee showed no hesitation in defending the base and his fellow soldiers.

Before the smoke cleared, insurgents dressed in Afghan National Army uniforms began pouring through the 60-foot breach in FOB Ghazni's outer wall. The explosion was just the beginning of the attack. The insurgents who came through the smoke and rubble also were wearing suicide vests, carrying small arms and rocket-propelled grenades.

Plumlee and five other Special Forces soldiers mounted armed vehicles and drove directly toward the site of the explosion. They drove into the line of fire, positioning their vehicle between the Taliban fighters and some wounded comrades who were fighting for their lives.

Without regard for his own safety, Staff Sgt. Plumlee hopped out of the vehicle, using his body to protect its driver while drawing his sidearm. He fought off two attackers and was wounded by a detonating suicide vest before he could get to adequate cover. He killed the two insurgents in his field of fire, but at least eight were still firing on American forces.

He left his position with only his pistol and advanced on the enemy alone, finally reaching a fellow soldier behind cover after what must have seemed like hours. Under intense enemy fire, he and the other soldier, no longer alone, withdrew to join other American and coalition troops who were preparing a counterattack.

Now armed with a rifle, Plumlee moved along with the counterattack, killing an insurgent as he and his allies advanced. His next move was to run to a wounded troop, carrying him to safety and performing first aid. He rallied three more coalition soldiers to form a defensive posture and moved to clear the battleground of insurgents.

One American and one Polish soldier were killed in the attack.

The complex assault never managed to penetrate farther into the base, due to the quick reaction of the Special Forces soldiers inside and the selfless work of Plumlee, who received a promotion after the battle. For his actions, he was awarded the Silver Star, which was upgraded to the Medal of Honor and presented to him by President Joe Biden on Dec. 16, 2021.

Read full citation here: <https://www.cmozs.org/recipients/earl-d-plumlee>





# CHAPLAINS CORNER / TAPS REPORT

Comrades July and August allowed us to transition into the new VFW year with a newly elected and installed Department of Pacific Area Commander, Michael D. Lutman and National Commander in Chief, Alfred “Al” Lipphardt. I pray and hope all Comrades that had the opportunity to travel to the 125<sup>th</sup> VFW National Convention experienced a rewarding and informative conference. I hope it gave an opportunity to meet fellow comrades from across United States and foreign posts to share and practice common VFW comradeship.

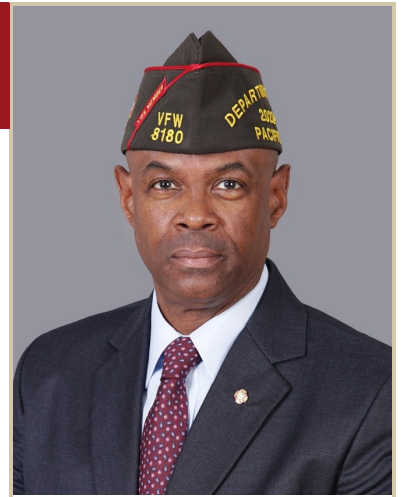
As each of us prepares to execute our individual office in which we were elected or appointed let’s not lose focus on our purpose to assist and help our veterans. As I will continue to reiterate throughout my term of office; continue to take care of our Veterans, their families, our Active-duty service members and less fortunate in our communities. With a “Buddy check” this task can be accomplished with a simple phone call, email, or text to ensure we all stay in touch and connected to our Comrades. And let’s not forget our Sick and Shut-in with home and hospital visits. If there is a Veteran in “CRISIS” any time of day or night, you may call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 or your country Emergency designated number. If you are eligible file your PACT Act claim or submit your intent to file for your VA benefits.

September and October are followed by Commemorative and Memorial events: 1<sup>st</sup> POW/MIA Recognition Day. Join me as we “Salute the men and women who served and sacrificed to keep America free...and salute the families of the missing who continue to keep the candle of hope alive. I encourage you to seek out the former POWs and the families in your communities and ask them to publicly tell their stories so that our children and their children will understand the service and sacrifice that’s required when America calls upon its military. 2<sup>nd</sup> Patriot Day and National Day and Remembrance. Both significant days hold a special place in our hearts as they not only commemorate the tragic events of September 11, 2001, but also remind us of the enduring spirit of unity and service that defines our nation.

Let us remember the following Comrades who passed away since our last report:

Comrade	Post	Comrade	Post	Comrade	Post
Williams Mark O.	2485	Coleman, Hugh D	2485	Samples, Henry D.	2485
Lucas, Vernal W.	2485	Parker, Robert E.	2485	Jarrett, Richard F.	2485
Mason, David J.	2485	Graham, John H.	2485	Grommon, Delmer O.	2485
Ruark, John H.	2485	Wood, Wdwin N.	2485	Pearson, Fausteen AL.	9723
Solley, James J.	1509	Thomas, Cooper R.	9876	Castro David Joseph	9612

Yours in Comradeship  
 Robert S. Chatman  
 DPA Chaplain



Chaplain

**Robert Chatman**



## Let us Pray

*“As comrade after comrade departs, we march on with our ranks growing thinner. Help us to be faithful unto Thee and to one another. Look in mercy on the surviving spouses and children of our departed Comrades, we beseech Thee, and with Thine own tenderness console and comfort those who are bereaved. Amen.”*





## Resources for Chaplains

### **The Chaplain's Corner - by State of Missouri Chaplain and National Chaplain 2021 - 2023 Debb Halter**

Good introduction to chaplain's duties.

<https://movfw.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=76106>

Or the easier to remember link: <https://movfw.org/chaplainscorner>

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### **CHAPLAIN'S GUIDE - by State of Pennsylvania Chaplain and Past National Chaplain Peter Hook**

Great resource guide for things you will need along the way.

<https://vfwpa.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=88797>

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### **CHAPLAIN'S RESOURCES - by Chaplain (Sky Pilot) Dale A. Iannello, the Military Order of the Cootie**

VFW Chaplain material has been consolidated in one location at the national level at: [https://lotcs.org/vfw\\_chaplain.html](https://lotcs.org/vfw_chaplain.html) There you will find a tabbed panel containing information on *Forms, Handbook, Duties, Ethics, Memorial, Prayer, Links and Training*.

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#### **Find a Mentor:**

Find a mentor who you are comfortable calling and working with to improve your skills and to learn from. In fact, have more than one of them. Everyone has something they are good at so you can learn something from everyone. **ASK QUESTIONS!**

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I recommend you print the newest *Chaplain's handbook* and read it, highlight it, and share it with fellow Chaplains. The latest version can be found at: [https://lotcs.org/Forms/Chaplain/VFW\\_Chaplain/Manuals/VFW%20Chaplain%20Handbook%202023%20May%20VFW%20Standard.pdf](https://lotcs.org/Forms/Chaplain/VFW_Chaplain/Manuals/VFW%20Chaplain%20Handbook%202023%20May%20VFW%20Standard.pdf). Chaplain Peter Hook worked hard to expand it this year. It is a work that grows with us.

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For updates and information on Chaplain items and Zoom training links, email **Chaplain Peter Hook** at: [PeterHook@verizon.net](mailto:PeterHook@verizon.net) and ask him to put you on the newsletter email distribution list. Good information comes through this email.

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It is highly recommended that chaplains attend **ZOOM** training which is held online on the third **Wednesday** of each month at **7:30 p.m. CST** starting in **September 2023**. The Zoom link comes through the Chaplain's newsletter, so get signed up! Also Chaplains can obtain the link under the "Training" tab at: [https://lotcs.org/vfw\\_chaplain.html](https://lotcs.org/vfw_chaplain.html). This gives you an opportunity to get to know other Chaplains and discuss things that are important to our work. **Good ideas are shared!**

# DEPARTMENT SURGEON

Comrades, continue to take care of each other, our families, active-duty service members and the less fortunate in our communities. Lets discuss a topic near, dear and essential to us all, the food we eat.

Food provides energy and nutrients that are essential for our health. This includes proteins, carbohydrates, and fats (called macronutrients), vitamins and minerals (called micronutrients). Having a balanced diet helps ensure you get all the nutrients your body needs.

Macronutrients make up the bulk of the calories you eat each day and provide the nutrients that your body needs to make energy. Macronutrients also give your cells important building blocks needed for all their different functions, like fighting diseases.

Your body needs only small amounts of micronutrients however they are critical for healthy development and disease prevention. To find the amounts of different nutrients in a food, look at the Nutrition Facts labels, you can also find information about nutrients “in foods” at: <https://www.nutrition.gov>.

Limiting how much added / processed sugar you eat to no more than 10% of your daily calories can help lower your health risks as well as choosing more complex carbohydrates, like whole grains, beans and starchy vegetables. Complex carbs can help you get more fiber, fruits and vegetables and are also a great source of fiber, rich in micronutrients.

Our individual genetic makeup interacts with our diet and may affect how each person’s body breaks down food. Scientists are now digging deeper to better understand these differences. NIH has launched a precision nutrition study to learn more about how various food components affect people differently. The study has enrolled 10,000 people to learn what factors predict how people’s bodies will respond to different types of foods.

In the end the researchers hope to learn how to tailor what you eat based on your genes, culture, and environment to improve your health. Learn more at Nutrition for Precision Health

In closing, did you get up and out and walk or exercise today, ride bicycle, take your significant other for a stroll, grab a fellow Vet hit the gym -exercise. Your activity does not have to be rigorous a simple dip in the pool or a swim is great / refreshing exercise most importantly if you are a smoker consider to stop.

Summer is winding down; Autum activities will commence before old man winter sets in along with cold and flu season, be prepared.

Yours In Comradship

Lou Holub  
DPA Surgeon



Surgeon

**Lou Holub**



Surgeon

# CHIEF OF STAFF

Hope all is well with my fellow Comrades in the Pacific.

First, keep in mind all of the requirements to be a VFW Post. Inspections, QM bonding, participation in the various programs, all of these are part of having a valid VFW Post. While increasing your membership is of vital importance to the Post, District, and Department, there are other areas that must be completed to keep your Post, and protect your Post members. Don't let these fall through the cracks.

As the National sites come back on line after the summer convention, use these tools to track your status for all of the programs and membership. What you show internally may be different than what National has received. Help in keeping their records accurate.

Schools are back in session. Now is the time to start the push on our scholarship programs. Some schools are not enthusiastic about this, but you must make the effort, for those that have schools to make the pitch to. For those without schools, you must make the monetary donation. Don't wait to get this done.

Back to membership, we have been, traditionally strong for a number of years, ensuring our Department is All-American. I have lost track on the streak we have, but it goes back a ways. Let's not slack off. Get the recruiters off to a fast start, and let's wrap his up as early as possible.

CofA will be in a new location this year, Taipei, Taiwan. Having made several trips there for the Department, and a couple for personal vacation, I can tell you, it is a wonderful country, My wife and I are really looking forward to it. We have already bought our tickets. Tony Hu and the Flying Tigers will be excellent hosts. Plenty to do, and lots to see. Get out and about as often as you can.

Will see you all in December!!

Rick Farris  
DPA Chief of Staff, 2024-25  
Past Department Commander 2019-2020



Chief of Staff

**Rick Farris**



Chief of Staff

National

# POW/MIA

RECOGNITION DAY

Honoring their **sacrifice**.  
Earnestly **searching** for those still missing.



SEPTEMBER 20, 2024 | **#OURPROMISE** | [WWW.DPAA.MIL](http://WWW.DPAA.MIL)



# DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR

Comrades,

District and Post inspections will begin on 1 October 2024. By the time this is published, your District Inspectors should have coordinated with each Post to schedule dates and times.

The purpose of inspections by DPA is to ensure that Districts and Posts are operating in accordance with National & DPA By-laws pursuant to our Congressional Charter.

Posts Commanders, Quartermasters and Adjutants can simplify the inspection process by preparing for the inspection and having all required documents on hand for your Inspector's review. Key dates follow:

- 31 Aug 2024- District & Post Inspections planned, and schedules reported to DPA Inspector (Report Inspector Name, Date, Time & Location for each District & Post inspection.)

NOTE: Face-to-face, on-site inspections should be conducted when possible or Zoom or similar when necessary due to geographical or financial limitations.

- 1 Oct 2024- District & Post Inspections begin
- 6 Dec 2024- DPA goal for successful completion & submission of all inspections
- 28 Feb 2025- Successful completion and submission of inspections to meet All-State requirement
- 30 Apr 2025- Final deadline for completion of all District & Post inspections

Please email all questions, concerns and reports to me at [inspdpa@vfwpacific.org](mailto:inspdpa@vfwpacific.org) and CC to [inspdpa@gmail.com](mailto:inspdpa@gmail.com)

Yours in Comradeship,

Brian Hamic  
Inspector  
Department of Pacific Areas



Department Inspector

**Brian Hamic**



# JUDGE ADVOCATE

Comrades,

At the VFW National Convention this past July, a proposal was adopted to change our National By-laws, Section 216b, concerning the appointment of a Post Service Officer. The old 216b reads, “The *Post* Commander shall appoint an Adjutant, Chaplain, and Service Officer.” (The word *Post* was added by me for clarity.) The new 216b will read. “The Commander shall appoint an Adjutant, Chaplain, and *may* appoint a Service Officer.” The word “may” was added.

I was not at the National Convention this year, so I don’t know how much debate there was on the floor concerning this change. I am sure that the By-laws Committee, which meets one day before the start of the Convention, had a robust debate concerning this change. When the Committee Chairman presents the Committee’s recommendation to the whole Convention is when the fun begins.

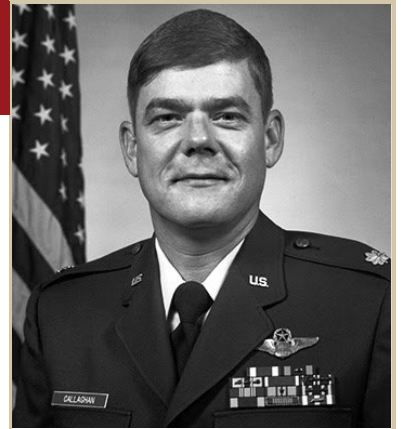
Since the Post Service Officer was never an elected position, the argument for the passage of this change must be that the Post can decide for itself whether or not they need a Service Officer. In reality, the Post Service Officer has no power to interact with the VA, except perhaps to look up answers to specific questions on the VA website. He can also seek answers from the Department Service Officer or one of the Assistant DSOs.

But, in my opinion, the real duty of a Post Service Officer is to lend moral support to a veteran in need, and steer that person to a VFW Certified Service Officer who can help file a claim or whatever the veteran needs assistance with. A Post Service Officer should also keep up with the latest major changes with the VA disability rating system and other benefits veterans have earned. The Service Officer can brief other Post members about these trends at meetings.

I think that NOT having a Post Service Officer degrades us in our mission to help veterans. The work done by VFW Service Officers at every level is one of the main selling points of our organization. Why weaken that at any level? As an added incentive, Commander Lutman’s All-State Program requires a Post to have an appointed Service Officer.

Yours In Comradeship,

Pete Callaghan  
Judge Advocate  
Department of Pacific Areas



Judge Advocate

**Pete Callaghan**



# VFW PRESS RELEASE

## VFW Remembers the End of the Afghanistan War

*The following is a message from VFW National Commander Al Lipphardt*

**WASHINGTON (August 30, 2024)** — It has been three years since the United States finally left Afghanistan in a calamitous and deadly withdrawal of our troops after almost two decades of war. Whether it is the footage of Afghan civilians clinging to the side of a C-17 Globemaster III and falling to their deaths or photos of the aftermath of the deadly attack at Abbey Gate which took the lives of 13 service men and women and more than 100 Afghans, these images from the chaos in Kabul at that time are seared into our collective memory. It is especially painful for those who fought so hard and for so long there. The frustration, the anger, the sadness, the sense of helplessness and hopelessness, and the never-ending question of “how could this of happened” all pile on to the moral injury many Afghanistan War veterans experience as we observe the anniversary of the end of the conflict. As a veteran of the Vietnam war, I say to all of you struggling – you are not alone. I know exactly how you feel.



As I watched the video of the CH-47 Chinook helicopter landing on the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul to evacuate diplomats and staff, it brought me right back to April 1975 and the images of evacuees boarding a helicopter just outside the U.S. Embassy in Saigon as the city fell to communist forces. After leaving my family behind, being wounded, losing friends, and fighting so hard for the Vietnamese people to maintain their freedom during my two tours of combat there, it felt like all of that was for nothing. That sinking feeling like you let your country down is a hard one to shake.

I'm here to tell you that like me and my fellow Vietnam War veterans, you have nothing to be ashamed of. You upheld the warrior ethos – you always placed the mission first, you never accepted defeat, you never quit, and you never left a fallen comrade. You took the fight to the enemy right where they were and for 20 years, you kept those terrorists from attacking our country like they did on 9/11. You successfully executed the largest non-combatant evacuation airlift in U.S. history. You did exactly what your country asked you to do and did it courageously with honor and dignity. Because of all of this, you can hold your head high. We are all so proud of you.

The question of why everything went down the way it did still needs to be answered and of course this will take time. I'm glad that Congress saw to it to form a commission to do a deep dive into the Afghanistan War and get the answers we all deserve. I'm honored that the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Memorial Building was selected as the location for the inaugural meeting and that VFW Washington Office staff were able to host the commissioners and witnesses for the hearing. You can read the Afghanistan War Commission first interim report [here](#). Never again should we go to war without a clear path to victory and without our political leaders making the same sacrifices that they ask us to make.

On behalf the of more than 1.4 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary, we ask all Americans in joining us in honoring the memory and sacrifice of the 2,459 brave Americans who died in service to a grateful nation, prosecuting Operations Enduring Freedom and Freedom's Sentinel for nearly 20 years in Afghanistan for each one of us. To those who came back, we say, “thank you,” “welcome home” and “job well done.”

**About the VFW:** The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is the nation's largest and oldest major war veterans organization. Founded in 1899, the congressionally chartered VFW is comprised entirely of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. With more than 1.4 million VFW and Auxiliary members located in nearly 6,000 Posts worldwide, the nonprofit veterans service organization is proud to proclaim “NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS” than the VFW, which is dedicated to veterans' service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs. For more information, or to join, visit our website at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org).





# DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER (DSO)

Comrades,

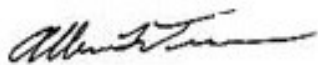
We are on the road to providing the benefits that all veterans have earned. I have reached out to the Department Assistant Service Officers and discussed the way forward. In the past the Department Service officers pretty much operated on their own. My goal is to have the Department Service Officers work as a team in collaboration with the District and Post Service Officers. We are a team with a goal to provide Information on benefits that you all have earned and assist veterans that are navigating the VA process.

Just like we followed Regulations and Standard Operating Procedures while we were performing our duties in the service, we have Regulations and Standard Operating Procedures in our civilian life when we are engaging with the Federal and Local Governments. Our challenge is understanding these Regulations and Standard Operating Procedures and ensuring that our comrades understand how these Regulations and Standard Operating Procedures impact them.

Last year we had 12,324 members in the Department of Pacific Areas. It has been suggested that there should be 1 service officer per 1,000 to 1,500 veterans. Since we assist all veterans, not just VFW Members, I would use the 1,000 veterans per service officer. Based on this the Department of the Pacific Areas should have 12.3 Assistant Service Officers. Thus, we are drastically understaffed. One needs to also take into consideration that The Department of Pacific Areas covers an extremely large area. With that in mind we should probably have more than 12 Assistant Department Service Officers.

My goal is to increase the engagement of the Post/Department Service Officers in assisting the Department Assistant Service officers in performing their duties. This will involve cooperation and engagement of all Post and District Service Officers. It will also require training and assistance from the Department of Pacific Areas VSO team. We are currently working on a syllabus for this training. The role out of this training will be in late October or November.

We are also attacking the issue of being understaffed. We currently have 3 Assistant Department Service Officers. The last week of September two Assistant Department Service Officers Candidates will be attending the VFW Nation Veteran Service Officer Basic Training. Still a long way from what is recommended, but we are making progress. One of these Assistant Department Service Officers Candidates will be stationed in the Philippines, and one will be stationed in the Marianas Islands. We have also picked up an Assistant Department Service Officer in Thailand. This will increase our service officer staff to 6. Still a long way from what is recommended, but we are making progress.



Allen L Turner  
Department of Pacific Areas  
[dsodpa@vfwpacific.org](mailto:dsodpa@vfwpacific.org)



DSO Pacific Areas

**Allen Turner**



**Service Officer**

**#STILL  
SERVING**



# VOD/PP/TA CHAIRMAN

Comrades,

I want to congratulate our new Department commander, Mike and the new DPA officers; I stand by to assist you with anything you need as well as the VoD, PP, and TA chairs that need it. I look forward to working with you in my initial year; let's see if we can get a first-place winner at National for the Pacific. Please send me the name and email address for your District Chairs.

For All-State, each District must participate in the Voice of Democracy (VOD) and Patriots Pen (PP)

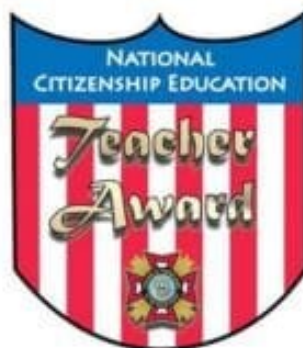
Programs by submitting one entry per program to the DPA VOD/PP/TA Chairman for judging. In lieu of this requirement, the District may elect to pledge a \$125 donation per program to the VFW National Director of Programs for each program they do not participate in.

This year's topics are: VoD – "Is America Today Our Forefathers' Vision?" & PP – "My Voice in America's Democracy?" Please get these out to schools, home-schools, and youth centers so that children can start working on them now. I also want to encourage you to work closely with the schools to try and get them more involved with the program. One way is to get some teachers to help with the voting as it suggests in the VoD/PP Chairman's guide

Deadlines: All submission must be uploaded to the Scholar's App website by 31 October for Post level judging. Each District will determine a winners and submit forward NLT 21 November, where a panel will select one Department level winner for each program. This gives three weeks each at the Post and District levels. Please know the rules on what is allowed in the essays. If there is any doubt if a submission may not be valid, please get with me ASAP so we can check and give a youth plenty of time to fix it before it is too late. The last thing I want to do is invalidate an entry.

Yours in comradeship and service,

Robert E. Madison, Jr.  
VoD/PP/Teacher's Award Chairman  
Department of Pacific Areas  
[vodppdpa@vfwdeptpacific.org](mailto:vodppdpa@vfwdeptpacific.org)  
Phone: +82-10-4413-1593



VOD/PP/TA Chairman

**Robert Madison Jr.**

## SOMETHING TO PONDER

In the movie "Scent of a Woman" there is an unforgettable scene: the one in which the protagonist, played by Al Pacino, invites a young woman to dance, to which she responds: "I can't, because my fiancé will be arriving in a moment."

"In an instant, a life is lived!" he replies, leading her to dance a tango.

This short but memorable scene contains one of the film's most beautiful messages: Some people live by running after time, but they don't manage to reach it even when they run in a hurry. Others, look only to the future, forgetting to live in the present moment, the only time that really exists. Everyone has time equally; no one has more or less than 24 hours a day. The difference lies in what we each do with this time.

We must know how to take advantage of every moment because, as John Lennon said: "Life is what happens to you while you are busy making other plans."



## POW/MIA CHAIRMAN

Every year, on the third Friday of September, we pay tribute to the courageous men and women who, as Prisoners of War (POW) or declared Missing in Action (MIA), demonstrated unparalleled bravery. Established in 1986, this day is a solemn opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices these brave souls and their families made. The United States Congress proclaimed National POW/MIA Recognition Day in 1998.

POWs and MIAs are not just military terms. They represent the real stories of service members. A POW is a service member who was captured and held by an enemy during armed conflict, while MIA refers to a service member who is unaccounted for and whose whereabouts remain unknown.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars has designated National POW/MIA Recognition Day as a Commemorative Tribute, on which the Post should provide recognition. There is no specific requirement on how to honor this date. Depending on the capabilities of the Post, the observance can be as low-key as a breakfast or brunch where the symbolism of the POW /MIA table is explained, or it can be a full-on ceremony at one of the many POW sites or battle monuments/memorial throughout the Department of Pacific Areas.

By commemorating National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the VFW fulfills a crucial role in providing a visual reminder to the public of the plight of the POW/MIA and their families. The VFW reminds every American never to forget to honor those who were held captive and returned and those who remain missing in action. This is also a significant opportunity to educate the younger generation about the sacrifices made by servicemembers to secure and preserve democracy and freedom worldwide.

POW/MIA Recognition Day is a time for all of us to come together, united in our mission to honor the memory of these courageous heroes, some of whom are still a mystery to their families. While their fates remain unclear, their spirits live on in our hearts as we recognize their sacrifices. Our nation remains strong because of the bravery of these men and women, and we must carry their courage and memory with us. May they be found, and may they all return home.

**Note:** an explanation for the symbolism of the POW/MIA table is:

- The table is round to show our everlasting concern.
- The white cloth symbolizes the purity of their motives when answering the call to duty.
- The single red rose reminds us of the lives of these men and women and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith while seeking answers.
- The red symbolizes our continued determination to account for them.
- A slice of lemon on the plate reminds us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land.
- A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears of our missing and their families who long for answers after decades of uncertainty.
- The Bible represents the strength gained through faith in our country, founded as one nation under God, to sustain those lost from our midst.
- The glass is inverted to symbolize their inability to share this evening's toast.
- The chair is empty; they are missing.

Yours in Comradship



James (Jim) Collins  
POW/MIA Chairman



Department of Pacific Areas

POW/MIA Chairman

**James "Jim" Collins**



# LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

Comrades, wow how does the time flies. It seems like just yesterday I was getting this ready for the Pacific Times so here it goes. Well, I am trying to keep you all up to date on what is going on in Washington and the and the VFW's National Legislative Service (NLS). One way, if you would like to keep track of yourself would be to sign up for the ACTION CORP newsletter. Click this link: <https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>

Here are some of the things that are happening:

**Grand Opening of VFW Pre-Discharge Claims Hawaii Office:** VFW National Veterans Service Director Mike Figlioli joined Chief of Force Development at the 647th Force Support Squadron Dr. William Kono, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Commander CAPT. Samuel White, and VFW Pre-Discharge Claims Representative Charles Tibbets for the grand opening of the VFW's newest pre-discharge claims office near Honolulu. If you're within 180 days of separating from the military, the VFW can help with your VA claim. [Learn more](#). The VFW has Pre-Discharge offices located on or near major military installations across the country. If you are within 180 days of discharge, you can contact a VFW Pre-Discharge representative to get the process underway. Here's an easy [checklist of what you should bring](#) to your appointment and more information on [what to expect at a compensation and pension exam](#).

Pass this information on to any of your friends or family members that are getting close to retirement or discharge.

**Apply Now for New VA Graduate Medical Education Program:** VA has launched an online portal for applications to a new pilot program through which it will reimburse salaries and benefits for at least 100 physician residents who rotate to covered health care facilities. For nearly 80 years, VA has impacted the next generation of health professionals with almost 70% of U.S. physicians having trained at VA. "This program will place physician residents where they are needed most, in rural and underserved communities across America. For veterans, this program will make it easier to access the health care they need and deserve," said VA Chief Academic Affiliations Officer Marjorie Bowman, M.D. [Learn more](#) about this new initiative and apply by Sept. 30, 2024.

I will be going to the Fall Legislative conference in September, I will pass on any new information that is given out to us on the DPA Facebook page.

Again, lastly, I urge each of you to sign up and get the get the **VFW ACTION Alerts** to sign up just click this link: <https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>. Lets all show our support and stand with the VFW National Legislative Service (NSL).

Randell E Himes  
DPA Legislative Chairman  
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Legislative Chairman

**Randell Himes**



**2024 PRIORITY GOALS**



**VFW ACTION ALERT**



**ACTION CORPS**

*Sign up today!*

# VOTING WHILE ABROAD IS SIMPLE



**In fact, it's easier than you think!**

If you are abroad, you can fill out a single form that will both **register you to vote and request an absentee ballot.**

## You don't need a U.S. mailing address to vote from abroad

There is no requirement for overseas voters to continue to maintain a residence or own property in the U.S. to vote.



## You only need to file one form to vote from abroad/overseas

You should send in a

**New Voter Registration/Absentee Ballot Request form**

to your local election official every calendar year during which you would like to vote, and whenever you change your address.\*

***\*You should send in your form as early as possible to ensure that your ballot has time to make the round trip!***

## Overseas absentee ballots count in every election

Absentee ballots submitted in compliance with state and federal election laws are counted in the totals for all elections, **and every vote, whether cast as absentee or in-person, counts the same!**



**U.S. VOTE**  
FOUNDATION

[usvotefoundation.org](http://usvotefoundation.org)

## WOMEN'S VETERAN CHAIRPERSON

During World War II in the Pacific Theater, there was a group of US military nurses, who became known as the “Angels of Bataan.” They were among the 27,000 American military personnel held as Prisoner Of Wars (POW) in the Pacific.

There was a total of 77 US military nurses (66 Army and 11 Navy nurses), who were the largest group taken captive and imprisoned by the Japanese. Both the Japanese and Americans used this as propaganda. The former boasted of their victory, while the latter inspired patriotism and retribution against the enemy.

During the fall of Bataan, Philippines, the nurses were taken as POWs and were separated from their military male counterparts. They were held with other civilian POWs at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, which became an interment camp during that time. As Santo Tomas was getting crowded, the 11 Navy nurses were moved to the Los Banos Internment Camp in Laguna. In spite of the shortage of medical supplies, the nurses provided professional care to all of the Allied POWs held in the camps from May 1942 to February 1945 when they were liberated by American forces. Remarkably all of them survived.

They survived largely due to an established chain of command headed by Chief Nurse Capt. Maude C. Davidson and Lt Josie Nesbit. Under their leadership, they maintained daily 4-hour shifts of nursing duty while being POWs. This gave the nurses a purpose and a reason to live. They helped curb epidemics, organized public health awareness to an overcrowded camp and provided medical attention with minimal supplies in austere and unsanitary conditions. As they were treating patients, they were fighting to survive themselves and ensure others survival. Emaciated and malnourished, all of the “Angels of Bataan” lived to tell their stories.

After the war, many of the patients they treated credited their survival to the Angels of Bataan, who never sought recognition. In 2001, through the efforts of Brigadier General (Ret) Connie Slewitzke, Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii and the surviving “Angels,” Maude D. Davidson was posthumously awarded the Army Distinguished Service Medal.

### MAMA JULIE

Without order and work we will never survive. This camp is guarded, you see, by Japanese but we run it ourselves. And I was the one (though many take credit) who labelled the quinine Soda Bicarbonate so it wouldn't be taken and the one who said we'd care for the internees imprisoned with us: Aussies, Brits, French and other enemies of the Rising Sun, men, women, children, all of them civilians. In khaki clothes we've made by hand, we work our shifts. No days off for heat waves or monsoon. Only the bedridden are excused. These girls are unprepared, call me Battle-Axe, but I know how to whip them into shape. No whining. No complaints We may be short on emetine or anesthetic and have no reserves of insulin, but what we do isn't free choice. It's a higher calling.

From **ANGELS OF BATAAN**, Susan Terris (Pudding House Publications, 1999)

Janet Alford  
Women's Veteran Chairperson  
Department of Pacific Areas

Resources:

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/nurse-pows-bataan-and-corregidor>  
<https://todayinhistory.blog/2019/04/09/april-9-1942-angels-of-bataan-and-corregidor/>  
<https://aahn.memberclicks.net/davison>



Woman's Veteran Chairperson

**Janet Alford**



Read more about the Nurse POWs: Angels of Bataan and Corregidor [Here.](#)

## A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

Frank Morris was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1908. At the age of six he lost his right eye after hitting a tree branch while horseback riding, and at the age of 16 he lost his left eye during a boxing match. Morris was very frustrated with having to depend on others to help him get around.

In November 1927, Morris's father read him an article by Dorothy Eustis, an American philanthropist living in Switzerland who operated a school that supplied dogs to the police and Red Cross. The article described schools in Germany that trained guide dogs for WWI veterans who had gone blind from mustard gas.

Morris was inspired to write Eustis for help. "Is what you say really true? If so, I want one of those dogs! And I am not alone. Thousands of blind like me abhor being dependent on others. Help me and I will help them. Train me and I will bring back my dog and show people here how a blind man can be absolutely on his own. We can then set up an instruction center in this country to give all those here who want it a chance at a new life." Eustis agreed to help.

Morris went to Switzerland and trained with a female German shepherd named Kiss, which he quickly renamed Buddy. The training was hard, but after a few weeks Morris was able to get around the Swiss village safely with Buddy's assistance.

In June 1928, Frank returned to the US with Buddy in New York City. He notified the media and demonstrated Buddy's abilities by crossing a busy New York street. According to Morris "She [Buddy] moved forward into the ear-splitting clangor, stopped, backed up, and started again. I lost all sense of direction and surrendered myself entirely to the dog. I shall never forget the next three minutes: 10-ton trucks rocketing past, cabs blowing their horns in our ears, drivers shouting at us. When we finally got to the other side and I realized what a really magnificent job she had done, I leaned over and gave Buddy a great big hug and told her what a good, good girl she was."

Morris sent a one-word telegram to Eustis: "SUCCESS!"

In January 1929, Morris and Eustis cofounded the first guide dog school in the US called The Seeing Eye. It operated in Nashville for two years and then relocated to New Jersey because the weather was more suitable for training dogs. Between 1929 and 1956, Morris traveled throughout the US spreading the word about the organization and the need for equal access laws for people with guide dogs. By 1956, every state in the US had passed laws allowing blind people with guide dogs access to public spaces.

Buddy died on May 23, 1938. Morris named his next dog Buddy, as he would all his subsequent seeing eye dogs. On April 29, 2005, a sculpture of Frank Morris and Buddy titled The Way to Independence was unveiled in Morristown, New Jersey.





# EMT/FIRE/LAW/SAFETY CHAIRMAN

## PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD CITATIONS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS, LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL, FIREFIGHTERS, DISPATCHERS AND EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL TECHNICIANS (EODT)

Posts are encouraged to submit a candidate/group for these awards to **Tim Anderson, the Department Safety/Public Servant Awards Chairman**. Email: [safetyemtfirele@vfwpacific.org](mailto:safetyemtfirele@vfwpacific.org)

Entries are due to the Post NLT Nov 8, 2024. Post Entries are due to the Dept Chairman NLT Nov 15, 2024. Please note that as per the Safety Chairman's guide, the awards do not have to go through District Judging. Entry forms can be downloaded at [https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/MY\\_VFW/Training-and-Support/Community-Service/Public-Servant-Award-Post-Entry-Form.pdf](https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/MY_VFW/Training-and-Support/Community-Service/Public-Servant-Award-Post-Entry-Form.pdf)

**VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Public Servant Citation:** Any individual/group, who actively gives emergency medical treatment, provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care, provide rescue and civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

**VFW National Law Enforcement Public Servant Citation:** Any individual/group, who serves in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with enforcement of the laws pertaining to their area of responsibility. This award does not apply to an individual employed by private companies or security services.

**VFW National Firefighters Public Servant Citation:** Any individual/group, who actively fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and give assistance to our nation's citizens.

**VFW National 911 Dispatcher Public Servant Citation:** Any individual/group who serves in a municipal, county, state, or federal unit tasked with providing the vital link between callers in distress and emergency response team by obtaining essential information to send the appropriate responders to the right location.

**VFW National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician Public Servant Citation:** Any individual/group, who serves in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with the enforcement of the laws and special handling pertaining to disposal of explosive threats to our nation's citizens.

**Criteria for these awards** – Candidates must have demonstrated:

- Recognition by their colleagues or those they serve.
- Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties.
- Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities over a period of years and continuous growth in responsibilities and skills within their profession.

**Documentation required for all Candidates:**

- Public Servant Award Citation Post Entry Form
- Nomination letter containing the candidate's name, title, address, telephone and identifying the award for which the individual should be considered.
- Include justification outlining background in field, accomplishments and awards.

There's no deadline for the following program. It's more of a "in the event of" award.



EMT/Fire/Law/Safety Chairman

**Tim Anderson**

# EMT/FIRE/LAW/SAFETY CHAIRMAN

## Life Saving Award

Safety Chairpersons at Posts, Districts and Departments are encouraged to regularly identify and honor individuals throughout the year in their geographic area who have saved a life.

The VFW National Programs office provides the following three different citations and medals, free of charge, for local presentation.

- Regular Life Saving Citation – Honors individuals who have, without regard for their own comfort, taken action resulting in the saving of another human life.
- Line of Duty Life Saving Citation – Honors individuals who, in the execution of their assigned duties, have taken action resulting in the saving of another human life.
- Valor Life Saving Citation – Honors civilians who have taken action resulting in the saving of another human life and have placed their own safety at risk.

Tim Anderson  
EMT/Fire/Law/Safety Chairman  
Department of Pacific Areas



EMT/Fire/Law/Safety Chairman

**Tim Anderson**



# BIG BUG SQUEAKS

## Grand Commander Himes (A.K.A., Biggest Big Bug)

**“communicate, Communicate, COMMUNICATE”**



**Randell Himes**



Click each Logo above  
for Websites

Comrades and Cooties, if you were able to attend the 125<sup>th</sup> VFW National Convention, I am sure you had a outstanding time. The **105<sup>th</sup> Supreme Scratch** was held right after, and a lousy time was had by all.

With the year goals almost the same for the DPA and the GPA, I would like to extend my had to all the DPA’s Brother and Sisters. If you are doing the work of the VFW, come and join us in the Grand and help us continue the work of a busy Bee. We are always looking for hard workers to join the Great Honor Degree of the **Military Order of the Cootie**.

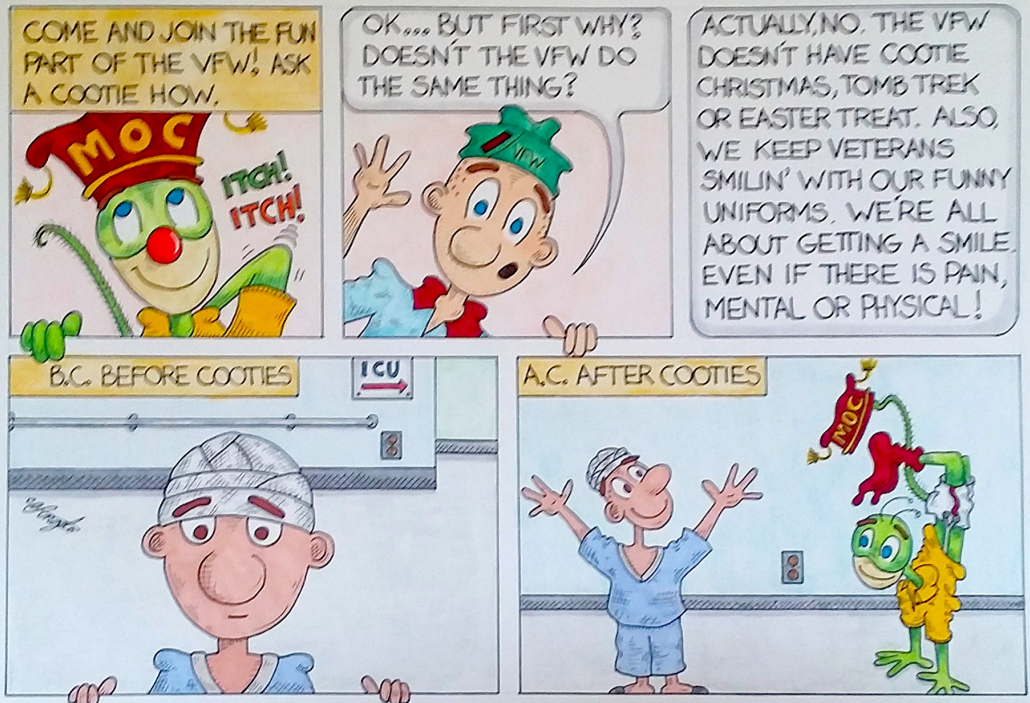
If you think you have what it takes to be a Cootie, drop by the GPA web site by visiting us at <https://mocpacific.org/Default.asp> and check us out.

Now let’s keep doing what we do best by...

**KEEP‘em SMILING in BEDS of WHITE !!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Yours in L.O.T.C.S.,

Randell E. Himes  
GPA Biggest Big Bug  
PT 1 CCDB  
PT 1 Cootie 1251  
[rehimes@gmail.com](mailto:rehimes@gmail.com)  
[cdgrd@vfwpacific.org](mailto:cdgrd@vfwpacific.org)



# SHAWN WATSON FOR VFW NATIONAL JVC 2028

Support  
**Shawn Watson**  
 For VFW National JVC 2028



Shawn's 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the Cash Calander 2024  
 As of 1 July, there are still 41 drawings.  
 That add up to \$5,484.00 in prizes  
 Tickets are  
**NOW ONLY \$5.00**

### Calendar Ticket Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Post Selling this Calendar: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Ticket Number \_\_\_\_\_

Scan and email ticket stubs to Larry, he will forward  
 info that you want to pay for the tickets to George.  
 His email is [PDCLyons935@gmail.com](mailto:PDCLyons935@gmail.com)

George will contact you directly on how to transfer funds to Shawn's campaign account.

Note if multiple tickets, fill out form once and state how many tickets you want.

Calendar Tickets \$5.00  
**Big Bucks Tickets \$20.00**

Once George verifies that funds have been transferred he will notify me and I place the tickets in the drum at that time.

### Big Bucks Ticket Form

**Support Shawn Watson's Bid for National JVC 2028**  
*Self - Family - Veterans*

**Big Bucks Raffle**

Donation \$20.00 per ticket

1<sup>st</sup> Prize \$5,000.00  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize \$3,000.00  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize \$2,000.00

Ticket # .....

Only 1,000 tickets being sold  
 Drawing as soon as all are sold or at the November 2025 Western Conference

Please print clearly

Name: .....

Phone Number: .....

Email Address: .....

Ticket # .....

# UPCOMING COMMEMORATIVE DATES\*



Veterans Day, a federal holiday that falls on November 11, is designated as a day to honor the more than 19 million men and women who have served in the U.S. military. It was first observed on November 11, 1919, as Armistice Day in honor of the first anniversary of the end of World War I, which officially ended on the “eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month” in 1918. In 1926, Congress called for an annual observance of the anniversary and by 1938 it was an official federal holiday. A few decades later, in 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower officially changed the name of the holiday from Armistice Day to Veterans Day, as it is currently known today.\*



National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day in 2023 will be observed on Thursday, December 7th. This day commemorates the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese Imperial Navy during World War II on December 7, 1941. It is a day to honor and remember the lives lost and the sacrifices made during the attack. Various events and ceremonies are held across the United States to remember this historic event and pay tribute to those who were affected.\*

## Other Important Dates

- 1st Monday of September - **Labor Day**
- September 14 - **VFW Auxiliary Founded (1914)**
- September 17 - **Constitution and Citizenship Day**
- September 18 - **U.S. Air Force Established (1947)**
- September 29 - **VFW Founded in 1899**
- October 13 - **U.S. Navy Established (1775)**
- 1st Tuesday of November - **Election Day**
- November 10 - **U.S. Marine Corps Established (1775)**
- November 21 - **Grenada Campaign Ended (1983)**
- December 13 - **National Guard Established (1636)**
- December 15 - **Iraq War Ended (2011)**
- December 20 – **U.S. Space Force Established (2019)**
- December 31 - **Official End of WWII (1946); Kosovo Campaign Ended (2013)**

**\*Posts should arrange special ceremonies and all commanders shall alert comrades to their obligations for the appropriate commemoration date.**

## DPA WEBSITE SPONSORS



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Rdrokit Power  
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### Notice

**Districts, to offset the costs of our website and newsletter please find at least one Sponsor of \$100 for a year. Congratulations to District 5 for going above and beyond!!**

We ask each District to submit at least one DPA Website Sponsor. Each Sponsor must donate a minimum of \$100. The term is one year and their Logo will be included on our Sponsor Website page and here in our Bi-Monthly newsletter. Contact the Webmaster at [webdpa@vfwpacific.org](mailto:webdpa@vfwpacific.org) or The Pacific Times Editor at [pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org](mailto:pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org) for information on how to submit your Sponsors.