

THE PACIFIC TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS



No One Does More for Veterans

Teamwork. Together Everyone Achieves More

Volume XXIX, Number 5

March/April 2026

FREE

Nominations and Elections 2026-2027

We are now in the nomination and election season for all posts and districts in the VFW for the 2026-2027 term.

Nominations are opened at the post general membership meeting in March and remain open until elections at the post general membership meeting in April. Section 215 - 217 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure provides guidance.

District nominations are opened at the meeting prior to the District Convention and remain open until the election during the District Convention. Section 415 - 417 of the National Bylaws & Manual of Procedure provides guidance.

In April posts will be electing those officers as well as the delegates for districts and department conventions. It is important to carefully consider your nominations and elect worthy leaders for all officer and delegate positions. Remember, you are electing the leaders of your post or district and they set the tone for your organization. It is also helpful to elect a Commander who is familiar with the chain of command within our organization and if possible, someone who is known at the Department level to be an honest, thoughtful, and dedicated comrade.

The process of electing delegates is laid out in the **National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure**, as well as in your **District and Department Bylaws**. If you have questions or are unsure of the process, go to the District or Department JAG and they will provide answers or get you an answer as required.

Sec. 222 - Delegates, District Convention & Meetings, Department and National Conventions.

VFW National Headquarters Kansas City, MO 64111 has a FREE Electronic Edition that can be downloaded by clicking [HERE](#)



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COMMANDER'S CALL

Comrades,

I want to begin by congratulating every Post, District, and Comrade across the Department of the Pacific Areas for the outstanding work you continue to accomplish on behalf of our veterans, their families, and our communities. As we move through the final months of this term, we can look back with pride at the progress we've made - through service, camaraderie, community outreach, and continued dedication to the mission of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Our Department continues to lead the way in membership growth and retention, and I am proud to announce that as of 15 February 2026, the Department of Pacific Areas is ranked 2nd place in VFW National Membership Statistics.

As of 1 March 2026 the department is presently in third place nationally at 100.08% with an additional 118 members needed to make the Commander in Chief's All-American goal of 101%.

This Department has already proven we can do it. We have Posts and Districts knocking on the door of full success across the board. With continued teamwork, we can reach **All-State and All-American** levels.

I strongly encourage all current members and family members to assist with recruiting new eligible veterans and reinstating former members. Every new member strengthens our voice, our mission, and our ability to advocate for veterans at every level. Remember, if each of you recruits at least 1 new member, we will surely surpass our goals.

Please mark your calendars now for the VFW Department of Pacific Areas Convention, scheduled for:

- 17–21 June 2026
- Pattaya Beach, Thailand
- Bayview Hotel 2

This Convention is a major opportunity for our Department to come together, discuss key issues, strengthen camaraderie, and shape the future direction of the Pacific Areas.

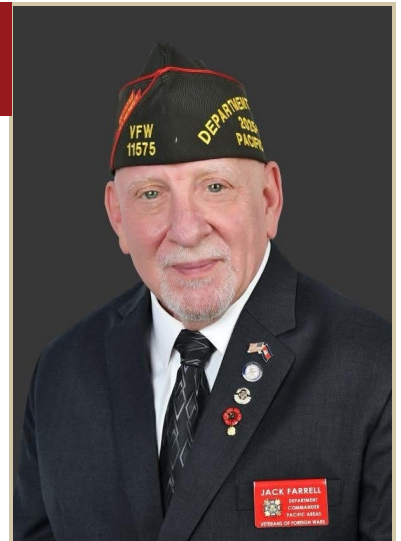
Our Convention Co-Chairmans this year are District 4 Commander Holub and Pattaya Post 9876 Past Post Commander Earp along with the outstanding comrades of Posts 9876 and 12146 and District 4 and 5. They are already hard at work ensuring that this year's Convention is both productive and memorable.

More details regarding registration, agenda, and events will be shared soon through the DPA Website and our DPA 2.0 Facebook page. I encourage all comrades to register early once the registration page goes live so the Convention Committee can properly plan for lodging, meals, and events.

Our Department continues to demonstrate the strength of VFW fellowship and esprit de corps. Recently, comrades gathered in Subic Bay, Philippines for the Annual Beach Bash, hosted by Post 11447. It was a fantastic reminder of how strong our camaraderie remains. Thank you to all who participated and helped to make it a success.

We are also only a few months away from the Department Convention and Grand Scratch, and I hope to see as many comrades as possible in Pattaya, Thailand.

March is a very important month for all Posts and Districts across the Department



Department of Pacific Areas

Commander

John "Jack" Farrell



COMMANDER'S CALL

because it is time for nominations for the 2026–2027 term.

To every Comrade stepping forward to serve: thank you. Leadership is not simply a title—it is commitment, sacrifice, and responsibility. I encourage all nominees and newly elected officers to learn their duties, study the Manual of Procedure, and seek mentorship. Strong leadership at the Post and District level is what keeps our Department moving forward.

When electing officers and delegates, let us choose those who have the best interests of the Post in mind and are committed to the mission of the VFW. As always, don't hesitate to reach out for assistance.

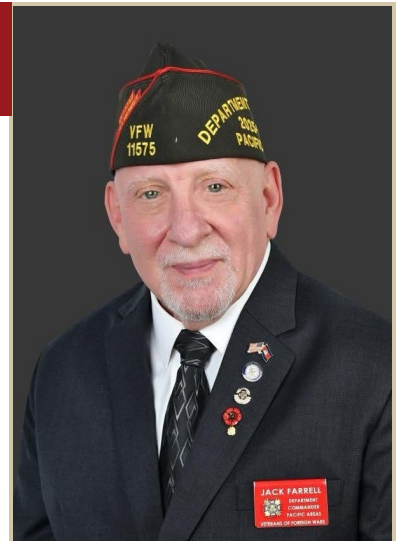
Comrades, I cannot thank you enough for the tireless work you are doing every day. Whether it is assisting veterans with VA claims, supporting widows and orphans, engaging in community service, or strengthening camaraderie within our Posts—you continue to prove that **"No One Does More for Veterans"**.

The State of our Department remains strong, and the future is even brighter. The work ahead is within our reach, and success is in our hands. Let's finish this term with strength, unity, and pride.

Thank you for everything you do. I am proud to serve alongside you.

Yours in Comradeship, and Service to Veterans

Jack Farrell
Commander
Department of Pacific Areas
"Teamwork. Together Everyone Achieves More."



Department of Pacific Areas

Commander

John "Jack" Farrell



STILL SERVING **VFW**
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

JOIN VFW DAY OF SERVICE

Veteran-led community service events kick off May 6, 2026.

ARE YOU READY TO SERVE?

vfw.org/DayofService

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

DPA BRANDING KIT



We have created a portal for users to access official artwork, logo's and design guidance. Please click [HERE](#) to access the webpage. You will find links to the following:

[VFW Style Guide](#)

[VFW Pacific Google Drive Folder](#)

[Emblem Guidance DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS](#)

In the future we hope to add all DPA, District and Post's logo's and artwork for users to access when they are creating artwork for flyers, announcements, official items such as convention shirts, etc. Please send all of your inputs to the DPA Webmaster at AugieSr@gmail.com.



SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

All-American:

Currently, the DPA holds the second-highest national membership rate at 99.87 percent and remains a top-performing department, aiming for another All-American year. To reach the National All-American goal of 101 percent, the Department needs just 145 more members.

With two-thirds of the year complete, 15 Posts and 3 Districts have already met the All-American membership benchmark. There is still ample time for the remaining Posts, Districts, and the Department itself to reach this All-American target.

All-State:

Pursuant to the Department's All-State Membership Requirements, there are currently 19 Posts and 5 Districts eligible to fulfill the All-State criteria. It is recommended to complete all requirements by April 15th to ensure recognition at the Department Convention, rather than delaying until the final deadline.

Assistance is needed regarding the All-State requirements for Post/District Schools of Instruction. Each Post and District must hold three instructional sessions during meetings that address Post Leadership Duties and Responsibilities. To receive credit, please provide either an email confirmation or meeting minutes as documentation of these sessions.

Also remember, every Post and District is required to take part in the DPA Awards Program by submitting at least one award nomination before March 30th. Additionally, both each Post and District need to buy a full page in the "Year of Review" publication.

Please visit the [All-State 2025-2026 Eligible Dashboard Report](#) to view the latest All-State Dashboard.

Nominations and Elections:

Post nominations will begin in March, followed by elections in April. It is important that candidates for these positions have received appropriate mentorship to prepare them for their roles. By doing so, we can support the success of our future officers.

Let us continue to maintain our momentum and strive for all Posts and Districts to attain both All-State and All-American recognition this year. Please feel free to contact me if you require any assistance.

FOR VETERANS, BY VETERANS with TEAMWORK, TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE.

Don Kelley
SVC Commander
Department of Pacific Areas

"Teamwork. Together Everyone Achieves More."

**YOU FOUGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY.
NOW JOIN US IN THE FIGHT
FOR VETERANS.**



Senior Vice Commander

Don Kelley



Sr. Vice Commander

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

Comrades,

I hope this finds you and your families in good health and doing well. As we move closer to our annual convention in Pattaya, I encourage posts and districts to look at both the All-State, and All-American Dashboards. We are still showing a lot of red that indicates incomplete program participation. Let's get on top of it and support the programs that provide assistance to our VFW Families and Veterans.

As of February 1st:

All-American shows - We have one post that has not met the requirement of one CSR a quarter, one post that has not updated or donated for Voice of Democracy, one post that has not updated or donated for Patriots Pen, and four posts that have not purchased the required 500 Buddy Poppies.

All-State shows - We have three posts that have not met the requirement of eight CSRs a quarter, one post that has not updated or donated for Voice of Democracy, one post that has not updated or donated for Patriots Pen, and four posts that have not purchased the required 500 Buddy Poppies. It shows that we have three Districts that have not donated the \$125 to VMS using the dashboard.

PROGRAMS:

I want to wish our Department Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen winners congratulations and good luck at the National level. If you have any questions, please contact **VOD/PP Chairman Robert Madison** at vodppdpa@vfwpacific.org. Please remember that Scholars App is the future and we need to embrace it.

Voice of Democracy/Patriot's Pen (All-State and All-American Requirement - Complete - Belldandy Lamb, District 3, Post 8180, VoD and Jayce Shaffer, District 7, Post 2485, PP

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award - Complete - No entrants

Public Servant and Safety Awards - Complete - Oliver Verba, Firefighter; Yuhei Tajima, EMT; William Kaiser, EOD Tech; all three from Post 9723

Scouting (Due to me by 1 Apr), CAP, and ROTC Awards - [Youth Activities Guide](#)

Day of Service Event in May (All-American Requirement) - Must **register prior to 15 May 2026 at [DoS Registration](#)**

Community Service Reports:

A CSR is an act of serving the **common good for your community**. Our relevancy depends on how the community sees the VFW and will care about us if we show that we truly care about them. Please review [CSR Best Practices](#) for National's guidelines; also, look for emails from me when I see issues as I am reaching out to help you understand why a CSR is not legitimate and to provide guidance on how to write it properly so that there is no confusion.

What is **NOT** a CSR - recruiting event, attending a Post meeting, "selling" Buddy Poppies, completing CSRs, etc.

What **IS** a CSR - helping a fellow veteran/surviving family member in need, giving blood, picking up trash around the neighborhood, volunteering at a food drive, etc.

After reading all of the CSRs coming in, I am amazed by how much we are doing in our communities. Please teach your members during a meeting and through information pushes on what is and is not a CSR; it will only benefit the Post. You all are doing great work out there promoting the VFW to the Pacific Areas. I have compiled the 1st All-State Quarter numbers below, which will show where you are at. I know that there are comrades doing good things within your Posts, please get those CSRs in so I can stay busy and approve them.

ALL-AMERICAN: minimum 1 CSR per quarter (1 Jul-30 Jun)

ALL-STATE: minimum 8 CSRs per quarter (1 May-30 Apr)

Awards: Let's not overlook the outstanding efforts of our own comrades. Recognizing excellence isn't just about ceremony—it's how we **retain and motivate members** by showing appreciation for their contributions. I feel that we do our members an injustice by not recognizing them.

Awards for the following will be selected:

Outstanding Post Award



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

David B. Gley Jr.



Jr. Vice Commander

**VFW GUIDE FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICE
BEST PRACTICES**

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

- Outstanding Post Member Award
- Outstanding Post Adjutant Award
- Outstanding Post Service Officer Award
- Outstanding Post Quartermaster Award
- Outstanding Post Commander Award
- Outstanding Post Membership Chairman Award
- Outstanding Contributor Non-Member Award
- Outstanding Contributor Business Award

Each Post should appoint an **Awards Chairman** to track achievements throughout the year.

Post Award Submissions: Due to your District by 30 March

District Award Submissions: One award from each of the categories are due to me by 15 April; the District judging panel **WILL include ALL** Post commanders from that District, as well as **at least one member** from Each Post in that District to ensure fair representation.

All-State Requirement: At least one awardee nominated at both Post and District levels.– [DPA Awards Page](#).

Let’s make sure every deserving member gets the recognition they’ve earned.

Post and District commanders, please ensure that you have a plan in place to grade your programs and awards so that there is time to get them to me a little early to provide time to fix any potential issues.

Buddy Poppy: The **All-American requirement** is to order **500** Buddy Poppies. If you have any questions, please contact DPA QM George Beck at qmdpa@vfwpacific.org. [Buddy Poppy Guide](#)

Let’s continue building a strong, sustainable Department by **mentoring future leaders** – have a backup for every position to ensure continuity and growth. As always, I am here to serve you; please do not hesitate to reach out if you need anything.

RECRUIT – MENTOR – RETAIN

David B. Gley Jr.
 Junior Vice Commander
jvcdpa@vfwpacific.org
dbgley@gmail.com

“Teamwork. Together Everyone Achieves More.”

All-American Dashboard as of 1 February

Post	Community Service	VMS	Voice of Democracy	Patriot's Pen	Buddy Poppy	Membership	NLS	Day of Service Participation
1054	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
9555	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
9812	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
8180	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
9985	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
10033	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
10223	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
9723	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
9957	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
10249	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
11575	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
12146	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
9876	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
9951	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
10217	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
12074	Met	Met	Unmet	Met	Unmet	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
12163	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
1509	Unmet	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
2917	Unmet	Met	Met	Unmet	Unmet	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
3457	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
124	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
2485	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
9892	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
11447	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Unmet	N/A	Unmet
12130	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
12224	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet
12231	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

David B. Gley Jr.



Jr. Vice Commander

**VFW GUIDE FOR
 COMMUNITY SERVICE
 BEST PRACTICES**



JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

All-American Dashboard as of 1 February

District	Post	Community Service	VMS	Voice of Democracy	Patriot's Pen	Buddy Poppy	Membership	NLS
		N/A	Met	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet	Met
2		N/A	N/A	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet	N/A
3		N/A	N/A	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet	N/A
4		N/A	N/A	Met	Met	N/A	Met	N/A
5		N/A	N/A	Met	Met	N/A	Met	N/A
6		N/A	N/A	Met	Met	N/A	Unmet	N/A
7		N/A	N/A	Met	Met	N/A	Met	N/A

All-State CSRs as of 1 February



DPA COMMUNITY SERVICE MONTHLY REPORTING
2025-2026



	POST #	# of Projects	Hours Worked	Miles Driven	Volunteers	Total Expended	Left for Quota
D2	1054	44	285.50	1,148	128	\$5,461.00	0
	9555	78	287.50	1,759	361	\$2,145.00	0
	9612	50	118.00	381	238	\$9,755.79	0
D3	8180	71	399.00	25,324	182	\$7,805.20	0
	9985	67	472.00	4,541	77	\$1,076.00	0
	10033	35	180.50	2,165	77	\$850.00	0
	10223	192	755.50	1,682	303	\$7,667.60	0
D4	9723	86	785.00	650	207	\$9,350.00	0
	9957	57	107.00	1,224	81	\$940.00	0
	10249	38	543.00	1,812	148	\$3,036.00	0
	11575	24	79.00	970	36	\$1,019.00	5
	12146	102	598.00	7,392	527	\$20,548.50	0
D5	9876	162	987.50	1,859	426	\$27,637.00	0
	9951	113	1809.00	2,934	598	\$11,411.50	0
	10217	171	1306.00	3,480	355	\$20,858.39	0
	12074	89	253.15	4,206	182	\$6,751.82	0
	12163	195	939.40	7,165	235	\$8,857.00	0
D6	1509	27	95.00	983	78	\$9,780.00	7
	2917	2	65.00	267	28	\$200.00	22
	3457	21	315.00	1,040	197	\$1,000.00	0
D7	124	82	690.00	3,505	280	\$28,852.15	0
	2485	262	1361.50	5,418	1092	\$11,699.00	0
	9892	141	349.00	7,281	246	\$15,771.70	0
	11447	90	374.00	5,951	325	\$4,690.44	0
	12130	51	182.25	1,640	98	\$5,381.58	0
	12224	32	130.50	2,165	62	\$1,953.91	0
	12231	110	1143.00	8,253	459	\$12,550.60	0
	Total	2,392	14610.30	105,195	7,026	\$237,049.18	34

Click [HERE](#) to generate the current All-State Dashboard

NOTE: You may be required to login to the Members Only page. Default login is Member Number and your password is your last name, first letter capitalized. If your post or district uses Website solutions program then it is the same logon and password.

Member ID #: 1234567890

Password: Last name, first letter capitalized example **Smith**



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

David B. Gley Jr.



Jr. Vice Commander

**VFW GUIDE FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICE
BEST PRACTICES**



OUT AND ABOUT VFW POST 9892

VFW Post 9892 held its first annual Comrade Tim Aukshun Senior Citizens Weekly Raffle. Starting 12 Oct until New Years. The senior citizen winners received a raffle prize of 2,500 php. These are seniors residing in a remote mountainous area. There were 13 winners in total. Past Post 9892 Commander Tim Aukshun believes, "We need to remember our elders and help when we can." Post 9892 was very proud to be part of this worthwhile project.



**STILL
SERVING**

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

DPA ADJUTANT

Hello Comrades,

We are now in the final stretch of another outstanding DPA year. However, there is still work to be done! Generally typing, our Districts and Posts are in very good position to make All State and All America. Reports look good and it should not be an issue to complete them for the Districts/Posts who need to do them. As for this type, the DPA is at 99.87% in membership and is in strong spot to join the current leader Europe as the only Departments/States to reach 100% thus far this year.

Next month, the DPA will be nominating Comrades for the 2026-27 term with elections in April. One favor please, before you update your Officers on the National Website OMS, please get with your elected Officers and ensure their address/phone number etc. are correct. Thank you!!!

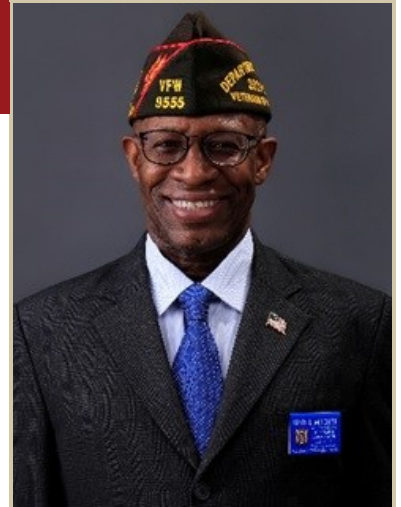
Concerning the DPA Convention, Chairman Lou Holub and Post 9876 Member Marcus Earp are working hard to iron out all necessary items so we will have registration information on the DPA Website by 15 March. This date has been consistently used for the Convention for many, many years!! We ask for a little patience, PLEASE! Mid-Winter cut-off is normally 15 October of each year to have the registration page ready to go...sure hope this helps!!! Once everything is ready to go for the Convention, I will contact the District/Post Commanders and ask to forward the information to his/her membership.

In closing, I will need your Delegate Letters as so as you can but no later than 15 May for the 60th Department of Pacific Areas Convention. Comrades, please take care of yourselves along with your families, and communities. Wishing you all the very best!!

Yours in Comradeship,

Kevin E. Mitchell
Adjutant
Department of Pacific Areas

“Teamwork. Together Everyone Achieves More.”



Adjutant

Kevin Mitchell



Adjutant



VFW CURRENT NEWS

WASHINGTON — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) is demanding that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) immediately rescind its interim final rule changing how disability ratings are evaluated, warning that the policy threatens to unfairly reduce benefits for disabled veterans. In a letter sent 18 February 2026, the VFW raised serious concerns about the rule's broad impact on veterans with musculoskeletal injuries, chronic pain and mental health conditions, as well as VA's decision to bypass the traditional notice-and-comment process. The VA's response, the VFW said, failed to address those concerns.

“The VA's response to the well-articulated concerns raised by so many has been dismissive and unacceptable,” said VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore. “Disabled veterans should never be forced to choose between following their doctor's orders and protecting their earned benefits. This interim rule puts that stability at risk, and it must be withdrawn.”

The rule directs VA adjudicators to evaluate veterans based on their level of functioning while on medication, rather than the true underlying severity of their service-connected conditions in a shift that contradicts long-standing court precedent and risks penalizing veterans who follow prescribed treatment.

“VA's disability compensation system exists to compensate veterans for the average impairment in earning capacity resulting from service-connected conditions,” said Whitmore. “It should not penalize veterans for seeking treatment, nor should it sidestep the system of judicial accountability Congress deliberately put in place.”

Since the creation of judicial review in 1988, veterans' law has evolved through a constructive dialogue between the courts, Congress and VA. If the Department disagrees with judicial interpretation, the appropriate response is engagement through the rulemaking process or legislative clarification, not the use of emergency procedures to bypass public input while casting binding precedent as an obstacle.

The VFW believes that invoking “good cause” to avoid notice-and-comment procedures, particularly where the rule materially affects earned disability compensation, undermines transparency and risks eroding confidence in the veteran-centric, non-adversarial benefits system Congress intended.

“Congress created judicial review of VA decisions to ensure accountability, uniformity and fidelity to the law,” said VFW General Counsel John Muckelbauer. “When Congress established the United States Court of Veterans Appeals, which is now the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, it did so to end decades of unchecked administrative decision-making and to provide veterans with an independent forum for review. Judicial oversight is not a disruption; it is a statutory safeguard.”

In addition to rescinding the rule, the VFW is calling on VA to restore the prior evaluation standard pending full regulatory review; and engage Congress and stakeholders in a transparent process that respects judicial precedent and protects veterans earned benefits.

The VFW will continue to submit formal comments, consult with Congress and evaluate all available options to ensure the integrity of the veteran's benefits system is preserved.

STOP THE PRESS!! The VA has rescinded this policy change. Read all about it [HERE](#).

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

Hello Comrades,

During the first week of March the National Council of Administration will be meeting in Washington, D.C. I will provide you with an update as to what was discussed as it relates to our national organization and of course specific discussion points that are applicable to our great Department. This information will be provided in the May/June Pacific Times.

As to current National initiatives, we will be meeting with both the Director of the VFW Washington Office, as well as the Director of the National Veterans Service office during the Washington Conference. We will be discussing among other items, the inequity of how TRICARE is managed in the Philippines, the requirement for overseas beneficiaries using TRICARE for LIFE to register and pay for Medicare even though MEDICARE cannot be used OCONUS, the FMP modernization act which among other items calls for overseas veterans with at least a 50% service-connected VA rating to be reimbursed for any health care treatment, not only service-connected issues, but this is also a benefit CONUS based veterans receive in the USA and we should not be treated any differently when living OCONUS.

Along with our DPA Commander Jack Farrell, and National Legislative Committee member Randell Himes, we will be visiting the Delegates from Saipan and Guam as we advocate for Veterans in our region.

We will keep you apprised of progress made and update you on the work our National officers are performing on our behalf.

Best wishes,



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



National Council Member

Ken Stein



VA | Foreign Medical Program (FMP)



EVERYTHING WE DO, WE DO FOR VETERANS.®



Learn more or join at vfw.org.

CERTIFIED NATIONAL RECRUITER

Good morning Comrades,

DPA is currently at 99.98%! There are three things I have to say about that.

Number One: THANK YOU to the following 118 recruiters: Post 1054 Brandon Zamora, Chad Yeagert, Daniel Topper, Earl Jackson, Mike Lutman, Richard Kilanski, Shelia Higa, Walter J. Fahnestock Jr., Post 9555 Caleb Whitaker Jr., Kevin E. Mitchell, Stephanie Taitano, Post 9612 Albert C. Luera, Guy S. Weaver, Jason C. Huff, Randell E. Himes, Richard L. Meeker, Post 8180 Aaron Garcia Gley, Christopher C. Duncan, Cyrus L. Bangunan, David B. Gley Jr., Ellis B. Colton, Ernest W. Lee, Justin M. Canizales, Justin T. Bruschi, Kevin A. Brady, Leterial J. Ashby, Nick Michael Carnovale, Patrick J. Higgins, Robert S. Chatman, Ronald J. Davis, Terrance T. Smith, Terry L. Rush, Warren Maxson, Wendy Canizales, William B. Quintero, Post 9985 Allen F. McFadden, Andrew R. Greider, Post 10223 Andrew T. McGuffey, Angelo A. Alvarez, Chad M. Heiden, Christopher R. Winstead, David W. Morss, Donald E. Kelley, George E. Beck, Ismael G. Bamba, Laurence L. Lyons, Nicholas P. Koziar, Cortez L. Pree, David A. Bill, Derek Boyd, John G. Bowlers, Kyle A. Houseman, Lakashka T. Moore, Terrell A. Ford, Post 9957 Scott J. Ellinger, Post 11575 Al R. Fitchett, Ashley J. Price, Gary D. Kidd, John P. Farrell Jr., Michael G. Evanoff, Paul M. Baker, Post 12146 David Lomeli, Jerry Sengdara, Louis S. Holub, Michael H. Cooperman, Terrance L. Hebron, Thomas Raymond Migliore, Post 9876 Gary A. Mellor, Harold W. Hart, Steven R. White, Post Joseph Blasetti, Randy S. Riggs, William L. Reaves, Post 10217 Frederick W. Berg Sr., Joel E. Pierson, Post 12074 Jason C. Logan, Robert J. Rositer, Post 12163 James D. Maughmer, Kurt E. Sassenfeld, Post 2917 Brian J. Merenda, Gary D. Hendrix, Genelyn I. Paz, John C. Pangelinan, William Shippey, Post 124 Avelino B. Molintas, Fortunato R. Poyaoan Jr., Jonathan R. Estoque, Jose H G. Agoot, Oscar Manuel Cano Rojas, Post 2485 Brian J. Hamic, Clifton W. Wilsey, Durand A. Phillips, Earl Damron, Janet S. Alford, Norman G. Smith, Shawn C. Watson, Steven L. Perkins, Post 11447 Michael P. Mummey, Troy J. Derby, Post 12130 Jack C. Kus, Roy E. Gowen Jr., Scott A. Stinson, Thomas E. Ruhl, Post 12224 Ricardo Don Armstead, Post 12131 Arnel Bayutas, Bayani C. Apuya, Danilo De Guzman Jr., Edgardo T. Onas, Edward J. Fern, Golda J. Russell, Jason Drahn, Leandro C. Pinzon and Michael Lee Castle.

Number Two: How come I don't see your name?

Number Three: **TEAMWORK: Together Everyone Achieves More!** 101% is The Department of Pacific Areas (DPA) goal.

Yours Always in Comradship,

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

**RECRUITER SUCCESS
POCKET GUIDE**
Best practices for recruiting
new members into the VFW.



DPA
Department of Pacific Areas
National Certified Recruiter

Larry Lyons

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
125
Years of Service
1899 - 2024

VFW
NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

**RECRUITER TRAINING
STUDENT GUIDE**
Your path toward the skills
that you need to recruit new
members for your Post.



rev. April 2023

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

US President Donald Trump awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor to Army Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Slover during his State of the Union address on Tuesday.

Slover was a helicopter pilot who was critically wounded during a January military raid that led to the capture of Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro.



"Slover was hit very badly in the leg and hip while preparing to land," Trump said, adding that even though he was hurt, Slover kept going and helped make sure the mission succeeded, according to The NY Post.

"The success of the entire mission and the lives of his fellow warriors hinged on Eric's ability to take searing pain," the President said.

Slover came into the House chamber with his wife, Amy, using a walker. He received the Medal of Honor from Joint Special Operations Command Commander Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga in the gallery above the House chamber.

Congress gave them a standing ovation, with many in the audience even chanting "USA, USA, USA."

Describing the incident, Trump said Slover was flying the lead helicopter, a big twin-rotor MH-47 Chinook. As the helicopter was coming in to land, the enemy started shooting at it from different directions. That intense gunfire hit the aircraft and hit Slover in his leg and hip about three times.

"While preparing to land, enemy machine guns fired from every angle, and Eric was hit very badly in the leg and hip, one bullet after another," Trump told the attendees. Even though he was badly wounded, Slover kept control of the helicopter and completed the mission.

Trump said Slover flew the helicopter under heavy enemy fire and saved the lives of his fellow warriors. "Eric maneuvered his helicopter with all of those lives and souls to face the enemy and let his gunners eliminate the threat, saving the lives of his fellow warriors from what could have been a catastrophic crash deep in enemy territory," Trump said.

The President also said that ten other soldiers who took part in the Maduro raid will also be recognized and honored at the White House later.

Read more [HERE](#).

Read full MoH citation [HERE](#).

CHAPLAINS CORNER / TAPS REPORT

Comrades I pray you and yours are well, in good spirits able to continue our most important advocacy work while advancing towards achieving Department of Pacific Areas (DPA) / District /Post goals for All State/All American and as we continue to pray that our advocacy grows stronger and more influential with increased recruitment. Our recruitment year is quickly coming to a close. As stated in my last correspondence, I reiterate and “echo” the use of “Buddy checks” for our comrades and families that are sick and shut-in which are important to our mission and a necessary task which can be accomplished with a simple phone call, email, or text to ensure we stay in touch and connected to our Comrades.

This edition is dedicated to echo some inspiring words from our National Chaplain: “In [our] role as VFW [Post, District and Department] Chaplain[‘s], [our] goal is to support [leadership and] fellow chaplains in their vital work of ministering to veterans and their families.” This can be done through the various resources; “by providing regular emails, offering live and zoom training sessions, writing articles, and developing materials tailored to the unique needs of our community.” Alongside the DPA chaplain team, which includes Post Chaplains, District chaplains and past chaplains, we should be encouraged by the “importance of interfaith cooperation, selfless service, and unity in all our efforts, fostering an inclusive and compassionate environment for all those we serve.”

Hospital Visitation - Changing nature of healthcare. Older generations are having a harder time understanding the changes of modern-day healthcare. We have in just a few decades changed to a managed care system. This isn’t just what are known as HMO’s, this even includes Medicare. This is and can be very complicated, especially for those not raised in such a system of healthcare delivery. An important note for those visiting the sick: The average hospitalized patient is much sicker now and has a shorter hospital stay, so they may be too sick or in too much pain for a visit. And if you do visit, be sensitive to their condition. The best strategy may be to keep the visit short to not tire them out. For more information about hospital visitation and etiquette please respond through email to: chatmankorea@gmail.com.

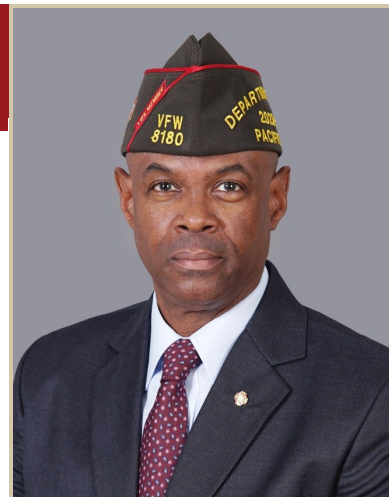
Prayers are with those that are seeking offices and appointments as the nomination and elections will open for the DPA, Districts and Posts in the VFW for the 2026-2027 term.

And prayers throughout DPA as we prepare for the annual: Day of Service 2026. While we join veterans, friends, and like-minded individuals for Day of Services 2026. This nationwide community service initiative kicks off on the first Saturday in May and continues throughout the month. Good luck to everyone!

VFW Final Roll Call for our Departed Comrades from the Pacific Areas as reported for this issue

Comrade	Post	Comrade	Post
Creekmore, Larry D.	3457	Reyes, Ronald	124
Dulay, Constante	124	Johston, Richard S.	10223
Buffington, Gerald T.	12074	Laperriere, Joseph A.	2485
Palomino, Refugio M.	2485	Palmer, George W.	10033
Morris, Robert E.	9951		

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 to 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>

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>

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 There you will find a tabbed panel containing information on *Forms, Handbook, Duties, Ethics, Memorial, Prayer, Links and Training*.

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!**

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. Chaplain Peter Hook worked hard to expand it this year. It is a work that grows with us.

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

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. This gives you an opportunity to get to know other Chaplains and discuss things that are important to our work. **Good ideas are shared!**

CHIEF OF STAFF

Comrades,

Camaraderie is alive and well in District VII, particularly in Barrio Baretto where Post 11447 hosted their annual Beach Bash. It's a great event that raises money for the various community projects performed by the local post.

Along with DPA CDR Jack Farrell we had visitors from Districts II, III, and IV joining their comrades from the Philippines. A great time was had by all. We even had a surprise visitor all the way from New Jersey by way of Cebu, Past Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento joined the festivities.

To District VII Commander Gibby, Post 11447 Commander and event chairman Trey Derby, Post 2485 Commander Janet Alford and all the comrades we visited in Barrio Baretto and Angeles City many thanks for the hospitality.

We all attended the District VII meeting and all I can say is you guys are killing it. Listening to the post reports it's evident you are ensuring your posts, and the VFW name is well known in your communities. Some really great projects have been completed, and you have outstanding Day of service events planned as well.

We have about four months left in this term; let's all keep pushing forward with our programs and keep looking out for each other. Buddy checks are so important for health reasons and to keep the spirit of camaraderie alive. Don't forget when you're out and about and meet an American, ask if they are a Vet, and if they are, tell them about the VFW and ask them to join if eligible.

All the best,



Kenneth A. Stein
Chief of Staff 2025-2026 Term
Department of Pacific Areas



Chief of Staff

Ken Stein



Chief of Staff

CHIEF OF STAFF

noun. [cheef uhv staf]

Someone who solves a problem
you did not know you had in a
way you do not understand.

See also **wizard, magician**

DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR

Greetings Comrades,

This year's inspection success is a direct reflection of your determination and teamwork. Each comrade in the process (District Commander, District Inspector, District/Post Adjutants and District/Post Quartermaster) contributed to the success of the Department's annual inspections and completed prior or shortly after the Mid-Winter Conference.

As my predecessor mentioned in a recent District meeting, the "annual inspections should not come as a surprise to anyone." It is an annual and routine inspection to ensure that all Districts and Posts are operating in accordance with the DPA and National By-laws and procedures. This is a positive aspect; as it ensures we all adhere to established norms, rules and principles.

As of this writing the Department Inspections stands at:

6 of 6 Districts is at 100% and 26 of 27 Posts is at 96%.

Thank you for your commitment and dedication to getting the job done.

Yours in Comradship and Service,

Janet Alford
DPA Inspector



Department of Pacific Areas

Department Inspector

Janet Alford



To view the 2025-2026 Inspections Procedure, or to Download the current forms, click [HERE](#).

SOME SAY THEY'VE GOT YOUR BACK. WE PROVE IT.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS:

- Hosting service members and their families at morale-boosting events
- Providing vital financial assistance to military families in need
- Helping veterans recoup their earned benefits from the VA
- Granting scholarships to student veterans for higher education
- Testifying on Capitol Hill, leading the way for veterans legislation
- Standing at the forefront in the battle

FOR VETERANS.



HELP US SLAM THE SCAM!



Social Security

Join Us for National Slam the Scam Day — March 5!

On March 5, 2026, during National Consumer Protection Week, the Social Security Administration (SSA) and its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will lead National Slam the Scam Day.

Take part by using tools from SSA and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to recognize imposters — including Social Security-related scams — and stop scammers from stealing your money and personal information.

Help Us Slam the Scam!

1. Learn about common tactics and how to recognize the signs. For example:
 - An unexpected problem or offer of a prize or government benefit increase.
 - Pressure to act immediately.
 - Request for unusual payments like cryptocurrency, gift cards, gold bars, cash, or wire transfers, even with the promise of keeping your money safe.
2. Spread the word. Visit ssa.gov/scam for more information that could help you and others stay safe.
3. Report suspicious activity. Report Social Security-related issues to SSA OIG (oig.ssa.gov/report) and other concerns to the FTC (reportfraud.ftc.gov).

Report a Social Security Scam

Follow SSA OIG on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

Repost #SlamtheScam content on social media to keep your friends and family safe.



JUDGE ADVOCATE

PREPARING A RESOLUTION TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

The policy of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is established by resolutions adopted by the delegates attending Department and National Conventions. Most resolutions originate at the Post level and are passed through the District and Department before being acted upon at a National Convention. Many times, an otherwise worthy idea gets nowhere merely because it is not correctly presented.

A resolution contains two separate parts; a statement of the problem to be solved, and the proposed solution to the problem. The problem is outlined in the "WHEREAS" clauses, and the proposed solution is given in the "RESOLVED" section.

The "RESOLVED" section of a resolution should be complete in itself without depending on the "WHEREAS" clauses to give it meaning.

EXAMPLE

WHEREAS, the rising cost of living has created an intense hardship on those disabled veterans whose only income is a meager pension check; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we petition Congress to enact legislation which would provide a substantial increase in non-service connected pension rates.

If a resolution deals with a local problem, it needs no action on a level higher than that of the Post. If the problem concerns an area larger than that served by the Post, it should, after Post approval, be presented before the District or County Council. All resolutions of statewide, regional or national concern must be acted upon by the Department Convention. Those resolutions approved by a Department Convention, which affect persons or matters outside the state boundaries, must be forwarded to the National Convention for final disposition.

When submitting a resolution to the Department Convention, a notation on the bottom should show the previous action taken, such as, approval by Post and, if applicable, by the District. A Post or District submitting a resolution to its Department Convention must follow guidelines established by the Department, which may require submitting the resolution to the Department Adjutant prior to the convening of the convention.

Resolutions not in proper form, with unclear meaning, or concerning matters clearly not within the scope and purpose of the Veterans of Foreign Wars cannot be considered by the National Convention.

Resolutions approved by a Department Convention, which affect matters outside state boundaries, must be forwarded by the Department Adjutant to the National Convention for final disposition. Approved resolutions should be sent to National Headquarters at the close of the Department Convention. The Adjutant General requests all resolutions be forwarded to National Headquarters no later than two (2) working days following the close of the Department Convention. A resolution disapproved by the Department Convention or not acted upon by the Department Convention will not be considered by the National Convention.

Resolutions may also be originated by Department officers or by the Department Convention itself and acted upon by the Department Convention. A National Officer may originate a resolution concerning National affairs and submit it directly to the National Convention without Department action. Likewise, a National Convention Committee may originate a resolution and present it for approval during the National Convention.

Policy set by the National Convention is binding upon all subordinate units of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. No Post or Department is permitted to take any individual action or espouse any cause contrary to the National Bylaws or to the actions of the National Convention except that it may propose changes in policy by the preparation of a resolution for consideration as outlined herein.

Warren "Max" Maxson
Judge Advocate
Department of Pacific Areas



Department of Pacific Areas

Judge Advocate

Warren "Max" Maxson



Official VFW Cover



New Ball Cap Style



CHAIN OF COMMAND PROTOCOL

The Commander is the arbitrator of arguments and the judge in disputes. As a general rule, their decisions are considered correct until over-ruled by the Post meeting, the District, Department Commander or Commander-in-Chief. That being said, it is important to resolve issues at the lowest level possible. However, there are certain times when it is necessary to elevate your concerns to the next level.

- Local issues are not the responsibility of the District or Department Commander.
 - Try to resolve them in-house.
- Never bypass anyone in the chain of command.
- If the alleged allegations involve the Commander, immediately notify the Commander next in the chain.
- Should there be irregular identified during a routine audit, any noted discrepancies must be reported immediately to the Post/District membership.
- If you believe that the problem cannot be resolved at your level or may result in a more serious situation by all means elevate your concerns to the next appropriate level (District and/or Department) Commander so they are not blindsided.
- A written report shall be generated for every investigation.
 - The investigator or investigating committee will present their findings to the post membership, District Governing Body or Department Council as applicable.
- Record relevant issues in your minutes. Include the motion and the approval or disapproval as applicable.
- If the Post or District fails to act to correct noted deficiencies, immediately inform the Department Commander for further guidance.
- Issues brought before the Department Commander for action, shall be supported by all relevant documents. i.e., Investigation Report (with supporting documents), Copy of the Minutes showing approved action(s), and the Commanders recommendations.
- Educate yourself on the procedures for removing an elected officer of their duties.
 - Post Level, MOP - Article II, Sec. 220
 - District Level, MOP – Article IV, Sec. 420
- Educate yourself on the procedures for initiating disciplinary action and the members right to appeal. There is a fine line that separates the need for a simple corrective action and the need to initiate disciplinary action under Article IX. *As an example: Misappropriation of funds is one of the offenses punishable by Article IX, Discipline. Do you simply remove the accused from office or Initiate Disciplinary action under Article IX? If initiated, it is imperative that proper procedures be followed.*
 - MOP -Article IX, Sec. 902 Provides a list of offenses recognized by the VFW that may be subject to Disciplinary Action.
 - MOP – Article IX, Sec. 907 Provides a list of Penalties that may be imposed for those offenses.
 - No member shall be subject to the penalties authorized in Section 907 unless such member has been advised in writing of the Charges and Specifications.
- Ensure any action taken is properly documented and withing the timelines specified in the MOP. Maintain a file copy of all correspondence to include receipts for certified mail (if applicable).
- Control Posts to Social-Media. Once it's posted the whole world knows. **(Don't air your dirty laundry)**

All Commanders are welcome to seek advice and guidance from the Department. If additional information is required or clarification is required, Department will reach out to National for assistance. We too have a Chain of Command.

THE UNLIKELY SPY: JUAN PUJOL GARCÍA

Juan Pujol García's life was marked by a series of failures. He struggled in boarding school, failed to make his chicken farm profitable, and could not sustain a small cinema business. During the Spanish Civil War, he managed to desert both the Republican and Nationalist sides without ever firing a meaningful shot for either. By conventional measures, he seemed to be a man of no consequence.

In 1940, Pujol approached the British Embassy in Madrid with an offer to spy against Adolf Hitler. However, officials viewed him through the lens of his past failures. They saw a man with no training, no connections, and no apparent value, leading to his rejection. Undeterred, he made a second attempt in Lisbon, only to be turned down again. A third try met with the same fate. Most people would have given up, but Pujol was determined. Instead of conceding defeat, he decided to escalate his ambitions. If Britain wouldn't hire him to spy on Germany, he would convince Germany to hire him to spy on Britain.



Pujol devised a daring plan. He created a fake identity as a pro-Nazi Spanish official and approached the Abwehr, the German military intelligence service. Presenting himself as a valuable asset, he offered his services. They accepted him, providing training, funding, and the codename “Arabel.” His mission was to travel to Britain and establish a spy network.

However, Pujol could not speak English. Instead of abandoning his mission, he remained in Lisbon and began constructing one of the most audacious intelligence deceptions in modern history. Using tourist guidebooks, public maps, and magazines, he fabricated an entire spy ring in Britain consisting of 27 fictional agents. Each had detailed biographies, political beliefs, jobs, personalities, and geographic locations. He described the pubs they frequented and referenced real British military units, all of it entirely fabricated.

Pujol's early reports contained mistakes, including cultural errors and misunderstandings of British customs. When German handlers questioned inconsistencies, he blamed his imaginary sub-agents, claiming some were unreliable or even dead. Remarkably, the Germans sent pension payments to the widow of a spy who had never existed.

By 1942, British intelligence noticed something unusual: Germany was receiving intelligence from “London” sources that did not exist. They traced this back to Pujol. Rather than arrest him, MI5 saw potential in his abilities and recruited him. They brought him to Britain and gave him a new codename: Garbo, named after the famous actress Greta Garbo. He was paired with a skilled handler, Tomás Harris, and together they refined the deception.

Garbo sent hundreds of reports to Germany—some false, some harmlessly accurate, and others true but intentionally delayed. The goal was not merely to mislead but to build credibility.

By 1944, the German High Command regarded Garbo as one of their most trusted assets. As the D-Day invasion approached, Allied planners needed Germany to believe the invasion would occur at Pas de Calais rather than Normandy. Garbo became central to this deception, sending over 500 messages reinforcing the illusion that a massive First U.S. Army Group was poised to strike Calais.

On June 6, 1944, as Allied forces stormed Normandy, Garbo sent a message warning Germany of the invasion. It arrived too late to change events but proved his loyalty. He then followed up with the crucial claim that Normandy was a diversion and the real invasion would occur at Pas de Calais. Germany believed him, leading to significant armored divisions being held in reserve at Calais, which did not reinforce Normandy during the critical early days.

In July 1944, Adolf Hitler awarded Pujol the Iron Cross Second Class, while Britain later honored him with the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). After the war, fearing retaliation from former Nazis, Pujol staged his own death in 1949 and quietly moved to Venezuela, where he lived anonymously for decades.

In 1984, a journalist tracked him down. On the 40th anniversary of D-Day, he returned to Normandy, where veterans shook his hand. The failed chicken farmer had altered the trajectory of a global war, proving that imagination and determination can outwit even the most powerful empires. Read more [HERE](#).

IMMEDIATE PAST DPA COMMANDER

Hooyah DPA!

January to March, happens every year. For us as a Department it may be the most “dangerous” time of the year. We’ve kicked back after Christmas and New Years. We have gotten past the Mid-Winter Solstice, CofA, Mid-Term Cambodia Border War Convention and now we move into the home stretch.

We still have a lot to do, and (despite having a great team) there remains work undone. Let’s not get it tangled or taken the wrong way. It’s not like we are not going to meet our goals; it is more of just when and it will be sooner than later. That said, warning signs ahead. We are entering a familiar destination. The “Oh my God it is almost the end of the year for awards and other submissions” destination. Otherwise known as the “End of Year” Zone.

Yes, what was prophesized in the Commanders, both Department and National Membership programs, is coming to pass. While we have several Posts and Districts who have met membership goals, there are a few that need to lean into it. Post Awards are coming soon and if you have not already started to craft those awards, you are behind the curve for submissions to Post, District and DPA. Comrades, this is your final warning before we drop the white flag and race to the finish.

Planning also includes the Department Convention. I am sure sometime in March, the DPA website will go live for Comrades to sign up for the Department Convention in June. Start looking at country visa entry requirements for Thailand. Bring your Comrades with you so they can learn about business at the Department level and be more prepared to move up in the ranks through your Posts and Districts. We will be conducting final nominations and elections for our future leaders and this process, as well as the swearing in ceremony, is worth taking in.

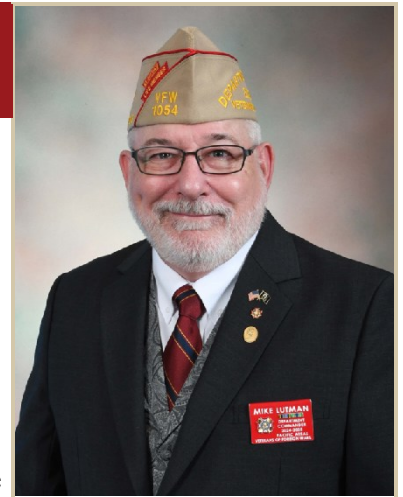
As we always say, do not let petty jealousies or trivia personalities influence our deliberations. Be fair and forgiving as we move forward. Nobody is perfect and we are all worth a second chance. Consider your future leaders carefully and be sure to understand what their experience and performance has delivered during their leadership in other positions.

God Bless each and every one of you. May the road rise up to meet you and the wind forever be at your back. Until we meet again, may God keep you in the palm of his hand. Safe and protected.

All the best,

Michael D. Lutman
Immediate Past Department Commander
Department of Pacific Areas
ADJ/QM Post 1054

TEAMWORK, Together Everyone Achieves More.



Immediate Past DPA Cdr

Michael D. Lutman



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



TodaysVFW.org

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER (DSO)

The Department of Pacific Areas (DPA) currently has 10 Assistant Department Service Officers (ADSOs) who are fully qualified, in training, or in the certification process. Recruitment continues with a focus on expanding coverage in Korea, Japan, and Guam. We also have one new ADSO beginning training in Thailand, Saipan and another in Okinawa, Japan, bringing our total to 13 ADSOs, hopefully by the end Oct 2026. Yes, it takes that long to go through the process.

I would like to note that an important member of our ADSO team has resigned due to personal reasons: Jeff Hansome of Okinawa, Japan. His departure has been deeply felt, as he provided tremendous support to veterans throughout the DPA. Jeff is truly missed, and we wish him nothing but the very best moving forward.

Since 1 November, the DPA Service Program has assisted over 800 veterans and dependents, filing more than 500 claims.

The DPA has gathered concerns from veterans across the DPA region and has assembled five resolutions addressing the following issues:

- Medicare not usable outside the U.S.
- Caregiver Program not available outside the U.S.
- Travel reimbursement not authorized outside the U.S.
- TRICARE payment disparities in the Philippines
- Education benefit inequities in the Philippines (the only country where benefits are paid at half the global rate)

These resolutions will be presented at the DPA Convention in June.

District and Post Commanders are encouraged to ensure their Post Benefits Advisors submit monthly reports. These reports document the impact of our work and highlight the needs of our communities.

DSO officers will also be traveling to Districts to assist with claims filing. District and Post Commanders who require face-to-face support may contact me at dpa.dso72@gmail.com.

Success Story Across the DPA

Post 10249 – Udon Thani, Thailand—Post Benefits Advisor: Richard Bronson

Richard Bronson has been a long-serving DPA ADSO and has assisted thousands of veterans and their dependents—filing claims, conducting hospital visits, and performing home visits. In January 2026, Richard dedicated over 100 volunteer hours, including six home visits. He worked closely with two terminally ill veterans and assisted 33 veterans along with nine widows and dependents. If you are in the Udon Thani area, stop by and give him a holler.

Your dedication ensures that veterans and their families receive the benefits, support, and advocacy they deserve. Without your commitment, much of this vital work would go undone.

Thank you all for your continued efforts - without you, so much would go undone. Until my next report,

Vernon C. Lask
Department Service Officer
Department of Pacific Areas
dsodpa@vfwpacific.org

**Click the Post Benefits
Advisor Guide to down-
load the latest version.**



DSO Pacific Areas

Vernon Lask



Service Officer



2025

**Post Benefits
Advisor Guide**

**#STILL
SERVING**



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

In a dim, smoke-filled room in 1955, cigarette haze drifted lazily around an old typewriter. Rod Serling sat there, a compact man of just five feet four inches, yet radiating fierce intensity. A decorated paratrooper from World War II, he had earned a Purple Heart for shrapnel wounds to his wrist and knee while serving in the Philippines. He had watched friends die and carried home nightmares that haunted him still.

Now, he was trying to write for the new medium of television. But the industry wasn't interested in truth. Sponsors wanted to sell cars, appliances, and cigarettes—not provoke thought. Executives warned that honesty was bad for business. Television, they insisted, should entertain without offending anyone, especially in the South, or risking sponsor backlash. Serling believed otherwise. He saw television as a powerful tool for more than escapism. A writer, he argued, had a duty to be "a menace of the public's conscience," to challenge complacency and expose societal flaws.



Then came August 1955. Fourteen-year-old Emmett Till was brutally murdered in Mississippi after allegedly whistling at a white woman. His killers were acquitted by an all-white jury. The injustice outraged Serling. He channeled his fury into a script called "Noon on Doomsday," aiming to dramatize the horror of mob violence and racial prejudice. He submitted it, convinced it was his most vital work. The network executives read it and recoiled—not from the message, but from potential controversy. Protests poured in from white supremacist groups. Sponsors feared boycotts. They demanded drastic changes: the victim could no longer be Black; the setting couldn't be the South. No references to lynching, no Southern elements at all.

Serling fought, but the censors prevailed. The script was gutted. In one version, the victim became an unnamed foreigner in New England. In another attempt, it shifted to a Mexican victim in the 1800s, recast as a Western. Even a Coca-Cola bottle was removed from a scene because the sponsor sold a rival soda. What aired was unrecognizable—lukewarm, "vitiating, emasculated," as Serling later described it bitterly. He felt defeated, like a coward for complying. Other scripts on corruption, hate groups, and America's growing darkness met the same fate: sponsors threatened to pull ads, and lines were slashed for being "too real." Frustration mounted until Serling had an epiphany. Censors were literal. They scanned for trigger words—"Negro," "lynch," "segregation," "South." They ignored metaphors, allegories, or the absurd. So he built a Trojan horse.

He pitched a new anthology series: fantasy tales of spaceships, aliens, time travel—the "impossible." Executives, relieved at the harmless escapism, approved it swiftly. A show called *The Twilight Zone* posed no threat to sales. They had no clue what they unleashed. For five seasons, starting in 1959, Serling appeared on screen in his signature black suit, cigarette in hand, introducing stories that seemed fantastical. But beneath the surface lay sharp commentary.

In "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street," flickering lights and paranoia turned neighbors against each other—not Russians, but ordinary Americans fearing invasion. It mirrored Cold War hysteria and McCarthyism without a single political keyword.

In "Eye of the Beholder," a bandaged woman awaited surgery to look "normal," revealing a society that punished difference. It skewered conformity without naming politics.

Sponsors never objected. Ratings soared; cars and cigarettes sold. Executives congratulated themselves, blind to the subversion. Serling was quietly triumphant. He had smuggled forbidden truths—prejudice, fear, the darkness in humanity—into millions of homes. By masking reality in the fantastic, he outwitted the system.

He proved you could confront society's deepest sins if you disguised them first. For five groundbreaking seasons, that's precisely what he did, forever changing television.

WOMEN'S VETERAN CHAIRPERSON

Good Day my fellow Comrades from the Pacific Areas and around the world. The article below is near and dear to my heart. Reminds me always of the Sailors and fellow veterans that I lost because of Suicide. It's never good to get a call or hear from someone that we lost another one. Please, talk to someone and ask for help! We are a TEAM and we are here to help and listen to each other! To those that listen to me... Thank you!



Riding for a cause: A mission to S.A.V.E. our Veterans

Woman in leather vest salutes beside military boots, helmet, and American flag monument at the S.A.V.E. run. Group observes solemnly under cloudy sky, conveying respect.

January 31, 2026

Evangeline Gibson
Public Affairs, Office of the Director, New Mexico VA Medical Center

Click [HERE](#) or on the picture above to read the full article.

If you're a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) to receive 24/7 confidential support. You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect. To reach responders, dial 988 then Press 1, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](#), or text 838255. Additionally, securing firearms with a cable gun lock, in a lockbox or safe can create a critical moment of pause in a moment of crisis. Learn more at [KeepItSecure.net](#). Finally, encourage Veterans to seek help early. If you or a Veteran you know needs support, "Don't wait. Reach out." Explore resources at [VA.gov/Reach](#) and take the first step toward assistance.

7 Steps to a Happier Life

Don't ever give up. Keep trying.

Don't make things complicated. Keep it simple.

Don't overthink. Be positive.

Don't be overly emotional. Have faith.

Believe in yourself. Don't worry.

Love yourself. Always smile.

Expect a little. Live simple.

Golda Russell
Women's Veteran Chairperson
Department of Pacific Areas
Post 12231 Manilla Post Commander



Department of Pacific Areas

Woman's Veteran Chairperson

Golda Russell



VOD/PP/TA CHAIRMAN

Comrades,

VFW Department of Pacific Areas remains fully committed to the ScholarsApp website for all contest submissions. While we continue to navigate technical glitches, the platform is improving and remains our path forward. Our goal is 100% digital participation; to achieve this, I ask for your assistance in communicating deadlines and requirements clearly at every level.

The platform offers downloadable flyers with QR codes for easy access, eliminating the need for paper or email submissions. Should you encounter issues, the technical team is highly responsive during U.S. business hours.

This year's DPA Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Teachers Award winners were:

- Patriot's Pen is Jayce Shaffer, from District 7, Post 2485, Angeles City, Philippines.
- Voice of Democracy is Belldandy Lamb, from District 3, Post 8180, Songtan, Korea.

Congrats, and let's wish them luck at the National level.

Looking ahead, new topics will be released around April 2026. I encourage you to partner with local schools to integrate these programs into their curriculum. Finally, please ensure all submissions are strictly reviewed against the rules—preventing disqualifications at the Department level begins with diligence at the Post and District levels.

Yours in comradeship and service,

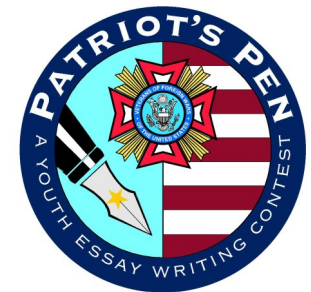
Robert Madison
VoD/PP/TA Chairman
Department of Pacific Areas
vodppdpa@vfwpacific.org



Department of Pacific Areas

VOD/PP/TA Chairman

Robert Madison



VOICE OF DEMOCRACY VFW VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
2025-2026 Theme
“How Are You Showing Patriotism and **PAST DUE** For Our Country?”
Student Entry Deadline: Oct. 31, 2025
Patriotic Audio Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$35,000 Award

PATRIOT'S PEN VFW VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
2025-2026 Theme
“How Are You Showing Patriotism and **PAST DUE** For Our Country?”
Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2025
Patriotic Written Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$5,000 Award

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

The petition that arrived at the United States Supreme Court on January 8, 1962, was handwritten in shaky pencil on prison stationery. Five uneven pages with imperfect spelling, it bore no resemblance to the polished legal briefs the justices usually received. Yet it posed a question so plain and powerful that it would forever alter American justice. “The question is very simple,” Clarence Earl Gideon wrote. “I requested the court to appoint me an attorney and the court refused.”

At fifty-one, Gideon was a drifter living on society’s margins. Gray-haired, weathered, with only an eighth-grade education, he moved town to town, taking odd jobs and battling constant poverty. He had served time for minor offenses but was no career criminal—just a man largely invisible to the system.

On June 3, 1961, the Bay Harbor Pool Room in Panama City, Florida, was burglarized. A door was forced, a jukebox and cigarette machine damaged, and about five dollars in coins stolen. Evidence against Gideon was weak: one witness claimed to have seen him nearby early that morning with coins and a wine bottle. Gideon insisted he was innocent.

His trial began August 4, 1961. Alone in court, Gideon asked Judge Robert L. McCrary Jr. to appoint a lawyer. The judge refused. Florida law allowed appointed counsel only in capital cases. For felony burglary, defendants had to represent themselves if they could not afford a lawyer.

The system pitted an untrained man against professional prosecutors. Gideon had to master rules of evidence, cross-examine witnesses, make legal arguments, and protect his rights—all without help. He tried valiantly, questioning witnesses and pleading his case plainly to the jury. It was not enough. Convicted, he received the maximum sentence: five years in Florida State Prison. Most would have accepted the outcome. Gideon did not.

In prison, he turned to the library’s law books. Painstakingly, he studied the Constitution. He read the Sixth Amendment’s guarantee of “assistance of counsel” in criminal prosecutions and the Fourteenth Amendment’s promise of due process. He came to see that justice too often depended on wealth rather than fairness. His appeal to the Florida Supreme Court failed. So Gideon took up a pencil. From his cell, he wrote a direct petition to the U.S. Supreme Court, arguing that denying him a lawyer made a fair trial impossible. Thousands of such handwritten pleas reached the Court each year; nearly all were ignored. Gideon’s was not.

In June 1962, the justices agreed to hear the case and appointed Abe Fortas, one of the nation’s top attorneys, to represent him. The case challenged *Betts v. Brady* (1942), which allowed states to deny appointed counsel in non-capital cases absent “special circumstances.” Fortas argued a simpler truth: no defendant could fairly face the state’s power without a lawyer. Justice Hugo Black, a dissenter in *Betts*, saw his long-held view finally triumph.

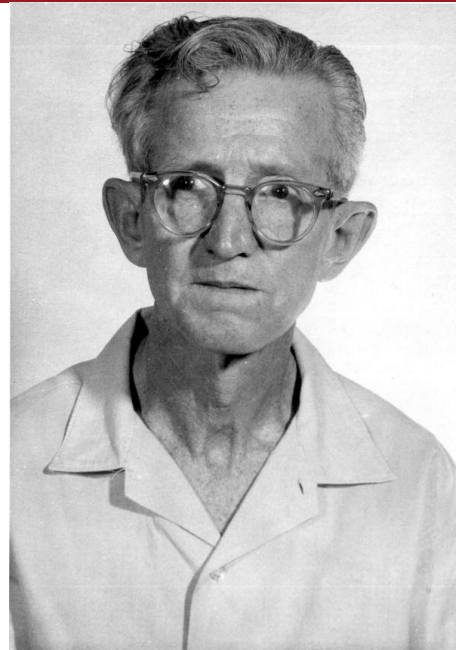
On March 18, 1963, the Court ruled unanimously, 9–0. In *Gideon v. Wainwright*, it declared the right to counsel “fundamental and essential to a fair trial” and binding on the states through the Fourteenth Amendment. *Betts* was overruled. States now had to provide attorneys to indigent defendants in serious criminal cases.

Gideon won a retrial in Florida. With a court-appointed lawyer, the prosecution’s thin case fell apart. On August 5, 1963, the jury found him not guilty. Clarence Earl Gideon walked free.

He never sought the spotlight. He returned to a quiet, hardscrabble life and died of cancer in 1972. Yet his stubborn act reshaped the nation. Public defender systems grew nationwide. Countless convictions were reviewed. And a familiar phrase entered American life:

“You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford one, one will be appointed to you.”

Those words exist because one poor man, armed only with a pencil and a refusal to accept injustice, changed the law from inside a prison cell.



MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Comrades,

This is a brief update regarding the status of Life and Legacy Membership in the Department of Pacific Areas (DPA). As of Monday, 23 February 2026, the DPA has 12,163 Life Members. This represents an increase of 92 Life Members since the last report on 3 January 2026. Notably, 94 percent of DPA membership consists of Life Members. The DPA warmly invites everyone to take this opportunity to become a Life Member.

The Department of Pacific Areas (DPA) has 595 Legacy Life Members, an increase of 21 since 1 January 2026. This total includes 207 Bronze members, 43 Silver members, and 345 Gold members. The Legacy Life Membership program allows VFW Life Members to contribute to the long-term success of the VFW. This annual endowment supports both your local post and the Department of Pacific Areas (DPA). All DPA Life Members are encouraged to become Legacy Life Members and join a legacy that truly makes a difference.

Additionally, Legacy Life Members receive discounts on purchases at the VFW Store <https://www.vfwstore.org/>. Bronze Legacy Life Members enjoy a 5% discount, Silver Legacy Life Members receive a 10% discount, and Gold Legacy Life Members benefit from a 15% discount.

Yours in Comradeship,

James (Jim) Collins
Legacy and Life Membership Chairman



Membership Chairman

James "Jim" Collins



Member Incentives

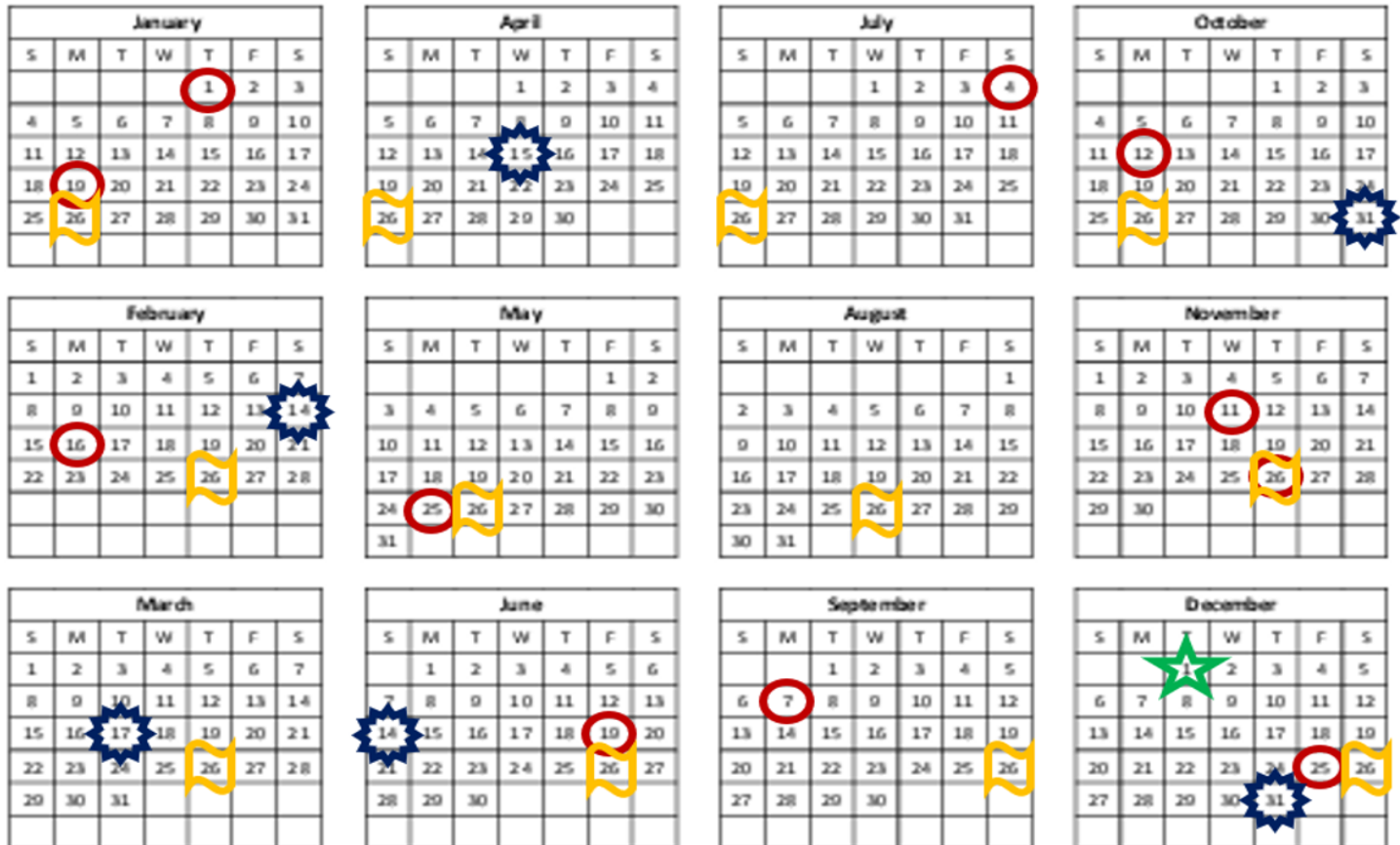
Bronze **Silver** **Gold**
\$400 \$800 \$1200

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Plated Engraved Legacy Life Card*	●	●	●
Legacy Life Lapel Pin*	●	●	●
Legacy Life Hat Pin*	●	●	●
Distinctive VFW Store items for Legacy Life Members*	●	●	●
Legacy Life Membership Certificate	●	●	●
Member Recognition on Internet & Convention Program	●	●	●
Legacy Hat Patch*	●	●	●
Personalized Brick at Centennial Plaza*	●	●	●
VFW Store Discounts (personal use only)*	5%	10%	15%
Annual Endowment to Post	\$6	\$12	\$18
Annual Endowment to Department	\$6	\$12	\$18
Annual Endowment to National Headquarters	\$6	\$12	\$18

SHAWN WATSON'S NATIONAL JVC FUND RAISER

Shawn Watson's

2026 Cash Calendar National JVC Fund Raiser



PAYOUTS

51 Fridays \$50.00 = \$2,550.00, **11** \$300.00 = \$3,300.00,
12 \$26.00 = \$312.00, **6** \$500.00 = \$3,000.00, **1** \$1,000.00

Donations are \$10.00 each or 3 for \$20.00

Scan tickets to Larry at PDCLyons935@gmail.com and coordinate funds transfer with George at gbeckjr@gmail.com. Email all to both.

Your tickets are good for all 81 drawings for a total of \$10,162.00!

Thank You for Shawn's Support

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Email _____

Only need to scan bottom portion of this ticket and email to Larry as per above. One for each ticket desired.

Help Support Shawn on his bid for VFW National JVC 2028

LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

Comrades, upcoming soon will be the VFW Legislative Conference held the first week of March each year in Washington D.C. This conference is where the VFW Legislative Members of each department will escort their Department Commanders & National Council Members to office visits with the Senators and Congress representatives. I have requested our face-to-face meetings with both of our assigned Congressional Representatives of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The area of DPA does not have any Senators that represent our area. Also, on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, we will attend in the VFW Commander-in-Chief's Testimony to Congress.

Along with the above we will be pushing this year's VFW Priority's There is a strong push for the following Bills.

S.1032 / H.R. 2102, Major Richard Star Act: To amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay for disability retirees with combat-related disabilities, and for other purposes.

H.R. 467, Foreign Medical Program Modernization Act of 202: To amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the requirement of a service-connected disability to furnish veterans with medical care outside of a State, and for other purposes. Access to health care for veterans living abroad by modernizing reimbursement systems and strengthening global care options. This would mostly improve services with the Veterans in the Philippines.

H.R. 4837, Written Informed Consent Act: Expand informed consent requirements to include five additional medication categories to ensure veterans are fully aware of the risks and benefits of these medications.

H.R. 740 / S.275, Veterans' ACCESS Act of 2025: To ensure veterans receive clear information and timely health care by improving efficiency, oversight, and coordination of VA's community care program.

As of this time we do not have the Talking points for the upcoming Legislative conference, however once they are published, I will put a link on the DPA Facebook page.

The NLS office, it's officially online and "live" the **VFW Voices of Service – Stories in Action**. Story Bank submission link: [HERE](#)

This is a new, permanent way for veterans, service members, caregivers, survivors, and families to share their real-life experiences directly with VFW National so those stories can be used (with permission) to educate Congress and strengthen our legislative advocacy. There are no deadlines, quotas, or reporting requirements. This is an ongoing effort meant to strengthen our advocacy over time.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars National Legislative Service (NLS) is asking for membership to sign up for the Weekly ACTION CORP newsletter. Please consider receiving the weekly information to your email box. Signing up for the ACTION CORP newsletter by clicking [HERE](#) or the link in the right hand column.

Randell E Himes
DPA Legislative Chairman
legdpa@vfwpacific.org
National Legislative Committee
rehimes@gmail.com 1-815-408-2454



Legislative Chairman

Randell Himes



**2025
PRIORITY
GOALS**

VFW ACTION ALERT



ACTION CORPS
Sign up today!

If you are interested in keeping track of these bills, sign up for the ACTION CORP newsletter. Click this link: <https://votervoicenet/VFW/register>. Doing so will get you updates on the VFW Priority Bills.

GRAND SEAMY SQUEAKS

Grand Commander Higgins (A.K.A., Witch Doctor)

“ALWAYS READY”

In Memory of Supreme Commander Eric S. Bell

It is with heavy hearts, we share the news that Supreme Commander Eric S. Bell passed away unexpectedly and peacefully in his sleep on January 19, 2026.

While we grieve this sudden loss, we find comfort in the peace of his passing and the strength of his legacy. Eric was not only a dedicated leader but also a devoted family man. His kindness and service touched lives all over the world, and he will be missed by all who knew him. Eric is survived by his wife, Kathleen, and their teenage son. We ask that you keep his family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Information regarding funeral arrangements and memorial services will be shared as it becomes available. In the interim, cards of remembrance and expressions of sympathy may be sent to: 37975 Grantland St. Livonia, MI 48150.

Supreme has created a fundraiser to help Eric Bell's family provide him with the beautiful farewell he deserves. You can easily make a donation by going to <https://givebutter.com/1nfPXZ> Checks can be mailed to Supreme HQ.

Finally, let us remember Eric's goal for the year and strive to accomplish them:

Eric's goals for our future were simple:

1. Continue to be a positive resource for veterans around the globe.
2. Remain steadfast and true to our parent organization (the VFW) by staying active in our posts, districts, and departments by recruiting VFW members and to spread Cootie awareness.
3. Recruiting and mentoring new cooties.
4. Staying engaged within our Pup Tents, Districts and Grands by teaching our cooties the process; ensuring proper completion and timely submission of our administrative requirements. In addition, communication and transparency are key. If you need assistance, ask for help. If you are asked to help... HELP!

L.O.T.C.S.

Grand Seamy
Pat “doc” Higgins
aka- the Witch Doctor
cdgrd@vfwpacific.org



Big Bug

Patrick “Doc” Higgins



Click each Logo
above
for Websites



PAID ADVERTISEMENT



DR. NITI NAVANIMITKUL

MEN'S HEALTH THAILAND

Dr. Niti Navanimitkul stands as a leading authority in men's health in Thailand, combining advanced medical expertise with a patient-centered philosophy. His career reflects a commitment to innovation, education, and holistic care, positioning him as a trusted figure in urology and male wellness.

Qualifications & Specialized Training

Dr. Niti's journey began at a top Thai university, where he earned his medical degree and discovered his passion for urology. He pursued advanced training in men's health, focusing on reproductive, urinary, and sexual health. His fellowships at renowned institutions equipped him with cutting-edge techniques, particularly in minimally invasive procedures.

Professional Excellence

As a full-time physician at Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Dr. Niti collaborates with multidisciplinary teams to address complex cases. His practice emphasizes:

- Penile Prosthesis Surgery: Thailand's foremost specialist, with over 70 successful cases and a 99.99% success rate.
- UroLift for BPH: Performed 50+ cases (Oct 2024–Jan 2025) with a 99.99% success rate, offering rapid recovery.
- ED Solutions: Stem cell therapy, shockwave treatment, and medication.
- Male Infertility: Diagnostic testing and advanced fertility procedures.
- Prostate Care: Screening, BPH management, and cancer prevention.

Awards & Recognition

Dr. Niti's contributions have earned accolades for patient care, research, and medical education. He actively shares insights at international conferences, driving advancements in men's health across Southeast Asia.

Holistic Patient Care

Beyond physical treatment, Dr. Niti prioritizes emotional well-being. His approach includes:

- Personalized consultations to address psychological impacts of conditions like ED or infertility.
- Empowering patients through education on preventive health and lifestyle changes.
- Collaborative care models at Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, ensuring comprehensive support.

Community Advocacy

Dr. Niti champions men's health awareness through public seminars.

DR. NITI NAVANIMITKUL
MEN'S HEALTH THAILAND

"If Men's Health is Life's Answer: Restoring masculine wellness with compassionate care, tailored to your needs by a team of US-Certified medical specialists with over a decade of experience."

- Penile Prosthesis Surgeon
- Sexual Dysfunction Specialist
- Water Vapor Therapy (Rezum) Specialist
- Urologist
- UroLift Specialist

Refer code "VFW"
for a one-time free consultation on your first visit.

Offer applies to the doctor's fee only at the first visit.
Valid until: December 31, 2025.
Booking at niti.menshealth@gmail.com

LETTER'S OF INTENT 2026-2027 TERM



No one does more for Veterans

Letter of Intent 2026/2027 for Department Surgeon

Greeting Comrades of the Pacific,

It is my pleasure to accept and run in the next election term for the Department of Pacific Areas, Surgeon. If elected, I look forward to working with the new administration of elected, appointed officers and Comrades.

I earned my eligibility to join the Veterans of Foreign Wars after joining the United States Army in 1977 where I had multiple assignments including a deployment to the Middle East during Desert Shield/Storm before retiring in 2003.

I joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars with Post 1193 in Lawton Oklahoma in 2007 and served as Post Adjutant and served as two time Commander, 2015 and reelected in 2016 for a second term.

I transferred my VFW Membership in 2017 to VFW Post 10216 in Songtan, South Korea. Since then the Post merged and is now Post 8180 and I have been an active member in the post, and the community.

I am currently the Department of Pacific Areas Chaplain 2023-2026. At the District III level, I was elected Chaplain in May 2019 and was reelected in 2020. I am currently District III Chaplain, and Commander of Post 8180. I served as District III Council Member 2023-2025. I have been able to help many Veterans and their families in their times of need and I am willing to expand that now at the Department level.

Besides the VFW I am also a Life Member in the Military Order of the Cootie. Currently I am the Grand of Pacific Areas (GPA) Hide Gimlet (Lil Bug), and Pup Tent & Blanket Bum. I also served as GPA Hospital Chairman, 2024-2025. I am also a Life Member of the VFW National Home along with the Patty Daddy Program that also supports the National Home.

I am fully retired now and willing and able to take on this role and would be honored to serve again, as your Department Surgeon. I thank you for your consideration.

Yours in Comradeship,
Robert S. Chatman
VFW Post 8180



LETTER'S OF INTENT 2026-2027 TERM

Greeting Comrades of the Pacific,

I am announcing my candidacy for term Pacific Areas Department Chaplain.

It is my pleasure to accept and run for a first term as Department of Pacific Areas, Chaplain. If elected, I look forward to working with the new administration of elected officers.

I earned my eligibility to join the Veterans of Foreign Wars after joining the United States Military in 1984. I served in multiple components of the military during that time to include U.S. Naval Reserves, Washington State National Guard, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army Reserves, and the U.S. Army. Where I had multiple overseas assignments including a deployment to the Middle East during Desert Strike and participated with two different units in the Afghanistan Campaign (with 2 Campaign Stars), before retiring in 2020. I have also received the Armed Forces Expeditionary Ribbon (2nd Award), Armed Forces Service Ribbon, and other service/campaign ribbons.



I joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars with Post 1054 in Yokosuka, Japan in 2014. From that time until 2020, I was still on active duty and assigned to Army units in Korea, Arizona, and then I retired out of Kaiserslautern, Germany, at which time I returned home to Japan.

Since my return to Japan, I have served in Post 1054 in various capacities, most recent of which as the Post Commander (2025-26). As well, I have been vary active in District II, in various capicites, most recent of which has been as the District Commander (2024-26).

At the Distict II level I am currently the D2 Commander, and held the same position last year. I am currently the District II Councilman and Post 1054 Post Commander, elect (2025-2026). I am also currently serving as the DPA Scouting Chair. I have been able to help many Veterans and their family members in their times of need and I am willing to expand that now at the Department level.

Besides the VFW I am also a Life Member in the Military Order of the Cootie with Pup Tent 1, Grand of Pacific Areas Hospital Chairman, and a Life Member ith the Patty Daddy Program that also supports the National Home.

Currently, I am workign as a facilitator for the DOL TAP VET progam that facilitates servicements transitioning to civilian life. My company is fully supportive of my work with the VFW. As such, I will have no problems with ensuring I have the time and energy to serve as your Department Chaplain. I thank you for your consideration.

Yours in Comradeship,

Walter Joseph Fahnestock Jr.
District 2, Commander

LETTER'S OF INTENT 2026-2027 TERM

LETTER OF INTENT TERM 2026-2027

Department Junior Vice Commander
Louis S. Holub EMC (SW) USN ret.



I am honored to announce my candidacy for the position of Department of Pacific Areas
Junior Vice Commander term 2026-2027.

A Charter Gold Legacy Life member of the All State-All American Banchang Utapao VFW Post 12146, Past All American Dist. V and Post Commander. I am currently District IV Okinawa, Taiwan, Cambodia and Thailand Commander certain to be AS and AA. I have served as DPA Audit Committee Chairman, Assistant QM, Chaplain and Surgeon. Also, the DPA Midwinter Meeting and Convention Chairman and current DPA Council member. Post 12146 Trustee 3year having held all Post and Dist. level Offices and Chairmanships including Honor Guard Member and the annual Golf Tourney Chair donations >10KUSD annually. I have been awarded by DPA and National for my recruitment efforts, National and Special Aid de Camp, awarded the Honor Degree Pup Tent One.

I bring a varied background to this most important JVC position by building on my Departmental experience. My goal while promoting the National and DPA Commanders programs is to continue to advance camaraderie and teamwork amongst DPA Officers, Districts and Posts, along with the Honored Degreed and Auxiliary. I have travelled extensively in and around the Pacific Areas having visited all 9 countries with the goal of understanding the Macro and Micro of the VFW, the Dist. and Post local needs such as medical and insurance needs, FMP, Service Officer Programs, Woman Warrior needs, Transition assistance for Active-Duty Military and continue to support our local DPAA POW-MIA missions.

My Military experience as a Chief Petty Officer USN, qualified Engineer Officer, 1st responder, Fire Marshal and my continuing civilian consultancy career a retired Senior Vice President, GM and Emergency Director of major energy companies has exposed me to many unique local, retiree, expatriate challenges which have prepared my competencies and compassion to fulfill the position as Pacific Areas JVC.

Please consider my previous VFW achievements:

VFW Department of New Jersey (at large) & PB 9876	(1996-2014)
Post 9876 Pattaya Beach, District 5 Trustee (appointed)	(2014-2015)
Post 12146 Charter member/QM, Dist. 5 Adjutant	(2015-2016)
AS/AA QM (National Aid de Camp)	
DPA Budget committee member & Dist. 5 QM	(2017-2018)
AS/AA Post Adjutant, National Aid de Camp	
DPA Assistant QM, Dist.5 QM, Post JVC	(2018-2019)
AS/AA Post JVC-Dist. 5 QM	
DPA Audit Chairman, Dist. 5 QM, Post SVC elect/Commander	(2019-2020)
AS/AA Post Commander, Dist. QM	
Dist. 5 Commander, Post JA, National Special Aid de Camp	(2020-2021)
AS/AA Dist. 5 Commander	
Post & Dist. 5 VOD/PP Teachers Chairman	(2017-2021)
Post VOD/PP Teachers & Annual golf tourney Chairman	(2021-2026)
DPA Chaplain, Post VOD/PP Teachers Chairmen	(2022-2023)
DPA Surgeon, Dist. IV Trustee Post VOD/PP Teach Chair	(2023-2025)
DPA Dist. IV Commander, DPA Convention Chairman	(2025-2026)

I ask that you place your confidence in me and I look forward to seeing each of you at the upcoming Department Convention in Pattaya Beach Thailand June 2026.

Yours in Comradeship and Service to Veterans
Louis Holub
Commander, D4
Convention Chairman 2026-27

LETTER'S OF INTENT 2026-2027 TERM

Letter of Intent for DPA Junior Vice Commander



My name is James E. Collins. I am a member of VFW Robert W. Zaher Post 2485. I am submitting my Letter of Intent as a candidate for the position of Junior Vice Commander for the Department of Pacific Areas (DPA) for the 2026-2027 term.

I enlisted in the U.S. Army in September 1974 and retired in October 2004 after 30 years of continuous military service, achieving the rank of Sergeant Major. I graduated from several prestigious schools throughout my career, including the U.S. Army Airborne School, Ranger School, the Special Forces Qualification Course, Pathfinder School, and the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. I also earned numerous awards, including the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the U.S. Army Meritorious Service Medal (fifth award).

While serving on active duty and fulfilling my military responsibilities, I earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of the State of New York in May 1990. Additionally, I obtained a Master of Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma in May 1998.

After retiring from the military service in 2004, I worked for 10 years as a U.S. military contractor in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing atmospheric and media operations support for U.S. and NATO forces.

My commitment to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is unwavering. Being fully retired allows me to dedicate all my time and efforts to this organization. I have been a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars since 1991. After completely retiring in 2015, I became an active member of Post 2485. In May 2016, I became VFW Post 2485's 100th Legacy Life Gold Member. Since then, I have held several leadership roles and achieved various accomplishments, including:

VFW Robert W. Zaher Post 2485, Angeles City

- Commander (2018-20 and 2022-24)
- 4-Time All-American Commander
- Early Bird Legislative Award (2022-2024)
- Consecutive National Community Service Awards (2022-2024)
- Life Member of the Military Order of the Cootie - Pup Tent 15 Hide Gimlet

District VII, Philippines

- Commander (2022 - 2024)
- All American 2 years consecutively
- Early Bird Legislative Award (2022-2023)

Department of Pacific Areas

- Clark Veterans Cemetery Chairman
- 2024 DPA Convention Chairmen
- POW/MIA Chairmen (2024 – 2025)
- Legacy and Life Membership Chairman (2025 – 2026)

If elected, I pledge to treat all members with respect, prioritize positive motivation over coercion, and honor the viewpoints of every DPA member. My guiding principle will be to make things better.

Yours in Comradeship

James E. (Jim) Collins

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIVE DATES*



1 May Loyalty Day - Loyalty Day originally began as "Americanization Day" in 1921 as a counter to the Communists' May 1 celebration of the Russian Revolution. On 1 May 1930, 10,000 VFW members staged a rally at New York's Union Square to promote patriotism. Through a resolution adopted in 1949, May 1 evolved into Loyalty Day. Observances began in 1950 on April 28 and climaxed May 1 when more than five million people across the nation held rallies. In 1958 Congress enacted Public Law 529 proclaiming Loyalty Day a permanent fixture on the nation's calendar.



May 8 V-E Day - On May 8, 1945 - known as Victory in Europe Day or V-E Day - celebrations erupted around the world to mark the end of World War II in Europe. The war had been raging for almost five years when U.S. and Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944. The invasion signaled the beginning of the end for Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. In less than a year, Germany would surrender, and Hitler would be dead.



31 May 2021 Memorial Day - Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, holding family gatherings and participating in parades. Unofficially, it marks the beginning of the summer season.



6 June 1944 D-Day - On 6 June 1944, more than 160,000 Allied troops landed along a 50-mile stretch of heavily-fortified French coastline, to fight Nazi Germany on the beaches of Normandy, France. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower called the operation a crusade in which, "we will accept nothing less than full victory." More than 5,000 Ships and 13,000 aircraft supported the D-Day invasion, and by day's end, the Allies gained a foot-hold in Continental Europe.



14 June Flag Day - Flag Day is celebrated by Americans on June 14 each year and commemorates the adoption of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States. Many Americans celebrate Flag Day by displaying the Red, White and Blue in front of homes and businesses. Some communities, schools and veterans' organizations hold Flag Day parades, essay contests, ceremonies and picnics.

Other Important Dates

March 24 - Start of Kosovo Campaign 1999*

March 29 - National Vietnam War Veterans Day

March 31 - Somalia Campaign Ended (1995)*

April 9 - National Former POW/MIA Recognition Day

April 11 - Persian Gulf War Official Cease-Fire

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

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