



Department of Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars

P.O. Box 1106 OKC, OK 73101-1126
(405) 850-0815 / www.vfwoklahoma.org



August 2023

2023-2024 Series

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."
-Sir Winston Churchill

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

General Orders No. 2

2023-2024 Series

1. Pursuant to National By-Laws Article VII Miscellaneous Provisions, Section 703, Bonds, "Each officer accountable for funds or property pursuant to any provision of these Bylaws shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, they may be accountable. The bond premium shall be paid from the funds of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Department, District, County Council or Post to which each officer is accountable.

The bonds of such accountable officers, in amount and as to surety, shall be approved by their respective units and held by their respective Commanders. The Commander of each unit shall be responsible for the proper and adequate bonding of all accountable officers in their unit."

2. **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 vfwhqokqm@outlook.com

3. **Department Directory/Roster:** Commanders & Adjutants at all levels are asked to send all corrections, changes etc. of the Department Roster to vfwokadj@outlook.com for changes.

BY ORDER:

ATTEST:

Erica L. Traxler
State Commander
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Michael L. Merit
State Adjutant
Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars



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State Commander Erica Traxler

*Department Convention Co-Chairman
Student Veterans of America Liaison
Citizenship Education Chair*

Comrades,

Hello Comrades. I hope this month's general orders finds you well. National Convention was great, and Oklahoma was represented very well. Thank you to everyone who attended the National Convention and the National Cootie Convention. We have 3 schools of instruction coming up on August 12th in Eufaula, August 26th in El Reno, and September 9th at the Fort Sill post. Each one is from 8 to 5pm. The Officer Training School is September 30th and October 1st in OKC at the Wyndham Garden Hotel. These trainings are not just for the officers holding the positions, they are for the general membership as well. The general membership is responsible for holding the elected and appointed officers accountable to their positions. It is hard to do that when there are members that do not know what is entailed in each of the positions. This is also a good opportunity to learn in case you feel the want to run for a position in the future. Training is key to the successes we have as an organization.

The department officers are here to help the members. We assist the district and post officers when they have questions, but we can also teach, coach, and mentor those that would like additional time to learn their job. Some of these positions are vast and require more than 1 hour of training. It is okay to reach out if you need some assistance. We are also here to help you grow.

I am excited to see everyone at the upcoming events we have scheduled. Be safe and I'll see you soon!

Erica Traxler

State Commander

Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars

989-239-5999

ericatraxlervfw@gmail.com

<https://vfwoklahoma.org/>

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***State Senior Vice Commander
Dan Fuller***

Comrades,

I am glad to be back in the great State of Oklahoma. I was proud to represent the Department of Oklahoma at the National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the district meetings. We had a great recruiting year last year and I am confident that we can continue our success with the National and State Commanders goal for memberships at 102%. Please make sure to attend the School of Instruction or the Officers Training course. Also, we will need volunteers for the Tulsa and Oklahoma City State Fairs for recruiting.

Keep up the Good Work!

Respectfully,
Dan M. Fuller
State Senior Vice Commander
Department of Oklahoma

***State Junior Vice Commander
Jeff Harris***

Greeting comrades,

Well, the 124th National Convention was rewarding and might I add that late July in Phoenix Arizona is HOT! I went to a VFW membership seminar, that showed us what National Commander-in-Chief Duane T. Sarmiento's mission is for the coming year. We went to a meet and greet with the National Jr. Vice Commander-in Chief Carol Whitlock and all the other State Jr. Commanders. Was nice to meet everyone that attended. Everyone was excited for the new year coming up. We will meet again in October. I



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enjoyed the drive there and back cause I have never seen mountains and beautiful scenery like I saw. Remember if I am needed to help with membership or whatever I can do, to call or email me at

Thank you very much,
Jeff Harris
State Jr. Vice Commander
jwharris1961@gmail.com

State Chaplain Jason Burns

Fellow Comrades,

What a July we have had. Going into Aug I would like everyone to stop and take 10min a week to call 3 Comrades and do a buddy check. Mental & Spiritual Health is very important and real.

In July I established an Oklahoma VFW Chaplain Network that connects the State Chaplain, District Chaplains to each Post Chaplains so we can get news to each other within min of something getting reported. Also, in July the Chaplain Network started a series of Txt Prayer Chains. We are also building a Chaplain Facebook Page & website where a member can reach directly out to the Chaplain services for Pray, Services & or any other needs. (Hope to be up and going by Oct 1st) Each month we will be informing the Membership of what is going on with the Chaplain Services.

I would like each Post Commander, QM or Post Chaplain to let me know of all members or family members that pass each month. My door is open to all members. Y'all can do this by mail or email. Current and updated information for Myself is:



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Chaplain Jason Burns
P.O. Box 505 Comanche Ok, 73529
vfwokchaplain@outlook.com

Your State and District Chaplains are:

State Chaplain Jason Burns
Asst. State Chaplain Gary Walker

District

- 1: Clark Nutting
- 3: Charles Hollibough
- 4: Daniel O'Grady
- 5: Gregory Patrick
- 7: Mitchell Williams
- 8: Hugh Allen
- 9: Lucas Derrick
- 10: Gary Walker
- 13: Marcus King
- 14: Billy Hartman
- 15: Jennifer Hurd

Till next month God Bless,
Chaplain Jason Burns





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State Inspector
Brad Blume

Commanders,

I would like to begin district inspections in mid-September. Please send me the date which works best for you and your district and I will do my best to accommodate. I am willing to conduct inspections during Fall Fest, Mid-Winter, and SOI. Please send the date, time and location you would like your inspection done by 31 August 2023.

Respectfully,
Brad Blume
VFW OK State Inspector

Grand Commander
Military Order of the Cootie
Ron Albert

Listen Up Cooties,

As your Grand Commander for 2023-2024, I am humbled that you have chosen me to lead this lousy OK Grande again. I am a Cootie and I serve just as you do, so I thank you for your trust and confidence in me to be Pediculus of this organization around State of Ok. I would like congratulations all the Pup-Tent Seam Squirrels and I am looking forward to working with lousy Cooties 2023-2024.

The Military Order of the Cootie of the United States is a non-profit Veterans Service Organization. We are known as "**The Honor Degree of the VFW**" and our members are comprised of the officers and leadership of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. Membership in the **MOC** is recognition of outstanding service to the VFW and its programs.

Founded in New York City on September 17, 1920, the **MOC** is based on the



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principals of good humor and fun. Over the past ninety years, the Cooties have provided social and entertainment programs to members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. as an Ancillary unit within the organization. Since 1923, our first year as a part of the VFW, the Cooties have worked hard to further the aims of the VFW while adding to it the frivolity known as Military Humor to the serious work of our parent organization. What would ultimately become known as the VFW National Home for Children, a sprawling campus of homes located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, started out as the brainchild of the MOC. We firmly believe in caring for the widows and children of our Armed Forces. Literally millions of dollars have been raised and donated to help "our kids" over our history; starting with the library, the swimming pool, the Fire Department, and a host of other projects designed to make life fun and educational for the children during their stay at the National Home.

With the outbreak of World War II, the Cooties recognized a need to entertain hospitalized troops and veterans during their confinement and rehabilitation at Veterans Administration facilities throughout the country. 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 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, and their fellow comrades in arms and their families. Our distinctive red hat and unusual uniform sets us apart and draws attention to the plight of those less fortunate than ourselves. We sacrifice a little of ourselves to bring a smile or a laugh during what is normally a difficult time for our heroes. We seek others like us to join and help us help them in their times of stress and anxiety. As we move into this year, we are adding more to our arsenal to assist the entire MOC world in recruiting, advertising, and our service. I ask that we continue to bring in more Cooties to the work that we do behind the scenes to keep us alive and in good standing with our parent organization the Veterans of Foreign Wars. They are watching us, they are looking at us, and they are evaluating us so we must continue to put our best foot forward.

I would also like to mention that we need to continue our relationship with our posts. This sometimes is a challenge, but we can overcome these challenges

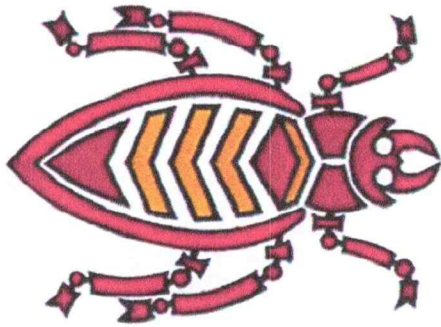
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because we are the *Honor Degree of the VFW*. This means that we put aside our differences and continue to think about our mission and not allow our mindset to be sidetracked. Always remember why you joined the VFW and the MOC to take care of Veterans and that number one goal.

Lastly, we are going have busy year going to Veterans homes throughout Ok and getting ready run the Southern Conference Hospitality room.

My best of wishes to all of you for this year and may it be a very lousy year for us all.



Ron J. Albert

VFW Oklahoma District 14 Commander
Oklahoma State Grand Commander MOC
CCVC Chair
Pass All-State & All-American Post 5263 Commander
Pass MOC 16 Put Tent Commander
Post 5263 Service Officer
580-512-0510
Ron200656@yahoo.com

Youth Essay Programs ***Mike Devenitch***

Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen & Teacher of the Year

VFW YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS: 2023-24 THEMES RELEASED. Now is the time to get ready, print applications and get the word out in the community. Successful essay programs: Email, call and visit the schools. Find your belly-

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button teacher, Speech Teacher, English, Counselors or Administrators that will help you. For the 2023-2024 school year the following topics have been released: Voice of Democracy (VOD) audio-essay program theme is - "What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?" and the Patriot's Pen (PP) youth essay "How Are You Inspired by America?" Both are due to the local VFW Post by midnight, Oct. 31. This is our signature program, so get out and make us proud! If you have any questions or need help, please contact me! Don't forget to get your auxiliary involved. See <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships> for more info.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR (ToY): 2023-2024 Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award: Every school has a special teacher that is doing something extra, so built a team (school/town/post) to work on the package! VFW has 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. They are to the local VFW Post by midnight, Oct. 31. Submit all nominations to me. Remember: Help make your teacher, your post, district, and the state shine with a win! National has request packages be limited to 5 pages.

SEND ALL ENTRIES TO ME AT STATE LEVEL!

<https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year>

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

District Meetings

D1 - 8/5 @ 11am Salina Department Officer TBD

D3 - 8/5 @ 11am Sallisaw (Jeff Harris - JVC)

D4 - 8/5 @ 11am Hugo (Erica Traxler - CDR)

D5 - 8/6 @ 10am Tulsa (Dan Fuller - SVC & Mike Merit - ADJ)



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- D7 - 8/5 @ 11am Muskogee (Dan Fuller - SVC)
- D8 - 8/6 @ 11am Bristow (Erica Traxler CDR; Jeff Harris JVC; & Curt Watts)
- D9 - 8/19 @ 10am Guthrie (Erica Traxler CDR & Jeff Harris JVC)
- D10 - 9/16 @ 10am Shawnee (Jeremy Owen PSC)
- D13 - 9/2 @ 11am Clinton (Erica Traxler CDR & Jeff Harris JVC)
- D14 - 7/15 @ 11am Ardmore (James Dockemeyer JA)
- D15 - 9/16 @ 11am Woodward (Jeff Harris JVC & Randy Traxler PRO/PAO)

Department Dates:

SOI: August 12th, 2023 Location: Eufaula VFW Post 8798 @9am

SOI: August 26th, 2023 Location: El Reno VFW Post 382 @9am

SOI: September 9th, 2023 Location: Fort Sill VFW Post 5263 @9am

Officer Training School: 30 September – 1 October 2023 Wyndham Garden OKC @9am

Fall Festival: TBD Location: TBD

Mid-Winter: TBD Location: TBD

State Convention: TBD Location: TBD

Commemorative Dates:

July 27th – Signing of the Korean Armistice in 1953

August 31st – End of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2010

September 2nd – VJ Day: Japan Surrender, 1945 ending World War II fighting

September 11th – Patriot Day



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- September 3rd Friday – POW/MIA Recognition Day
- October 7th – State of Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan 2001
- October 18th – Recognition of Women in Military Service
- October 23rd – Beirut Bombing
- November 11th – Signing of World War 1 Armistice, 1918. Veterans Day
- December 7th – Pearl Harbor Day, since 1941
- January 27th – Signing of the Vietnam Peace Accord in 1973
- February 15th – Sinking of the U.S.S. Maine, 1898
- February 28th – Liberation of Kuwait – Operation Desert Storm 1991
- March 24th – Start of Kosovo Campaign 1999
- March 29th – National Vietnam Veterans Memorial Day
- March 31st – End of Operation Restore Hope – Somalia 1995
- May 1st – Loyalty Day, annually
- May 8th – VE Day: German unconditional surrender signed, 1945
- May 30th – Memorial Day
- June 6th – D Day: Allied invasion of Europe, 1944
- June 14th – Flag Day
- July 4th – Independence Day