

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS



DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA

NUMBER 4

403 Lee Jackson Highway
(540) 886-8112

**"Veterans Helping Veterans
Dept. of Virginia 100th Anniversary"**

FAX: 866-416-0586
Website: www.vfwva.org
Email: statehq@vfwva.org

October 1, 2022

Staunton, Virginia 24401
In Virginia 800-888-3521

GUIDE TO THE GO:

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1. COMMANDER'S MESSAGE:

Comrades and Auxiliary,

Greetings. September was another, very busy month across the VFW. I was honored to represent the Virginia VFW at numerous events such as: Warrenton Recruiting Day at Tractor Supply; VFW at the Ballpark-Norfolk Tides Baseball Game; District 8 Recruiting Day-Culpeper; Valley Veterans Ride For Heroes, Waynesboro; and the Fall Council of Administration, Staunton. At the time of this writing, we are packing up to participate at the Virginia State Fair-VFW Recruiting Booth. We will be operating in the Farm Bureau Center-Exhibit Hall from September 23 until October 2. If you are at the Fair, stop by and visit with us.

As part of our effort to offer continuous process improvement, we have conducted extensive training to better enable our officers and members.

School of Instruction: Your State Officers and District Commanders were very busy last month conducting Schools of Instruction all across the state. Thus far, we have conducted twelve of thirteen "District SOIs" with only one remaining. The re-vamped training has been very well received, and I am anticipating great returns on our training.

Recruiting School of Instruction (RSOI): We have completed three regional in-person RSOIs and one virtual (online) RSOI. The training has reached three-quarters of the Posts across the state. Thanks to Instructors Tom Hines and Ken Wiseman.

State Adjutant-Quartermaster (AQ) Training. State AQ Ed Mann conducted two in-person AQ Training events last month, with in-person and online participation. If your Post or District needs some expert State A/Q Training please contact State Headquarters.

Reporting: Last month, the Department of Virginia achieved 100 percent reporting, for the first half of the year. Thanks to all the individuals, Posts and Districts who made this happen. As a reminder: *All Posts must have submitted the following reports (Hospital, Americanism, Community, Safety and Youth) at least **once** during the first half of the year (May 1 thru Oct. 31) and **once** during the second half (Nov. 1 thru Apr. 30).*

Membership: Our membership currently stands at just over 83 percent. Our summer recruiting efforts seem to have paid off. I encourage you to keep pressing with recruiting and retention efforts. Veterans Day/Weekend is a great time to set up a Poppy Drive and recruit some new members. Special thanks to Membership Chair Tom Hines and his outstanding Membership Team for their efforts. If you need a “recruiting assist” just let us know.

Homecoming: It was announced last month that the State Commander & State President’s Homecoming will be held on January 13, 2023 at the Renaissance Portsmouth Hotel (see flyer). Over sixty people signed up in the first month. We are anticipating over 150 guests. Let’s make this the largest Homecoming ever! The State Homecoming is a free event funded through the sale of State Commander/President shirts and fundraising raffles. We hope all our members and Auxiliary and will attend. RSVP by January 6; you don’t want to miss it!

Fund Raising: 2023 VFW State Calendars are on sale now! Initial reception (first month sales) has been very strong. 2023 Calendars are only \$20 each and each calendar provides the holder a chance at one of **365 prizes totaling \$25,000**. Specifically, there will be three \$1000 drawings; seven \$500 drawings; two \$200 drawings; nine \$100 drawings; and 344 \$50 drawings.

Commander & 100th Anniversary (red & gold) shirts are in stock in all sizes, and red ballcaps are on hand. Wear yours to all VFW events, Centennial Celebrations and RED (Remember Everyone Deployed) Shirt Fridays. All proceeds go towards supporting the Homecoming (a free event). Have a great month and make a difference for veterans!

Sincerely and respectfully,
Geoffrey Lyster
State Commander
Department of Virginia

2. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP:

The National Bylaws provide for only one type of membership: active membership. There are no provisions in the National Bylaws, nor is there any authority or justification for issuance of Club Membership cards, Associate Member cards, Honorary Membership cards, Courtesy Membership cards or any other special type of cards. Any Post issuing such unauthorized cards, or conducting club operations open to the general public, endangers its standing with the Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit organization. Officers signing outlaw cards admitting non-members to VFW premises are subject to disciplinary action. National and Department officers cannot defend practices that conflict with VFW Bylaws or procedures.

3. AUDITS:

Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 218(a)(11) of the National Manual of Procedure, Officers: Duties and Obligations. Trustees’ Report of Audit must be prepared in detail within thirty (30) days from the end of each quarter. June 30 quarter has ended and is **NOW PAST DUE**.

4. BUDDY POPPY:

Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget

those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as “They Gave, Will You?” is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of your distribution date. Be sure to specify a date by which the poppies are required, do not use “ASAP.” **We now have Buddy Poppies in stock. Boxes of 500 Buddy Poppies will have to be re-boxed and make take a few days longer to process.**

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot’s Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairmen guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that non-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The silver, gold and diamond anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need. The anniversary poppies are approximately three times as expensive for us to produce, but because of the small quantities we deal in, we don’t pass those costs on to the Posts. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out, unless you are currently in your 100th year. These are ordered through the Department and processed the same as the red poppies. Annotate on the order to National that it is for anniversary poppies and specify which one.

PURCHASING BUDDY POPPIES:

For many years, the courtesy of allowing Posts to buy Poppies and to pay later was something that was extended as a way to help Posts. However, we have started to see too many Posts still owe for Poppies at the end of the year because of not paying their bill. Effective May 30, 2019, Posts must pay before they can receive Poppies. We will continue to accept payment by check, or you can call and order over the phone with State Headquarters by using a credit or debit card. An order form can be found on the State website under Resources, then Forms.

Ed Mann
State Adjutant/Quartermaster

5. BY-LAWS AND MANUAL OF PROCEDURE:

All officers should obtain current 2023 copies of the podium edition of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual. Copies of the revised edition of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual are available through the VFW Store at National Headquarters. The 2023 revised edition reflects the amendments adopted by the 123rd National Convention, which becomes effective on August 20, 2022.

6. CITIZEN EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD:

Please see the attachment. There is a change for the 2022-2023 Program.

7. CONTROL OF UNITS:

All Commanders are reminded that Section 709, Manual of Procedure - Control of Units, requires that any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or in behalf of a Post, County Council, District or Department shall be at all times under the direct control of such Post, County Council, District or Department and that all money, property or assets of any kind or nature, must be placed in the care and custody of the respective Quartermaster. All Commanders should ensure that all provisions of Section 709 are enforced.

8. DELINQUENT:

The following is a list of Posts that are still delinquent in Delegate Fees, Bonds and Audits. If you are bonded through another company, **you must still submit proof of bonding** to State Headquarters.

Dist.	Post	Delegate Fees	Audits	Bonds	Dist.	Post	Delegate Fees	Audits	Bonds
2	2582			Expired					
3	7167	\$6.00			12	4301	\$6.00	June	
3	8046	\$6.00			12	5715	\$12.00		Expired
					12	8652		June	Expired
4	5313		June	Expired	12	9600	\$9.00		Expired
					12	9830	\$6.00		
5	873		June		12	9864	\$6.00		
5	7800		June						
					13	District			Expired
7	621	\$15.00			13	10574		June	Expired
9	4667			Expired					
9	9696			Expired					

9. DIGITAL MEMBERSHIP CARDS:

Members now have the ability to download their digital version of their membership card. Depending on whether a member has an iPhone or Android, they will be able to download and access their digital membership card from the VFW app.

This will not replace the physical VFW membership card - we will still be sending out membership cards to all our annual and Life members. This is intended as another option for our members' convenience. When asked to show a VFW membership card, a member can either produce their physical card out of their wallet or display their digital card on their smart phone.

10. DISTRICT MEETINGS:

1 st	Date: 1/21/23 Meeting: 11:00 AM Location: Hosted by Post 8252 Gloucester DAV Building, 6265 Professional Drive Rep: State Inspector Charles Bush	4 th	Date: 11/5/22 Meeting: 11:00 AM Location: Post 7166 South Hill 1472 N Mecklenburg Avenue Rep: State Surgeon Mark Maggio
2 nd	Date: 12/3/22 Lunch: Noon Meeting: 1:00 PM Location: Post 3160 Norfolk 111 A View Avenue Rep: St Commander Geoffrey Lyster	5 th	Date: 11/19/22 Meeting: 10:00 AM Location: Post 4637 Martinsville 1425 Greensboro Road Rep: St Chief-of-Staff Ken Wiseman
3 rd	Date: 11/19/22 Meeting: 10:00 AM Location: Post 9808 Mechanicsville 7168 Flag Lane Rep: State Surgeon Mark Maggio	6 th	Date: 12/3/22 Meeting: Noon Location: Hosted by Post 5311 Christiansburg at Post 1264 Roanoke 4930 Grandview Avenue NW Rep: St Judge Advocate Doug Hoffman

7 th	Date: 1/21/23 Lunch: 11:30 AM Meeting: To follow Lunch Location: Post 2447 Edinburg 100 Veterans Way Rep: State SVC Gary Adams	10 th	Date: 12/11/22 Lunch: Noon Meeting: 1:00 PM Location: Post 1177 Leesburg 401 Old Waterford RD NW
8 th	Date: 11/19/22 Meeting: 10:00 AM Location: Post 7728 Morrisville 12496 Harpers Run Rd, Bealeton Rep: State Inspector Charles Bush	11 th	Date: 1/28/23 Meeting: 10:00 AM Location: Post 2216 Staunton 212 Frontier Drive Rep: PSC Butch Schupska
9 th	Date: 1/21/23 Meeting: 10:00 AM Location: Post 11115 Hillsville 701 W. Stuart Drive	12 th	Date: 12/3/22 Meeting: 11:00 AM Location: Post 1994 Abingdon 17581 Lee Highway Rep:
		13 th	Date: 11/5/22 Meeting: 11:00 AM Location: Post 8169 Scottsville 2997 W River Road Rep: State SVC Gary Adams

11. E-MAIL ACCOUNT ACCESS:

All email accounts were reset so the new Officers could take control of their emails as of **June 15th**. This will be the primary means of sending correspondence from State Headquarters to Post and District Officers.

You will receive all General Orders, special notices and any other documentation that you need via email. This will help cut down on postal expenses and speed up the response time for you receiving the information.

Here are directions for logging into your new account for the first time.

1. Go to Department web site www.vfwva.org.
2. Click on Resources, Microsoft 365.
3. The username is your email address; put that on the first line (see below for your new address).
4. Your default password will be **VFW2022!** once you have accessed the mail program you will be asked to change it; it must contain at least one uppercase letter and one number.

For Post Officers, your address will be cdrpost176@vfwva.org where the 176 is you replace it with **your** Post number.

adjpost176@vfwva.org
qmpost176@vfwva.org

For District Officers your address will be cdrdist1@vfwva.org for Districts other than the first just replace the 1 with your district # **Please note District Senior Vice Commander's now have an email address**

svdist1@vfwva.org
adidist1@vfwva.org
qmdist1@vfwva.org

12. GENERAL ORDERS:

The cut off for the General Orders is the 20th of the month. No EXCEPTIONS. Subscriptions for hard copy General Orders are \$30.00 for the year. Contact State Headquarters for more info.

13. IMPORTANT DATES:

October 27 – 30, 2022	Southern Conference, Asheville, North Carolina (Information packet is included in this month's General Orders)
January 12 - 15, 2023	Winter Council, Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk Waterfront Hotel, 425 Water Street, Portsmouth, VA phone 1-888-839-1775. Room Rates are \$97.00 per night.
June 1 – 4, 2023	State Convention, Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk Waterfront Hotel, 425 Water Street, Portsmouth, VA; phone 757-673-3000. Room Rates are \$149.00 per night. Group name "Virginia Department VFW & Auxiliary State Convention 2023"; Cut-off Date April 28, 2023.
July 22 – 27, 2023	National Convention, Phoenix, Arizona
November 1 – 4, 2023	Southern Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma
July 27 – Aug 1, 2024	National Convention, Louisville, Kentucky
August 9 – 14, 2025	National Convention, Columbus, Ohio

14. INCORPORATION:

The attention of the Post Commander is directed to section 708 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure, which prescribes the procedure for the Incorporation of Units. It shall be the responsibility of the Post Commander to ensure full compliance with both sections and to ensure that all state requirements for annual filing, fees, etc., are met in a timely manner.

Posts should take the necessary steps to incorporate under the laws of the state in which the Post is located. Financial responsibility laws, as interpreted by the courts, may cause members of unincorporated Posts to be at risk. Incorporating under the provisions of section 708 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure and the laws of the state will provide protection for Post members. Posts are urged to contact their Department Adjutant to obtain the proper forms for incorporating. The Articles of Incorporation must be reviewed by the Commander-in-Chief prior to forwarding them to the proper state authorities.

15. INSPECTIONS:

Hello, Comrades of Virginia; we hope you enjoy the last days of warm weather.

I'm happy to report as of September 20, 2022

<u>08</u> DISTRICTS OUT OF <u>13</u> INSPECTED	(62%)
<u>72</u> POSTS OUT OF <u>127</u> INSPECTED	(52%)
<u>37</u> POSTS ARE INSPECTION READY	(29%)
<u>14</u> POSTS WITH OUTSTANDING INSPECTION BINDER	(11%)

Let's start October with Congratulations to **Districts 1, 3, 6, and 11 for getting most of their Post Inspected in July and August, good job!**

District Commanders and District Inspectors of the Month for Post Inspections:

Month	Name	District Comments	
July	Comrade Mark Shockley	Dist. 1	Awesome Job!
July	Comrade Dave Ebersole	Dist. 3	Great Job!
August	Comrade Jerry Jacobsen	Dist. 6	Great Job!
August	Comrade Gene Chavis	Dist. 11	Great Job!

Each will receive a letter of appreciation and a \$20 gift certificate to Chick-fil-A or Mission BBQ.

Next, we will start Inspectors' training in October; please check with your District Commander to join.

Finally, Inspectors No. 1 Objective is to create and support a plan to inspect all Posts and Districts by December 16, 2022, and to correct all discrepancies by May 5, 2023.

Yours in Comradeship and Peace,
Charles H. Bush Jr.
State Inspector
inspector@vfwva.org
540-907-5292

16. IRS FORM 8822-B:

It is now a requirement by the IRS that all Posts submit this form. This form must be submitted anytime the Post Quartermaster changes and/or the Post address changes. This is effective January 1, 2014.

Here is the link to get the form and instructions – <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8822b.pdf>. This will also apply to all Auxiliaries that have their own EIN numbers.

17. JLC REPORT:

The JLC met at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond on September 15, 2022. Rick Raskin (Primary) and Joanne Smith (Alternate) represented the VFW.

DVS Commissioner Dan Gade addressed the council and stated that the State of Idaho had been able to acquire a list of VA recipients from TransUnion at about 10¢ per record. He expects that the DVS will also be able to do so and that will help in their targeted outreach program.

He also expects the DVS will be hit with a flood of claims after the passage of the PAC act and is considering options for bringing on additional Veterans Service Representatives.

In a report from MG Tim Williams (National Guard) he stated that the over 3,000 Guard members who were deployed in recent mobilizations should be returning by January 2023. He thanked the JLC for their legislative efforts which have been a major influence in recruitment and retention.

MG Williams also commented that a new beer brand “Ever Forward” would become available in October. A portion of the sales would go to aid NG centric charities.

The JLC approved six legislative initiatives for the next legislative session, three of which were prioritized. The remaining will be prioritized at the next JLC meeting on December 15.

VSO	SUBJECT	PRIORITY
American Legion & AUSA	Income Tax Subtraction for Retirees Under Age 55	TBD
Fleet Reserve Association	Spousal Burial Fees	TBD
MOAA & VFW	Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Died on Active Duty	1
Reserve Association of America	Disabled Veteran Real Estate Tax Exemption	TBD

VA National Guard	Income Tax Reduction	5
VA National Guard	Free Admission to State Parks	6

Mark Shockley, representing Virginia Veterans Memorials, Inc., was there at the request of DVS Commissioner Dan Gade. The Virginia Veterans Memorials, Inc. (VVM) was established in 2020 as a 501.C3 Non-Profit organization for the purpose of recognizing and preserving the memories and incidents of Virginia citizens who served in the United States Armed Forces with the development of public memorial(s) to honor the service and sacrifices of current and future generations. The memorials are to be in Huntington Park, Newport News, VA, adjacent to the Virginia Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Mark discussed the proposed Iraq Veterans Memorial. www.virginiavereransmemorials.org

Rick Raskin
PSC
JLC Representative

18. LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP:

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to www.vfw.org, click on JOIN, scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership, each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

<i>Enrollment Cost:</i>	<i>Annual Payouts:</i>	<i>Post:</i>	<i>Department:</i>	<i>National:</i>
Levels: Gold- \$1200.00		\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver- \$800.00		\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze- \$400.00		\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

What will your Legacy be?

19. LIFE DRAWING:

Congratulations to Francis Cannon Post 7589, Manassas as the winner of a free Life Membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Virginia. Francis Cannon Post 7589 was made eligible for this Free Life Membership for having 75% of their membership reported to State Headquarters by September 23, 2022 deadline.

20. MEMBERSHIP:

Comrades and Commanders,

Our Schools of Instruction have been completed and I hope all have benefited from them. Our next challenge is to take advantage of the fall festivals and events around the areas of our Post to recruit, reinstate, and renew veterans. We mentioned an existing tool to the District Commanders at our C.O.A. meeting in Staunton on September 17th. That being the (Find Unpaid, Relocated List), of relocated veterans that move into our state, including name, address, contact info, former post, age, years since renewal, and how many miles from the zip code you enter. District Quartermasters can access this list. If possible, it should be printed and distributed at each District Meeting. Make sure Post Commanders request this list and follow up on their success in using it. Word of caution, you will find some bad info in the list, so be prepared. The list cannot be updated daily at Headquarters. However, the majority of the info is correct.

We will be at the State Fair when these General Orders come out and hopefully, we will have added a member or two to your Post. This event normally adds between 80 and 130 veterans to our ranks each year. As always, your Membership Team is here to assist your Post and District. Please take advantage of this resource by contacting the

Membership Team at Membership@vfwva.org or State H.Q. for assistance. Thank you in advance for your efforts to sign, renew, or reinstate veterans into our great Department.

Tom Hines PSC
Membership Team Chairman

21. OFFICE CLOSURE:

State Headquarters and the Service Officer Offices in Dale City, Norfolk and Smithfield will be closed October 10, 2022, in observance of Columbus Day.

The Adj/QM will be available by phone and email for any issues that may arise.

Please note the Hopewell Service Office is temporarily closed.

22. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY:

Procedure and Ritual establish that *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 12th Edition* shall be the parliamentary authority on procedural matters not governed by VFW By-Laws and Manual of Procedure. This edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* is readily available at local bookstores and online retailers such as Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

23. PARTNERS IN PATRIOTISM:

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW's Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible, and a Year End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at partners@vfw.org with "Partners in Patriotism Application" in the subject line.

24. REPORTING:

Comrades to view whether your Post has submitted an Audit Report, Americanism, Community Service, Safety, Youth or Hospital report you should visit the Department website (www.vfwva.org).

The website is updated daily. If you have any questions, please call State Headquarters.

There will be no form for Homeless when reporting for assistance to a homeless veteran please put it on a Community Activity report under aid to others.

25. ROSTER CHANGES:

Department Service Officer
Laurie Clay
223 Washington St
Smithfield, VA 23430
757-775-2903
serviceofficer@vfwva.org

IT Chairman
Robert (Check) Adamczyk
703-763-6189
Post 1499
Post Dues \$40.00

JLC Chairman
Richard Raskin
8767 Bradley Forge Dr
Manassas, VA 20112
703-369-2732
rraskin@vfwva.org

JLC Vice Chairman
Joanne Smith
5491 Scandia Rd
Sandston, VA 23150
804-339-1810
qmpost9808@vfwva.org

National Home Representative
Mitchell Rubenstein
4384 Swover Creek Rd
Edinburg, VA 22824
516-381-5906
jvicecdr@vfwva.org

National Legislative Committee
Jill Lynch
243 Stoner Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
757-478-9416
nlcjlynch@vfwva.org

National Legislative Committee
Thomas Levitt
13404 Classic Court
Woodbridge, VA 22192
703-895-5070
nlctlevitt@vfwva.org

VFW Riders Chairman
Leo (Rob) Pedersen, III
757-647-5976

District 13 Adjutant
Howard Robertson
10637 Shannon Hill Road
Louisa, VA 23093
808-683-2596
adjdist13@vfwva.org

Post 621
Post Dues \$45.00

Post 993 JVC
Kent D. Cain
4401 Taylor Road
Chesapeake, VA 23321
757-266-8365
niacquod@gmail.com

Post 1503
Post Dues \$40.00

Post 2123 QM
Thomas E. Dalton
3922 Northwestern Pike
Winchester, VA 22603
540-877-3312
qmpost2123@vfwva.org

Post 2582
Mailing: 4301 Pughsville Road, Suffolk
Mtg: Post Home
757-484-5109
Mtg Day: 1st Tues @ 1900

Post 8241 SVC
George J. D'elia
2062 Royal Fern Ct. Apt. 21A
Reston, VA 20191
703-930-5052
raven_d1996@yahoo.com

26. SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY THEMES:

The 2022–23 themes have been chosen by Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland. The Voice of Democracy theme is “**Why is the Veteran Important?**” and the Patriot’s Pen theme is “**My Pledge to our Veterans.**”

27. VVF COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT:

The Virginia Veterans Foundation, the official foundation of the Virginia VFW, has opened the window to apply for a grant to perform community service. The grant, funded by Powerhouse Gaming, will provide twelve (12) grants worth up to \$250 for the 2022-2023 year. Should any money remain after the twelve (12) grants are paid out, those not selected in the first round of grants will be considered a second time. The requirements and application are in the attachments. While the project can be completed anytime between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, the application is due no later than November 30, 2022. Posts **AND** Auxiliaries can apply for this grant, but only one

grant will be given to an individual Post or their Auxiliary, regardless of who applies. Entries can be mailed, faxed, or emailed to State Headquarters.

28. VVF POST HOME IMPROVEMENT AND ASSISTANCE GRANT:

Recently, the Board of Directors for the Virginia Veterans Foundation approved a reduction in the Foundation's budget affecting several items. An affected item is the Post Home Improvement Grant. There are still 10 grants available, but each will be for a maximum of \$300. The application is attached and on the state's website. The deadline and other requirements for the program are the same.

The Foundation's Board felt this change was necessary to plan for future years where less revenue is possible while still trying to maintain the programs supported by the Foundation. We hope everyone can understand and support this and we will continue to monitor our budget to find opportunities to support our organization.

The Virginia Veterans Foundation, the official foundation of the Virginia VFW, has opened the window to apply for a grant to perform improvements on your Post home. The grant, funded by Powerhouse Gaming, will provide **ten (10) grants worth up to \$300 (please note new amounts)** for the 2022-2023 year. The requirements and application are in the attachments. While the project can be completed anytime between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, the application is due no later than November 30, 2022. Entries can be mailed, faxed, or emailed to State Headquarters.

29. VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION:

It's not too late for Posts or Districts to become commemorative partners in the Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commission. Visit <https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/> and take it from there.

This month's Vietnam War Congressional Medal of Honor winner is Merlyn H. Dethlefsen. Born in Greenville IA in 1934, he joined the Air Force in 1954 and was commissioned via the Aviation Cadet program the following year. Dethlefsen served as a Navigator on C-124 Globemaster transports at Dover Air Force Base from February 1957 to January 1959, and then entered Undergraduate Pilot Training at Bainbridge Air Force Base. After receiving his pilot wings in February 1960 and attending combat crew training, Dethlefsen flew F-100 Super Sabres with the 9th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Spangdahlem Air Base from January 1961 to February 1965. He flew with the 560th Tactical Fighter Squadron at McConnell Air Force Base from February 1965 to October 1966, when he deployed to Southeast Asia.

Dethlefsen flew F-105 Thunderchief fighters with the 333rd Tactical Fighter Squadron and then the 354th Tactical Fighter Squadron of 335th Tactical Fighter Wing at Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base at Thailand, from October 1966 to June 1967. By March 10, 1967, had risen to the rank of captain. On that day, his actions in the air earned him the Medal of Honor. His citation reads as follows:

Major (then Captain) Dethlefsen was 1 of a flight of F-105 aircraft engaged in a fire suppression mission designed to destroy a key antiaircraft defensive complex containing surface-to-air missiles (SAM), an exceptionally heavy concentration of antiaircraft artillery, and other automatic weapons. The defensive network was situated to dominate the approach and provide protection to an important North Vietnamese industrial center that was scheduled to be attacked by fighter bombers immediately after the strike by Maj. Dethlefsen's flight. In the initial attack on the defensive complex the lead aircraft was crippled, and Maj. Dethlefsen's aircraft was extensively damaged by the intense enemy fire. Realizing that the success of the impending fighter bomber attack on the center now depended on his ability to effectively suppress the defensive fire, Maj. Dethlefsen ignored the enemy's overwhelming firepower and the damage to his aircraft and pressed his attack. Despite a continuing hail of antiaircraft fire, deadly surface-to-air missiles, and counterattacks by MIG interceptors, Maj. Dethlefsen flew repeated close range strikes to silence the enemy defensive positions with bombs and cannon fire. His action in rendering ineffective the defensive SAM and antiaircraft artillery sites enabled the ensuing fighter bombers to strike successfully the important industrial target without loss or damage to their aircraft, thereby appreciably reducing

the enemy's ability to provide essential war material. Maj. Dethlefsen's consummate skill and selfless dedication to this significant mission were in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country

Dethlefsen could have pulled out of the mission on a number of occasions: when attacked by MiGs, when he and his wingman were hit by flak, or when the smoke of battle made it difficult to locate the enemy. But he decided to make repeated passes, each one more dangerous than the one before. For his actions, Dethlefsen was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Lyndon B. Johnson on February 1, 1968. He became the third of 12 airmen so honored during the Vietnam War. He retired from the Air Force in 1977 with the rank of colonel. Dethlefsen died at age 53 of natural causes on December 14, 1987, and was subsequently buried in Section 65 of Arlington National Cemetery.

Jeff Dombroff
Vietnam War Commemoration Committee Chairman

30. VOICE OF DEMOCRACY:

The Voice of Democracy program, instituted in 1947, has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars premier scholarship program. Annually, nearly 25,000 high school students compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives. Written and recorded audio essays are submitted by each applicant and address an annual patriotic theme. The 2022 theme is, "Why is the Veteran Important?" The contest is open to students in grades 9-12. More specific information, including rules, forms, and brochures are available at <http://www.vfw.org>.

In order to have a successful program this year it is important that participating Posts begin recruiting high schools, teachers and students as soon as possible. Since high schools in your area have already let out for summer vacation, you can either contact them now electronically through emails and social media or contact them directly as soon as classes resume.

2022-2023 Voice of Democracy Reporting Deadlines

31 October 2022 Student entries due at the Post
15 November 2022 Completion of Post judging
03 December 2022 Completion of District judging
17 December 2022 Department VOD Selection Board
06 January 2023 Completion of Department Judging
15 January 2023 District Participation Reports due for Department Chairman
15 January 2023 Department winners due for National

Awards will be presented to the top three Department winners at the Department Winter Council meeting on Saturday, 14 January 2023 in Portsmouth, Virginia. Please send complete application packets to the Department VOD Chairman to include the completed Official Student Entry form with all appropriate signatures, a typed transcript, flash drive and a photograph of the District winner. Make sure your flash drive is properly recorded and playable before sending it. Incomplete application packets will disqualify your candidate from District and Department judging. District Chairmen are expected to complete and send out the District Participation Report in a timely manner. It should be received by the Department VOD Chairman, which is required for his Department Report NLT Sunday, 15 January 2023.

The District first place winning submissions should be mailed to the Department VOD Chairman Louis Filippone at 15608 Jillians Forest Way, Centreville, Virginia 20120.

You are strongly encouraged to send your application packets by UPS, Fed Ex, or USPS return receipt. You are also advised to keep a duplicate copy of the complete application packet on hand. The Department VOD Chairman must

receive your submissions NLT Friday, 16 December 2022. The Department VOD Selection Board will be held on Saturday, 17 December 2022, location to be announced. Possible teleconference format judging is being considered.

Voice of Democracy Department Awards

The top three finalists will be invited to the Winter Council Luncheon in Portsmouth, Virginia on Saturday, 14 January 2023. All three finalists will receive their awards and present their essays at the awards banquet. The first-place winner will receive a minimum of \$2,000.00 from the Department along with \$500.00 from the Commander's Club and an additional check from the Auxiliary. The second-place winner will receive a minimum of \$1,000.00, and the third-place winner will receive a minimum of \$500.00. Additional donations are expected this year. The Post that sponsors the Department's first place winner will be awarded the Clarence E. Kelley Memorial Voice of Democracy Trophy at the Department Convention in June 2023, date to be determined. Should you require any assistance or additional information regarding the 2022-2023 Voice of Democracy program, or its administration please contact me directly at (703) 477-2274 or email at drlouortho@aol.com.

Please be advised all dates and venues are subject to change as a result of unforeseen Covid 19 restrictions.

Louis Filippone
Voice of Democracy Program Chairman

31. WINTER COUNCIL MEETING:

You will find the information for your online reservation link below. If you have questions or need help with the link, please do not hesitate to ask. We look forward to a successful event. **Please note last day to Book is Monday, December 12, 2022.**

<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1656095589272&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

The Winter Council is January 12 – 15, 2023, but you can receive the discounted rate January 9 – 18, 2023. Room rate is \$97.00 per night.

Official:



Ed Mann
State Adjutant

By Order of:



Geoffrey D. Lyster
State Commander

Laurie K. Clay
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of Virginia
Department Service Office



Laurie K. Clay was selected to her current position as Department Service Officer (DSO) in August 2022. As the DSO for the VFW Department of Virginia, she is responsible for ensuring all Virginia Veterans receive the best possible service from both the Department of Virginia Service Officers and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Laurie began her 21-year career with the Department of Veterans Affairs as a Veterans Service Representative (VSR) in August 1998 and was promoted to Rating Veterans Service Representative (RVSR) in 2002, Coach in 2005, Assistant Service Center Manager (VSCM) in 2007 and VSCM in 2009. Laurie's favorite position was when she served as a Rating Quality Review Specialist from 2012 to retirement in 2019. In this position, she felt she had the most impact on Veteran's rating decisions by mentoring rating and appeal team employees.

Prior to her career in the VA, Laurie worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Department of the Army and Air Force. Laurie served in the US Army for 5 ½ years with her last duty assignment as a court reporter with the 82nd Airborne Division, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate.

Laurie was born in Portland, Oregon and earned a bachelor's degree in Public Administration and Human Services. She is married and lives with her husband in Smithfield, Virginia. She has two daughters, 38 and 33 and a granddaughter age 5 ½ years old, all currently living in Roanoke, Virginia.

Subject: Citizenship Education Teacher Recognition

There is a change for the 2022-2023 Program. Once again, National will recognize teachers from elementary, middle and high school rather than the State selecting one of their winners and submitting that entry. Our State's 3 winners will all receive recognition from National.

Post and District Chairpersons are strongly encouraged to go to the National website (<http://www.vfw.org>) and download the VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Chairman's Manual. This document contained entry forms, judging sheets and the necessary information that you need to run a successful program.

Post chairmen must be sure to send the original entry form for the winners along with a one-page resume as a minimum, or up to five pages (both sides) as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience, such as references, news articles, etc. Also, good quality head and shoulders photograph from the winning teachers.

Eligibility: Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime candidates for this award. For example, do you know a teacher who plans field trips to city hall or organizes community volunteer projects? Maybe you know an instructor who invites veterans into the classroom to discuss their military experiences. Perhaps you are familiar with a teacher who fosters the development of democratic value and beliefs through special projects. If you know of such a teacher, honor him or her today.

All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals, including students.

Deadlines:

31 October 22: All Entries due at the Post
15 November 22: Post Judging complete
10 December 22: District Judging complete
17 December 22: District winners must be at State Chairman for judging
19 December 22: State Judging

Post Chairpersons: Don't forget to fill out the bottom portion of the entry form showing number of teachers participating; number of winners advanced to District; amount of Post/Auxiliary awards; and, amount of Post/Auxiliary additional expenses.

District Chairpersons: You will have a report to submit with your entries to State that reflect Post information as well as District awards and expense money. This report will be emailed/mailed to you by November 1 and should be submitted with your District winners.

Any questions, you can contact me at bigredtruk@comcast.net or (540) 539-5446.

Chris Birch
Teacher Recognition Program Chairman



Toll the Bells to honor all those who have served and sacrificed

Bells of Peace is a U.S. national "bell tolling" created in collaboration with the Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (SHGTUS) in 2018 to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the World War I Armistice.

The Doughboy Foundation has since promoted it as an annual remembrance of those who served in WWI and the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when the guns fell silent, and bells tolled on the Western Front in 1918.



Sign Up

[Register your 2022 participation](#) as an individual or as an organization and join the tens of thousands who have tolled the bells in the name of liberty and freedom.

When you sign up you can add your organization's logo to the [National Participants Wall](#) (going back to 2018).

No bell? No Problem!

[Download the Bells of Peace Participation App](#) and get a countdown @ 11am local.

Select from various bell sounds that toll 21 times, 5 seconds apart from at the right time. Get others in your group to do the same, all selecting with the phone clocks synchronizing the tolling.

If you don't use social media, you can still share your plans and your App using the phone to take pictures or make videos, and it will also be included on the [National Participants Wall](#).



timer to 11/11

your smartphone different sounds

event through the

Join us at the WWI Memorial in Washington D.C. in person, or online at 10:30am Eastern

The Doughboy Foundation will be hosting a Bells of Peace commemoration at the National WWI Memorial in Washington, D.C. starting at 10:30am Eastern on November 11, 2022.



The ceremony will include a wreath dedication, remarks by special guest General Barry McCaffrey, the Bells of Peace tolling, and "Echoing Taps" by [Taps For Veterans](#), when multiple buglers will play taps from different corners of the WWI Memorial.

If you are in DC, we invite you to join us live at the Memorial, located at Pennsylvania Avenue between 14th Street and 15th Street NW, across from the White House Visitor Center. If you are not local, tune in to our LIVE STREAM on the Doughboy Foundation YouTube channel

at [YouTube.Com/c/TheDoughboyFoundation](https://www.youtube.com/c/TheDoughboyFoundation) or on the home page of Bells of Peace site.

Questions?

Get the overview on the [About page](#) or dig into the details on the [Info and FAQs](#) page.

THE VIRGINIA VETERANS FOUNDATION

VFW Community Service Grant

The purpose of the VFW Community Service Grant is to assist VFW Posts and Auxiliaries in Virginia who need assistance with funding community service projects. There will be of twelve (12) grants worth up to \$250 each for the 2022-2023 year. All requirements must be met, or the grant must be returned, in part or in whole, depending on the circumstances.

The requirements of the grant are as follows:

- 1) The project must be initiated and completed in the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.
- 2) The VFW Post or Auxiliary in question must have a current non-profit status on file with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Post must provide the IRS paperwork proving this.
- 3) The Post or Auxiliary must be in good standing with the VFW National Headquarters and the Department of Virginia.
- 4) If the project is hosted at a building, it must be a non-smoking building regardless of the owner's rules for the use of the building.
- 5) The grant is not to be used for work on a VFW Post home or the property owned by any membership-based organization.
- 6) Receipts for the project must be provided and payment of the grant will not occur until this is done with all payments coming after project completion.
- 7) Should the project costs total less than \$250 once completed, the balance of the grant will not be paid. Additional projects may not be added to an approved grant. Alterations to an approved grant require approval by the Virginia Veterans Foundation before the grant can be claimed.
- 8) The VFW Post or Auxiliary receiving the grant must agree to allow the VFW Department of Virginia and Virginia Veterans Foundation the opportunity to promote the project on social media, in official communications, and in other forms of marketing.
- 9) The grant will only cover materials and the Post is responsible for providing labor. This can be done through paying for labor or by doing the work themselves.
- 10) All decisions on grants are final and will be made by the Board of Directors for the Virginia Veterans Foundation.
- 11) Funding from this grant program may be combined with other grants but the total of the funding received cannot exceed actual costs and the amount received from this grant may be reduced accordingly.
- 12) Only one grant per year will be provided to an individual Post or Auxiliary, regardless of who applies for the grant.

THE VIRGINIA VETERANS FOUNDATION

VFW Community Service Grant

Official Grant Application

(All questions must be answered in full)

Name and number of the Post/Auxiliary: _____

Mailing address: _____

Physical address of the event: _____

Commander/President name, phone number, and email address: _____

Quartermaster/Treasurer name, phone number, and email address: _____

Description of the project to be completed: _____

Estimated cost of the project: _____

How will labor be provided?: _____

By signing below, you acknowledge the requirements of the grant program. Furthermore, you acknowledge that you have provided all needed documents and that the decision on this grant application rests solely with the Virginia Veterans Foundation. Finally, you agree to provide all needed receipts for the project and to cooperate with the Virginia Veterans Foundation and the VFW Department of Virginia in promoting the project and grant.

Commander/President: _____ QM/Treasurer: _____

THE VIRGINIA VETERANS FOUNDATION

VFW Post Home Improvement and Assistance Grant

The purpose of the VFW Post Home Improvement and Assistance Grant is to assist VFW Posts in Virginia who need assistance with funding projects to improve, expand, or repair their Post home as well as assisting those Posts in financial need. There will be ten (10) grants worth up to \$300 each for the 2022-2023 year. All requirements must be met or the Post will be required to return the grant, in part or in whole, depending on the circumstances.

The requirements of the grant are as follows:

- 1) If funding a project, it must be initiated and completed in the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Post must submit a thorough justification for the grant.
- 2) If asking for emergency assistance, the Post must explain the reason for the emergency and provide a plan for how the Post will raise money in the future and prepare for future problems.
- 3) The VFW Post in question must have a current non-profit status on file with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and must provide the IRS paperwork proving this.
- 4) The Post must be in good standing with the VFW National and Department Headquarters.
- 5) If funding a project, the Post must own or lease the Post and must provide a copy of the documents showing either ownership or a current lease. For Posts who lease the property, there must be at least 2 years remaining on the lease to receive a grant.
- 6) The Post must not allow smoking in their Post building but may use the grant to repair damage after voting to ban smoking. A ban on smoking is defined as no smoking allowed inside the building of the Post home. It may be allowed outside of the building.
- 7) Receipts for the project or bills covered by the assistance requested must be provided and payment of the grant will not occur until this is done with all payments coming after project completion or for bills already paid.
- 8) Should the project costs or assistance requested total less than \$300 once complete, the balance of the grant will not be paid. Additional projects may not be added to an approved grant. Alterations to an approved grant require approval by the Virginia Veterans Foundation before the grant can be claimed.
- 9) The VFW Post receiving the grant must agree to allow the VFW Department of Virginia and Virginia Veterans Foundation the opportunity to promote the funded project on social media, in official communications, and in other forms of marketing.
- 10) The grant will only cover materials and the Post is responsible for providing labor. This can be done through paying for labor or by doing the work themselves.
- 11) All decisions on grants are final and will be made by the Board of Directors for the Virginia Veterans Foundation.
- 12) Funding from this grant program may be combined with other grants but the total of the funding received cannot exceed actual costs and the amount received from this grant may be reduced accordingly.

THE VIRGINIA VETERANS FOUNDATION

VFW Post Home Improvement and Assistance Grant

Official Grant Application

(All questions must be answered in full)

Name and number of the Post: _____

Post mailing address: _____

Physical address of the Post: _____

Post Commander name, phone number, and email address: _____

Post Quartermaster name, phone number, and email address: _____

Estimated cost of the project or assistance requested: _____

How will labor be provided?: _____

On a separate page, give either a description of the project to be completed or justification for assistance requested. For emergency assistance, also include in your description a plan for how the Post will raise money in the future and prepare for future problems.

By signing below, you acknowledge the requirements of the grant program. Furthermore, you acknowledge that you have provided all needed documents and that the decision on this grant application rests solely with the Virginia Veterans Foundation. Finally, you agree to provide all needed receipts for the project and to cooperate with the Virginia Veterans Foundation and the VFW Department of Virginia in promoting the project and grant.

Post Commander: _____ Post Quartermaster: _____



Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Virginia *State Commander & President's Homecoming*



- **Purpose:** *To Honor Commander Geoffrey Lyster & President Fred Jennings*
- **Date/Time:** Friday, January 13, 2023; 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- **Location:** Renaissance Portsmouth Hotel, 425 Water St, Portsmouth, VA
- **Cost:** Free
- **Entertainment:** Famous DJ “JR”– and Featured Speakers
- **Dance Contest:** Awards for Best Dancer; Best Couple Dancers
- **Giveaways:** Complimentary Deluxe 2022-2023 Commanders Challenge Coin; die cast-full color-ltd edition (in vinyl sleeve) *One free Deluxe Challenge Coin to all attendees, if not rec'd previously*
- **Raffles:** *Henry Golden Boy* .22 S/L/LR (walnut stock); Door Prizes
- **Dress:** Casual (*wear your red or pink organizational shirt*)
- **Menu: “Famous Tidewater Buffet!”**
 - *Mixed green salad with optional: tomatoes, croutons, goat cheese, spiced pecans, cranberries, roasted peach vinaigrette; creamy ranch or tasty Italian dressing*
 - **Entrees:** *-Tidewater “all-day smoked” beef brisket with bourbon BBQ sauce*
-Southern Fried Chicken - buttermilk brined coating
-Buttery garlic mashed potatoes and seasonal grilled vegetables
 - *Dessert: Assorted Chesapeake mini-dessert shooters, strawberry lemonade cheesecake, ‘Campfire S’mores’, assorted southern style mini-bundt cakes, crème brule & assorted macaroons*
-Served with fresh baked rolls & butter, freshly brewed gourmet coffee and exotic herbal teas
- ❖ **RSVP for Commander by January 6, 2023:**
Ken Wiseman – kwiseman@vfwva.org
- ❖ **RSVP for President by January 6, 2023**
Ellen Stogsdill - ellenstogsdill@cox.net



*You must RSVP
(for catering purposes)
No walk ins*

This may be the largest State Homecoming Extravaganza ever!
Stay overnight at the hotel or make it a Daytrip.
Whatever you do, you don't want to miss it!!

Hospitality Rooms
open prior to
event-then dine
with us!



Elegant Dancing

Famous ‘All-You-
Care-To-Eat’
Tidewater
Buffet!!

The Military Order of the Cootie is recognized as a subordinate and auxiliary order to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. It shall be considered as the "Honor Degree" of the parent organization and shall be governed by and under the control of the National Convention, the National Council of Administration, and the Commander-in-Chief.

Our service program is described as a directive to "Keep 'em Smiling in Beds of White." Each year the Cooties volunteer thousands of hours of time worth over ten million dollars to Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) hospitals and domiciliaries throughout the United States. This work, in addition to the hours of service donated as active members of the VFW, set the members of the MOC apart as Foreign Service and Combat Veterans who are fully engaged in their communities.

Eligibility is determined through being active members for at least 6-months in a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post and through completion of satisfactory service on a Post committee or satisfactory performance of Post duties or participating actively as a leader of post functions.

If you are interested in learning more about what it takes to become a Cootie reach out to grandcdr@vfwva.org.

"Neb"

Ben Guinan
Commander, 2022-2023
Grand of Virginia
Military Order of the Cootie





Charles H. Bush, Jr.

Candidate for the High Office of VFW State Surgeon 2023-24

Comrades, my name is Charles Bush, and I am running for State Surgeon. With your help, I want to bring learning, knowledge, recognition, and creditability to each position. I'm passionate about supporting our veterans, impacting our communities with good deeds, honoring our teachers and educators, engaging with our first responders, and encouraging youth activities by setting the example of a good American to all.

My goals are to continue improving our work on the business and administration side of our organization, grow membership and find a way to improve membership retention (I think we are missing out on grooming our next set of VFW leaders). Continue to make the VFW a strong voice for veterans. Create a strategic plan to visualize these goals along with your feedback, comments, and support. On the VFW membership side, embrace the family culture by enhancing members' experiences through recognition and increased learning. We, the VFW family, can uphold the VFW's outstanding achievements of the past with future process improvements.

My eligibility includes joining the Marine Corps and serving two combat tours, Desert Storm/Desert Shield in 1990 and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in 2003, also deployments in South Korea.

My qualification includes joining the VFW organization as a Life Member in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, in 1997 while on active duty, transferring to Post 3103 Fredericksburg in 2009, and being appointed as the Senior Vice Commander pro temp in 2009 and elected to Post Commander in 2010-2011. Served on the District Eight Staff for over eight years, designated as the Inspector, and elected JVC, SVC. I was elected District 8 Commander and achieved All-State and All-American District Commander as District Commander for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. In 2019 all five posts made 100% membership, and two of five posts made All-American and All-State.

I'm currently serving as the State Inspector. In my positions working with the Posts, Districts, and the State, I have accumulated experience in the business of the VFW. I am ready to serve my comrades at the state surgeon level.

I am a learning member of the State Resolution Committee and the current President of the Commanders Club. I am also a member of the Past Post Commanders Council for Post 3103.

I'm currently employed by the Marine Corps Systems Command as a civilian employee since 2012, working in Acquisition Logistics. My wife Danielle is also a veteran and lifetime member of VFW Post 3103.

Born and raised in Mobile, Alabama (LA Lower Alabama), and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps from June 1981 until July 2011. With over 30 years of active duty military service and achieved the highest enlisted technical rank of Master Gunnery Sergeant/E-9 (MGySgt) in the Tactical Field and Garrison Communications MOS, starting as a basic field wireman to Communications Chief.

My father was Army Vietnam Veteran Airborne; my grandfathers were Veterans, and eight great uncles joined the military. I grew up around veterans and enjoyed the benefits as a dependent of a 100% disabled veteran (father). Now I have the opportunity to serve as a veteran in this organization. Together, Let's keep moving forward!

In Peace and Comradeship, Charles Bush, 540.907.5292 (cell), charlesbush2259@gmail.com.