



Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars



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November 2021

2021-2022 Series

“It’s about how we treat our veterans every single day of the year. It’s about making sure they have the care they need and the benefits that they’ve earned when they come home. It’s about serving all of you as well as you’ve served the United States of America”

Barack Obama

DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA HEADQUARTERS
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

General Orders No. 05

2021-2022 Series

1. **Department Directory/Roster:** Department Directory has been updated to reflect new State Officers. The updated directory can be found in the “members only” section of the Department website at vfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com

2. **Trustee’s Report of Audit:** Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 218 of the Manual of Procedure, “Duty of Trustees.” Trustees Report of Audit must be completed in detail at the close of each quarter, one of which ends Dec 31 2021. Commanders are reminded that accurate and complete records shall be kept by all person handling Post funds, including the Club Manager, Bingo Chairman and VFW Riders Groups. These records shall be audited by Post Trustees in the same manner as Post Quartermaster and Adjutant.

Posts & Districts are reminded to forward their Trustees’ reports at the end of each quarter of the current year: June 30th, Sep 30th, Dec 31st and March 31st. Send these audit reports to VFW-OK, P.O. Box 1126, Oklahoma City, OK 73101 or email to vfwhqokqm@outlook.com

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JAMES BASSETT
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /

Curtis A. Watts
Adjutant

Commander Jim Bassett

Oklahoma is 7th out of 14 Departments within the Southern Conference.
Oklahoma is 38th out of 52 Departments within the Veterans of Foreign Wars.
As of 20 September 2021

Veterans Day is upon us. A time to reflect and remember. But never forget those still in uniform.

On October 18th of this year, the United States and veterans lost a great leader. He was a military leader and statesman. He was born April 5th, 1937 and passed away this October. He served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as well as Secretary of State. Collin Powell was a leader. Over the years he had developed rules of leadership as well as sayings on leadership that are extremely relevant today. Below are his 13 rules of leadership:

Rule No. 1: *It ain't as bad as you think. It will look better in the morning.*

There's a silver lining in every cloud, you just have to find it.

Rule No. 2: *Get mad, and then get over it.*

Anger is part of the normal range of human emotions.

Rule No. 3: *Don't become so attached to an argument that if it fails, your ego goes with it.*

Things aren't always going to go your way, that's just a fact of life. Be humble enough to accept that fact.

Rule No. 4: *It can be done.*

Just about anything can be accomplished if you set your mind to it, have the necessary resources, and the time to get it done.

Rule No. 5: *Be careful what you choose. You may get it.*

Don't rush into a bad decision. Take the time to consider your options, weigh the relevant facts, and make reasoned assumptions. Once you pull the trigger, there are no do-overs. So, make it count.

Rule No. 6: *Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision.*

Learn how to read a situation for yourself. Become the decision-maker your people need you to be.

Rule No. 7: *You can't make someone else's decisions. (And don't let others make yours.)*

Ultimately, you're responsible for your own decisions. Don't duck that responsibility and don't succumb to external pressures. Make your own decisions and live with them.

Rule No. 8: *Check small things.*

Leaders must have ways to check the little things without getting lost in them.

Rule No. 9: *Share credit.*

Don't be a glory hog. Share credit where credit is due and allow your people to stand in the spotlight. It ain't about you. It's about them.

Rule No. 10: *Remain calm and be kind.*

Keep calm and carry on. Kill 'em with kindness. When everyone is under incredible stress, be the leader people want to follow, not the leader people want to avoid.

Rule No. 11: *Have a vision.*

As a leader, part of your job is to articulate a vision that is worthy of their efforts.

Rule No. 12: *Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers.*

Think clearly, think rationally, and make decisions that aren't rooted in emotion.

Rule No. 13: *Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.*

People will feed off your optimism. Believe in your purpose, believe in yourself, and believe in your people. And they'll believe in you.

Here are some of Collin Powell's statements. His simple statements teach a lot.

"Being responsible sometimes means pissing people off."

Good leadership involves responsibility to the welfare of the group, which means that some people will get angry at your actions and decisions.

"The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them."

They have either lost confidence that you can help them or concluded that you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.

"Don't be buffaloes by experts and elites. Experts often possess more data than judgment. Elites can become so inbred that they produce hemophiliacs who bleed to death as soon as they are nicked by the real world."

Real leaders are vigilant -- and combative -- in the face of these trends.

"Don't be afraid to challenge the pros, even in their own backyard."

Learn from the pros, observe them, seek them out as mentors and partners. But remember that even the pros may have leveled out in terms of their learning and skills. Good leadership encourages everyone's evolution.

"You don't know what you can get away with until you try."

You know the expression "it's easier to get forgiveness than permission?" Well, it's true. They're prudent, not reckless. So, the moral is, don't ask.

"Keep looking below surface appearances. Don't shrink from doing so (just) because you might not like what you find."

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it" is the slogan of the complacent, the arrogant or the scared. It's an excuse for inaction, a call to non-arms.

"Organization charts and hence titles count for next to nothing."

Organization charts are frozen, anachronistic photos in a workplace that ought to be as dynamic as the external environment around you.

“Fit no stereotypes. Don't chase the latest management fads. The situation dictates which approach best accomplishes the team's mission.”

Leaders honor their core values, but they are flexible in how they execute them. They understand that management techniques are not magic mantras but simply tools to be reached for at the right times.

“Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate and doubt, to offer a solution everybody can understand.”

Effective leaders understand the KISS principle, or Keep It Simple, Stupid. The result? Clarity of purpose, credibility of leadership, and integrity in organization

“The commander in the field is always right and the rear echelon is wrong, unless proved otherwise.”

Shift the power and the financial accountability to the folks who are bringing in the beans, not the ones who are counting or analyzing them.

“Have fun in your command. Don't always run at a breakneck pace. Take leave when you've earned it. Spend time with your families.”

Corollary: “Surround yourself with people who take their work seriously, but not themselves, those who work hard and play hard.”

“Command is lonely”

The essence of leadership is the willingness to make the tough, unambiguous choices that will have an impact on the fate of the organization. I've seen too many non-leaders flinch from this responsibility.

“All work is honorable. Always do your best because someone is watching.”

If Soldiers see a leader slack on the mundane matters, they won't have confidence that he can competently lead them into combat.

“Control enthusiasm in the face of victories, large or small.”

The concept that followers will take their cues from the leader and to maintain composure and cognition when things are going your way, and when they're not.

“Dig up all the information you can, then go with your instincts.”

Rather than try to think your way through complex problems, it's better to trust that internal voice. The subtle magic is that by digging up all the information you can, you feed and *inform* your instincts.

“You don't step on enthusiasm.”

Encourage people when they show initiative and enthusiasm. Even if their ideas are underdeveloped or not quite realistic, guide them into more productive areas without crushing their spirit.

“Never believe the first thing you hear.”

There is *always* more to the story, there are more perspectives to consider. Rarely should leaders act on a single piece of information, especially in the military when the activities routinely involve risk to life or contact with an enemy.

Collin Powell taught us many things. He taught me many things. He will be missed.

If your post or district is going to host or participate in a major event, please let the department know. We do have vendors that may help your event. We cannot ask them if we do not know about them. Please help the department get word out.

Recruiting versus retention. If we retain our members, then to grow we when we recruit. As it is, we must recruit 2 new members. One to grow and one to replace the members leaving. What are you doing to keep your members?

I have been asked if I have a special project. The answer is no. I'm concentrating on retention. I do have something that I'm very interested in supporting. My class of commanders has created a perpetual Voice of Democracy scholarship. Currently it is only a \$1,000 to the recipient, almost at the \$1,500 threshold. The more money donated to the scholarship, the more can be awarded to the recipient. To donate to this worthy cause, you can send the money to our department to be collected as a total donation from the department or you can send your donation to:

Class 122 VOD Scholarship
James Lierz
VFW National Headquarters
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
816.756.3390

We have multiple investigations or enquiries going on. Please let the processes continue to their conclusions. Please don't talk about them, spread rumors or speculation about the proceedings. Spreading lies or misinformation only complicates the process and contaminates the body pool if we need take something to an Article 9 hearing. We meet to "*transact business of **mutual benefit**. **Do not let petty jealousies or trivial personalities influence our deliberations**. Let us uphold always the obligations of **unselfish comradeship** and loyalty to our organization and to the government of the United States of America.*" Please, let us not forget that.

As always, I want everyone to take precautions that they feel they need to do to stay healthy. Be it wearing a mask, social distancing, or taking the vaccine. Do what you feel is best for your health. The winter months are on their way. Family holidays are planned. Don't forget those without families. This can be a depressing time of year for many, keep an eye out and check with people. Buddy Checks. Stay healthy, stay on top of deadlines, but mostly, remember to have fun. We have many wonderful opportunities out there; we just need to capitalize on them.

Jim Bassett

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Oklahoma

While others talk... do.

While others fear... believe.

While others wait... work.

Senior Vice Commander
Jeremy Owen

Comrades, I want thank you all for a wonderful fall festival. I want to thank Eufaula, Muldrow, Sallisaw, El Reno, Curt Watts, and Daryl Mabry for a couple of awesome hospitality rooms and our convention committee for some good training and meetings.

I would like to congratulate our National Council Member Curt Watts and our Surgeon Mike Irons on winning their elections, I know that you will both fill your positions well!

We have a busy month with District meetings and Veterans Day soon upon us. There will be celebrations all over this great state and I wish I could attend all of them. Get out there and show your pride and remember to be visible. Always remember this organization has a mission and we, as members, are the frontline troops for that mission! We're getting to the part of the year that can really affect people mentally so be sure to do buddy checks, I've personally seen what a one little phone call can do for a person. I haven't met anyone in this organization who wouldn't be there for our comrades or their families.

I hope we are all healthy and well, if not, I hope for a speedy recovery!

Have you thought about supporting our very own Oklahoma VFW Foundation? There are several ways to do it: Amazon smile is a great way. Just go to <https://smile.amazon.com> once there then find Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation. Post donations & personal donations are another great way to support our Foundation. Donations are tax deductible. Donating to the Oklahoma VFW Foundation is a way of donating back to Posts within our department and our programs. Donors may also designate where they want their donation dollars to go toward, for instance, Veterans Services, Honor Guards, etc. Donations can be sent to Oklahoma VFW Foundation, [P.O. Box 1126, Oklahoma City, OK](mailto:PO.Box.1126@okvfwfoundation.org) or by visiting the Foundation website at <https://okvfwfoundation.org> and the selecting the donate button.

Jeremy Owen
State Senior Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma

Junior Vice Commander

Erica Traxler

*Student Veterans of America Liaison
Citizenship Education Chair*

Comrades,

I hope this month's General Orders finds you well. As we move into the cooler months please bundle up and stay safe. Some of you came to Fall Festival and attended the different training sessions available to you. Did you learn anything? Were they helpful? I am setting up separate post and district level JRV training sessions. They will be broken up into the four quadrants since we have so many posts, but the district session will be all at the same time. The district meeting will be on December 5th at 3pm. The post meetings will be held on 11 & 18 December. They will be 1-3pm and 3:15-5:15pm both days. I will send out the quadrants in the December GOs that will be attending each day and time. If you have questions, please send them to my email. Also, please let me know if you will not be able to attend.

Please remember to set up your VFW Facebook pages. Individually if you like other post pages across the nation you can see what other posts, districts, and states are doing which can sprout ideas for your posts and districts. Social media is a powerful tool that can assist in the successes of every event we host in Oklahoma.

Mid-Winter is in January this year. I look forward to seeing each of you there. If you know of any vendors that may want to set up please get them signed up to attend. The only way these conventions can be successful is by people participating. We can learn from one another, assist with events, and help make the team stronger.

Every day I am emailed membership stats for the nation. I see how every state is doing, plus I am emailed our state statistics down to the post. We need to continue to recruit because the new members we recruit today are our future. We want to continue the VFW legacy and recruiting is how we do that.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve you as the Oklahoma Junior Vice Commander. This is truly an honor. I look forward to seeing you at Mid-Winter at the Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton. Please call, text, or email if you need anything.

Erica Traxler

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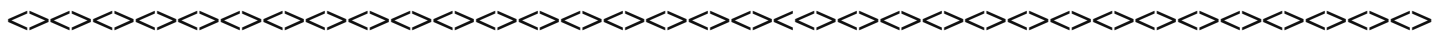
State Adjutant/Quartermaster

Curt Watts

Department Parliamentarian (RP)

NOTICE TO ADJUTANTS AND QUARTERMASTERS: Comrades, we at the Department Headquarters want to give credit to each Post and District on our State Dashboard for what you do. However, we do not have visibility of everything you do. For instance, if you donate to V&MS, National Home for Children and sometimes even our own Oklahoma VFW Foundation using websites or mailing directly to the organization, we at State Headquarters do NOT see that. The same is true when you submit your IRS-990. Therefore, please send us a copy of the donations or any other document in which you need added to the dashboard and we will get it posted. Please send to either vfwHQokqm@outlook.com or vfwHQoklahoma@outlook.com . Thanks for your assistance in these matters.

Please note that as of this week, the 2022 Podium Editions have yet to arrive at the VFW National Store. Once we receive them at Department Headquarters we will let you know via email. <https://www.amazon.com/Veterans-Foreign-Wars-Podium-Laws-ebook/dp/B09JV5S9K7>



National Legislative Committee Member

Michael L. Merit, PSC

Comrades, Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings!! I hope all of you are doing well and those that are not, I wish you a speedy recovery. Below I have written the information concerning the VFW Top Priority Goals in front of the current Congress. Rebecca Merit, the Auxiliary Legislative Chair, and I met with Senator's Inhofe and Lankford offices as well as Representative's Hern, Cole and Lucas offices to discuss these matters. Most all the bills were well received, especially the GWOT Memorial Location Act because it was budget neutral. However, as you will see below, most of the main bills the VFW is supporting is not supported by our congressional delegation. We must change that. As I have said so many times before, our voice in Congress is only as big as you make it. That means we need each one of you involved to ensure these bills pass.

Below, not only have I provided the bills, but there is also a short description of the bill, its status and how many Oklahoma cosponsors there are, if any. Below them is the contact information for both of our senators and all five of our representatives. Please utilize them to contact their offices expressing your desire for them to cosponsor these bills as soon as possible.

If there is one bill that I would especially ask you to focus on is asking Senator Inhofe to cosponsor the Major Richard Star Act and to add it to the National Defense Authorization Act

to ensure it passes this year. This is a vital piece of legislation and is the first “foot in the door” allowing retired veterans to receive not only their retirement, but also their disability without an offset. Senator Inhofe is on the verge of signing on to the bill. So, if we all speak with one clear voice, I truly believe that we can ensure it becomes law this year. What a great way to honor the legacy of a truly honorable veteran who is no longer with us.

As always, if you have any questions concerning these bills or any other national legislative issues, do not hesitate to get ahold of me and ask. Keep up the great work!

Email: michael.l.merit@gmail.com Cell: (918) 314-3951

All the bills can be found here: <https://www.congress.gov/>

S.3003 Comprehensive and Overdue Support for Troops (COST) of War Act of 2021 or the SFC Heath Robinson Burn Pit Transparency Act - An original bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances. Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR. 3967 Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2021 or COVENANT Act, Conceding Our Veterans' Exposures Now And Necessitating Training Act, FASTER Presumptions Act, Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act, Fairly Assessing Service-related Toxic Exposure Residuals Presumptions Act, Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act, Palomares Veterans Act, Presumptive Benefits for War Fighters Exposed to Burn Pits and Other Toxins Act, TEAM Act, Toxic Exposure in the American Military Act, Veterans Agent Orange Exposure Equity Act, Veterans Burn Pits Exposure Recognition Act - To improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances. Passed House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

S. 976 Caring for Survivors Act of 2021 - This bill increases the monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation payable to surviving spouses through the Department of Veterans Affairs. The bill also adjusts the amount payable to surviving spouses and children of veterans who were rated as totally disabled for a period of less than 10 years before their death. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR.3402 Caring for Survivors Act of 2021 - This bill increases the monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation payable to surviving spouses through the Department of Veterans Affairs. The bill also adjusts the amount payable to surviving spouses and children of veterans who were rated as totally disabled for a period of less than 10 years before their death. House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs hearings held. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

S. 535 Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act - This bill authorizes the establishment of a National Global War on Terrorism Memorial in the area of the National Mall. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks hearings held. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 2 (Inhofe and Lankford)**

HR. 1115 Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act - This bill authorizes the establishment of a National Global War on Terrorism Memorial in the area of the National Mall. Referred to the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 4 (Cole, Lucas, Hern and Bice)**

S. 1093 Department the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration - This bill establishes the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration to administer economic opportunity assistance programs for veterans and their dependents and survivors. Specifically, the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration must administer the following Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs, vocational rehabilitation and employment programs, educational assistance programs, veterans' housing loan and related programs, the Transition Assistance Program, and the database of small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans. Prior to the transfer of administrative responsibilities, the bill requires the VA to certify that (1) the transition of the provision of services will

not negatively affect the provision of such services to veterans, and (2) such services are ready to be transferred. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearings held. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

S. 2172 Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Act of 2021 - A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve grants, payments, and technical assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to serve homeless veterans. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearings held. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

S. 444 Advancing Uniform Transportation Opportunities for Veterans Act or the AUTO for Veterans Act - This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide (or assist in providing) an eligible veteran or service member with an additional automobile or other conveyance under the VA automobile allowance and adaptive equipment program. Currently, a veteran or service member with a specified service-connected disability or impairment may not receive more than one automobile or other conveyance under the program. The bill authorizes the additional benefit for such veterans and service members if 10 years have passed since the person last received such benefit. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearings held. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR. 1361 Advancing Uniform Transportation Opportunities for Veterans Act or the AUTO for Veterans Act - This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide (or assist in providing) an eligible veteran or service member with an additional automobile or other conveyance under the VA automobile allowance and adaptive equipment program. Currently, a veteran or service member with a specified service-connected disability or impairment may not receive more than one automobile or other conveyance under the program. The bill authorizes the additional benefit for such veterans and service members if 10 years have passed since the person last received such benefit. Referred to the House Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

HR. 2335 VET TEC Enhancement Act of 2021 - This bill increases the amount authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) High Technology Pilot Program from \$45 million to \$125 million for FY2022 and each succeeding year. The High Technology Pilot Program provides eligible veterans with the opportunity to enroll in high technology programs of education that the VA determines provide training or skills sought by employers in a relevant field or industry. Referred to the House Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 1 (Lucas)**

S. 344 Major Richard Star Act - This bill allows a veteran with a combat-related disability and fewer than 20 years of creditable service to receive retirement pay, without reduction, concurrent with disability compensation. Referred to the Senate Committee on Armed Services. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR. 1282 Major Richard Star Act - This bill provides that combat-disabled uniformed services retirees with fewer than 20 years of creditable service may concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation. Referred to the House Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 3 (Cole, Mullin, Hern)**

S. 1291 Record of Military Service for Members of the Armed Forces Act of 2021 - A bill to provide for a standard record of service on active duty for members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes. Referred to the Senate Committee on Armed Services. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 1 (Lankford)**

S. 1611 I am Vanessa Guillén Act of 2021 - A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the responses of the Department of Defense to sex-related offenses, and for other purposes. Referred to the Committee on Armed Services. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR. 3224 I am Vanessa Guillén Act of 2021 - To amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the responses of the Department of Defense to sex-related offenses, and for other purposes. Referred to the House Committee on Armed Services. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 3 (Cole, Mullin, Hern)**

S. 1944 Vet Center Improvement Act of 2021 - A bill to improve Vet Centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearings held. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR. 3575 Vet Center Improvement Act of 2021 - To improve Vet Centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

HR. 4233 Student Veterans Counseling Centers Eligibility Act - To amend title 38, United States Code, to furnish Vet Center readjustment counseling and related mental health services to veterans and members of the Armed Forces using certain educational assistance benefits. Referred to the House Subcommittee on Health. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

HR. 239 Equal Access to Contraception for Veterans Act - This bill prohibits the Department of Veterans Affairs from requiring payment from a veteran for any contraceptive item that is required to be covered by health insurance plans without a cost-sharing requirement. Passed the House, received in the Senate and referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

S. 796 Protecting Moms Who Served Act of 2021 - This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to implement the maternity care coordination program. The VA must provide community maternity care providers (i.e., non-VA maternity care providers) with training and support with respect to the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum veterans, particularly regarding mental and behavioral health conditions in relation to the service of the veterans in the Armed Forces. Additionally, the Government Accountability Office must report on maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity among pregnant and postpartum veterans, with a focus on racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes for veterans. Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent, Received in the House, and held at the desk. **Oklahoma Senator cosponsors: 0**

HR. 958 Protecting Moms Who Served Act - This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to implement the maternity care coordination program. The VA must provide community maternity care providers (i.e., non-VA maternity care providers) with training and support with respect to the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum veterans, particularly regarding mental and behavioral health conditions in relation to the service of the veterans in the Armed Forces. Additionally, the Government Accountability Office must report on maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity among pregnant and postpartum veterans, with a focus on racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes for veterans. Passed the House, received in the Senate and referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. **Oklahoma Representative cosponsors: 0**

Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK)

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National Council Member
Curt Watts

Comrades:

I want each of you to know how privileged I feel being elected as your National Council member to finish Comrade Robbie Clark's term. Comrade Clark has served our Department with distinction over his many years of service and has served well as our National Council Member. I wish Robbie good health and success in his future endeavors. My goal is to serve this Department with distinction as well. When I took my Officer's Obligation Oath at the Fall-Festival in front of many of you, I took that oath and swore on my character and promise as a true comrade. I did not take that oath lightly. I have been elected by Oklahoma VFW members and it is YOU who I represent. I will always remember that. I will stand firm and speak-up for Oklahoma while maintaining professionalism.

Comrades, I believe wholeheartedly in our legislative and veteran services programs both nationally and in Oklahoma. As your National Council Member, I will work with our Oklahoma members on our National teams to try and improve these programs and the lives of Oklahoma veterans. Comrades Merit and Dockemeyer are both great assets to our department and I hope as your council member, I, too, can help strengthen these programs while working with them and others. I truly believe that when we all work together for our common goals that we are greater collectively than the sum of the many parts.

Comrades, I have created this email address, vfwokncm@outlook.com in the hope for greater two-way communication. Our General Orders are great for sharing information to our members. However, I feel that hearing from our department members is important in our efforts to articulate Oklahoma concerns to the National leadership. Feel free to contact me with any issues you deem important. It is the voice and vote of all members who count in our organization. Also understand that I am willing to accept criticism and mentorship; I believe it helps in our growth both professionally and personally.

Curt Watts
vfwokncm@outlook.com
405.590.8577

*Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen & Teacher of the Year Chairman
Mike Devenitch*

VFW YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS: OK, the deadline for receiving essays to the post has past. Post judging needs to be completed by Monday, November 15th. Please check the Chairman's Manual before starting judging. Make sure the essay word count/time and have a picture of the student that meet the requirements before are sending to district level. Remember for every 15 entries you can send another for district judging. District judging will need to be completed and sent to me by December 15th. For the 2021-2022: **Voice of Democracy (VOD)** audio-essay program theme is - "**America: Where do we go from here?**" and the **Patriot's Pen (PP)** youth essay – "**How Can I Be a Good American?**" This is our signature program so make us proud! See <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships> for more info.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR (ToY): EVERY POST CAN SUBMIT 3 PACKAGES! That is one for each category annually: elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics and promote America's history and traditions. Look for teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are great candidates for this award. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors, you or other interested individuals. Submit all nomination to me. Post should have the teacher packages complete, be sure to complete fully and sign the ToY form. Please send to be by December 15th so I can get ready for judging. See <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year> for more info.

VOD/PP/ToY CONTACT: Mike Devenitch, (405) 819-9914. 4224 Manhattan Dr. Moore, OK, 73160 sentrymike@yahoo.com

Michael H. Devenitch

Past State Commander (2012-2013)

Department of Oklahoma

Veterans of Foreign Wars

sentrymike@yahoo.com

State Safety Chairman
Ron Albert

As the State Safety Chair, I hope these General Orders find each of you in good health. I would like to thank each of you for the unwavering support I have been given throughout my time in the Oklahoma VFW. I want all Post and District Commanders put safety before planning and remember the cold season is coming. Have extra blankets, food, water, and a flashlight in your car just in case of a break down. If you are going to travel, make sure you check your tires and heaters on your car to make sure they work prior to your trip.

I just want to remind everyone about the VFW Public Servant Award Citations for the Emergency Medical Technicians, Firefighters and Law Enforcement Personnel. We encourage all post to submit as many candidates as possible you believe should be recognized for their outstanding commitments, selfless service and sacrifice they provide and demonstrate to the community. The criteria for those awards are as follows:

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN:

Any individual who actively gives emergency medical treatment
Provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care.
Provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

FIREFIGHTER:

Any individual who fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and gives assistance to our nation's citizens.

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Any individual who serves in a municipal, county, states, or federal unit tasked with enforcing the laws pertaining to their area of responsibility.

Unfortunately, this award does not apply to individuals who are employed by private companies or security services.

All of these candidates must have demonstrated some if not all of the following:

- 1) Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties
- 2) Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities
- 3) Continuous growth in their skills and responsibilities with their profession
- 4) Recognition by those they serve and their colleagues
- 5) Continuing or previous volunteer work for their community

Please fill out and submit the VFW Public Servant Award Citation (included) for all candidates along with the following:

- 1) A Photograph from the chest up

- 2) One page summary of the candidate's overall background in their field
- 3) One page summary of the candidate's overall volunteer work for their community
- 4) One page record of all the candidate's accomplishments and/or awards in their field and/or in the community

All packets must be submitted to the VFW Post 5263 by 05 December 2021 for selection. There are two ways you can submit them and they are:

- 1) Via email at vfw5263cdr@gmail.com with Public Servant Award Citation from (your department name) in the subject line.
- 2) Postal Mail at VFW Post 5263

Att: Public Servant Award Citation
103 NE 20th Street
Lawton, OK 73507

All candidate packets will be read and judged by an appointed board. One candidate from each category will be chosen and sent up to the VFW National Headquarters by 01 January 2022, where they will be combined with other Oklahoma VFW Public Servant Award Citations. There all candidate packets will be read and judged by an appointed board. One candidate will be chosen from all categories and that candidate will be recognized by the Oklahoma VFW National Headquarters. The candidate will be informed of the recognition date, time and location when they've been notified of them winning.

If you have any further questions, concerns, clarifications, etc please contact me via email at vfw5263cdr@gmail.com or call my cell phone number at 580-512-0510. Please leave a voicemail if I don't answer. Thank you for your continued unwavering support and I look forward to receiving all the packets. May you have a great day.



DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

D-1 > 22 Jan 22	1100hrs>Post 5307 Salina>
D-3 > 07 Nov 21	1100hr>Post 4518 Sallisaw> A/Q Curt Watts
D-4 > 06 Nov 21	1100hrs>Post 3658 Antlers> Sr. Vice Cdr. Jeremy Owen
D-5 > 07 Nov 21	1000hrs>Post 10887 Broken Arrow Vet Center> Surgeon Mike Irons
D-7 > 06 Nov 21	1100hrs>Post 539 Henryetta> Jr. Vice Cdr. Erica Traxler
D-8 > 07 Nov 21	1100hrs>Post 2027 Stillwater>State Cdr. Jim Bassett
D-9 > 06 Nov 21	1000hrs>Post 4578 Guthrie> State Cdr. Jim Bassett
D-10 >08 Jan 22	1000hrs>Post 8706 Moore, New Hope Christian Church> Jr. Vice Cdr. Erica Traxler
D-13 >04 Dec 21	1300hrs>Post 6141 Fairview> Jr. Vice Cdr. Erica Traxler
D-14 >14 Nov 21	1600hrs> Post 85263, Ft. Sill> State Cdr. Jim Bassett
D-15 >08 Jan 22	1100hrs> Post 1193 Lawton > State Cdr. Jim Bassett

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 10 Nov> U.S. Marine Corps Established (1775)
- 07 Nov> Daylight Saving Time Ends (Set clock back one hour)
- 11 Nov Veterans Day, Signing of WWI Armistice (1918)
- 14 Nov Southern Conference Begins (Hilton Head Island, SC.
- 21 Nov> Grenada Campaign Ended (1983)
- 25 Nov> Thanksgiving Day
- 05 Dec> District Jr. Vice Training via Zoom, 1500hrs,
- 11 Dec> Post Jr. Vice Commander Training via Zoom, 1-3pm, & 3:15-5:15pm.
- 18 Dec> Post Jr. Vice Commander Training via Zoom, 1-3pm, & 3:15-5:15pm.



American Red Cross

We are with you, wherever you are, 24
hours a day, everyday.
1-877-272-7337 or redcross.org/military

American Red Cross Needs YOU!

Please join us as a Red Cross Volunteer Mental Health Facilitator!

We are looking for volunteers interested in facilitating virtual, interactive, engaging, psychoeducational, small-group workshops for military service members, Veterans, their family-member's and caregivers.

Our Goals:

Provide a safe educational space for participants to discuss challenges and concerns and learn the tools to build upon their natural resilience.

Ready To Join The Team? Need more information?

Please contact Samantha Hand at Samantha.hand@redcross.org or call 405-245-6467.

What is needed?

- Master's level or higher mental health professional with independent, clinical, and unencumbered license.
- Interest in facilitating 2 or more workshops:

What is required?

- Facilitate a minimum of two times a year
- Able to facilitate virtually and/or in person
- Actively participate in short virtual training course
- Provide copy of current license with visible expiration date

Red Cross provides:

- All training and materials
- CEs for completion of facilitator training

- Tech hosts for virtual and in person workshops

Current workshops

- Creating Calm
- Stress Solutions Reconnections--Adult / Child Family Laugh and Learn
- Calm and Connected Virtual Chat for teens Mind/Body workshops

Volunteer Opportunities with Service to the Armed Forces

- Virtual Briefing Facilitators
- Virtual Workshop Tech Hosts
- Casework
- Youth Action Campaign (Ages 13-24)
- MTF Pharmacy Teams
- Remote Office Support
- Pharmacy
- Dental/Medical Assisting
- Sewing Auxiliary

We are with you, wherever you are, 24 hours a day, every day. 1-877-272-7337 or redcross.org/military

Virtual Resiliency Workshops

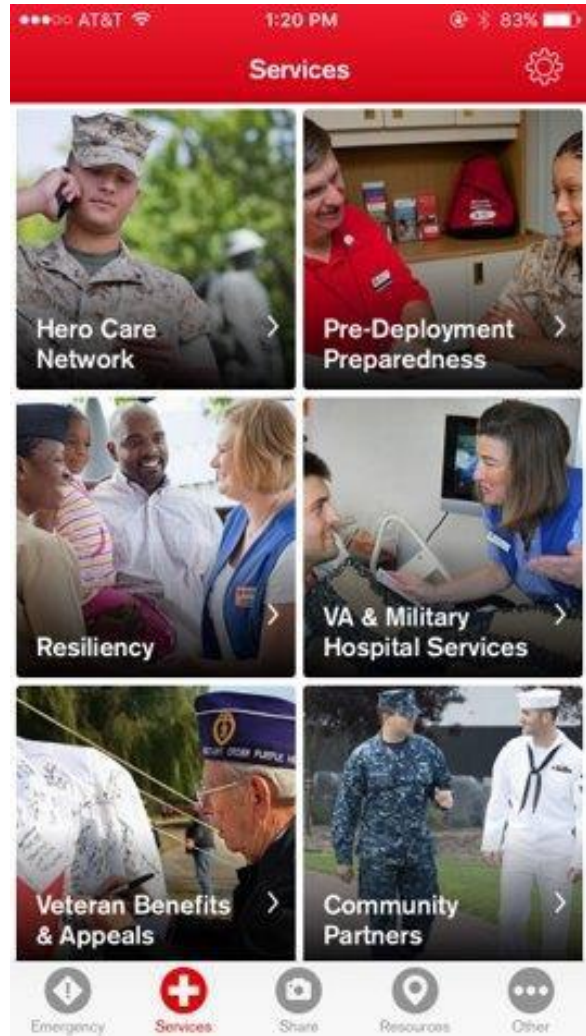
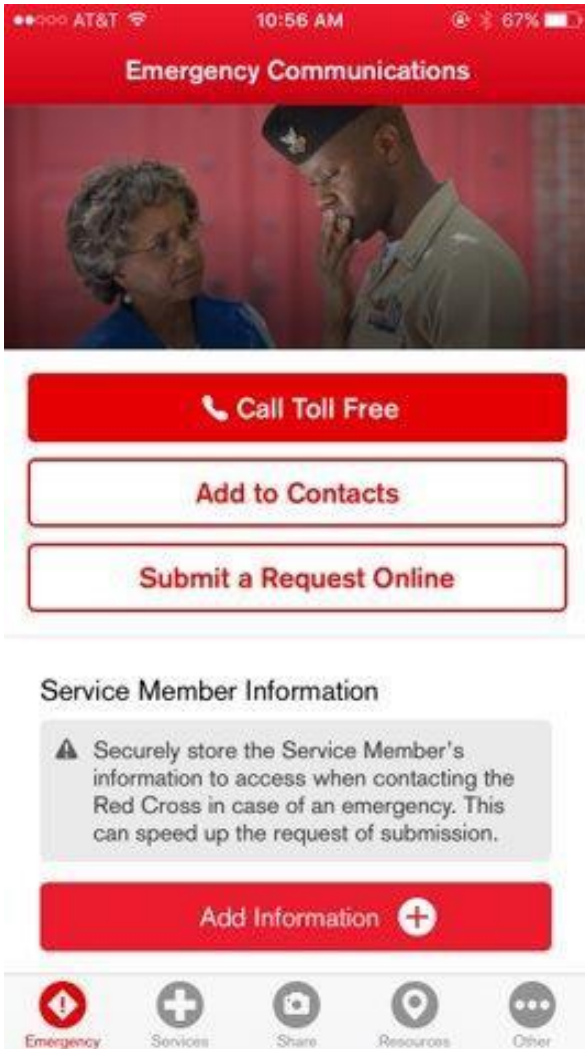
- Live, interactive, virtual workshops.
- Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, Veterans, Family Members, Family Readiness, Ombudsmen, Key Spouses, and Caregivers of Military/Veterans.
- Topics Include
 - Stress Solutions
 - Effective Communication
 - Reconnection Workshops
- Ready to schedule a workshop for your command, group, or family?

Contact us by phone or email to set up your workshop today!
katrina.velarde@redcross.org 785-477-1751
samantha.hand@redcross.org 405-245-6467

Hero Care APP

Easy to use free smart phone application.

The fastest way to
send an emergency
message
Text
'GETHEROCARE'
' to 90999.



Contact Information:

If you would like more information on the American Red Cross, it's programs, or volunteering or helping, please contact Samantha Hand at Samantha.hand@redcross.org or call 405-245-6467 or

Rebecca McGary, rebecca.mcgary@redcross.org or call 405-228-9547, VFW Post 8706.



A message from the Special Olympics Oklahoma

Hello Volunteers!

First off, you are SO missed! Here at Special Olympics Oklahoma we are searching for ways to stay connected and active during these times and want you to know we have not forgotten about you!

I actually need some volunteers for a few upcoming events & then I want to share an at-home volunteer opportunity that you can be a part of.

For the last few months an at-home opportunity has been available and has been very successful for reaching our athletes in an encouraging way! This opportunity is called **Volunteer From Home** and allows you to make homemade posters, letters, videos, and photos encouraging our athletes across Oklahoma. More information regarding this event is available through the link here to sign-up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E4EA4AC2BA6F58-volunteer>

If you have any questions regarding any of the above opportunities or have suggestions as well, please reply to this email and I will do my best in communicating back with you as soon as possible. Thank you again for all that you have done and will continue to do for Special Olympics Oklahoma and our incredible 12,100 athletes!

Josie Stephens

Volunteer Manager

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Special Olympics Oklahoma

Tel +1 918-481-1234

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