

# Department of Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars



P.O Box 1126 OKC. OK 73101

405 850-0815/ <u>www.vfwoklahoma.org</u>

October 2021 2021-2022 Series

"While we can never do enough to show gratitude to our nation's defenders, we can always do a little more."

**Gary Sinise** 

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

General Orders No. 04 2021-2022 Series

- 1. *Trustee's Report of Audit:* 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 emailed to <a href="mailto:vfwhqokqm@outlook.com">vfwhqokqm@outlook.com</a>
- 2. Members are reminded that under the subscription dues model, an annual members dues expire on the last day of the month of which they paid the previous year. Annual members are encouraged to renew their dues prior to their anniversary month to avoid a lapse in continuous membership. Officers and committee members, whose membership is not in good standing by reason to pay current dues by the end of anniversary month, shall forfeit eligibility to hold any office the remainder of the administrative year.

In addition, every effort should be made to renew the membership of continuous members and sign up new and recover former members at all times during the year.

3. *Department Directory/Roster:* Commanders & Adjutants are asked to send all corrections, changes etc. of the Department Roster to <a href="wfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com">wfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com</a> for changes.

/os/

JAMES BASSETT STATE COMMANDER

**OFFICIAL:** 

/ os /

Curtis A. Watts

Adjutant

# Commander Jim Bassett

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

It has been a busy couple of months. The Oklahoma State Fair in Oklahoma City has drawn to a close and the Tulsa State Fair is getting underway. The Tinker AFB 9/11, POW/MIA Memorial run and the 45<sup>th</sup> Fallen Heroes Memorial run were successfully concluded. These are big events that draw crowds. People are in the crowds, and in those crowds are potential members and people that learn what the VFW is all about. If your post or district is planning an event, let the department know. We have vendors that may help with the event and the department will support the event in any way that it can.

Our next major event is our Fall Festival, 22 to 24 October. We have moved the location to the Embassy Suites in Norman Oklahoma. The address is 2501 Conference Dr, Norman, OK 73069. There will be training classes for Commanders, Sr Vice Commanders, Jr Vice Commanders, Quartermasters, Adjutant, and Chaplains. This training is open to people interested in learning what they do or possibly to move into the position. There will be many vendors in attendance, visit with them and check them out.

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. 34<sup>th</sup> Street Kansas City, MO 64111 816,756,3390

National has started an investigation into the Department of Oklahoma. We also have multiple investigations or enquiries on going. I do not want people to worry, but 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 a 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

State Commander
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars
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Oklahoma City Oklahoma 73101
405.664.3929
Bassettj15@yahoo.com
https://vfwoklahoma.org/



While others talk...do. While others fear...believe. While others wait...work.

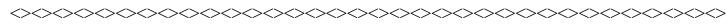
# Senior Vice Commander Jeremy Owen

Comrades, we've been on roll already this year and we need to keep that momentum going. I hope we are all healthy and doing good, if not, I hope you're on the mend. We have been doing good things with recruiting at both state fairs! We have fall fest approaching fast and I hope to see you all there. Congratulations to our new State Junior Vice Commander Erica Traxler! Let's keep it going TEAM OKLAHOMA!

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 <a href="https://smile.amazon.com">https://smile.amazon.com</a> 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 or by visiting the Foundation website at <a href="https://okvfwfoundation.org">https://okvfwfoundation.org</a> and the selecting the donate button.

Jeremy Owen State Senior Vice Commander Department of Oklahoma



# Junior Vice Commander Erica Traxler

Comrades,

I hope this month's General Orders finds you well. I would like to extend a thank you to the Counsel of Administration members for your support in my election to Junior Vice Commander, but also to the members of the state. Without your assistance, guidance, and support I would not be where I am at today. Post 5263 has by far been the biggest support in my journey so thank you to them and to District 14. I am grateful to be here and look forward to serving the veterans of Oklahoma.

As I visit my social media accounts, I realize how much other states are utilizing their Facebook to advertise what is going on. With each post having requirements to be on social media now as well as districts and the state it is imperative that we take full advantage of what social media can do for us. Advertise every event possible with one or two photos and share your events up the chain. The more we like and share, the more people get to see what we are doing. Oklahoma is doing great things and I know we can be the leader in how to make social media work for us so we can take care of more veterans in this great state.

Fall Festival is coming up later this month. There will be training so please come up for the training. Come meet your fellow comrades and get to know them better. We are a team and as a team we need to know where our strengths and weaknesses are. By learning more about your fellow comrades you may learn of a strength or weakness in yourself or others that you need assistance or that you can assist with to help obtain better success in this mission. If you have questions don't be afraid to ask them, I'm not.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve you as your Junior Vice Commander. This is truly an honor. I look forward to seeing you at Fall Festival at the Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton.

Please call, text, or email if you need anything.

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#### **Erica Traxler**

Junior Vice Commander, VFW Oklahoma Student Veterans of America Liaison Citizenship Education Chair 989-239-5999 ericatraxlervfw@gmail.com



Student Veterans of America Liaison Citizenship Education Chair

Comrades,

I hope this month's General Orders finds you well because for some we know it will not. We have had to say goodbye to more of our beloved comrades. Comrade Steven Bentley passed this month and was a huge influence on our VFW members and the veteran community. There are more out there that we may not have known as well but were on our rosters. These months have not been easier and hopefully will ease up so we can move on to continue our mission. The health of each veteran in the state of Oklahoma is important and we need to push forward as safely as possible. If you need any assistance, I am but a phone call or text away.

With COVID-19 rearing its ugly head again with this new Delta variant please be vigilant when you are out and about in public even if you have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Keep in mind that this virus has not been around very long, nor has the research. Please, continue to monitor these websites for the most current information.

CDC: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html?CDC\_AA\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html?CDC\_AA\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F</a> 2019-ncov%2Fyour-health%2Fneed-to-know.html

FEMA website: <a href="https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/fact-sheets">https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/fact-sheets</a>

World Health Organization: <a href="https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab\_1">https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab\_1</a>

The VA has started enrolling veterans into a new program called VA Positive Airway Pressure (PAP) Program Patient Information. It is for veterans who are using a CPAP machine. The attached flier has all the ordering options and how this program will work. It will be a 5- year prescription and this will be like an Amazon distribution center but for the VA. You must be put

into the system first so please contact your local VA to be added for this great upcoming program that makes using our benefits significantly easier.

Comrades.

I hope this month's General Orders finds you well. I would like to extend a thank you to the Counsel of Administration members for your support in my election to Junior Vice Commander, but also to the members of the state. Without your assistance, guidance, and support I would not be where I am at today. Post 5263 has by far been the biggest support in my journey so thank you to them and to District 14. I am grateful to be here and look forward to serving the veterans of Oklahoma.

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

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#### **Erica Traxler**

Junior Vice Commander, VFW Oklahoma Student Veterans of America Liaison Citizenship Education Chair 989-239-5999 ericatraxlervfw@gmail.com



Continue to keep your eyes and ears peeled for Student Veterans and their needs. Extend an Olive branch out to them or the school. Have a resource fair with the Veterans Affairs office at the school and get a bunch of veterans' organizations involved including VA VBA, VHA, VA Education, and other VSOs.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve you as your State Surgeon. This is truly an honor. I look forward to seeing you at Fall Festival at the Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton.

#### **Erica Traxler**

State Surgeon, VFW Oklahoma Student Veterans of America Liaison Citizenship Education Chair

# State Adjutant/Quartermaster Curt Watts

Department Parliamentarian (RP)

#### **Adjutant Side:**

Post and District Adjutants should note that they are required to input and approve the All-American Dashboard entries. We will discuss in further detail during A/Q training during Fall-Fest.

#### **Quartermaster Side:**



**Notice:** This year's buddy Poppy boards are available for purchase along with Buddy Poppies. Please let me know if you need either Poppies or Poppy Boards. We can delivery to you at Fall-Festival or mail them. Again, I will attach a copy of the Buddy Poppy order form with these General Orders.





#### FALL FESTIVAL INFORMATION

Please spread the word that the decision has been made to have our annual Fall-Festival at the **Embassy Suites by Hilton, Norman Hotel & Conference Center 2501 Conference Drive, Norman, OK.** (405.364.8040). The dates are from 22-24 Oct, 21. Our block is now open and available to book rooms! If you call to book reservations you will need to call 1-866-577-1273 and give them the group code "VFW" However, it would be easier to book on-line.

A web link to book rooms is below. We will have until October 1, 2021 to book rooms under the special group rate of \$99.

#### Group Web Link:

https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=OKCESES&groupCode=CESVFW&arrivaldate=2021-10-22&departuredate=2021-10-24&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT

Hope to see you there.

Curt

# Embassy Suites by Hilton 2501 Conference Drive, Norman, OK

#### \*\*THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE\*\*

<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>OCTOBER</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021

Service Officer Training (Sooner Room 1) 1:00 – 5:00 pm

Grand Cootie (Degree Work) Cootie Banquet to follow 7:00 pm- TBD

Hospitality Room(s) as available

SATURDAY OCTOBER 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

Buddy Poppy Judging (Sooner Room) 7:30- 8:00 am

Joint Opening Session with the Auxiliary (Banquet G/H) 8:00 – 9:30 am

Council of Administration (Sooner Room) (Member Open Forum/ Symposium to follow) 9:30 - 12:00 am

Lunch (All) 12:00 – 1:30 pm

Commanders' Club Luncheon (TBD) 12:00 - 1:30pm

Commander Training – All Post and District Commanders (Sooner Room A) 1:30 - 2:30 am

(All Comrades are invited)

Chaplain Training (Sooner Room B) 1:30 – 2:30 pm

Senior-Vice Commander Training – All Post and District Senior-Vice Commanders (Sooner Room A)

2:30 - 3:45 pm

(All Comrades are invited)

Adjutant/Quartermaster Parliamentary Training (Sooner Room B) 2:30 – 5:00 pm

Cootie Time/ Grand Scratch (Sooner Room) 5:00 - 6:30 pm

National Reps Reception & State Commander/President Homecoming Celebration (Banquet G/H) 7:00 pm

- Join the State Commander (Jim) and Department President (Polly) for fun, food and fellowship
  - Monetary gifts only please (to be given to their respective special projects)
  - Bingo and/or Karaoke to follow

Hospitality Room(s) as available

#### SUNDAY OCTOBER 24<sup>™</sup>, 2021

VFW/VFWA Church Service (Sooner) 9:00 – 10:00 am

# Veterans and Military Services Committee Chair Tony McGrew

Hello Comrades,

VMS Programs are an integral part of the VFW's never-ending obligation to assist members of the active-duty military, national guard and reserves, as well as their families. VMS is broken down into 3 distinct stand-alone programs.

- Unmet Needs
- Military Assistance Program (MAP)
- VFW "Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship" program



This year the focus is on Unmet Needs.

This year's years fair was a great success thanks to those who gave up their time to serve. Posts from around the state stepped up and supported the effort. The participating Posts signed up several life members and annual members, spoke with numerous Veterans about their needs and directed them to the appropriate entity and collected \$468.50 for VMS Programs. This was only the second year that we have been involved with the fair and each time we gain more experience on how to make it better next year. We are already looking for someone to be the State Fair Chairperson of next year. If you want to serve, this is a great way to do it.

Last month we had the opportunity to participate in the First Annual USO Experience "Military Village." This event drew all of the US Military Branches to RiverSport Park. Again we set up a table/tent and had the opportunity to speak with Active Duty, Guard and Reserve personnel.

There will be opportunities arising during the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. The Air Guard has already reached out to us for assistance with food baskets. We will have more information on this later.

- \* Unmet Needs provides financial assistance to service members, veterans, and their families experiencing a financial hardship directly related to their military service.
- \* Assistance, not a hand out.
- \* The financial assistance is in the form of a one-time grant in an amount up to \$5,000. All grants are paid directly to the "creditor" companies (such as the electric company, mortgage company, landlord, etc.) and not to the individual.
- \* Funds can be used for rent, car repairs, medical expenses, infant-care items and many other necessities.
- \* Each case is reviewed individually, and acceptance determined by a committee.
- \* Applied for on-line at: https://www.vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities and Events:

#### Thanksgiving and Christmas Seasons

All for One; One for All

Tony McGrew State VMS Chair

District 10 Commander Department of Oklahoma

405-820-6467

<u>Tony.vfw8706@gmail.com</u> https://www.vfwoklahoma.org





Help us raise money for VFW Unmet Needs Program:

JOIN IN ON THE FUN! TRY
YOUR LUCK AT ONE OF
THESE ITEMS WHILE RAISING
MONEY FOR THE VFW UNMET
NEEDS PROGRAM: We now have
7 items to date for the drawing!



TICKETS: \$5.00 ea/5 for \$20.00

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

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VFW YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS: We are in the final month, essays are due to your post October 31st. Hit the schools and make contact and set your post up for next year too. Successful essay programs: Email, call and visit the schools. Find your belly-button teacher, counselors or administrators that will help you. For the 2021-2022 school year the following topics have been released: 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?" Both are due to the local VFW Post by midnight, Oct. 31. This is our signature program so get out and make us proud! See https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships for more info.

**TEACHER OF THE YEAR (ToY):** Every school has a special teacher that is doing something extra and built a team (school/town/post) to work on the package! VFW 3 different categories annually: elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics and promote America's history and traditions. Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are great candidates for this award. Call the school principal and ask, which teacher fits this bill? Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors, you or other interested individuals. Submit all nomination to me. Remember: You will look good, your post, district and the state will all win when your teacher does!

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

#### DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

D-1 > 16 Oct 21 1100	hrs>Post 530/ Salina>
D-3 > 07  Nov  21	1100hr>Post 4518 Sallisaw>
D-4 > 06  Nov  21	1100hrs>Post 3658 Antlers>
D-5 > 07  Nov  21	1000hrs>Post 10887 Broken Arrow Veteran Center>
D-7 > 06  Nov  21	1100hrs>Post 539 Henryetta>
D-8 > 07  Nov  21	1100hrs>Post 2027 Stillwater>
D-9 > 06  Nov  21	1000hrs>Post 4578 Guthrie>
D-10 > 08 Jan 22	1000hrs>Post 8706 Moore, New Hope Christian Church>
D-13 >04 Dec 21	1300hrs>Post 6141 Fairview>
D-14 >07 Nov 21	1400hrs> Post 8580 Elgin/Fletcher>
D-15 >08 Jan 22	1100hrs> Post 1193 Lawton >

# Recruiting Banners! Recruiting Table Cloths!

Customizable 7-foot tall banner. Can order either Oklahoma or city with Post and number. Comes with four point stand or ground stake. Approximately \$190 plus shipping

Table Cloth, 6-foot black with post number, Auxiliary and VFW logos. \$200 plus shipping.



These items are offered at cost and shipping.

Contact Jim Bassett, bassettj15@yahoo.com



#### 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

Facebook Special Olympics Oklahoma
Volunteer Facebook Special Olympics Oklahoma Volunteers
Instagram @SOOKlahoma
Twitter @SOOKlahoma



## **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 withindependent, 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

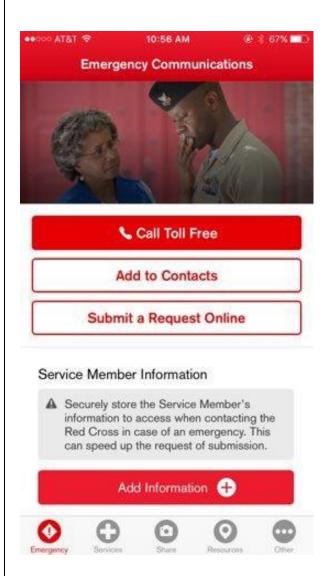
- Live, interactive, virtualworkshops.
- Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, Veterans, Family Members, Family Readiness, Ombudsmen, Key Spouses, and Caregivers of Military/Veterans.
- Topics Include
  - Stress Solutions
  - Effective Communication
  - Reconnection Workshops
- Ready to schedule a workshop 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 <a href="mailto:Samantha.hand@redcross.org">Samantha.hand@redcross.org</a> or call 405-245-6467 or

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

# Helping those that we have sworn to help.

The VA Medical Center in Oklahoma City is running low on supplies for their patents. The below list was provided but can also be used to help the ODVA homes as well.

#### Clothing:

T shirts – S, M, L, XL, 2XL Men's shoes – sizes 10, 10.5, 11, 11.5, 12, 13 Gripper socks, various sizes

### Hygiene items:

Toothpaste
Toothbrushes
Hair brushes
Shaving cream
Bodywash (3 in 1)
Men's deodorant

#### Entertainment

Books
Magazines
Puzzle books
Puzzles
Playing cards
Board games

If anyone orders online and has items shipped to us from Amazon, Wal-Mart, or Dollar Tree, please let us know so we can keep an eye out.

Thank you all so much!

Melissa L. Overfield Chief, Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE) (formerly Voluntary Service) Oklahoma City VA Health Care System 921 NE 13th Street (135) Oklahoma City, OK 73104