



Department of Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars

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



July 2023-2024 Series

*"Respect is earned. Honesty is appreciated. Trust is gained. Loyalty is returned.
Upjouney*

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

General Orders No. 1 2023-2024 Series

Attention is directed to: **National Bylaws, Sect. 216 Elected and Appointed Officers: Chairmen and Committees:** Post Officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the Post Adjutant. Post Officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof of eligibility shall be open to and reviewed by the Commander, Adjutant and Quartermaster prior to installation of office. In the event an elected or appointed officer fails to submit proof of eligibility with thirty (30) days of election or appointment, any right of the officer to hold the office shall be forfeited, the office declare vacant, and the eligibility qualifications of such officer shall be questioned in accordance with the provisions of Section 108 of the National Bylaws.

BY ORDER:

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

ATTEST:

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

Newly Officers for Department High Office 2023-2024

- Department Commander > Erica Traxler > Post 5263
- Department Senior Vice Commander > Dan Fuller > Post 577
- Department Junior Vice Commander > Jeff Harris > Post 8798
- Department Quartermaster > Curt Watts > Post 2027
- Department Adjutant > Michael Merit > Post 577
- Department Chaplain > Jason Burns > Post 1192



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Department Inspector > Bradly A. Blume > Post 4938
Department Service Officer > James Dockemeyer > Post 1317
Department Judge Advocate > James Dockemeyer > Post 1317
Department Surgeon > Tony McGrew > Post 8706
Department Chief of Staff > Dannie Bates > Post 8384
Department Officer of the Day > Larry Mullins > Post 3608
Past Department Commander > Jeremy Owen > Post 8798
National Council Member > Curt Watts > Post 2027

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. Thank you to everyone for an amazing year! We hit some excellent numbers in membership, and I look forward to seeing what you are going to do this year in membership as we soar to new heights with a national goal of 102%. July starts a new month and a new year. We have much planned and will have a calendar out soon for everyone to see. If you want things added to the calendar, please reach out to the Department Public Relations/Affairs Officer Randy Traxler at randytraxler@icloud.com. The membership plan will be coming out in a separate email with information for everyone. We had an Officer Training School scheduled for July 8-9 that will be rescheduled at a time and place to be determined. We have 3 schools of instruction coming up also: August 12th & 26th, and September 9th. There will be more information to follow.

The National Convention is coming up from July 22-27, 2023, in Phoenix, Arizona. Curtis "Doc" Bohlman will be nominated for the 8th time as the national surgeon general by the Southern Conference. This is another great opportunity for Oklahoma to be represented at the national level. If you are headed that way I look forward to



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seeing you there. Going to the national convention is a great way to collaborate and network with other departments. Good luck and safe travels.

I really appreciate each and every one of you. I always look forward to seeing you and spending time together. I feel blessed to be able to represent Oklahoma in this position and am very grateful. Thank you for allowing me to serve you as the Oklahoma Senior Vice Commander and now your State Commander. 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/>

State Senior Vice Commander Dan Fuller

Greeting Comrades

I would like to wish everyone a Very Happy 4th of July, be safe and take care of you and yours.

Many members of the Department will be traveling the National Convention in Phoenix AZ at the end of the month, to receive their ALL-AMERICAN awards and other recognition. Great work for those that have earned this award.

I look forward to traveling to the Posts that are hosting the schools of instruction. I have been appointed as the Membership Chair for the Department. Please contact me for any membership team meeting at your District or Post. I will travel there to help plan for retention, recruiting and information mining for "At Large Members", relocated members, and unpaid members in your area.



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Cell 918 577 4522.

Respectfully,
Dan Mack Fuller



State Junior Vice Commander Jeff Harris

Greetings Comrades,

I hope everyone had a good time at State Convention.

I want to thank everyone for supporting me as the next Jr. Vice Commander for the State of Oklahoma.

I am getting ready for the National Convention in Phoenix, AZ. I will meet with a lot of the Jr. Vice Commanders from other Departments and I will meet the National Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief as well. I look forward to some training in membership recruiting. We will be going to the Southern Conference with the other 13 Departments.

Remember, I am always available to come to you Post to help with membership of any kind. I am wanting to do all I can to make the Department of Oklahoma succeed.

-Jeff Harris

State Jr. Vice Commander



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State Chaplain Jason Burns

Comrades,

1st, I wanted to reach out and wish you all a great fourth and good health.

Comrades since elected as the State Chaplain I have been called upon a few times for visits and for prayer by members themselves. So, I would like to personally offer my Email and Number to each of you for your time in need.

If you would like for me to come to say prayer or blessings at an event please call or email in advance so I can make sure I can make it and make sure Commander Traxler doesn't have me attending a state function at that time. Also, if there is a Spiritual emergency, please call me day or night. If I do not answer, please leave a VM and text or email also. I will return your call back.

I will also send Commander Traxler my dates I will be out of pocket, but I will have access to emails at any time I'm gone.

District Commanders please pass my information to your District Chaplains so they can reach me as well. Also, if you could send me their contact information in a private email so I can create a Chaplain Call chain I would appreciate it. I would like to have Bi-Weekly checks with District Chaplains so I can send up a accurate monthly Chaplain Report.

I will be gone July 7-21 but I will answer emails and txt as I get service.

With Blessings,
Chaplain Jason Burns
OK State VFW Chaplain
(580)439-4627
Combat.ministry1@gmail.com
Matt 11:28-30



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Grand Commander Military Order of the Cootie Ron Albert

Listen Up Cooties,

As your Grande 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 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 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

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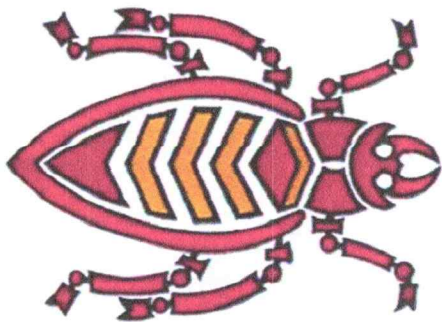
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communities, and their fellow comrades in arms and their families. Our distinctive red hat and unusual uniform sets us apart and draws attention to the plight of those less fortunate than ourselves. We sacrifice a little of ourselves to bring a smile 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 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.



Ren J. Albert

VFW Oklahoma District 14 Commander
Oklahoma State Grande Commander MOC
CCVC Chair
Pass All-State & All-American Post 5263 Commander
Pass MOC 16 Put Tent Commander
Post 5263 Service Officer



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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-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