



Department of Oklahoma
Veterans of Foreign Wars



P.O Box 1126 OKC. OK 73101-1126

580 515-0567/ www.vfwoklahoma.org

August 2024 2024-2025 Series

*"In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock."
~Thomas Jefferson*

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

General Orders No. 02 2024-2025 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

/os/
DAN FULLER
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:
/ os /
Heidi Teeter
Adjutant

***Commander
Dan Fuller***

Greeting Comrades,

It is good to be back in the Great State of OK after a very productive National Convention. Oklahoma was very well represented there. Congratulations to Spiro Post 4884 for receiving the National Community Service Award.

I believe we can now focus on our Programs, Recruiting and Special events that we have coming up.

I was grateful to attend both Dist. 3 and 5 meetings this weekend both having a very large turnout.

Please plan on attending the Officer Training in OKC next weekend. The same training will be taught on Saturday then Sunday, you can attend one day or both days if you like. Note see the OTS schedule.

I am excited that we will have three members of the Texas VFW training team as subject matter experts for some of the classes. There will also be a National Recruiter from the VFW HQs there as well for a class on the All-America Program and best recruiting practices. For those members that cannot attend the OTS there will be a SOI in Lawton, OK at the Ft. Sill Post the following weekend on the 24th.

Both State Fairs dates will be here soon please volunteer if you are available to assist the Department in the major recruiting event.

Remember the 3 “Rs” Recruit, Retain and Reinstate.

Wear your own kind of hat,

Dan Fuller

State Commander
Department of Oklahoma

***Past State Commander
Erica Traxler***

Student Veterans of America Liaison
VFWRG Chairman
Post Bylaws Committee Chair
Administrative Committee Chair

Comrades,

I hope this month’s General Orders finds you well. I have been identified for the above positions at the department level this year. I look forward to serving the department in this capacity.

Student Veterans of America: Host or support local SVA Chapters events. Build a working relationship with the chapter. Documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

If you have a university or college in your area where there is a significant veteran population, please reach out to them to see if starting Student Veterans of America chapter would be beneficial to them. I am happy to assist in helping to get new chapters off the ground as well as work with current chapters to be successful. If we can get multiple chapters to support across the state, I have a public relations event that could help the chapters get word out about what they do, why they are an organization, and how they help veterans. The National organization has a Student Veteran Support Grant that can be applied for to support events across the state regarding student veteran events. There is also a VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship that they can apply for. Those students go to National Legislative week in the spring for the opportunity to speak with policy-makers/legislators to discuss issues student veterans face.

VFW Riders Group Chairman: Assist chapters with growing their membership, support VFWRG events across the department, address issues with the National Organization, set up meetings at least once a quarter to get together with the members across the state, and be available for members to answer questions, comments, and/or concerns. If you are going to the National Convention there is a committee meeting on Sunday July 28th, 2024 from 10:00am – noon in room M104. For those who are unaware this committee is appointed by the Commander-in-Chief and consists of (1) member from each Conference which I have listed below. The committee meeting is an opportunity for all VFW Riders to discuss upcoming events, provide feedback on past events, share best practices, ask questions about procedure or policy and voice concerns or issues that may need addressed by the Commander-in-Chief or National Headquarters. If you have any information that you want addressed with National please reach out to me via email or telephone so that I may do so with our conference representative.

Oklahoma is hosting its first Operation Daily Battle Rally September 13-15, 2024 at VFW Post 5263, Fort Sill. This will be ODB's 4th rally as we rotate between Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma. The address is 103 NE 20th St, Lawton, OK 73507. The flyer is attached for you to be able to register. Once registered (you must enter an email address), you will receive an email to follow through with the payment. You can also register through this link.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfFjmt2kYmcRBegLjya3aHZZBmyPZUhp9VNX5Qq_4rIEaLx2eg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0

The purpose of ODB is the following:



OPERATION DAILY BATTLE

VFW RIDERS SUICIDE INTERVENTION OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

UPDATED MAY 2023

Military Times reports statistics show that up to 22 veterans a day choose suicide as a means of ending the hell of war and its lingering after effects. Operation Daily Battle (ODB) will be a joint effort between the VFW Riders of Arkansas, VFW Riders of Louisiana, VFW Riders of Oklahoma, and the VFW Motorcycle Group of Texas (hereinafter referred to as the ALOT Riders) to educate and assist any veteran or family member who may be seriously contemplating suicide as an option.

The purpose of ODB will be to educate our members through professional trainers to effectively get the message out to veterans in need of this service. These volunteers will be trained to recognize the signs of a possible problem and take the necessary initial steps to deal with it. Promoting prevention through education and proven techniques will go a long way toward saving lives.

To ensure continuity and long life ODB will create a fund supported by the Texas VFW Foundation. The Fund will be managed by an ALOT Riders Chairman whose duties will include reviewing and approving structured group settings using complimentary trainers, when possible, to preserve the sustainability of the ODB Fund. Members who are unable to utilize complimentary trainers will be given online options for training. Once training is completed, the member will be entitled to reimbursement through the ODB Fund by following request procedures.

The ALOT Riders will work to raise awareness of ODB by promoting the purpose and procedures and encouraging participation in the ODB. Additionally, there will be an annual ODB Rally to raise capital for the ODB Fund and highlight successes of the past year. Monies raised and any individual donations will be deposited into a restrictive fund within the Texas VFW Foundation.

ODB Procedures

Michele Anderson vfwmgtxsec@gmail.com

There will be an ODB flier soon. Once that comes out, I will send it to the department to be disseminated via constant contact. We can always use volunteers to ensure that everyone remembers Oklahoma and can't wait to come back the next time.

If you are overseeing a post suspension or administrative committee, I would like monthly updates so that I can report them to higher. If you need my assistance with any of these please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for everything you do for your veterans, their families, and your communities. I look forward to serving the department in my new roles. Please reach out if you need anything, now and in the future.

Erica Traxler

Past State Commander
Department of Oklahoma

Adjutant/Quartermaster *Heidi Teeter*

Comrades,

It has been a busy month for me as Adjutant and Quartermaster. So far, I have received approximately 29 April-June audits. Once we get through the next few weeks of training, I should have these reflected on the Department Dashboard. As a reminder to login to view the Dashboard, you choose "Members Only" under the "Login" option. You need to use your member id number then your last name as the password. If you have trouble logging in email me at either vfwokadj@outlook.com or vfwhqokqm@outlook.com and I will try to get you set up.

If your post is having an event, please report that to your District Commander prior to the 25th of the month so that they can let me know. We will publish these events in the General Orders each month to get as much awareness of these events as possible. To truly grow we must all work together.

I have again included the letter and questionnaire for the VFW Accountable Officer Bond. The accountable officer bond is for September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025. Again, this is for the VFW Accountable Officers only, the questionnaire for the Clubroom, Canteen, and Bingo Employees will come at a later date, those bonds are for October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025. I will send this questionnaire out again with the August General Orders. The rates for the bonds are as follows:

- \$4.50 per thousand for \$3,000 - \$99,000
- \$3.50 per thousand for \$100,000 - \$250,000
- \$2.50 per thousand for \$251,000 - \$299,000
- \$2.00 per thousand for \$300,000 - \$600,00

As a reminder if you are mailing your 990 or audit to the Department make sure to keep a copy in your records. These are items that are checked during post inspections.

We have officer training coming on August 17th and 18th at the Embassy Suites on South Meridian in Oklahoma City. Our next (and final for the year) School of Instruction will be held on August 24, 2024, at Post 5263 in Lawton.

I look forward to working with each one of you throughout the year. Again, if you need anything please reach out.

Charlie Mike,
Heidi Teeter

State Adjutant/Quartermaster
Department of Oklahoma

Judge Advocate *Randy Traxler*

Leadership: A Team Effort

Effective leadership in our VFW Post is built on a foundation of accountability, professionalism, and teamwork. These qualities are cultivated through mentorship and shared responsibility.

A cornerstone of our democratic process is the right of members to make and debate motions. When a properly made and seconded motion is presented, the Commander has a duty to recognize it for discussion. Failure to do so without a valid reason undermines our organization's principles.

If a Commander improperly refuses to recognize a motion, members have recourse. A point of order can be raised, forcing the Commander to justify their decision. If the ruling is unsatisfactory, an appeal can be made to the membership.

In instances where there is disagreement over procedural matters or the interpretation of our bylaws, the Post Judge Advocate should be consulted to provide guidance. Their expertise in organizational law is invaluable in ensuring that our meetings are conducted fairly and in accordance with our governing documents.

Should the Commander persist in denying members their rights, more serious action may be necessary. This could include forming an investigative committee to assess the Commander's performance and potentially initiating removal proceedings under Article IX.

Remember, our Post is strengthened when leaders and members work collaboratively to uphold our bylaws and ensure a democratic process for all.

v/r,
Randy Traxler
Judge Advocate
Department of Oklahoma

State Fair *Deric Duncan*

It's that time of year again. The OKC Fair and Tulsa Fair are kicking off in just a couple months. Amy Stout and I are organizing the OKC Fair and Frank Whitlock is organizing the Tulsa Fair. We are asking all leaders to begin looking at their schedule and step up to volunteer. Later this month a signup list will be sent out. The OKC Fair and Tulsa Fair draw attendees from all over the state. I can tell you as the Chairman for the last two years I have seen people at the OKC fair from Boise City, Hollis, Haworth, and Galena. That covers our entire Department. This year's fair is going to be better than before, but we need dedicated individuals that will commit to actively engaging with the public. There are so many exciting things going on in our departments and we need to share those things. So, if you feel like you can volunteer, actively engage with individuals and want to have a great time please reach out to myself, Amy Stout or Frank Whitlock with any questions or comments you may have.

Deric Duncan

State Fair Chairman,
dericduncan@gmail.com
405-250-4887

VOD & Patriots Pen *Jim Bassett*

Voice of Democracy:

“Is America Today Our Forefathers Vision?”

Patriots Pen:

“My Voice in America's Democracy?”

Voice of Democracy Audio-Essay Competition and Patriots Pen Deadlines:

- Student entry deadline: 31 October
- Post judging deadline: 15 November

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Deadlines:

- Post entry deadline: 31 October
- Post judging deadline: 15 November

As a reminder the Scholars App platform for VOD and Patriots Pen is required at the Department level but is optional at the Post and District level.

Jim Bassett

VOD, Patriot Pen, ToY Chairman

Historian
Richard Elsheimer

During the 2024 VFW State Convention, history was once again changed as Heidi Teeter was sworn in as the first female State Quartermaster. Ms. Teeter, a member of Clinton Post 4465, was also the first female to attain the position of Commander of District 13 in 2021. In addition to her VFW duties, she is also the proud mother to a daughter, Maecy, age 20, a college Junior, as well as a son, Daxton, age 10, who will enter the 4th grade.

Ms. Teeter will serve as Quartermaster/Adjutant with State Commander Dan Fuller for the 2024-25 term.

Richard Elsheimer

State Historian

Safety
Ron Albert

My name is Ron J, Albert and I'm the Safety Chair for the Dept Ok 2024-2025 year for the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Every Year the VFW sends out the Public Servant Award Citations for the Emergency Medical Technicians, Firefighters, Law Enforcement Personnel, 911 Dispatcher and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician. We encourage you to submit as many candidates 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/group, 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, provide rescue service or civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

FIREFIGHTER:

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

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Any individual/group, who actively serves in a municipal, county, states or federal unit tasked with enforcement of 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.

911 DISPATCHER:

Any individual/group who serves in a municipal, county, state, or federal unit tasked with providing the vital link between callers in distress & emergency response team by obtaining essential information to send the appropriate responders to the right location.

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL TECHNICIAN:

Any individual/group, who served in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with the enforcement of the laws & special handling pertaining to disposal of explosive threats to our nation's citizens.

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 nomination letter containing the candidate's or group's name, title, address, telephone and identifying the award for which the individual/group should be considered to include justification outlining background in the field, accomplishments and awards.

All packets must be submitted to me by 16 December 2024 for selection. There are two ways you can submit them to:

- 1) Via email at vfw5263pso@gmail.com with Public Servant Award Citation from (your department name) in the subject line.
- 2) Postal Mail at VFW Post 5263

Att: 2024-2025 Public Servant Award
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 their winning.

If you have any further questions, concerns, clarifications, etc. please contact me via email at vfw5263pso@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.

Respectfully,

Ron J. Albert
District 14 Commander
Safety Chair 2024-2025
District & Post Service Officer
Past two-time All-State CMR & All America CMR
Past two-time OK All -Star Grande Commander
580-512-0510
Ron200656@yahoo.com
Vfw5263pso@gmail.com

District Happenings

District 1:

Sequoyah-Downing Post 3573 will be hosting a Golf Tournament on September 14.
Jim Maxwell Post 10829 is having a Gun Show on September 14-15
George L. Husong Post 8380 will be hosting a Fishing Tournament on September 11-13

District 4:

Atoka Post 4859 will have their monthly breakfast fundraiser on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

- D-1** > November 2nd, Stilwell, 1100
- D-3** > TBA
- D-4** > TBA
- D-5** > TBA
- D-7** > TBA
- D-8** > August 10th, Sapulpa, 1100
- D-9** > August 17th, Crescent, 1000
- D-10** > September 28th, Shawnee, 1000
- D-13** > September 7th, Clinton 1100
- D-14** > August 31st, Ft. Sill
- D-15** > October 12th, Woodward, 1100

DATES TO REEMBER:

Officer Training >> August 17th – 18th, Embassy Suites, 1815 S Meridian AVE, OKC,
Time: TBA

CiC Al Lipphardt Homecoming >> August 22nd – 25th, Atlanta, GA

School of Instruction >> August 24th, Ft. Sill Post 5263, Time: 0900

Dept Adjutant/QM Training >> September 12th – 15th, Kansa City, MO

Accredited SO Training >> September 22nd – 27th, Annapolis, MD

Dept Junior Vice Training >> October 10th – 13th, Kansas City, MO

Fall Fest >> Location TBD, October 18th – 20th (tentative)

Southern Conference >> Nashville, TN, November 7th – 9th



2024-2025 Officer Training

August 17-18, 2024

Embassy Suites, 1815 S Meridian Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73108

Schedule of Events:

Large Group

0800-0810 Department Commander Introduction and welcome

0810-0840 VFW Video

0840-0910 Women’s Veterans Chair Presentation

Classroom 1 Instructors: QM Heidi Teeter, Texas Instructor QM Ben Lowrance

Classroom 2 Instructors: Commander Fuller Judge Advocate Randy Traxler, Texas Instructor Steve Evans

Classroom 3 Instructors: Past State Commander James Dockmeyer, Texas Instructor Marcey Phillips

AM Session

Classroom 1

Classroom 2

Classroom 3

0930-1030 QM Basics, Dashboard

Meeting Conduct

Commander Best Practices

1030-1130 Adjutant, Reporting

Disruptive Members

Service Officer Basics and Changes

1130-1230 Lunch on site

Large Group

1230-1330 National Membership Chair Ed Stefanik, CiC Al Lipphardt’s All American Program

PM Session

Classroom 1

Classroom 2

Classroom 3

1330-1430 QM Basics, Dashboard cont.

All State, At Large List

Inspections

1430-UTC Adjutant, Reporting cont.

District Command / Art IX

Member rights / VFW 101

A survey will be administered to gather feedback on the Officer Training School. Both physical and digital survey options will be made available. Commander Fuller invites all Department of Oklahoma members to attend the training, however, seating will be prioritized based on elected or appointed positions. All resources will be loaded on www.vfwoklahoma.org at the conclusion of the School of Instruction and Officer Training School 2024-2025 series.

OPERATION: ALL IN



VFW National Membership Program

2024-2025

Al Lipphardt

Commander-in-Chief

“Believe in what you do, do what you believe in.”

VERSION DATE: May 6, 2024

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I: SITUATION:

Commander's Introduction:

Alfred J. "Al" Lipphardt was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. at the 125th VFW National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

Al served in the United States Army from 1965 to 1979, earning his VFW eligibility by serving in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968, and from 1970 to 1971. In recognition of his heroic service in combat, he received the Combat Infantryman's Badge, Bronze Star with "V" device, Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Service, Purple Heart Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with Silver Star and two Bronze Stars, among many others.

He joined the VFW in 2002 at Post 12002 in North Fulton, Georgia, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership. Al is also a Triple Crown Commander, having been named as an All-American Post Commander in 2006, District Commander in 2010, and Department Commander in 2015.

Membership Mission:

To recruit, retain and mentor a stable membership base including all generations of veterans. To cultivate a membership that is well versed in institutional knowledge and actively involved at all levels of the organization and in the local community. To establish Posts with an established vision of service, leadership, and community outreach.

Specific Membership Numbers:

Our requirement this year is to continue growth and achieve at least 102% in membership. In the simplest of terms, we look at the prior year's total (which is how many individual members paid membership dues last year) and want to see a 2 percent increase. If a member has been lost due to passing away or not renewing their dues, then that means we must fill that gap in addition to recruiting new members to meet the 102% goal. This should serve as an example to prove that we must maintain our focus on retaining and mentoring our existing members as well as bringing in new members to the organization. Bring in the members we need, keep the members we have.

II: MISSION:

Membership:

1. Build a strong organization through recruiting new members while retaining our current membership, creating a solid baseline for the future.
2. Work together to achieve VFW's goals. The VFW National Headquarters staff is available to assist in coordinating programs, developing membership initiatives, and building awareness among our membership and the entire veteran community.

Membership Requirements:

- Achieve 102% in Membership
- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member.
- Increase membership drives and/or events.
- Develop new Posts and/or revitalize existing Posts.
- Increase Life Membership and Legacy Life Membership

WHO: All VFW Members, including Post, District, Department, and National leadership.

WHAT: To meet the goals of increasing membership through recruiting, retention, and mentorship. To develop a spirit of camaraderie and service to all veterans. To strengthen the Veterans of Foreign Wars through a solid membership base.

WHERE: Across the globe with Posts in all 50 states and in overseas countries and territories.

WHEN: Beginning on July 1st, 2024 and continuing through the end of the membership year on June 30th, 2025.

WHY: To serve our comrades and their families, to remember and honor those who have come before us, and to live the words of our motto, that ***NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.***

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S STATEMENT

Comrades of Team Tribe 24-25,

You elected me to lead this organization in accordance with the National Bylaws, Manual of Procedures and Ritual to which I was installed. **LEAD I SHALL.**

D-Day

Operation ALL IN will commence August 1, 2024 @ 1200 Hours

THIS IS NOT A DRILL,

THIS IS NOT AN EXERCISE

The Alert Order was issued when you were Department and State Junior Vice Commanders, and the Warning Order as Senior Vice Commanders, in order to prepare for *Operation All In*, our All-American Program for Departments, Districts and Posts.

We proudly stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us; the founders from the Spanish American War followed by World War I. World War II, Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf War, along with our continuing Global War on Terrorism and those deployments to many other places under the orders of the President of the United States. We have been preparing for this moment for three years. In 2022-2023 we focused on *Commitment* under the leadership of CIC Tim Borland and "Every Veteran Counts" and we successfully achieved those goals because you came together. You realized how critical the force (membership) is to mission accomplishment. In 2023-2024 we focused on *Credibility* under the leadership of CIC Duane Sarmiento and "Meet the Challenge". Again, you supported the sitting commanders realizing how critical it is for this nation's veterans to know we speak the truth. The principles we were founded upon 125 years ago remain our foundation.

Team Tribe 24-25 Commanders at all levels will focus on *Courage*. Your courage is undeniable. The day you raised your hand and took the oath of enlistment you said four words that sealed your pledge to the people of this nation, "So help me God". When you were ordered to deploy, putting yourself in harm's way, you knew full well the dangers you would face. With changing geo-social-economic conditions and frankly, partisan politics, we have forgotten the most important asset we have. Our nation can never replace the sons and daughters lost in war. Failing to have a clear plan to achieve victory has been our strategy over these last four decades. Our warriors are deployed to be merely pieces on a game board to be used repeatedly without consideration for the toll taken on the warrior and

families at home. The material costs of war and the lifetime of grief and tragedy both physically and mentally to our warriors and their families are quickly forgotten by our nation's leaders.

More dangerous to this nation is the failure by its leaders to keep the promises made to those who have borne the battle. Slowness to grant healthcare and service-connected disabilities is only one part of this failure. We depend on a volunteer military. Recruiting is an issue across all branches of service. Veterans who have deployed to combat have very long memories. The memories I am referring to are those of 1975 and the evacuation of Saigon and when we saw the debacle in Afghanistan at Bagram Air Base as our equipment was left behind but more tragically was witnessing our troops, that is our families (who serve knowing we will never be left behind) and allies abandoned on the ground. Our Warrior Ethos says I will never leave a comrade behind. Our nation's leaders failed to keep that promise.

One of my uncles who served in WWII was with the 82nd Airborne landing in Anzio on D-Day. He went on to battles in Bastogne and Market Garden. He was highly decorated. Unfortunately, I was not close to him as he seemed to always be deployed overseas. I remember a conversation that confused me at the time. The talk was about what was I going to do with my life. At age 11, in 1957 America, I didn't know what I was going to do the next 15 minutes much less had I considered my life. But, I did not remember what he said until I heard it again from a Vietnam Veteran and fellow Rotarian. My Uncle Eddie's words were "the talent you have is your gift from God, the use of that talent is your gift to God". As I remembered I thought, did I really hear those words from that rock hard chiseled old soldier. But then I also remember he said, I chose to be a soldier. I chose to be a peacemaker, a Warrior of God. Evil exists and it cannot be appeased, reasoned with, or condoned. Evil is, and there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to destroy it wherever it appears. Like many of you we have seen the face of evil. In closing I am asking you to take up the vision of courage, never, ever, compromise your integrity. Your word is your bond. If you want to know where I am, look to the front, that's where I'll be. Follow Me.

I am proud to serve together with you. Put that vision into action. Embrace the suck, stand rigid for righteousness' sake, never compromise your principles, use the beliefs you held when you lowered your hand as you took the oath, and always be the best you can be as you **"Believe In What You Do – Do What You Believe In"**

III: EXECUTION:

Commander's Intent:

"Efforts are to be appreciated. Achievements are to be celebrated."

To incentivize the necessary tasks of recruiting and retention, which are essential to the continued growth and strength of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, a series of award programs will be established and overseen by the Membership Department under the direction of the Adjutant General. These programs will be directly related to membership growth and program participation, and awards will be assigned to those individuals as well as Posts, Districts, and Departments that show excellence above and beyond the standard.

How To Achieve Tasks:

Focus on the three pillars of membership: *Recruiting, Mentorship, and Retention*

1. Recruiting: We need to bring in new members and recover lapsed members. To do this, we must not only reach out to veterans in our community but also build our VFW Posts into places where veterans can feel at home, find the support and camaraderie they deserve, and be provided with the best service for their family and community.
2. Mentorship: We must engage our membership and keep them active. We must be training the leaders of the future, but also communicating and serving every member of our Posts
3. Retention: We must retain the members currently on our rolls. This means putting an end to cliquishness, welcoming eligible veterans of all generations, backgrounds, and walks of life.

IV: SERVICE AND SUPPORT:

Membership Resources:

In order to assist our Posts, Districts, and Departments in meeting the goals set out by the Commander-in-Chief in this membership program, the National Headquarters has a wealth of resources at your disposal. Many of those are available free of charge to our members.

Membership materials ranging from applications, recruiting brochures, posters, and benefits brochures can be ordered directly from the Membership Department using the Membership Order Form (located under Membership Quick Links once you log into vfw.org)

Resources for Post Development, Membership Campaigns, and Mentorship such as training guides, videos, and webinars are available in the Training & Support section on vfw.org

Promotional tools such as radio spots, sample advertisements, public service announcements, and media kits are all available through the Media Room on vfw.org See the trend? Just about anything you will need is at vfw.org, check it out.

Department Leadership: Department officers will provide resources, support, and training where available including Schools of Instruction, Unpaid/Relocated lists, and other tools and incentives to enable membership growth and the mission of recruiting, retention, and mentorship.

National Headquarters: The VFW National Headquarters staff is ready and trained to answer any questions you may have concerning membership, VFW programs, or other issues. National Headquarters staff will be available for remote training when necessary, feel free to contact the Membership Department to schedule.

You can contact our Member Service Center directly at [1.833.VFW.VETS](tel:1833VFWVETS) or msc@vfw.org, or the Membership Department at [1.888.JOIN.VFW](tel:1888JOINVFW) or membership@vfw.org.

V: COMMAND AND CONTROL:

In order to incentivize growth and provide motivation and recognition for those individuals, Posts, Districts, and Departments that go the extra mile to strengthen and grow the organization, the Membership Department will issue membership awards designated by the Commander-in-Chief.

Awards Program Notes:

- Awards and stipends given to a Post will be transferrable to another member of that Post.
- No more than one stipend will be awarded to an individual for a given event.
- Post/District/Department: Membership must be a minimum of 102% in order to receive any award or stipend. This does not apply to the Early Bird award.
- NOTE: Reimbursement for travel expenses paid by the VFW will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service on Form 1099 if the total of payments made to you during any calendar year equals \$600.00 or more. Travel expenses paid for a guest or spouse for the award will also be reported to the IRS. The reimbursement you receive from the VFW will be deemed by the IRS to be taxable income. Since the circumstances of each individual are different, it is recommended that you consult your tax advisor to determine the effect these payments may have on your personal tax situation. It is your responsibility to keep receipts and other records as you and your accountant and/or tax advisor deem necessary in order to document your expenditures.
- Employees and officers of the VFW National Headquarters are excluded from receiving stipends unless otherwise authorized by the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General.
- Individuals receiving a 5-night hotel stay for either the VFW National Convention or the Legislative Conference must confirm attendance with the VFW Membership Department. Individuals confirmed who do not attend will be invoiced for half the cost of the reserved room.

All-American Program:

The All-American program exists to recognize exceptional leadership and teamwork, authentic accomplishment in membership growth and VFW core programs.

All-American Post Criteria

- Membership must be at least 102%
- Post-Election Report must be submitted to National Headquarters
- Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria by January 31st, 2025:
 - Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$125 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$125 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Donate to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$125
- A Post must submit a community service report quarterly to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard. The quarters are July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March, and April-June. One of these community service activities must be for the VFW Day of Service. Learn more at <https://todaysvfw.org/vfw-day-of-service/>
- Must purchase a minimum of 500 Buddy Poppies

All-American Post Award

All Posts that meet the qualifying percentage of 102% and the program participation criteria will receive an All-American Banner, Post Streamer and be recognized in the VFW magazine.

The Top 15 Posts in each Division will receive:

- Acknowledgment in VFW Magazine
- Acknowledgement during the All-American Awards Ceremony at the National Convention
- All-American Post citation
- All-American Post streamer
- All-American citation - commander
- All-American name badge – commander
- All-American cap (commander only, quartermaster, adjutant, and Post members may purchase cap)
- All-American lapel pin (commander only, quartermaster may purchase pin)

The top five Post commanders in each division will also receive five nights paid hotel stay* at the VFW National Convention and reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.

Division Captains and Co-Captains: The commander of the top Post in each membership division will be designated as the Team Captain, with the 2nd through 5th place commanders designated as Co-Captains. The All-American caps for these Captains and Co-Captains will bear a special designation.

All-American District Criteria

- Membership must be at least 102%
- District-Election Report must be submitted to National Headquarters.
- Meet all the following Program Participation criteria by January 31st, 2025:
 - Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$125 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$125 to National in lieu of entry)

All-American District Award

All Districts that meet the qualifying percentage of 102% and the program participation criteria will receive an All-American District Commander Citation, All-American Streamer and be recognized in the VFW magazine.

The Top 10 Districts in each Division will receive:

- All-American District streamer
- All-American District citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap (commander only, quartermaster may purchase cap)
- All-American lapel pin (commander only, quartermaster may purchase pin)
- Acknowledgement during the All-American Awards Ceremony at the National Convention

The top two District commanders in each division will also receive five nights paid hotel stay* at the VFW National Convention and reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.

Division Captains and Co-Captain: The commander of the top District in each membership division will be designated as the Team Captain, with the 2nd place commander designated as Co-Captain. The All-American caps for these Captains and Co-Captains will bear a special designation.

All-American Department Criteria

- Membership must be at least 102%.
- Department must submit Department legislative chairman reports monthly through the Program dashboard tool.
- Meet all the following Program Participation criteria by January 31st, 2025:
 - Voice of Democracy - An entry advanced to National judging
 - Patriot's Pen - An entry advanced to National judging
 - Veterans & Military Support Programs – Must complete State/Department fundraiser and proceeds donated to Veterans & Military Support Programs, Kansas City, Mo.

All-American Department Award

- Acknowledgement during the All-American Awards Ceremony at the National Convention
- All-American Department streamer
- All-American Department citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap - commander – quartermaster, and adjutant may purchase cap.
- All-American lapel pin - commander - quartermaster may purchase pin.
- Five nights paid hotel stay* for the 2024-2025 Commander attending the VFW National Convention.
- Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention Joint Opening Session

All-American Notes:

- Any member in a Post that achieves All-American status can purchase a “Post Member” cap. Those members must be in the Post during the membership year. Adjutants may purchase a cap. Quartermasters may purchase a cap and/or Quartermaster Pin. Commanders who were not in the top 15 in their Division may purchase a cap, Commander’s Pin, and/or Post Commander Citation.
- Donations made to replace Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen by eligible overseas Posts, Districts, or Departments must be made through the All-American Dashboard, not through any other means.
- Veterans & Military Support Programs Services Donations for Post/District/Department as listed above will only be accepted only through the All-American Dashboard.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS AND AWARDS:

Individual Recruiting Awards:

1/5/10/15 members recruited: recruiting pin

25 members recruited: Commander-in-Chief’s Coin

50 members recruited: Commander-in-Chief backpack

75 members recruited: Commander-in-Chief’s Medallion Set

100 members recruited: Century Cap or \$50 VFW Store credit & citation

Recruiting Awards will be sent out five times during the year to the Post, to be given out at a Post meeting to those members who have recruited new members. Mailings will take place near the end of October, January, March, May, and then after the end of the membership year.

Early Bird Award:

The top two Posts in each division on Jan. 1, 2025, will each be awarded a 5-night hotel stay for the VFW Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. One room will be booked per award/Post.

New Member Award:

Each Post that brings in a total of 15 New members will each be awarded a travel charger with the official VFW Commander-in-Chief logo. A Post may receive this award up to *five times* during the year!

“Operation: All In” Award:

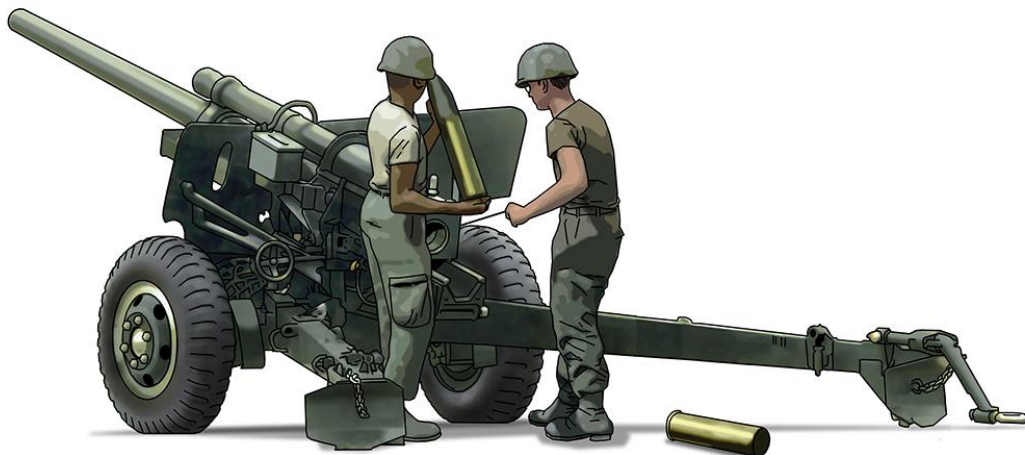
The top two Post commanders and the top two District commanders in each division who achieve 102% membership by June 30th, 2025, will each be awarded a five-night hotel accommodation at the National Convention.

102% Post, District & Department:

A distinctive streamer will be awarded to every Post, District and State/Department that achieves 102% or greater in membership by June 30th, 2025.

105% “Above And Beyond” Drawing:

Each Post and District commander that meets or exceeds 105% in membership by June 30, 2025, will receive an entry in this drawing. Twenty Post commanders and Twelve District commanders will receive a \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.



Post Division Recruiting Challenge:

For every 10 new members recruited between July 1, 2024, and June 30th, 2025, Posts will earn one entry to be entered into a drawing. One Post per division will receive a \$1,000 membership grant deposited into the Post account.

Legacy Life Membership Acquisition:

Each Post that achieves the cumulative benchmarks of 25, 50 and 75 Legacy Life Members will be awarded a Legacy Society Post Proclamation.

Each Post that achieves the distinctive benchmark of 100, 250, or 500 Legacy Life members by June 30th, 2025, commander or Post representative will receive a 5-night hotel accommodation at the VFW National Convention, reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session and a Legacy Society Post Proclamation.

Top Department Recruiter:

The top Recruiter in every Department by June 30th, 2025, will receive an engraved Cavalry Saber. Note: Minimum of 25 new members required to win this award.

Elite Recruiter:

Any VFW member who signs up 250 or more new members by June 30th, 2025, will receive a 5-night hotel accommodation at the VFW National Convention and a distinctive cap, citation, and name badge. In the event that an Elite Recruiter has already received a 5-night hotel accommodation from another award, a \$1,000 stipend will be issued at the National Convention.

Recruiter of the Year:

The Elite Recruiter who signs up the greatest number of new members greater than 250 by June 30th, 2025, will receive an additional \$1,000 stipend, reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session, a distinctive cap, citation, and name badge, and the Commander-in-Chief's Crystal Eagle trophy.

Life Member Recruiter Award:

Any VFW member who recruits at least 75 New Life members by June 30th, 2025 will receive a special citation from the Commander-in-Chief and a Recruiter Satchel with the Commander-in-Chief's logo.

New Post Development Department Grant:

For each new Post chartered the Department Quartermaster will receive a \$250 credit from the VFW Store to be used towards necessary materials for the new Post.

Department Commanders and Quartermasters may apply for this grant directly through the National Membership Department.

Commander-in-Chief's Challenge:

To emphasize the importance of Life Membership as the backbone of our membership strength, the Commander-in-Chief is issuing the following challenge to all VFW Posts. Each month through the year, Posts will accumulate points as follows:

- New Annual Member: 1 point
- Annual or Lapsed Member converts to Life Member: 5 points
- New Life Member: 10 points

Each month, the Post that leads their membership division in points will receive a special award designated by the Commander-in-Chief. In addition, at the end of the year every Post who has led their division in the monthly challenges will be featured on a video display at the National Convention to recognize their achievements.

Triple Crown:

The Triple Crown is one of the most prestigious membership awards that an individual can achieve. It requires being named as an All-American Commander at Post, District, and Department level. Leaders who attain this level of excellence will be recognized at an Awards Banquet at the National Convention with a special Triple Crown pin.

Post Division Breakdown:

Division	Minimum Membership	Maximum Membership
1	951+	
2	750	950
3	356	749
4	246	355
5	185	245
6	143	184
7	112	142
8	88	111
9	68	87
10	51	67
11	10	50

District Division Breakdown:

Division	Minimum Membership	Maximum Membership
1	5000+	
2	3,282	4,999
3	2,172	3,281
4	1,447	2,171
5	906	1,446
6	10	905

Department Division Breakdown:

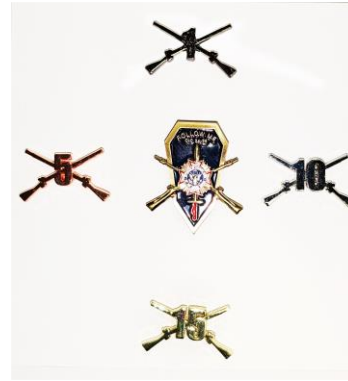
Division	Minimum Membership	Maximum Membership
1	29,000	above
2	15,750	28,999
3	12,000	15,749
4	7,000	11,999
5	2000	6,999

FRAGO: Items and Materials

Below you will see examples of some of the awards and items mentioned in this program. For more information, contact the VFW Membership Department.



Commander-in-Chief
Medallion and Coin



Commander-in-Chief Pin
and Recruiting Pins



Travel Charger



Cavalry Saber



Recruiter Satchel



2024 – 2025 Recognition Program



Wear Your Own Kind of Hat

Dan Mack Fuller
Commander

Jeff Harris
Senior Vice Commander

Tony McGrew
Junior Vice Commander

Heidi Teeter
Quartermaster

Heidi Teeter
Adjutant



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DEPARTMENT GOAL:

98% BY DECEMBER 31ST, 2024

102% BY JUNE 30TH, 2025



DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Aide-de-Camp: Pat Eagan,
At-Large Chair: Pat Eagan (Chair), John Sherrill (Co-Chair)
Buddy Poppy: Heidi Teeter
Bylaws/Resolutions: Curt Watts
Community Service: Gordon Wheeler
Credentials: Curtis "Doc" Bohlman
Conference and Convention: Curt Watts
Historian: Richard Elsheimer
Homeless Veterans: Rick Musgrove
Loyalty Day: District Commanders
State Legislative: Josh Starks
Membership & Retention: Aaron Smith
National Home: Danny Medley
National Legislative: Joshua Starks
Native American: Ed Beasley
OK Veterans Commission: TBD
OK Veterans Council: Gary Secor, Rebecca McGary, Larry Hurd, Ron Albert
Parliamentarian: Curt Watts
Patriots Pen: Jim Bassett
POW/MIA: Deric Duncan
Public Relations: Randy Traxler
Safety: Ron Albert
Scouting: Michael Schaffer
State Fair: Deric Duncan (OKC), Frank Whitlock (Tulsa)
Student Veterans Association Liaison: Erica Traxler
Teacher of the Year: Jim Bassett
Training and Development: Randy Traxler, Jim Bassett Vice Chair
VFW Riders: Erica Traxler
Veterans and Military Support: Jim Bassett
Veterans Service Committee: Dan Fuller, Erica Traxler, James Dockemeyer, Gordon Wheeler,
Voice of Democracy: Jim Bassett
Women Veterans: Chris Chavez

DEPARTMENT MISSION

First, congratulations to this year's Post, District, and State officers on your elections and appointments. You are assuming duties of great responsibility and leadership. I am honored to serve with you as your State Commander; together we will move the VFW of Oklahoma forward. Together, all of us can keep the VFW as the premier veteran's organization. Working together with our partners, the Auxiliary, we can do great things. Collaborating with other organizations will also



help get word out, the VFW is here to stay and here to help. Shared recruiting drives with other Veterans Service Organizations or other community organizations will also help.

Let us get out in the public, make sure that they know we are here, we are taking care of veterans.

The Department's mission is to foster camaraderie among United States Veterans of overseas conflicts living within the state of Oklahoma. To serve and assist our veterans, the military and foster good citizenship within the communities in which they live. To advocate on behalf of all veterans in the state of Oklahoma and nationwide. It is an amazingly simple mission and easy to do, take care of veterans. Earning the All-State Award is recognition of the posts and districts that live the mission of the VFW. The VFW can be the heartbeat of the communities that we live in. Members just need to go out and talk about the VFW, the rest falls in place.

ALL STATE AWARD

INTRODUCTION

The VFW is the premier veteran's organization that fights for veteran's rights and benefits. The posts within the VFW are the tip of the spear. They lead the fight for veteran's rights and benefits. The way they do this is twofold. First is getting out and recruiting. The second way is the hardest. Managing the programs, being proactive on getting the word out about the programs. The VFW has some fantastic programs. People become interested in them when they learn that they exist. Supporting the programs and getting the word out helps by informing the communities that we are there and continuing the mission. This in turn generates the communities' interest in helping us fulfill our mission. Wear VFW items when you go out in public. Freely answer questions when asked. It is not hard, but for some reason a lot of members do not do it. The posts that do deserve recognition. Pay close attention to the Department's Dashboard.

ALL STATE POST

The Post is the heart and soul of the VFW. The prestigious title of "All State Post" demonstrates that the membership of a post has been dedicated and involved in the VFW programs and their community. The All-State Verification form will be attached to the March 2025 and April 2025 General Orders for completion, submission, and arrival at the Department HQs no later than **May 24, 2025**. Cut-off for all criteria reporting will be the close of business on **May 30, 2025**, unless stated otherwise. All outstanding documentation and/or reports must be sent to the Department Adjutant by that date. This allows the Awards Committee to meet, select, and prepare the awards for State Convention. The prestigious cap will be presented to the Post Commander and Post Quartermaster for their efforts of guidance, tracking, and submission of the requirements. The post will receive a mounted certificate for their achievements. All State Team caps should be available for purchase at the VFW Store.

Membership requirements, each post must:

- 102% in membership.
- Commander and Quartermaster must each recruit one NEW member.



- Senior Vice Commander or Junior Vice Commanders must each recruit one NEW member.

Submission requirements, each post must:

- Voice of Democracy – submit a minimum of one entry to their district for judging.
- Patriots Pen – submit a minimum of one entry to their district for judging.
- Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year – submit a minimum of one entry to their district for judging.
- Safety Award (Law Enforcement, Fireman, and Emergency Medical Technician) **or** Scout of the Year; submit one entry for either the Safety Award **or** Scout of the Year entry to their district for judging. Duplicate entries to the department program will not be accepted.
- Community Service Reports – submit a minimum of nine reports.
- Community Events; submit a minimum of two reports per quarter (July- Mar) and at least one in the fourth quarter (Apr-May). Reports must be submitted 30 days after an event to the online reporting system. Only reports submitted through the online reporting will be accepted. Only reports tabulated prior to May 29, 2025, will be used for judging purposes.
- Quartermaster Bond – submit before September 1, 2024. If the bond is not through the VFW, proof needs to be submitted to the Department Quartermaster before September 1, 2024.
- Post-Election Reports – submit accurate and complete Post election reports. Reports **MUST** be received by the State Quartermaster through OMS or hardcopy before May 17, 2025.
- Recruiting Events – submit by write-up and provide proof of a minimum of two recruiting events conducted by your post for the year to the State Adjutant by May 24, 2025. *OK State Fair and Tulsa State Fair participation will only count if a post covers the booth for the entire day.*
- Post Inspection Reports – submit a complete and accurate post inspection report to the Department Quartermaster by December 20, 2024. Submit quarterly audits before 30 days after each quarter has ended.
- Proof of 990 filing must be filed with the Department Quartermaster by December 31, 2024.
- Delegate Registration – submit proof of delegate registering for the 2025 National Convention before May 17, 2025.
- State Delegate Fees – provide payment of State delegate fees before May 17, 2025.
- Buddy Poppies – purchase from the department. The required number is five Buddy Poppies per member based upon membership strength as of July 1, 2024. Purchase before 29 May 2025.
- Post Service Officer Appointment – must submit a copy of Post Service Officer Appointment Letter to the Department Adjutant before September 30, 2024.

Attendance requirements. Each Post must:

Attend a State conducted School of Instruction. Minimum attendance requirement:

- Commander, **or** Sr. Vice, **or** Jr. Vice **and**
- Quartermaster **or** assistant/representative **or** Adjutant **or** assistant/representative
**Officer Training School Aug 17-or 18 will be considered instead of SOI*
- Participate in a 2025 Loyalty Day Program at either Post, District, or State level.
- Attend at a minimum two of the three Department sanctioned events. Those events are State Convention 2024, Fall Fest 2024, and Mid-Winter 2025.
- Have one of the following command staff (Commander, Sr. Vice, Jr. Vice, Adjutant or Quartermaster or QM assistant) attend every District meeting within their District.



ALL STATE DISTRICT

The prestigious title of “All-State District” demonstrates that the District, Post level leadership, and post members have been dedicated and involved in the VFW programs and have been shown to be involved all aspects of membership and community to promote and support the Veterans within their communities. The All-State Verification form will be attached to the March 2025 and April 2025 General Orders for completion, submission, and arrival at the Department HQs no later than **May 24, 2025**. Cut-off for all criteria reporting will be the close of business on **May 30, 2025**, unless stated otherwise. All outstanding documentation and/or reports must be sent to the Department Adjutant by that date. This allows the Awards Committee to meet, select, and prepare the awards for the State Convention. The prestigious cap will be presented to the Post Commander and Post Quartermaster for their efforts of guidance, tracking, and submission of the requirements. The post will receive a mounted certificate for their achievements. All State Team caps should be available for purchase at the VFW Store.

Membership requirements. Each district must:

- 102% in membership.
- Each Commander and Quartermaster must each recruit one new member. This requirement is waived if they have the same requirement at the post level.
- Each Senior Vice or Junior Vice Commander must recruit one new member. This requirement is waived if they have the same requirement at the post level.

Submission requirements, each district must:

- Voice of Democracy – submit a minimum of one entry to the department.
- Patriots Pen – submit a minimum of one Patriot's Pen entry to the department.
- Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year – submit a minimum of one entry to the department.
- Safety Award and Scout of the Year Award – Safety Award (Law Enforcement, Fireman, and Emergency Medical Technician) **or** Scout of the Year; submit one entry for the Safety Award **or** Scout of the Year. Duplicate entries to the department program will not be accepted.
- Program Reports – reports must be submitted by the Commander by the due dates given by the Department Programs Liaison.
- Community Service Reports – at least 2/3 of the posts within the district must complete the All-State Post Community Service requirement.
- Quartermaster Bond – submit no later than September 1, 2024. If the bond is not through the VFW, proof is required before September 1, 2024.
- Election Reports – submit accurate and complete election reports. Reports **MUST** be received by the Quartermaster through OMS or hardcopy before May 17, 2025.
- Recruiting Events – a minimum of two posts in each district must complete the recruiting event requirements as stated above in the All-State Post requirements.
- Post Inspection Reports – successful completion of inspections reports **MUST** be completed by the District Commander or District Inspector before December 20, 2024. Any extensions must be approved by the State Commander.



- District Inspection – successful completion of district inspection MUST be completed by the State Inspector before February 1, 2025. Any extensions must be approved by the State Commander.
- Quarterly Audits – submit all district quarterly audits before 30 days after each meeting.
- Proof of IRS 990 must be submitted to the Department Quartermaster by December 31, 2024.
- Convention Registration – commander registered for State Convention before May 17, 2025.
- Service Officer Appointment Letter – must submit a copy of the appointment letter to the Adjutant before September 30, 2024.

Attendance requirements. Each district must:

- Conduct at least three meetings within the VFW year. In case of inclement weather or other emergencies causing a travel hazard preventing a meeting, the commander must coordinate and report to the State Officer representative assigned to attend the meeting as well as notifying the State Commander and State Adjutant. Video/Telephone meetings are authorized and encouraged.
- Attendance by Commanders at all scheduled Council of Administration meetings and any other meeting determined by the State Commander. The Senior Vice Commander or the Junior Vice Commander may represent the Commander at a meeting if unable to attend. Only the State Commander can excuse a commander or their designated representatives due to certain circumstances. The designated representative, other than the Commander, Senior Vice, or Junior Vice Commander, meets the quorum requirement, but NOT the All-State attendance requirement for District Level judging.
- Attend a State conducted School of Instruction. (Dual positions accepted if currently holding an attendance required by Post position) Minimum attendance by:
 - o Commander, or Sr. Vice, or Jr. Vice and
 - o Quartermaster or assistant/representative or Adjutant or assistant/representative**Officer Training School Aug 17-or 18 will be considered instead of SOI*
- Loyalty Day Program – take part in a 2025 Loyalty Day program at your own post, another post, district, or state level. Proof of attendance must be submitted by said body conducting the event no later than the end of May 17, 2025.
- Service Officer – appointed Service Officer must attend scheduled Service Officer Training provided by the State Service Officer or by his appointed Instructors within 120 days of appointment.
- Commander post visits – twice during the administrative year to show involvement and aid as needed.

STATE PROGRAM RECOGNITION

INTRODUCTION

The VFW is the premier veteran’s organization that fights for veteran’s rights and benefits. As part of this, the VFW offers many outstanding programs for our communities. Our partners, the VFW



Auxiliary, work with us hand in hand on these programs and projects to help promote that stance. We are one melded organization. As I said in the introduction to the recruiting/retain program, we need to build on this and look to the future. We need to set this organization up to continue the fight. Not for us. Not just for the current generation in uniform. This needs to be done so that the VFW can continue and help those children in grade school who will end up in some unnamed operation at some unknown location at a date in the future. We owe them this. Let us work together and run the programs. Unforeseen benefits come out of managing the programs. Take advantage of these when they present themselves. The VFW, the posts, and the communities are the ones that benefit. We need to focus on the basic tenets of our organization: to take care of our members, their families, and the veteran community, and this includes future generations. Some of these programs, or drives, may be combined with doing joint events with other organizations in your community.

BUDDY POPPY PROGRAM - *Chair, Heidi Teeter*

It is a requirement to purchase Buddy Poppies. Each Post must hold at least one Buddy Poppy drive prior to the next convention, documented online in the Departments website. They must also support the Auxiliary with their entry in the Buddy Poppy contest. Donate excess or unneeded Buddy Poppies back to the department for State level events. Document online on the department website.

CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM – *Chair,*

As evidenced by the quantity of submissions, documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

HOMELESS VETERANS - *Chair,*

Documented hours of effort show coordination. Perform clothing/food/equipment drives to support local shelters or take part in Sooner Showdown. Document online on the department website.

PATRIOTS PEN - *Chair, Jim Bassett - "My Voice in America's Democracy?"*

As evidenced by the quantity of submissions, documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

POW/MIA PROGRAM - *Chair, Deric Duncan*

Host or support POW/MIA events in your community. Documented hours of effort show coordination. Document online on the department website.

SAFETY PROGRAM, FIRST RESPONDER OF THE YEAR - *Chair, Ron Albert*

As evidenced by the quantity of submissions, documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

SCOUT OF THE YEAR - *Chair, Michael Schafer*

As evidenced by the quantity of submissions, documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.



SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR - Chair, Jim Bassett

As evidenced by the quantity of submissions, documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

STUDENT VETERANS ASSOCIATION - Chair,

Host or support local SVA Chapters events. Build a working relationship with the chapter. Documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICE - Chair, Jim Bassett

Documented hours of effort show coordination with the local military units. Number of events sponsored. Donation more than requirements. Document online on the department website.

VFW NATIONAL HOME - Chair, Danny Medley

Donate more than program requirements, documented hours of effort for events or drives performed is support of the VFW National Home. Work with Department Representative for donations at convention. Document online on the department website.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY - Chair, Jim Bassett, "Is America Today Our Forefathers' Vision?"

As evidenced by the quantity of submissions, documented hours of effort show coordination with the local community. Document online on the department website.

STATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

SCOTT P. SQUYRES AWARD

A plaque was donated to the department in memory of Oklahoma's own past Department Commander (1931 – 1932) and past National Commander-in-Chief (1937 – 1938), Scott P. Squyres. A memorial plaque was contributed and is intended to serve as a traveling memorial recognizing the excellence a post has demonstrated in engaging and supporting their community throughout the administrative year. It will once again be awarded to the post that has been judged the Most Outstanding Community Service Post at the State Convention in June 2025.

VFW/AUXILIARY TEAM SPIRIT AWARD

One post per category will be recognized with this joint award for exhibiting the most spirit, teamwork, cooperation, and working together throughout the year as a VFW and Auxiliary TEAM. Selection of these Posts will be up to the State VFW Commander and the State Auxiliary President. Support of the various VFW and Auxiliary programs, involvement in your local community and working as a VFW/Auxiliary TEAM are key criteria for consideration. Every post will have opportunities to earn the coveted TEAM SPIRIT Award. (All eyes will be out taking notes and supplying recommendations, so always show your great spirit)



VFW SERVICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD

A VFW post, district, or department level officer may submit a Service Officer for the Post/District Service Officer of the Year and the State Service Officer of the Year Award. The nomination letter at a minimum must include information about the work the service officer has performed, hours volunteered, miles driven to aid other service officers and/or veterans throughout their areas. Additionally, it should include any other pertinent service officer information that makes them stand out against others at their same level. Submissions will be accepted before May 17, 2025. The State Service Officers and the Supervisor of the VFW Veteran Service Office in Muskogee, OK will decide the recipient of these two awards.

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Oklahoma VFW Legislator of the Year (Senator James Inhofe Award)

As part of our continued engagement with our Congressional delegation and our State Legislature, we want to honor those elected officials who have stepped up and fought the fight for our military, veterans, and their families. This award is given to an Oklahoma Member of Congress or State Legislator who has exemplified through their public service a commitment to ensure that every member of the armed services, its veterans, and their families in the State of Oklahoma receive the care and benefits promised to them when they entered service. This award can span the current year or a lifetime of commitment in service to our veterans. Nominations for this award can be made by anyone affiliated with the Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars and its appendant bodies. Nomination letters, proof of accomplishments, and any other pertinent information must be given to the State Legislative Chair before March 1, 2025. The National Legislative and the State Legislative Chairs will appoint an awards committee to review and decide the designee for the year and the award to be given. The award will be presented at the 2025 State Convention.

Oklahoma/District VFW Comrade of the Year

This award is for a VFW Comrade that has shown exemplary dedication, volunteerism, support, hard work, and performed above all others throughout the 2024-2025 year. A District Comrade of the Year will be given to a comrade from each District. There will be one overall Oklahoma VFW Comrade of the Year given. Any fellow comrade who is a member in good standing of the VFW Department of Oklahoma may nominate another comrade. Self-nominations will not be accepted. This award is given at the sole discretion of the State Commander based on the recommendations provided and is not intended to compete with the lifetime achievement status that the Mr./Ms./Mrs. VFW Award holds.

Mr./Ms./Mrs. VFW

This award was established by Past State Commander Bill Beane and will be judged and presented by the past Department of Oklahoma Mr./Ms./Mrs. VFWs. Requirements for this award will be posted in the March – May 2025 General Orders/Newsletters by the Awards Committee of that group. This award considers comrades who have demonstrated a lifetime of outstanding work and service as a member of the VFW Department of Oklahoma. Nominations will be taken in letter format to the said committee. The selection committee will be composed of various Past



Mr./Ms./Mrs. VFW Award winners ONLY. The winner of this prestigious award will receive a plaque provided by the Past Mr./Ms./Mrs. VFW Group in honor of his/her outstanding achievement at the annual June 2025 State Convention Banquet. The Oklahoma Past Commanders Club sponsors this prestigious award.

MEMBERSHIP

MISSION

To recruit, retain and mentor a stable membership base including all generations of veterans. To cultivate a membership that is well versed in institutional knowledge and actively involved at all levels of the organization and in the local community. To establish posts with a strong tradition of service, leadership, and community outreach.

INTRODUCTION

The VFW is the premier veteran's organization that fights for veteran's rights and benefits. We need to build on this and look to the future. We need to set this organization up to continue the fight. Not just for the current generation in uniform, but for those children in grade school who will end up in some unnamed operation at some unknown location at a date way in the future. We owe them this. So, what do we do? In the past the VFW as a whole has pushed recruit, recruit, and recruit some more. This has had the effect of slowing our decay. We need to change our focus. Yes, recruit. If every member of our department went out and recruited one individual, we would double in size. In reality, we would show an increase but not double. Why? We need to work on retaining the members we recruit. Retain and re-engage those that left. We must improve the way we communicate with our members at all levels of the organization. Posts and districts need to use all methods available to convey information for news and training to our membership; newsletters, emails, social media, and outreach teams are some of the most effective ways to maintain communication with our members. We need to know who our members are and how we can address their needs and concerns. We need to focus on the basic tenets of our organization: to take care of our members, their families, and the veteran community, and this includes future generations.

MEMBERSHIP GOALS

1. Build a strong organization for the future.
2. Work together to achieve the VFW's goals. The VFW Oklahoma Headquarters staff is available to assist in coordinating programs, developing new membership initiatives, and building awareness among our membership and the entire veteran community.

MEMBERSHIP OBJECTIVES

- Recruit new and recover unpaid members
- Reinstate members in you Post area (contact Dept QM for details)
- Involve members directly in VFW functions at all levels



- Retain and mentor existing membership
- Develop new Posts and revitalize existing Posts **Note: District Commander Priority**
- Increase Life membership
- Increase Legacy Life membership

MEMBERSHIP RESOURCES

To work together and help each other is the main reason that resources are made available. In order to assist our Posts and Districts in meeting the goals set out by the Commander-in-Chief in this membership program, the National Headquarters has a wealth of resources at your disposal. Many of those are available free to our members. Please use them and share them. Veterans helping Veterans!

- Membership materials ranging from applications, recruiting brochures, posters, and benefits brochures can be ordered directly from the Membership Department using the Membership Order Form (located under the Membership Quick Links once you log into vfw.org)
- Resources for Post Development, Membership Campaigns and Mentorship such as training guides and video webinars are available in the Training & Support section on vfw.org
- Promotional tools such as radio spots, sample advertisements, public service announcements, and media kits are all available through the Media Room on vfw.org.
- The amount of information on the VFW web site is staggering. Use it. Just about anything you will need is at vfw.org, check it out.

The VFW National Headquarters staff is ready and trained to answer any questions you may have concerning membership, VFW programs, or other issues. You can contact the **Member Service Center directly at 1-833- VFW-VETS**, or the **Membership Department at 1-888-JOIN-VFW**. They will help you find what you need. Further, the Department has many experienced recruiters that are more than willing to help you achieve your goals.

RETENTION

Retention is half of the battle for growing your post. Retention plays an integral role in accomplishing growth within the post, district, and state membership. Retention is not a prerequisite for All State. The number of paid annual members in your Post on July 1, 2024, is your ensuing year's "prior year total." One more new or reinstated member is required to make up for each prior year annual member the post fails to retain. Your post retention is derived from six types of payment components based upon your prior year total of annual members and our goal will be to ensure:

- A prior year annual member pays their annual membership dues
- A prior year annual member pays the life membership installment fee
- A prior year annual member pays for life membership dues
- A prior year annual member transfers to another Post and pays their annual membership dues to your Post prior to transfer



- A prior year annual member transfers to another Post and pays the life membership installment fee to your Post prior to transfer
- A prior year annual member transfers to another Post and pays life membership dues to your Post prior to transfer

Note:

(Above section information taken directly from the National Commanders Membership Program)

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Largest Post Membership Increase Award (By Category)

- Category A: Posts with Membership of 10 to 75
- Category B: Posts with Membership of 76 to 150
- Category C: Posts with Membership of 151 to 250
- Category D: Posts with membership of 251 to 500
- Category E: Posts with Membership of 501 and up

The minimum post membership increase goal for the 2024-2025 membership year will be ten (10) new members for Category A & B. Fifteen (15) new members for Category C. Twenty (20) new members for Categories D & E.

The cut-off for judging the membership increase by Category Award will be May 17, 2025. Each Category winner will receive an award to be presented at the June 2025 State Convention.

Legacy Life Membership Award

The post with the highest increase of Legacy Life Members will be recognized. A minimum of three new Legacy Life Members is needed for Category A through C. Five new Life Legacy Members in Category D and E. The cut-off for entry of this award will be May 17, 2024. The award will be presented at the June 2025 State Convention.

State Commander/President's Challenge

The Auxiliary are our partners. To foster camaraderie between the VFW and Auxiliary, the Auxiliary Department President and VFW State Commander are issuing a challenge to our memberships. The VFW member that recruits the most Auxiliary members, and the Auxiliary member that recruits the most VFW members, will each receive specialty recognition and an award TBD at the 2025 State Convention. To receive credit for recruiting, proof of who was recruited and by whom must be submitted to the respective headquarters. The cutoff for this award is May 17, 2025.



Membership Recruiting Awards

You will receive the appropriate reward total based on award cutoff of May 17, 2025

If you recruit twenty-five new members, you receive:

- One VFW Membership Badge and Ribbon

If you recruit fifty new members, you receive:

- One VFW Membership Badge and Ribbon
- One 20 oz Tumbler

If you recruit seventy-five new members, you receive

- One VFW Membership Badge and Ribbon
- One 20 oz Tumbler
- One State Commander Polo

If you recruit one hundred new members, you receive:

- One VFW Membership Badge and Ribbon
- One 20 oz Tumbler
- One State Commander Polo
- Two Banquet ticket for the June 2025 State Convention

Past State Commander Troy Hensch Memorial Top Recruiter Award:

This prestigious award, named in Honor of Past State Commander Troy Hensch, will be presented to the Top Recruiter in the Department for the year. Commander Hensch served as Department Commander and as a United States Army Recruiter.

- Two banquet tickets at the June 2025 State Convention
- One plaque in honor of their outstanding recruitment efforts

*******Recruiter Award Disclaimer*****:**

The cut-off for the Awards for recruiting will be on close of business on June 1, 2025. On that day, the total amount of N/R that a Comrade has will be the Recruiting Award that Comrade will receive.

VFW OKLAHOMA 2024-2025 PROGRAM DUE DATES

Service Officer Appointment Letter Submission: Sept. 30, 2024

Quartermaster Bond Submission: Sept. 1, 2024

Post Inspections submitted: Dec. 20, 2024



IRS 990 Filed and copy provided to State: Dec. 31, 2024

District Inspections submitted: Feb. 1, 2025

Membership Increase Cut-off: May 17, 2025

Recruiting Events Cut-off: May 17, 2025

Community Service Events Submission: May 17, 2025

Delegate(s) Registered for 2025 State Convention: May 17, 2025

Proof of Loyalty Day Attendance: May 17, 2025

All State Form cut off: May 24, 2025

2024-2025 Post Election Report: May 17, 2025

Delegate(s) Registered for 2025 National Convention: May 17, 2025

100% Membership Streamer: June 30, 2025



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

Oklahoma

NOTES



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Oklahoma

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Oklahoma

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VFW Public Servant Award Citation Post Entry Form

NOTE: VFW Point of Contact should fill out their section below prior to distributing this form.
This will provide individuals from outside of the VFW with the needed information to submit their packets successfully.

To be filled out by VFW representative

Sponsoring VFW Post #:

Sponsoring District #:

VFW Post POC

Full Name:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Individual Submitting Nomination

Full Name:

Phone:

Email:

Nominee Information

Choose appropriate citation:

Full Name: (please list as you wish it stated on the citation)

Occupation Title: (if any) (please list as you wish it stated on the citation)

Employer Name: (please list as you wish it stated on the citation)

Address of Employer:

City:

State:

Zip:

Employer Phone:

Employer Email: (if available)

Please complete this form and submit to your local VFW Post using the information provided above. Ensure to include all required documentation that is outlined on the instructions sheet provided with this form. All winning Post entries must be received by their **Department Headquarters no later than January 1st**. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tammy Beauchamp at 816-756-3390 x 6287, e-mail tbeauchamp@vfw.org