

THE PACIFIC TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS



No One Does More for Veterans
Veterans First, Comrades Always

Volume XXVIII, Number 4

January/February 2025

FREE

Happy Holidays from VFW National

WASHINGTON – With the end of another year upon us, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) warmly extends safe and happy holiday wishes to the veterans, service members and families of our great nation. As we come together, let us acknowledge the service and sacrifices of military members past and present who have defended our American way of life and freedom to observe this season according to our values. Let us also pause and give thanks to those currently standing the watch around the world and who are unable to be with family and friends during this time. Most of all, the VFW calls on all to reflect and think of Gold Star families, for whom the holidays are reminders of the ultimate price their loved ones paid in service to our country.

Looking back on 2024, we are immensely grateful for our members, supporters, partners, allies and every service member, veteran, family member and survivor we have had the privilege and honor of serving. For 125 years, the VFW has relentlessly pursued the greatest good for veterans, from within our communities to the halls of Congress, and our 126th year will be no different. We celebrate the arrival of a new year and the countless opportunities to continue serving that it brings.

From the VFW family to yours, Merry Christmas and happy holidays!



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COMMANDER'S CALL

Comrades,

Let me start by saying (and maybe you have heard this before)...WOW! Our recruiting accomplishments are OFF THE CHAIN! You have set the bar at an all-time accomplishment level. Just to name a few:

100% 5 NOV 24

101% 5 DEC 24

Let that sink in, 101% BEFORE the CofA...I mean...the Mid Term Convention!!! WOW!

As of this article, we are VERY close to crossing the 102% threshold and that will mark a major milestone in our collective effort. That said, please continue to work on membership. The challenges, the goals, the finish lines....call them what you want. We, as an organization, only get stronger by increasing our membership. As it is with any organization, not all can meet all the challenges, all the time. However, those that can raise those that cannot UP and continue to remind us all this is a TEAM EFFORT! Next Comrade, Next Post, Next District up. We do this for the Comrades to the right, and those to the left. DPA stands for more than Department of Pacific Areas. It also stands for... Dedication Perseveres Always

Keep up the great work Comrades and don't rest on your accolades (well deserved to be sure). Good, Better, Best. Never let it rest. Until your Good is BETTER and your Better is BEST.

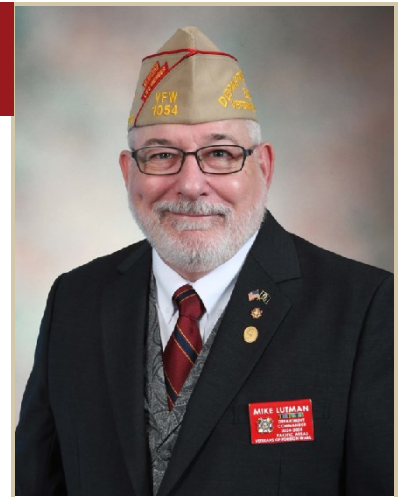
Speaking of which, tip'o the hat to Troy Derby and the Comrades in Subic / Barrio Barreto for a FANTASTIC (ahem) Mid Term Convention!!! I could have used a better toilet seat but, meh, who am I to complain? Seriously, having to pivot the way we did in short order and get that set up was masterful. Special thanks to my horses SVC Jack Farrell and ADJ Kevin Mitchell for ramrodding the effort along with the always gregarious Post PAUL P. BUSEK POST 11447 Commander Comrade Troy Derby and his entire band of WESTPAC Pirates for making it happen in such a GLORIOUS fashion. As many on Klingon Home world would say, it was a good day to die! Fortunately for us, the only fatalities I heard of were a few ATM cards. I have received nothing but glowing reviews from the many (more than usual) that attended and THANK YOU TROY AND TEAM for all that you did for us. Qapla'! (It's true....I am a nerd).

Nerd? Hey, that rhymes with BIRD, how about our DPA EARLY BIRD "Flock!" OMG! Three Districts and nineteen Posts made Early Bird! WOW!

We also had 3 Posts quality for the 2024-2025 Early Bird Legislative Conference Award! WOW! To put this in perspective, and as they say in horse racing, we are half way there. WOW!

Of course a lot of other hard work has gone on behind the scenes. Inspections are all but done thanks to our trusty DPA Inspector Brian Hamic and his team of District Inspectors. VOD and PP programs are completed thanks to our Chairmen Robert Madison and his mentor, District Commander David Gley.

THANK YOU to all the Posts and Districts that get their audits in on time. THANK YOU to all the Posts and Districts that have gotten their Buddy Poppy, VMS Donations and Bonds done in a proactive manner. THANK YOU to all the Posts and Districts that have submitted their CSRs and continue to prove that NOBODY DOES MORE FOR VETERANS than we do.



Department of Pacific Areas

Commander

Michael Lutman



COMMANDER'S CALL

THANK YOU to all the Posts and Districts that get out and about, getting after recruiting and supporting their communities. WOW!

Oh, and yeah, thank you to my horses SVC Jack Farrell and JVC Don Kelley for their Program / Dashboard management. We couldn't keep it straight without them and they continue to prove why those we elect for these critical positions are the DPA leaders that we can rely on day in and day out.

Yeah, we rock. So does our webmaster Augie Augustine. He goes about his business day in and day out fielding complaint after complaint over a process he doesn't control and help request after help request for issues he can't change. Yet he is our Knight in shining armor who leads the cyber assault to remedy our ills. Usually, and as long as things are moving smoothly, it's all good. The minute is isn't; Dangit Augie! I just thought I would take a moment to recognize one of our most underappreciated horses, Augie.

You know who else rocks, our DPA DSO Al "the Hitman" Turner. We went into this term with CHALLENGES. Al has met them head on and has NOT blinked. We continue to work on growing our OVERWORKED ADSO force and despite some heavy seas, Al has kept a calm and steady hand on the helm. This includes our Post Service Officer Corps. Service Officer training has went well with a few "exceptions" but we hope to clean that up soon. Suffice to say our All World DSO Al Turner has taken the bull buy the horns and is driving the program like he stole it! THANK YOU Al for all that you do and will continue to do (despite a broken hip, hip replacement surgery and recovery). We could not be in better hands and WE as a department will grow into the ADSO force needed under Al's leadership.

Just so you know, I'm a major proponent of Post Service Officers. What they do, day in and day out (within their job scope) is critical to the success of the entire program. I disagree with VFW Bylaws requirements which now no longer require a post to appoint a VFW Post Service Officer. I believe they are, as they have always been, the tip of the spear when it comes to getting information out regarding Veterans support programs and the VA Claims process. But, because of those few who have caused major litigation issues for the organization, they have removed the requirement. I understand the application of damage control to reduce risk, but not why we would just abandon our front line information warriors in support of Veterans and their family members.

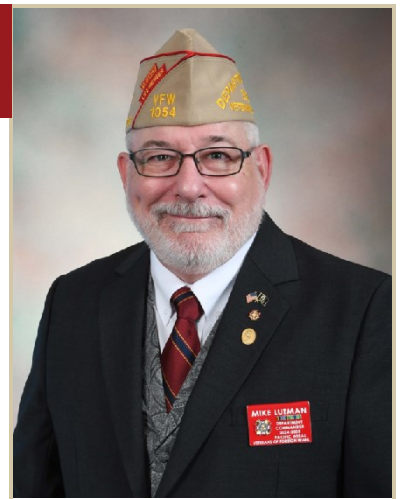
Speaking of programs, I'll be headed to Washington D.C. soon for the Legislative Conference during which we will recognize our program winners. On behalf of the entire DPA Team who worked the entries, did all the judging and got them submitted one way or the other, it is my GREAT pleasure to announce the following winners from the DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS! Give it up for:

Voice of Democracy Winner: District 6, Post 1509, Mr. Simon Sanchez High School - Mr. Hailey Pilar Pangelinann

Patriots Pen Winner: District 2, Post 9612, Camp Zama Middle School - Mr. Quinn Savannah Wagner

Teachers Winner: District 2, Post 9612 - Camp Zama High School, Music Department, Mr. Bradley Harzman

Comrades, please join me in congratulating each of our winners for their outstanding entries, patriotism and service above self. I would also like to once again thank my staff for being there and supporting the effort from cradle to grave.



Commander

Michael Lutman



COMMANDER'S CALL

In particular, DPA JVC Don Kelley and SVC Jack Farrel. As with all things, nobody pulls the load alone in this department, but they certainly punch way outside of their weight class.

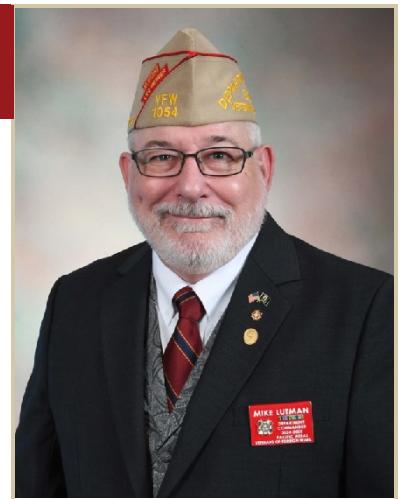
On another note, the 4th annual VFW Day of Service will kick off May 6, 2025. Events will take place throughout the month of May. Please sign up as soon as the system allows you to do so. Since National has compressed participation into a small time frame, chances are the system may not accommodate a large number of entries in such a short time frame. Also, remember this is a requirement for ALL AMERICAN recognition.

So, the road ahead includes our DPA Convention in Bangkok, Thailand and you will see the dates on or about the posting of this article. Things are coming along well, and I expect no major issues. In addition, the National Convention will soon be upon us as well so prepare to register AS A DELEGATE if that is in fact your status. Just registering online for the convention does NOT register you as a delegate. Your QM has to do that for you since you would have been appointed by the Post as their delegate. Also be sure that you understand the "Pre-Registration" option.

Also, let us not forget Veterans in need. California VFW Department Commander Deb Johnson has confirmed the need for financial assistance for veterans affected by the wildfires there. There is a QR code and link on our FB page you can use to send a donation to the VFW Disaster Relief Fund or you can send directly to the California VFW. I have included them below as well. Commander in Chief Al Lipphardt has asked that you keep those affected by the wildfires in your prayers and thoughts and if you can afford it, please donate as many of these veterans have lost everything <https://heroes.vfw.org/page/164026/donate/1> or use the QR Code.

To each and every one of you, THANK YOU for all you do in supporting Veterans. Never forget the significant impact you have on our National Organizations success. If you want details, I can share them with you, but in the grand scheme of things, WE carry more than our share of the load and I am honored to be a part of the best team in the VFW! HOOYAH DPA, CARRY ON!

Michael D. Lutman
Commander
Department of Pacific Areas VFW
"Veterans First, Comrades Always"



Commander

Michael Lutman



SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

Firstly, Congratulations for a job well done at the Mid-Winter Conference committee and to VFW Post 11447. The participation, shared comradery, and support was simply outstanding. BZ to Troy Derby and the negotiation team for stepping up and were able to pull this together on short notice. Additionally, to our webmaster Augie for his expedient support. A true Team success story. Well done to all the Comrades at Post 11447 who supported us as well.

For All State, we are making process. However, as you can see from the attached (Click the All State link in the righthand column), there is work to be done. As a Veterans Service Organization, it is our obligation to support the various program requirements. Remember, It's the Active Duty, Veterans, Veterans Families, Widows, and Orphans that benefit.

Comrades, I am tracking all Posts and Districts and will determine those who have met the minimum ALL STATE criteria. All Districts and Posts that meet the minimum criteria as stated above by 15 April 2025 will be considered for All State recognition at the DPA Convention. All Districts and Posts meeting the minimum criteria by 30 June 2024 will be considered for recognition for All State at the DPA Mid Term in December 2025.

As of 28 December, the Department has 12,492 Life Members which is all-time high! Additionally, as a reminder, for All State you must have a least one New or Legacy Life upgrade.

As you can see from the All State Dashboard, which has been sent to all District Commanders, there are several items that still need to be addressed at the District and Post levels. The District and Post Service officer Department training requirement has passed. The Service Officer who attended for the District or Post must be the person indicated on the election report. A general Order Number 1 will not suffice in this instance. So, look at your election reports and update accordingly. Contact your Post Service Officer to see if the DSO will be offering a stragglers class.

Remember to forward all inquiries you may have to the appropriate Program Chairperson. If you are not sure who they are please go to our General Order that is on the vfwpacific.org website. It includes the Chairperson's name, email, etc. If there are any questions regarding the All-State requirements. Please ensure that you are regularly reviewing your requirements for All-American to ensure confirmation of completion of the specific program requirements.

Again, thank you for the trust and honor to serve as the Department Senior Vice Commander. Thru a shared vision and team work. We will continue to be the shining star of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I wish each of you and your families a healthy, joyous, and prosperous New Year!!

Yours in Service to Veterans,

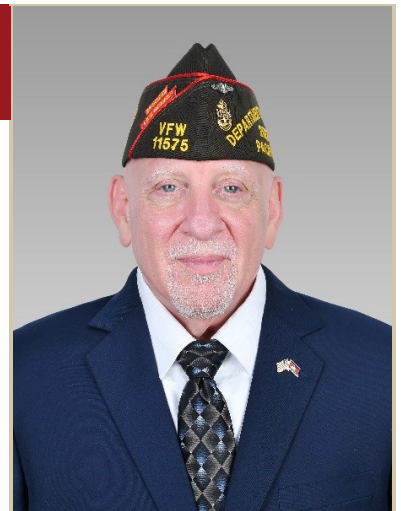
John "Jack" Farrell
Senior Vice Commander
Department of Pacific Areas

Veterans First, Comrades Always

Veteran-led community service events kick off May 3, 2025.

GET INVOLVED NOW

vfw.org/DayofService



Senior Vice Commander

John "Jack" Farrell



Sr. Vice Commander

All State Dashboard, click [HERE](#)

All American Dashboard, click [HERE](#)

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

Comrades,

First, I would like to say how proud I am to be a member of the Department of Pacific Areas who is leading the way in VFW membership. Let's keep it up to meet the Commander's goal.

Almost two-thirds of the Posts in the Department have already met the requirements for programs. So, for those who haven't already done their submissions or donations, this is how you qualify for these All-American Programs.

The **Veterans and Military Support** Donation this year is \$125.00. The donation can only be made by the Quartermaster through the VMS Donation Link in the upper right corner on the VFW National All-American Dashboard. This requirement must be accomplished by January 31st.

The VFW MAP Grant, which is part of the VMS Program, is closed for the 2024-2025 program year. The funds have been depleted and will open again next September. As of October, the Department had no donations and had expended \$4,987.50. So, you can see how the VFW MAP Grant, which is only a portion of the VMS program, can be depleted so quickly.

Voice of Democracy and **Patriot's Pen** is both a Post and District requirement. This year the donation is also \$125.00 and can only be made by the Quartermaster also through the same VMS Donation Link in the upper right corner on the VFW National All-American Dashboard. For those Posts and Districts that had essay entries, it's not automatic, you must submit an Entry through the VFW National All-American Dashboard, which is also found in the upper right corner. These entries can be made by the CDR, SVC, JVC, or Adjutant. Choose the Program, fill in the information, and click on Save and Approve. Also, the District and/or Department must approve the entries. Again, this must be accomplished by January 31st also.

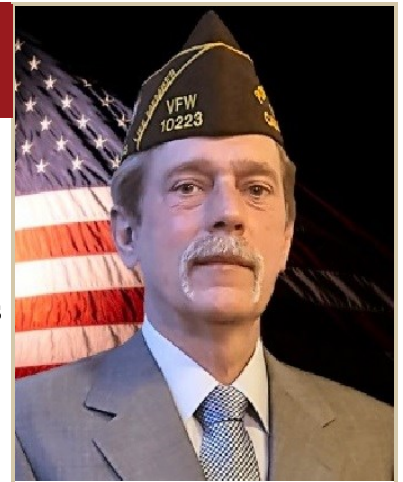
One new item this year in the All-American Program is that one community service activity must be for a VFW Day of Service event held during the month of May. This event must also be registered at [VFW Day of Service](#). Sign Up Now but no later the 01 June 2025.

A couple more programs, which are not related to All-America, are the **Public Servant and Safety Award**, which is due to the Department on January the 1st and the **Scouting of the Year Award** which is due to the Department on April the 1st. Please forward all Public Servant and Safety Awards to me.

Now, every Department JVC's favorite subject, **Community Service**. How a VFW Post interacts with its community determines the relevancy of the VFW. The National Community Service Trust Act defines community service as: "encompassing any human act serving the common good; in the interest of the community." Community service is further defined as "a service that is performed for the benefit of the public or its institutions." Notice the emphasis on benefiting the Community and not the VFW. I could go over some examples of non-qualified CSRs, but I don't want to embarrass anyone. Bottom line, if the VFW benefits from it, like Buddy Poppy and Membership Drives, it does not qualify as a CSR. If these actions are done in conjunction with valid Community Service, like a MAP Event or Ceremony, then so be it.

Examples of Good Community Service

- Assisting of veterans within the community
- Scholarships to youth



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

Don Kelley



Jr. Vice Commander

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

- Sponsoring of youth teams
- VA hospital work on behalf of the VFW
- Blood drives
- Care packages for troops, homeless etc.
- Food Bank support
- Building of ramps for disabled veterans
- Visiting VA Homes & nursing facilities
- Community Clean Up activities
- Natural Disaster Relief support
- Clothing Drives
- Donations to civic organizations within the community that align with our values

Examples of Non-Qualified Community Service Events

- Flying the US Flag
- Flying the POW Flag
- Post dinners
- Bingo
- Building memorials
- Paid VFW Service Officer work
- Personal efforts of a member volunteering at a church or other non-profit organizations
- Buddy Poppy Drives
- Membership Drives
- Anything that directly benefits the post
- Charging, Renting or loaning the Post Hall to their Auxiliary or Cootie Pup-Tent

Just follow the guidelines in the [VFW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE BEST PRACTICES](#).

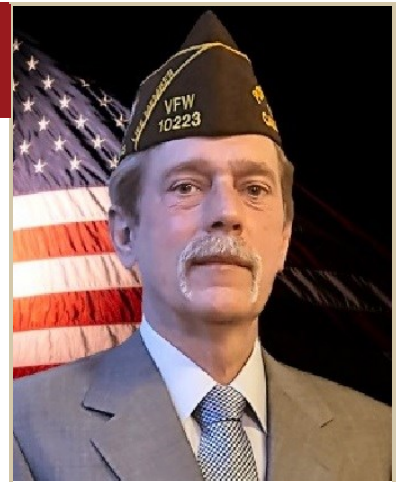
Finally, **Awards:** Most of all, don't forget our own comrades. Every Post has members that excel in what they do and deserve the credit for it. I suggest every Post appoint an Awards Chairman to keep track of accomplishments throughout the year and ensure Awards don't get overlooked. Don't let just a few Posts take all the awards again this year. I am looking forward to seeing award submissions from every Post.

BELIEVE IN WHAT YOU DO, DO WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN while being a **VETERAN FIRST, COMRADE ALWAYS.**

Yours in Comradeship and Service,

Don Kelley
Junior Vice Commander
jvcdpa@vfwpacific.org

Veterans First, Comrades Always



Department of Pacific Areas

Junior Vice Commander

Don Kelley



Jr. Vice Commander

**VFW GUIDE FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICE
BEST PRACTICES**



In the SPOTLIGHT

In the VFW, we know our veterans are #StillServing and rising to meet the challenges of this uncertain time. We want you to share your stories and maybe even inspire others across our Department to do the same. Click here to tell us your story. pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org



The Comrades of Lance Corporal Frank C. Allen Post 9723 observed Veterans Day with the Kadena Air Base Exchange/Commissary, Marine Corps Base Camp Foster Commissary/Post Exchange and Foster Clothing Store. The Comrade Curtis Kozlesky provided the keynote address for the Camp Foster Clothing Store and Kadena Base Exchange. Commander Cortez Pree served as the keynote speaker for the Foster Commissary/PX celebration. The local entities provided all veterans with a meal, souvenir bags, and a Commemorative Coin.



The Comrades of Lance Corporal Frank C. Allen Post 9723 donated toys and food to Oki Hearts/ Oki Hands on December 24, 2024. Oki Hearts / Oki Hands is a local community support center that assists local members and groups homes. Comrades Shoemaker, Ford, Wu, and Commander Pree delivered the items.

The Comrades of The LCpl Frank C. Allen Post 9723 celebrated the United States Navy 249th Birthday with the Sailors of Commander Fleet Activities Okinawa on November 6, 2024. Commander Cortez Pree and Comrade Curtis Kozlesky provided Captain Patrick Dziekan and the sailors with a celebratory cake and drinks while they conversated about the various military careers. On November 14, 2024, Post 9723 celebrated the Marine Corps 249th Birthday with Colonel Marc Walker and the Marines of Headquarters and Support Battalion of Marine Corps Base Camp Foster. The Post provided a ceremonial cake while conversated with the Marines.



Various members of the community lined the streets of Kadena Airbase as the Comrades of The Lance Corporal Frank C. Allen Post 9723 participated in the Kadena Airbase annual Veterans Day Parade on November 10, 2024. The Comrades marched along the parade route with ROTC, Boy/Girl Scouts, and several Private Organizations. The post provide membership brochures, buddy poppies, and candy to the patrons in attendance.

In the SPOTLIGHT

VFW Post 9876 spreads Christmas Cheer across Pattaya Community



VFW Post 9876 presents essential medical equipment valued at 29,000 THB to the local Kidney Center, improving patient care and bringing hope this holiday season.



Representatives from VFW Post 9876 deliver donations totaling 99,000 THB to the Father Ray Foundation, Pattaya Orphanage, and Hand-to-Hand Foundation, ensuring continued support for vulnerable children and families.



Over 100 children receive Christmas gifts and essential supplies at Jomtien Baptist Church, with Santa and Mrs. Claus joining the celebration to bring joy and smiles.



In the SPOTLIGHT



On 12/24/24, Banchang Utapao VFW Post 12146, held a Christmas Party for the students of the WAT Samnak Thon, Rayong Special Education City of Banchang. Comrade Mike Clark chaired the event along with the help of his wife Aom. Comrade Mark Trudel was Santa Claus. Kitty House Bar and grill provided lunch for the students. Each student received a gift set which included a towel and stuffed animal and a candy cane along with some chocolate. The Post donated cleaning supplies and sanitary items to which the school were greatly in need.



Your feedback is important to us. Please submit your Letters to the Editor or Suggestions by clicking pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org

In the SPOTLIGHT



On January 10, 2025, members from VFW Post 12146 paid a visit to a local school in Ban Chang, Thailand to celebrate Children's Day. Members and friends of the Post assisted with handing out snacks and drinks to the students.



DPA QUARTERMASTER

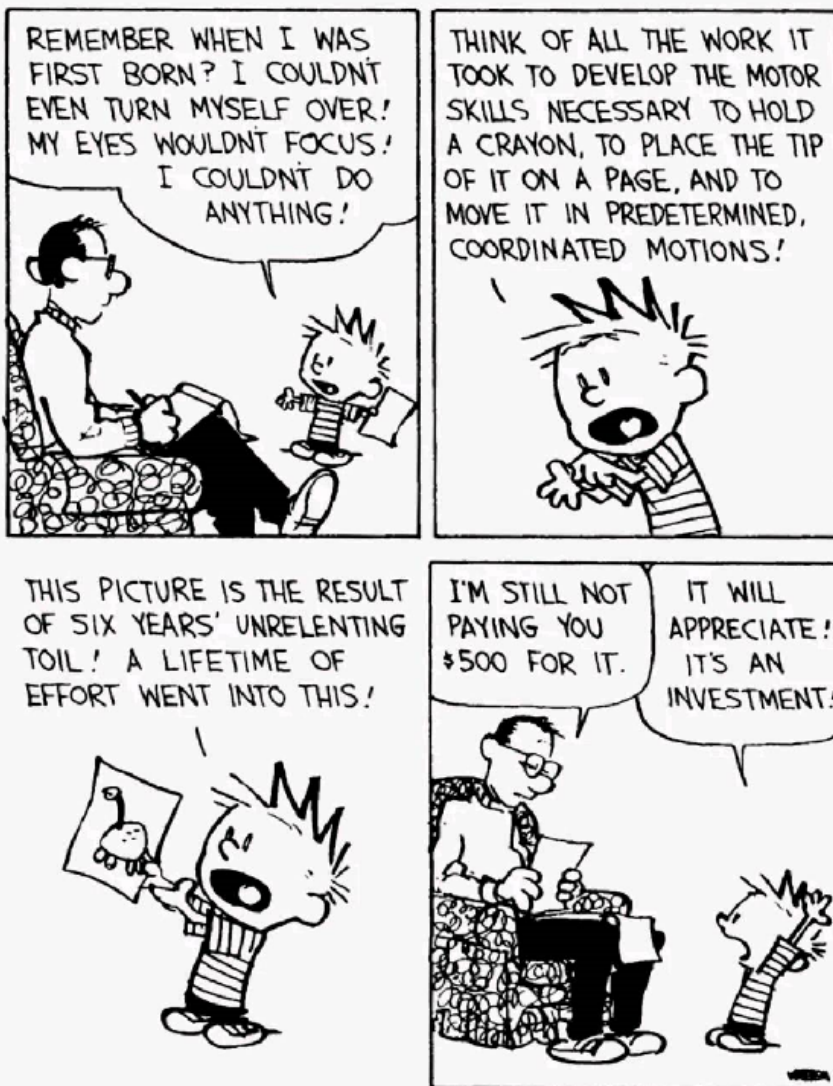
Comrades,

I hope that everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It was good to see everyone that attended the Mid-Winter Conference AKA Mid-Term Council of Administration. Congratulations to all the Posts and Districts that qualified for the Early Bird Award. This is the most we have had since I have been Quartermaster.

With half the VFW year gone and most of the programs are completed, now is the time to review the All-State and All-American criteria. There are still a few Posts that have not ordered Buddy Poppies. If you need to order them, there is an order form on the Department Website. Please fill it out and email it to me. Once the money is transferred to the Department account, I will process the order with National.

If you have any questions on any aspect of the quartermaster duties, please reach out to me. I am here to help.

Shawn Watson
DPA Quartermaster



Quartermaster

Shawn Watson



Quartermaster

DPA ADJUTANT

Greetings Comrades,

I would like to start by saying “THANK YOU” for the “OUTSTANDING JOB” by Post 11447 and namely Post Commander and Committee Chairman Troy Derby for taking on our Midterm Convention on short notice. Everything turned out great and I did not hear of any complaints...which is always nice!!! Next up... DEPARTMENT CONVENTION!!!

Also, congratulations to our DPA CDR Lutman and our National Certified Recruiter and PDC Larry Lyons for leading our Department to 101.40% (as of 31 December) and second overall to Montana in National Membership standings. We are looking primed to reaching our National Commander’s goal of reaching 102% in membership for the second straight year!

On behalf of CDR Lutman, I would like to announce our Comrades who are appointed VFW Unpaid Appointments for this term:

National Aide-de-Camp

- Janet Alford – Post 2485
- Wayne Bihler – Post 9876
- John Bowers – Post 9723
- Garrett Bridges – Post 9892
- Robert Chatman – Post 8180
- Terrence Hebron – Post 12146
- Camilla Lawson – Post 9612
- Dennis Polli – Post 2917
- Anthony Tardio – Post 12224
- Christopher Winstead – Post 10223



National Special Aide-de-Camp

- Michael Evanoff – Post 11575

Congratulations to the appointees!!

The VFW Aide-de-Camp is a prestigious position within the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) organization. The title typically refers to an honorary role given to individuals who have made significant contributions to the VFW or veteran affairs. The Aide-de-Camp is usually appointed by high-ranking VFW officials or commanders and serves to assist with ceremonial duties, special events, and representing the VFW in various capacities.

In closing, let’s build on our first half year by having a very successful second portion. I hope you and yours had a wonderful Merry Christmas and that you and yours will party like it was 1999 for New Years’...HA!!! Go USA and have a happy and healthy 2025!!!

Yours in Comradeship and Service,

Kevin E. Mitchell
Adjutant
Department of Pacific Areas
Veterans First, Comrades Always



Adjutant

Kevin Mitchell



Adjutant

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

Hello My Comrades,

The VFW Washington Conference is scheduled for 1-5 March. This is where each Department visits their Congressman to discuss issues of vital importance to veterans. In addition, we stress the key pieces of legislation the VFW is focused on during this term.

Along with Randell Himes, our legislative Chairman, and Department Commander Mike Lutman, we plan to visit the Delegates from Saipan and Guam. We also hope to meet with a member of the Veterans Affairs committee who is the Delegate from American Samoa.

We will be discussing the importance of moving the VA Regional Office that supports seventeen of our posts from Pittsburgh to the VA Regional Office in Manila.

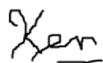
Other items we expect to discuss center around following up on the promised change from paper checks to electronic direct deposit for beneficiary's reimbursement from FMP. This change was meant to take place in the first quarter of 2025.

Two other items we will discuss, the fact beneficiaries residing overseas can ONLY be treated or reimbursed for service connected injuries or diseases is inconsistent with how CONUS based veterans access health care through the VA. Finally, we will remind the delegates that Tricare for Life beneficiaries residing overseas must pay for MEDICARE part B, even though they cannot use Medicare outside of the U.S. We will keep you apprised how our discussions go.

If you have other items you would like addressed, please advise me by email.

Happy New Year to you and your families. Here's hoping you all have a healthy 2025.

Yours in comradeship and service to veterans



Kenneth A. Stein
National Council Member 2022-2028
Department of Pacific Areas



National Council Member

Ken Stein



**SOME SAY THEY'VE GOT YOUR BACK.
WE PROVE IT.**

HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS:

Hosting service members and their families at morale-boosting events
Providing vital financial assistance to military families in need
Helping veterans recoup their earned benefits from the VA
Granting scholarships to student veterans for higher education
Testifying on Capitol Hill, leading the way for veterans legislation
Standing at the forefront in the battle **FOR VETERANS.**



NATIONAL CERTIFIED RECRUITER

Greeting Comrades of the Pacific,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and New Years. As far as Membership goes in the Department, we did **OUTSTANDING** the first six months of the year. We currently as far as percentages go we are at 101.33 % that leaves us short of 82 Members to make CinC's Goal of 102% !

We currently have 4 Districts of 102%. With this fact we also have 15 Posts that also have made the 102% or more goal! We also have an additional 5 Posts that are 100% or better! We also have some Posts that are struggling that could use some help.

One of the reasons is that some posts pay for Reinstated or Continuous members toward the year's end. This is great if the Post can afford this, but it puts the Post in jeopardy for the Commander next year. This has been normally so the Post could make All American.

Remember our greatest strength in the VFW is Membership. The more members we have is bargaining power to get our bills passed in Congress. We have all joined the VFW to help Veterans. So, by leaving those possible recruits out of your Post it is not helping them or our current Membership. It takes Time, Commitment and Desire to help our Post, District, Department and the National Membership Program so that we can do more for OUR Veterans, their Dependents and our own local Communities.

So, if you already have made your goal for this year this is the time to push for more Life Memberships, still recruit Annual Members but put them in our Department at Large Program or sign them up for their Home of Record. Keep track of those members so when their Membership is due next year, ask them to transfer into your Post.

Let's back up a little, it was great seeing everyone at the Mid-Year Convention in Subic Bay. We had a record breaking in the number of Early Bird Programs winners at District and Post levels.

In closing I would like to thank the 99 recruiters for doing great things for our Department. You are all the ones that make us shine! I would also like to take a spinoff of Dick Kelleys phrase of 100% means No Growth but change that to **105% means that you are looking at the future of your Post!** I truly believe that all Posts could achieve 105%, is it work? Yes, but the outcome outweighs the effort!

I am here to help, just ask. PDCLyons935@gmail.com

Yours in Comradeship always,

Larry Lyons
Certified National Recruiter
Year in Review, Editor
Past Department Commander 08/09
Department of Pacific Areas



Membership Recruiting Kit Link [HERE](#)



Department of Pacific Areas
National Certified Recruiter

Larry Lyons



Membership
Recruiting and
Retention
LINK

VFW DAY OF SERVICE 2025!



VFW DAY OF SERVICE 2025



From coast to coast, and around the world, VFW members and fellow veterans united with one another to strengthen bonds in their communities as part of the VFW Day of Service in May of 2024.

Now, it's time to gear up for 2025!

The fourth annual VFW Day of Service will kick off May 3, 2025, but the event lasts for the full month. Be sure to let your fellow veterans and Posts know and encourage them to [sign up](#).

Sign Up for Day of Service 2025

Participating in Day of Service 2025 puts your Post one step closer to achieving All-American status. While you're working toward All-American, your community is benefiting. It's a win-win!

Other Posts and veteran groups are already signing up. Check out what a few of them are doing to get inspiration for your own service project:

Post 6603 in Mansfield, Missouri, is partnering with its local Lions Club to clean up the city's park.

In Fairbanks, Alaska, Post 3269 is cleaning up along a nearby riverbank, and partnering with a fellow VFW Post.

Post 2639, located in Neptune, New Jersey, is distributing hygiene kits to the unhoused in their community.

Did we mention Posts that confirm their events, and participation early will be more likely to have support from our team to earn media coverage? The sooner you confirm participation, the more support we can provide. What will you plan? [We can help you get started!](#)

P.S. Don't miss out on your chance to show America how you're #StillServing with your fellow veterans. [Start making plans now to participate in the 2025 VFW Day of Service!](#)

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Post 8180 Songtan Korea Col Lewis L. Millett Hill 180 Memorial Post

Lewis Millett was born in December 1920 in Mechanic Falls, Maine, and was raised in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts. Enlisting in the Massachusetts National Guard in 1938, Millett continued his family tradition of service in the military—his great-grandfather served during the Civil War and his uncle served during World War I. Describing his uncle, he said that he “always thought of him as a hero” and that his uncle was “one reason [he] joined the Army.”

In the National Guard, Millett served as a clerk. Then, shortly after graduating from high school, he joined the Army Air Corps in 1940, attending Gunnery School. With the U.S. having not yet joined World War II, however, Millett, hoping to combat the Nazis, deserted his post in 1941, leaving for Canada to support that country’s war efforts. Deployed to Europe, he was a part of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery before transferring back to the U.S. Army after U.S. entry into the war. With the U.S. Army, he took part in the American invasion of North Africa, serving as an anti-tank gunner and earning a Silver Star for driving a burning vehicle filled with ammunition away from fellow soldiers.

After serving in Tunisia, Millett deployed to Italy. While he was there, the Army discovered Millett’s earlier desertion, finding him guilty in a court-martial. He later laughed while explaining this, however, remembering that “they fined [him] a \$52 fine and made [him] a second lieutenant.”

After his service in Europe, Millett returned to the U.S., attending Bates College in Maine while remaining with the National Guard as a reservist. He then deployed to Japan, where he worked in education, then later in Korea with the 27th Infantry after the start of the Korean War, eventually becoming its commander.

In February 1951, with one of his platoons under heavy fire, Millett led a bayonet attack on enemy forces up a hill, rushing forward despite facing consistent enemy fire and yelling to encourage his soldiers to continue fighting. Despite being injured by a grenade, he remained on the battlefield until he ensured that the goal of the charge had been accomplished. For his actions, President Harry Truman awarded Millett a Medal of Honor in July 1951. Referencing his accomplishment, Truman said that “this is not just [his]. It’s a hundred men that [he] had too.”

After his service in Korea, Millett moved to Fort Benning, Georgia, and attended Ranger School. He then trained service members for the Vietnam War at the 101st Airborne Division reconnaissance-commando school, which he founded, before serving as an advisor for special operations in that war.

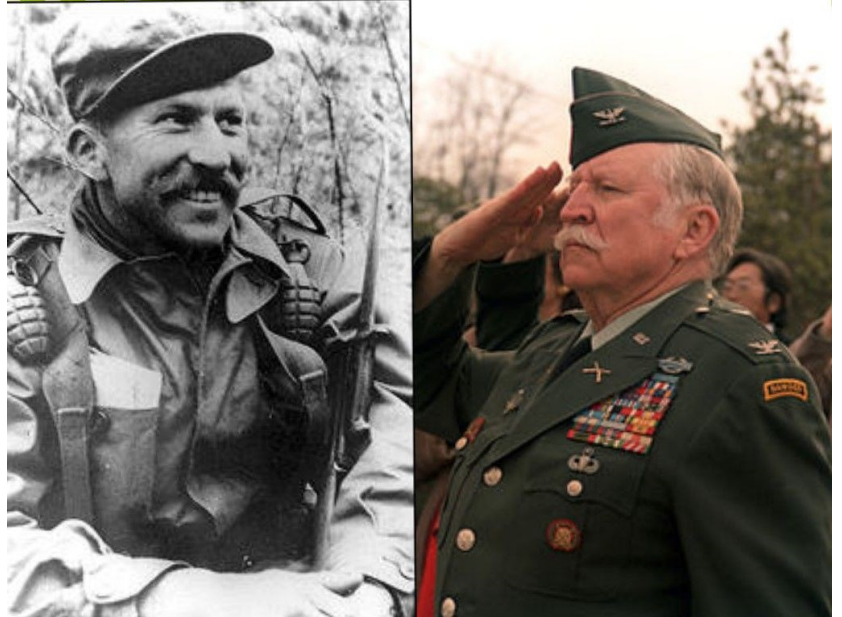
Millett retired from service in 1973. In addition to the Medal of Honor and the Silver Star, he earned a Distinguished Service Cross, two Legions of Merit, three Bronze Stars, four Purple Hearts, and three Air Medals.

In addition to his unique career in the military, Millett was married for 44 years before the death of his wife in 1993, and he had four children. In 1985, one of his sons, John, was killed in the Arrow Air Flight 1285 crash. The aircraft was carrying U.S. service members returning from a peacekeeping mission in the Sinai Peninsula.

Millett died in November 2009. He was 88 years old.

Read full citation here: <https://www.cmoah.org/recipients/lewis-lee-red-millett>

Post 8180 Songtan Korea Col Lewis L. Millett Hill 180 Memorial Post [Website](#)



CHAPLAINS CORNER / TAPS REPORT

Happy New Year! I wish all the best to you, your family, and friends for 2025. Hopefully, everyone had a safe Holiday Season, and the New Year will bring much joy and happiness.

Commander, Distinguished Guest, Officers, Council members and Comrades, I pray you and yours are well, in good spirits, able to continue our most important advocacy work. Congratulations to all who were able to attend the Mid-Term Council of Administration (C of A), to achieve the Department goals, AS-AA, continue to take care of Veterans, their families our Active-duty service members and the less fortunate in our communities. As I have continued to “Stress” that “Buddy Checks” are important and the Works of the “Almighty” and will bring blessing as we continue to look after our fellow Comrades.

This past convention we honored and paid tribute to the fallen Comrades on Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day as observed annually on December 7, to remember and honor the 2,403 Americans who were killed in the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, which led to the United States declaring war on Japan the next day and thus entering World War II.

I am Honored and Privilege to serve as the DPA Chaplain and have accepted a tentative nomination to run for the 2025-2026 election year, DPA Chaplain for a third term.

Before closing, I would like to express and reiterate (Buddy Checks) the sentiments of our comrade James D. Malott: “Comrades we need to support veterans and their families who are in distress. Whether hospital or home bound we should be reaching out to them. Do they need assistance? Are they getting the care they need? Or they just need to know we care and haven’t forgotten them by performing visits.” Please see DPA Around the Pacific 2.0 for more information.

Let us remember the following Comrades who have passed since the last report

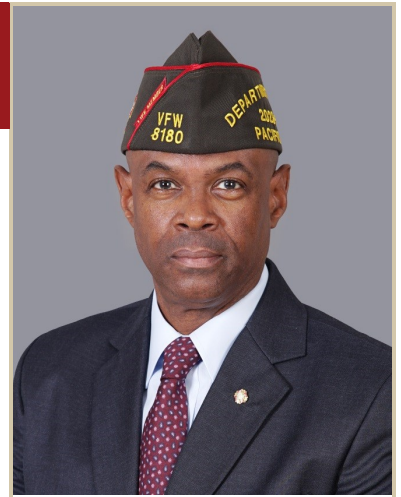
Comrade	Post	Comrade	Post	Comrade	Post
Rubio, Edurado	2485	Lib-on, Erol Jesse R.	2485	Saywers, Kenneth	9985
Gage, Ralph H.	2485	Adams, David C.	2485	Wiley, Billy R.	2485
Koslovski, Wernder I.	2485	Pittman, Michael B.	2485	Solivan, Larry A.	2485
Rice, Charles S	9951	Borchers, Davd Lee	10217	Hagler, Gregory L.	10223
Galbraith, Charles	2485	Luther, James H.	2485	Lucas, Jerry W.	9985
Stone, Roger C.	2485	Roberts Jr., Harcourt B.	2485	Bowie, Raymond L.	2485
Hamilton, David	2485	Morris, Geoffrey L.	1054		

Yours in Comradeship

Robert S. Chatman
DPA Chaplain

Let us Pray

“As comrade after comrade departs, we march on with our ranks growing thinner. Help us to be faithful unto Thee and to one another. Look in mercy on the surviving spouses and children of our departed Comrades, we beseech Thee, and with Thine own tenderness console and comfort those who are bereaved. Amen.”



Chaplain

Robert Chatman





Resources for Chaplains

The Chaplain's Corner - by State of Missouri Chaplain and National Chaplain 2021 - 2023 Debb Halter

Good introduction to chaplain's duties.

<https://movfw.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=76106>

Or the easier to remember link: <https://movfw.org/chaplainscorner>

CHAPLAIN'S GUIDE - by State of Pennsylvania Chaplain and Past National Chaplain Peter Hook

Great resource guide for things you will need along the way.

<https://vfwpa.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=88797>

CHAPLAIN'S RESOURCES - by Chaplain (Sky Pilot) Dale A. Iannello, the Military Order of the Cootie

VFW Chaplain material has been consolidated in one location at the national level at: https://lotcs.org/vfw_chaplain.html There you will find a tabbed panel containing information on *Forms, Handbook, Duties, Ethics, Memorial, Prayer, Links and Training*.

Find a Mentor:

Find a mentor who you are comfortable calling and working with to improve your skills and to learn from. In fact, have more than one of them. Everyone has something they are good at so you can learn something from everyone. **ASK QUESTIONS!**

I recommend you print the newest *Chaplain's handbook* and read it, highlight it, and share it with fellow Chaplains. The latest version can be found at: https://lotcs.org/Forms/Chaplain/VFW_Chaplain/Manuals/VFW%20Chaplain%20Handbook%202023%20May%20VFW%20Standard.pdf. Chaplain Peter Hook worked hard to expand it this year. It is a work that grows with us.

For updates and information on Chaplain items and Zoom training links, email **Chaplain Peter Hook** at: PeterHook@verizon.net and ask him to put you on the newsletter email distribution list. Good information comes through this email.

It is highly recommended that chaplains attend **ZOOM** training which is held online on the third **Wednesday** of each month at **7:30 p.m. CST** starting in **September 2023**. The Zoom link comes through the Chaplain's newsletter, so get signed up! Also Chaplains can obtain the link under the "Training" tab at: https://lotcs.org/vfw_chaplain.html. This gives you an opportunity to get to know other Chaplains and discuss things that are important to our work. **Good ideas are shared!**

DEPARTMENT SURGEON

Comrades hoping the Mid-Winter attendees, Council, Delegates and guest returned home safely and in good health, enjoyed a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Here in the Kingdom as the wind direction changes the weather turns “cool” many are experiencing the age-old Flu (influenza), headaches and pains, running nose, coughing etc. It’s not too late to vaccinate but the choice is yours. As discussed I hope you are exercising walking, jogging, cycling, swimming or engaged in other activities (ZAMBA) to stimulate your heart, your cardio.

During the Mid-Winter Business session discussion arose related to medical condition called “Shingles” (herpes zoster), a painful rash the successor to chickenpox. A few years back during the pandemic period I caught the Shingles, the rash and severe pain. After a couple weeks I was treated by local physicians and follow on vaccination. If you think you have Shingles do not wait, go to your health service provided ASAP.

Symptoms of Shingles are a painful rash that usually develops on 1 side of the face, body or head. The rash is made up of small blisters that typically scab over after 7 to 10 days. The rash is usually in a stripe on the left or the right side of the body. Sometimes people with weakened immune systems have a rash that spreads across more areas of the body.

Before the rash develops, people often have pain, itching or tingling in the area where the rash will be. Although shingles can be anywhere on your body, they are usually around the back above the belly button (the upper abdomen) or on the face. Other symptoms of shingles can include fever, headache, chills and / or upset stomach.

The pain or irritation from shingles usually goes away in 3 to 5 weeks, It is important to get early treatment within the first few days of the rash appearing. If you get shingles on your head or scalp, you may get headaches or weakness on 1 side of your face that makes it look droopy. This usually goes away, but it may take many months — especially if you have had a lot of weakness in your face muscles.

Some people also develop serious painful eye or ear inflammations and infections. Shingles can cause facial scarring or loss of vision. If you have shingles, you should: cover the rash, avoid touching or scratching the rash, wash your hands regularly to prevent the spread of the virus. If you have never had chickenpox or received the vaccine, you can catch chickenpox if you are in close contact with someone who has shingles.

You should avoid contact with the following high-risk groups until the rash has developed crusts: pregnant women who have not had chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine, premature or low birth weight people, people with weakened immune systems or having chemotherapy, organ transplant recipients and people with HIV infection.

Treatment works best if you start it early, go to your healthcare provider as soon as you see the rash. The best protection against shingles is vaccination so consult your healthcare provider.

Lou Holub
DPA Surgeon

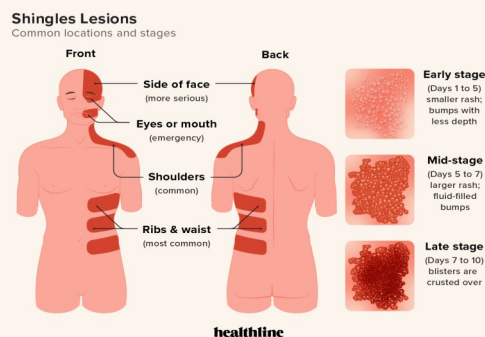


Surgeon

Lou Holub



Surgeon



A LITTLE BIT OF DPA HISTORY

VFW JOSE C. CALUGAS SR Post 12231

Mustered in on April 2, 2024, the seventh Post in the seventh District, Department of Pacific Areas, is VFW JOSE C CALUGAS SR Post 12231, based in Manila, Philippines. Instituted by the VFW National Commander Duane Sarmiento, the event was attended by VFW members from all the posts in the Philippines, Department of Pacific Area and the United States.

Also known as VFW Manila (by virtue of location), it is proud to be a part of the other posts within District 7 namely, VFW Subic, VFW Palawan, VFW Angeles, VFW Cebu, VFW Baguio, and VFW La Union. VFW Manila takes its cues from its predecessors and follows their examples, in an effort to increase membership, enhance awareness, and continue to help veterans and the community. VFW JOSE C CALUGAS SR Post 12231 is honored to be part of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.



This post was formed by the urging of VFW DPA Past Commander Alex Fores, after an initial attempt that did not materialize. With due diligence and perseverance, the Comrades of VFW Post 12231 are motivated to form, engage and be involved in any way possible. And with the support of the VFW Team on many levels, it has come to be, a thankful VFW Manila.

The initial area of coverage is Manila (NCR-National Capital Region) but extends its membership to veterans in the STR-Southern Tagalog Area (Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, Batangas, etc.), even in Eastern Visayas, Bicol, and a few members in the United States who were delighted to be part of VFW Manila.

VFW JOSE C. CALUGAS SR Post 12231, meets every first Saturday of the month at 11:00AM at the 7th Floor Corinthian Plaza Bldg., 121 Paseo de Roxas, Legazpi Village, Makati, Metro Manila

e-mail manilavfw@gmail.com Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/vfwmanila/>

In its short time of existence, VFW Manila has been involved in numerous events such as: VFW Manila Membership Drive, Fourth of July Celebration, honoring MOH recipient USN Ret FN2 Telesforo Dela Cruz Trinidad, Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies in numerous locations, provided military honors for funerals, joined in the honoring of veterans for the 80th Anniversary of the Gen. McArthur Landing, hosted the US Navy and US Air Force Birthdays, contributed to charitable organizations, participated in community service, assisted veterans with claims – ID.ME, visited other posts in the Philippines, and many others.

One with all VFW Comrades, we look forward to a productive 2025. Onwards VFW!

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

Not a sentimental man by nature, Lee Marvin reportedly kept only four souvenirs of his career over the years. These were his Best Actor Oscar for "Cat Ballou" (1965), the citation he received from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame for his performance in "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" (1962), his Gold Record for "Wandering Star" from the "Paint Your Wagon" (1969) soundtrack, and the high-heeled shoe that Vivien Leigh beat him with in "Ship of Fools" (1965).

When Marvin was first approached to play Bill Tenny in "Ship of Fools," he turned it down based on his sense that Katherine Anne Porter's source novel was too high brow for his acting style. But director Stanley Kramer argued that, after many years of toiling as a heavy in supporting roles, Marvin's career was on the descent and that he would have to begin diversifying if he was going to become a bankable star. Marvin was convinced, and not only did he successfully make the transition, but he ultimately won that year's Best Actor Oscar, though not for this film.

Vivien Leigh was subject to bouts of depression and alcoholism and was abrasive to fellow actors. There was a rocky start to her relationship with Marvin, wherein she complained about his stale alcohol breath. Eventually, the two became highly unlikely good friends.

Marvin served as a Marine in the Pacific theater during World War II. In total, he took part in the invasions of 21 islands and was wounded and nearly died as a result during the Battle of Saipan, an engagement in which most of his unit was killed. He was a sniper and would be sent in during the night in a small rubber boat, prior to the rest of his platoon. He was awarded a Purple Heart for his wounds and spent 13 months in therapy recovering from them. His wartime experiences deeply affected him for the remainder of his life.

"I remember the uniform of flesh, not the clothing. I remember the men. The war effort, at that time, was a condoned worldwide effort for peace and freedom. But uniforms, even then, seemed to take identity away from the individual. It's the mentality of the uniform that I don't like; I attack the uniform as a symbol of that mentality. I feel the same way about the police mentality, but instead of attacking it, I avoid it; you're in trouble if you give the cops an excuse to unload on you." Born 19 February 1924, Died 29 August 1987. (IMDb) Read more [here](#).



DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR

Commanders, Inspectors & Comrades,

DPA Inspections are conducted annually, and the purpose of the inspections is to ensure that all of our Districts & Posts are operating in accordance with our National & DPA by-laws, procedures and policies.

The DPA sets a goal for successful completion as prior to the C of A and the reason for establishing that completion goal is to assist in identifying and quickly resolving any issues before they become larger, and to ensure that any problems do not carry over into the next VFW year.

The Current inspection status follows:

D2	D2 & 3 Posts	All Successfully Completed & Reported	D Insp. Randell Himes
D3	D3 & 4 Posts	All Successfully Completed & Reported	D Insp. George Beck
D4	D4 & 5 Posts	All Successfully Completed & Reported	D Insp. Dan Morgan
D5	D5 & 5 Posts	All Successfully Completed & Reported	D Insp. Marcus Earp
D6	D6 & 3 Posts	D6 Complete & 0/3 Posts Completed & Reported	D Insp. Pete Callaghan
D7	D7 & 7 Posts	All Successfully Completed & Reported	D Insp. Vern Lask

The remaining Posts have until 28 February 2025 to successfully complete all required inspections to meet one of the many criteria to achieve All-State. Posts not successfully completed and reported by 30 April 2025 will be subject to suspension.

Yours in Comradeship & Service,

Brian Hamic
DPA Inspector
Department of Pacific Areas



Department Inspector

Brian Hamic



JUDGE ADVOCATE

Comrades,

The theme for this edition of the Pacific Times is Happy New Years. So I thought it might be fitting to pass on a few tips for having a Happy VFW Year. Every Post seems to have cycles of good times and bad times. Some Posts have a wealth of members who wish to be involved in the success of the Post. Others have a hard time getting a quorum to attend meetings. And this can happen to the same Post at different times.

The key ingredient to having good times is leadership. The Post officers need to encourage participation, especially from newer or younger members. Entertain new ideas, even if they have been tried before in some fashion. The three inventors of the popular lubricant WD-40 named their product because it was their fortieth attempt to find the correct mixture for water displacement. It took eight years!

Meetings can be a drag if they are dominated by one or two members. A good leader will ask the quieter members for their opinions on matters up for discussion. People naturally spend their free time doing what they enjoy. So, try to make the meeting productive and enjoyable. After-meeting snacks can break the ice for a new member to feel welcome.

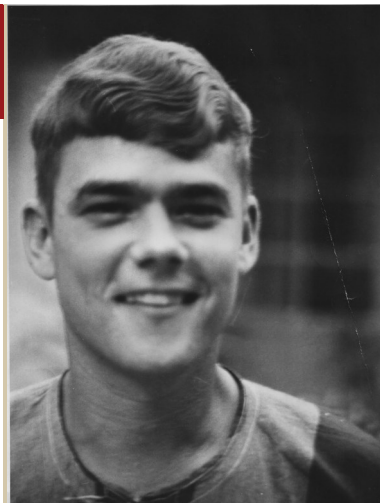
Do you send out meeting reminders by email or other social media a day or two before the meeting? You might be surprised how this can increase attendance. Everyone can use a memory jog once in a while.

A good leader can also diffuse conflicts between members by asserting his authority and demanding respect for every opinion. Disagreements are inevitable. How you handle them can make the difference in having a meeting end on a good note or a sour one. Sometimes you just need to agree to disagree.

As we strive to finish the VFW year by meeting goals and checking off squares for this award or that, remember that it is the people doing these tasks that are the reason we are in business. Veterans helping other veterans should be the primary mission of your Post. Have a happy, healthy, and successful 2025!

Yours In Comradeship,

Pete Callaghan
Judge Advocate
Department of Pacific Areas



Judge Advocate

Pete Callaghan



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

Kilroy Was Here: The Story Behind the Iconic WWII Graffiti

WHO WAS KILROY?

For many, especially those born between 1913 and 1950, the name "Kilroy" brings back a flood of memories. This piece of American history is immortalized in stone at the National War Memorial in Washington, DC, hidden away in a small alcove.

So, who was Kilroy?

In 1946, the American Transit Association sponsored a nationwide contest through its radio program, "Speak to America," to find the real Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car. Almost 40 men claimed to be the genuine Kilroy, but only James Kilroy from Halifax, Massachusetts, provided the necessary evidence.

James Kilroy was a 46-year-old shipyard worker during WWII, employed as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy. His job involved counting the rivets completed by the riveters, who were paid by the rivet. To prevent double counting, Kilroy marked the inspected rivets with semi-waxed lumber chalk. However, riveters would erase his marks to get paid twice.

To combat this, Kilroy began writing "KILROY WAS HERE" in large letters alongside his checkmarks, eventually adding a sketch of a chap with a long nose peering over a fence. This made it difficult for the riveters to erase his marks, and soon, his graffiti began appearing on ships leaving the shipyard.

With the war in full swing, these ships often went unpainted, leaving Kilroy's markings visible to thousands of servicemen who boarded them. The troops, amused and intrigued by the mysterious graffiti, began spreading the "Kilroy was here" message across Europe and the South Pacific, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

Kilroy became a symbol of the U.S. servicemen's presence, appearing in unlikely places such as atop Mt. Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arc de Triomphe, and even in the dust on the moon. The legend grew, and it became a challenge for troops to place the logo in the most improbable locations.

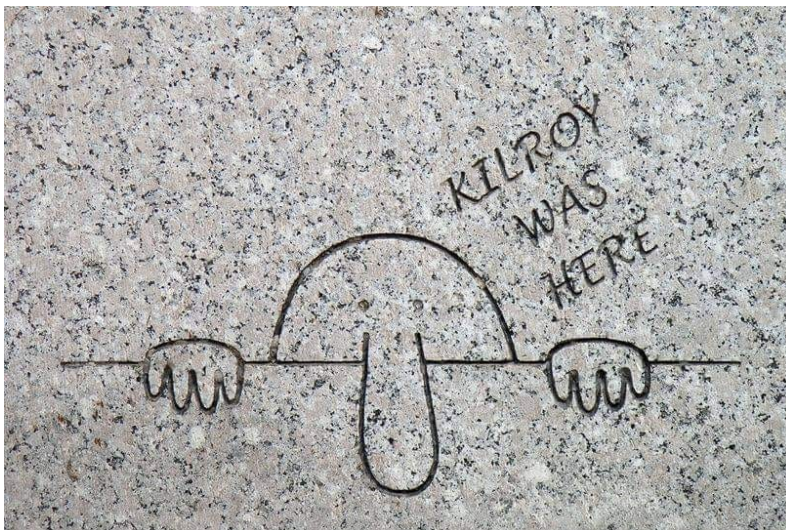
In 1945, during the Potsdam Conference, Stalin used an outhouse built for Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill. After emerging, he reportedly asked, "Who is Kilroy?"

To prove his authenticity in 1946, James Kilroy brought officials from the shipyard and some riveters to the contest. He won the trolley car, which he gifted to his nine children as a Christmas present, setting it up as a playhouse in their yard in Halifax, Massachusetts.

And so, the tradition of Kilroy continues, a testament to the spirit and humor of the WWII generation.

The Tradition Continues...

Details occurred from Groton historical Society Newsletter



DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER (DSO)

Comrades,

I would like to congratulate Vernon Lask on his completion of Veteran Service Officer Basic Training. Wallace Gowin and Genelyn Paz are slated to take the Veteran Service Officer Virtual Basic Training which will be held from 3 Feb to 7 Feb 2025. Time to be announced later. We will still need more Veteran Service Officers. In particular, we currently do not have a Veteran Service Officer in Commonwealth of Northern Marianas, Cambodia, Australia, Korea and Mainland Japan.

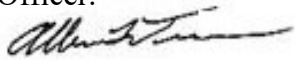
We held the Post Service Officer/District Training on 14 December at 1700 Guam Time and will be holding the second Post Service Officer/District Training on 8 January at 1700 Guam Time. If your District and/or Post Service Officer (the one listed on your GO1 and Election Report) did not attend the 14 December training session, please ensure that they confirm attendance at the 8 January session.

As I discussed in the September-October 2024 Pacific times, **we are understaffed.** We currently have four Assistant Department Service Officers (one in Thailand, one in Okinawa and two in the Philippines). Our goal is to increase this number to at least ten. With Wallace Gowin (Thailand) and Genelyn Paz (Guam) slated for the winter Veteran Service Officer Virtual Basic Training, we still need at least four more volunteers to take the winter Veteran Service Officer Virtual Basic Training. To date, we have the following ADSO candidates: Bob Duffy – Post 12074 (Thailand) and Steve Perkins – Post 2485 (Philippines). We still need candidates from Korea, Mainland Japan and Cambodia if possible.

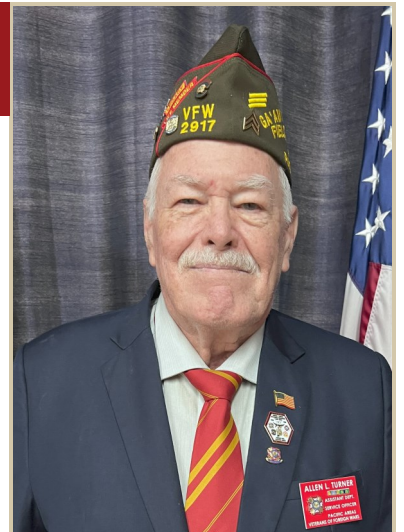
The process for ADSO Candidates to be enrolled in the training is as follows:

- Recommendation of individual candidate to Department Service Officer
- Interview by Department DSO
- Candidate completion of VA TRIP (Training, Responsibility, Involvement and Preparation of Claims). Please note this could take between 1 week to 1 month depending on how much time the candidate puts into the training on a daily basis. I recommend that one month be allocated for this process. Planning for only one week would require almost 100% time dedication to complete the course.
- Completion of Background Investigation
- Submission of VA Form 21
- VFW Application for Accreditation
- Letter from Department Commander submitting candidates' application documentation to NVS

Our Department Service Officers assist veterans regardless of their affiliation with the VFW and their place of residence. If a veteran does not live close to one of our Department Service Officers, we can help them virtually. If the veteran needs assistance but is not computer literate we rely on the closest Post Service Officer to be our link between the veteran needing help and the Department Assistant Service Officer.



Allen L Turner VA-OGC#49546
Department of Pacific Areas
dsodpa@vfwpacific.org



DSO Pacific Areas

Allen Turner



Service Officer

**#STILL
SERVING**



VOD/PP/TA CHAIRMAN

Comrades,

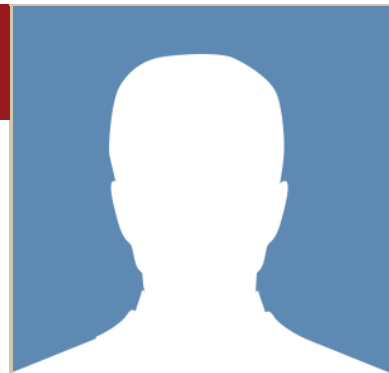
We faced a huge challenge this year, transitioning to an electronic arena for our Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy application processing. The new method introduced delays and roadblocks slowing the operation of deciding Department winners for each program. Eventually, we were able to work with website engineers and remedy all the many issues that we experienced. Please keep in mind, to qualify for All-State, each Post must submit entries for VoD and PP or donate to VFW National. You may make your donations on the All-American Dashboard. Post and District donations are \$125.

This year's winners are; for **Patriot's Pen Quinn Wagner**, from District 2, Post 9612, Camp Zama Middle School, Japan. For **Voice of Democracy Hailey Pangelinan**, from District 6, Post 2917, Simon Sanchez High School, Guam. **Teachers Award 9th-12th grade is Alexis R. Wilson**, from District 2, Post 9612, Camp Zama, Japan. There was no entry for grades K – 5 or 6 - 8. Congrats and let us wish them luck at the National level. For the winners, I will need to know the date that you will tell them that they are a Department Winner. Please let it be known that National runs these through plagiarism and AI scans and if there are major refractions, they can disqualify them and ask for the second-place winner to be submitted.

The 2025 - 2026 program themes will come out next April. I will populate Scholar's App with leadership personnel at Department, District, and Post levels respectively. This will establish the foundation for next year's PP & VoD contest effort.

For those of you overseeing PP and VoD efforts, remember to log in once you receive the email and verify/review for mistakes then download/print the flyers for distribution at your respective schools. Also, consider any eligible students in your area outside the schools reach, i.e., home-schooled students. Be sure to review each application, I really hate to disqualify a student at my level when it should have been caught at the Post or District. Time should be provided to the entrant to fix their essay. You cannot help them or tell them what to fix but, you can tell them what is wrong and let them fix it on their own.

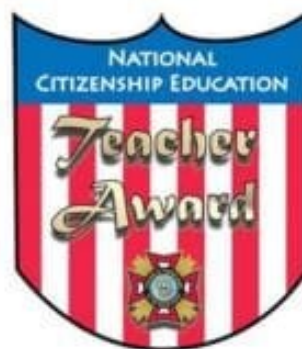
Robert E. Madison, Jr.
VoD/PP/Teacher's Award Chairman
Department of Pacific Areas
vodppdpa@vfwpacific.org
Phone: +82-10-4413-1593



Department of Pacific Areas

VOD/PP/TA Chairman

Robert Madison



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

In 1951, Nils Gustaf Håkansson signed up for the Sverigeloppet endurance race traversing virtually the entire length of Sweden. His submission was rejected because of his age – he was 66.

Their reasoning was that he would have neither the strength nor the stamina to compete with the 50 other racers, all of whom were less than half his age.

Nevertheless, having ridden 600 miles to get to the starting line, Håkansson was there on race day in the saddle of his roadster complete with mudguards, a headlamp, front basket and panniers. He wore a homemade bib with the number 0 on it.

Due to the volume of racers, Håkansson crossed the starting line about 20 seconds after the race had started, but five days, five hours and 1,000 miles later, he crossed the finish line first – more than a day ahead of the next rider.

Håkansson had not been bound to one rule that the other ‘official’ participants were obliged to follow. As part of race regulations, competitors were expected to meet and stop at a checkpoint at the end of the day to recharge and restart the next morning.

Instead, Håkansson took just an hour’s rest before setting off again in the middle of the night. This allowed him to make up for the 10 miles he was behind after 300 miles and put a 20-mile gap between himself and the rest of the pack.

After three days and only five hours' sleep, Gustaf was leading the field by more than 120 miles. At one point the police tried to persuade him to stop for a medical examination, but he only laughed and pedaled on.

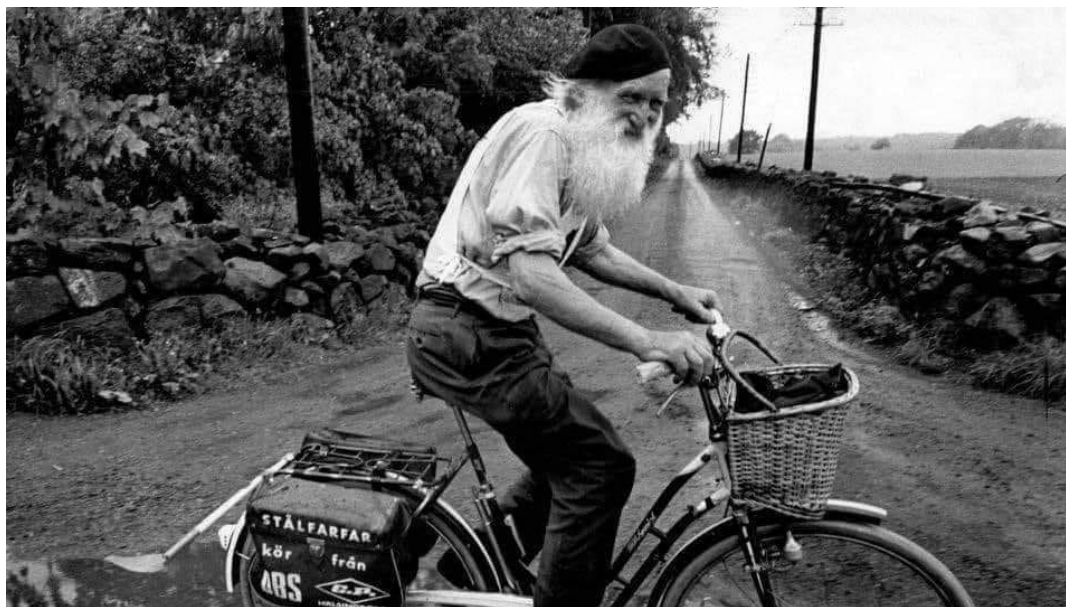
Eventually, with only 800 yards or so to go, Stålfarfar or "Steel Grandpa"; as he became known in the villages he'd passed through, came to an abrupt halt. But it wasn't sheer exhaustion that had stopped him – the old man's bicycle had suffered its first and only flat tire.

Unperturbed, Gustaf dismounted and set towards the finish line where, with only a few yards to go, he remounted to cross the line at 2:15pm on July 7, 1951.

Despite the albeit unofficial victory, a subsequent audience with the king of Sweden, and generally being showered in fame and honor, Gustaf's greatest satisfaction came from proving wrong the doctors who had thought he was better suited in a rocking chair than he was in a saddle.

The Steel Grandpa continued to ride bicycles until his death in 1987 at the age of 102 and if that isn't a testament to the health benefits of riding a bike, then I don't know what is.

~Duncan Badine



POW/MIA CHAIRMAN

Currently, over 81,500 Americans are still missing from conflicts such as World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and the Gulf Wars, among others. Of these, approximately 75% of the missing individuals are located in the Indo-Pacific region, and more than 41,000 are presumed lost at sea, including losses from ships and aircraft that went down in the water.

In 2024, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency accounted for approximately 83 veterans missing in action in the Pacific region. This includes 49 veterans from World War II, 31 from the Korean War, and three from the Vietnam War. Updates on the repatriation of lost service members are reported weekly in the VFW Action Corps Weekly <https://www.vfw.org/actioncorpsweekly>, and a comprehensive list can be found on the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency website: <https://www.dpaa.mil/>.

The year 2025 will mark the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. Various events are being organized to commemorate the significant events that led to the war's conclusion. Some events will focus on prisoners of war and those missing in action, while others will honor notable events throughout the conflict.

On 20 October 2024, the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle of World War II, was marked. General MacArthur returned to Leyte Island, which had been occupied by Japanese troops since early 1942, and initiated the recapture of the Philippines. The naval contingent from the United States included more than 660 ships, 11 vessels from the Royal Australian Navy, and some units from the Mexican Air Force.

The Palawan massacre took place on December 14, 1944, near Puerto Princesa in the Philippine province of Palawan. Allied soldiers who were imprisoned in the area were burned alive, machine-gunned, and bayoneted by Imperial Japanese soldiers. Only eleven men managed to escape and survive the massacre, while 139 were killed.

On January 9, 1945, the United States 6th Army conducted an amphibious landing at Lingayen Gulf in the Philippines. This event marked the beginning of the Battle of Luzon. After a heavy naval bombardment, Allied forces successfully invaded the island, representing a significant advancement in the Allied campaign to liberate the Philippines.

The Palawan massacre prompted a call to action to save Allied POWs and civilian internees from a similar fate. This served as the motivation for the POW rescue mission at Cabanatuan, known as "The Great Raid," which will be commemorated on February 1, 2025, with an 80th-anniversary ceremony at the Cabanatuan American Memorial. On January 30, 1945, United States Army Rangers, the Alamo Scouts, and Filipino guerrillas attacked the camp and successfully liberated 511 prisoners.

On February 22, 2024, the U.S. Embassy and the American Battle Monuments Commission will hold a commemoration at the Manila American Cemetery to mark the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Manila.

All past observances included participation from VFW members, and I hope there will be strong representation at future events.

Yours in Comradeship,
James (Jim) Collins
DPA POW/MIA Chairman



POW/MIA Chairman

James "Jim" Collins



SOMETHING TO PONDER



THERE IS PERHAPS NO BETTER DEMONSTRATION OF THE FOLLY OF HUMAN CONCEITS THAN THIS DISTANT IMAGE OF OUR TINY WORLD. TO ME, IT UNDERSCORES OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DEAL MORE KINDLY WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND TO PRESERVE AND CHERISH THE PALE BLUE DOT, THE ONLY HOME WE'VE EVER KNOWN.

-CARL SAGAN, 1994

LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

Comrades, I have encouraged many of you to sign up for the Action Corp newsletter to keep up with Veteran Legislative items and to heed the Calls for Action, one such Call to Action was the [H.R.1282 / S.244 - Major Richard Star Act](#), provides that combat-disabled uniformed services retirees with fewer than 20 years of creditable service may concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation. **Status** on this Bill as it has passed both the House and the Senate. It is now pending the signing of the President.

The [H.R. 8371 bill \(The Elizabeth Dole Act\)](#), has been passed in the House and is now in the Senate. As I explained in the last issue of the Pacific Times, this bill would provide healthcare and benefits for veterans, caregivers, and survivors, something VFW thinks is long due.

Some of the other Bills that the VFW NLS office has been working on for us Veterans.

Unaddressed Toxic Exposures: this is an extension to the PACT Act bill to have the VA report on all newly found toxic exposures to be added.

Exploring Alternative PTSD Treatments: since this would take funding, they said further research would have to be done on it but was receptive on this issue.

S. 740 / H.R. 1139 GUARD VA Benefits Act (Cracking Down on Predatory Claims Companies): Both congressmen have already co-sponsored this bill and I again thanked them for their support for this bill.

Again, one-way, to keep track of these bills for yourself would be to sign up for the ACTION CORP newsletter. Click this link: <https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>

As the New Year has started the planning for the Spring Legislative meeting in Washington D.C. has started. I will once again join other VFW Veterans from various State Departments, walking the hall of the Congress and the Senate spreading and encouraging our representatives to support the VFW and our all if us Veterans.

Lastly, again I urge each of you to sign up and get the get the **VFW ACTION ALERTs** to sign up just click this link: <https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>. Let's all show our support and stand with the VFW National Legislative Service (NSL).

Randell E Himes
DPA Legislative Chairman
legdpa@vfwpacific.org
National Legislative Committee
rehimes@gmail.com
1-815-408-2454



Click for Latest News



Legislative Chairman

Randell Himes



2024 PRIORITY GOALS



VFW ACTION ALERT



ACTION CORPS

Sign up today!

BIG BUG SQUEAKS

Grand Commander Himes (A.K.A., Biggest Big Bug)

“communicate, Communicate, COMMUNICATE”

Comrades & Cooties, with most of the Holiday behind us and the Start of a New Year. I hope that each and every one of us is blessed with a Great and Peaceful 2025 the year of the SNAKE.

Mid-Term is also behind us I hope that everyone that attended had a lousy time. Pup Tent 11 did an outstanding job for setting up our Scratch and Social/Auction. CCDB Napsey said we did more fundraising than before.

The next event for us Cooties will be the Beach Bash at Subic Bay on the 14-17 of February 2025, again our host will be PT 11 and Post 11447. I am looking forward to being one of the lucky Judges.

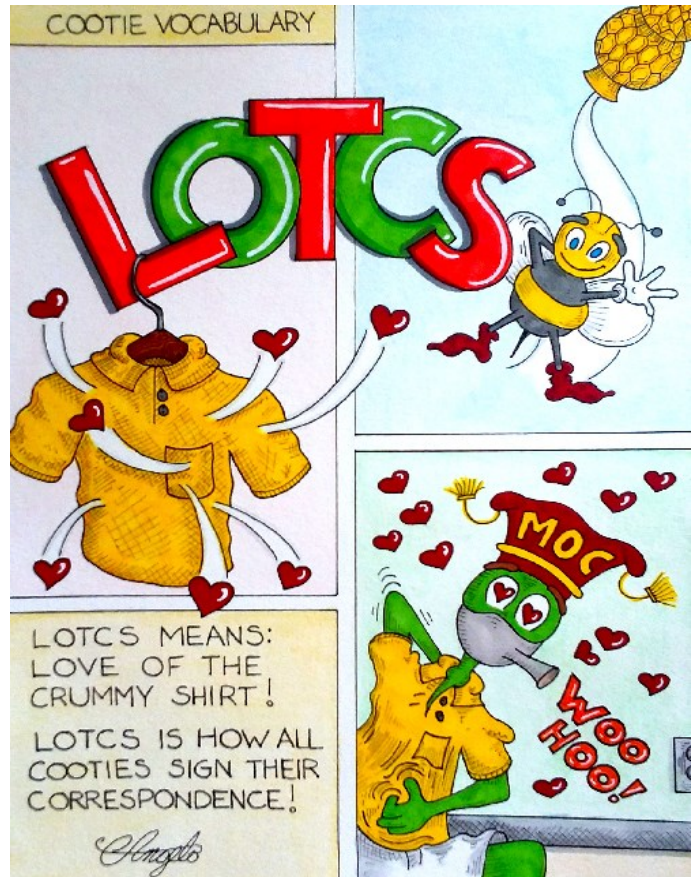
We are losing a lot of our older members, and I behoove you all to make your visits to them in the hospital. Continue making your calls and giving Buddy Checks. Let our senior Veterans know they are not alone. Not calling anyone out but I know of 2 of our Veterans there in Philippines that spent awhile in the Hospital with only two or three persons making visits. Guys let's get out there and support our VETERAN BROTHERS in their time of need. Show support to their spouses and children.

If you think you have been doing the hard work and would like to join the ranks of the Honor Side of the VFW, contact one of our Cooties and let us know.

KEEP'em SMILING in BEDS of WHITE !!!!!!!!!!!

Yours in L.O.T.C.S.,

Randell E. Himes
GPA Biggest Big Bug
PT 1 CCDB
PT 1 Cootie 1251
rehimes@gmail.com
cdrgrd@vfwpacific.org



Randell Himes



Click each Logo above
for Websites

SHAWN WATSON FOR VFW NATIONAL JVC 2028

Support
Shawn Watson
 For VFW National JVC 2028



Shawn's 2nd Half of the Cash Calander 2024
 As of 1 July, there are still 41 drawings.
 That add up to \$5,484.00 in prizes
 Tickets are
NOW ONLY \$5.00

Calendar Ticket Form

Name: _____ Email: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 _____ Post Selling this Calendar: _____
 _____ Ticket Number _____

Scan and email ticket stubs to Larry, he will forward

Info that you want to pay for the tickets to George.

His email is PDCLyons935@gmail.com

George will contact you directly on how to transfer funds to Shawn's campaign account.

Note if multiple tickets, fill out form once and state how many tickets you want.

Calendar Tickets \$5.00
Big Bucks Tickets \$20.00

Once George verifies that funds have been transferred he will notify me and I place the tickets in the drum at that time.

Big Bucks Ticket Form

Support Shawn Watson's Bid for National JVC 2028
Self - Family - Veterans

Big Bucks Raffle

Donation \$20.00 per ticket

1st Prize \$5,000.00
 2nd Prize \$3,000.00
 3rd Prize \$2,000.00

Ticket #

Only 1,000 tickets being sold
 Drawing as soon as all are sold or at the November 2025 Western Conference

Please print clearly

Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Ticket #

LETTERS OF INTENT

**LETTER OF INTENT
DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS
DEPARTMENT SURGEON
Patrick "Doc" Higgins**

Fellow Comrades,

I am humbled and honored to once again submit my name for candidacy for Department of Pacific Areas Surgeon for the 2025-2026 term.

I have been asked if I am interested in filling this position and I have accepted.

I am a 27 year Air Force Veteran and earned eligibility in the VFW through two tours service in Korea. I am proud to be a Silver Legacy Life Member and have been a Life Member since 1994 and having been active in VFW Post 10033 as Commander and as going through the Chairs for Post 10216/8180. I have been Chairman of multiple projects over the years, see list below.

- **National Aide-De-Camp 2022-2023**
- **All-State Team Post Commanders 2022-2023**
- **National Surgeon General 2017-2018**
- **National Aide-De-Camp 2015-2016**
- **Department Surgeon 2008/09, 2013/14, 2014/15**
- **District III Commander 2011-2012**
- **Post Commander 2010-2011**
- **PT 8 Seam Squirrel 2011-2012**
- **PT 8 Pill Pusher 2013-2015**
- **PP/VOD, Teachers Award**
- **1st Responders, (Fire, EMT, Security Forces, EOD and CBRNE)**

If elected to serve as the Department Surgeon I pledge to have current and pertinent articles to promote healthy lifestyles for inclusion in our Monthly communication for all Post Surgeons to disseminate.

Once again, this is my letter of intent for the Surgeon position and I thank you for your support.

YIC

**Patrick "doc" Higgins
Department of Pacific Areas**

LETTERS OF INTENT

LETTER OF INTENT
DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS
JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER
DAVID B. GLEY, JR.



Fellow Comrades,

With great honor and a humble heart, I am excited to announce my candidacy for Department of Pacific Areas Junior Vice Commander for the 2025-2026 term. Several comrades have encouraged me to step forward, and I am deeply grateful for their support.

I am a 24-year Air Force veteran, having earned my VFW eligibility from service in Operations Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, the Global War on Terrorism, and four tours in South Korea. I am proud to be a Gold Legacy Life member and have been a VFW member since 2014 and active with Post 10216/8180 since 2016

My VFW/MOC experience includes:

- National Aide-De-Camp, 2021-2023
- National General Resolutions Committee, 2021-2024
- Department VoD/PP/TA Chairman, 2021-2024
- District 3 Commander, 2024-present
- District 3 Trustee, 2019-2021
- District 3 Youth Programs Chairman, 2021-2024
- Post 8180 All-State and All-American Commander, 2019-2020
- Post 8180 Judge Advocate, 2023-present
- Post 8180 Youth Programs Chairman, 2018-2024
- Post 8180 Historian, 2017-present
- Grand All-Star Commander, 2023-2024
- Grand Surgeon, 2020-2021
- Pup Tent Commander, 2020-2021
- Pup Tent Quartermaster, 2023-present

If elected to serve as your Department Junior Vice Commander, I pledge to represent all Veterans in the Department of Pacific Areas and worldwide with "Service above Self." I humbly ask for your confidence and support in allowing me to perform the duties and responsibilities of this position.

Yours in comradeship and service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David B. Gley, Jr."

David B. Gley, Jr.
Gold Legacy Life Member
Candidate for Department of Pacific Areas Junior Vice Commander

LETTERS OF INTENT



No one does more for Veterans

Letter of Intent 2025/2026

Greeting Comrades of the Pacific,

Agaian, I have been asked by the incoming CoA of the Pacific Areas to servie as a 3rd term Department Chaplain.

It is my pleasure to accept and run for a third term as Department of Pacific Areas, Chaplain. If elected I look forward to working with the new administration of elected officers.

I earned my eligibility to join the Veterans of Foreign Wars after joining the United States Army in 1977 where I had multiple assignments including a deployment to the Middle East during Desert Shield/Storm before retiring in 2003.

I joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars with Post 1193 in Lawton Oklahoma in 2007 and served as Adjutant and served as two time Commander, 2015 and reelected in 2016 for a second term.

I transferred my VFW Membership in 2017 to VFW Post 10216 in Songtan, South Korea. Since then the Post merged and now is Post 8180. Since then I have been an active member in that post and the community.

At the Distict III level I am currently the D3 Chaplain, and held the position in June 2019 and was reelected in 2020. I am currently District III Councilman and Post 8180 Senior Vice Commander. I have been able to help many Veterans and their family members in their times of need and I am willing to expand that now at the Department level.

Besides the VFW I am also a Life Member in the Military Order of the Cootie with Pup Tent 8, Grand of Pacific Areas Hospital Chairman and a Life Member of the VFW National Home along with the Patty Daddy Program that also supports the National Home.

I am fully retired now and willing and able to take on this role and would be honored to serve again, as your Department Chaplain. I thank you for your consideration.

Yours in Comradeship,
Robert S. Chatman
VFW Post 8180



LETTERS OF INTENT

LETTER OF INTENT
DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS
QUARTERMASTER
GEORGE E. BECK JR.



Comrades,

I would like to announce my intent to run for Department of Pacific Areas Quartermaster for the 2025-2026 term. I am a retired Army veteran of 21 years' service. I am a Gold Legacy Life member of the VFW and have been a member since 1997.

My VFW/MOC experience includes:

- Post 10223 Quartermaster, 2003-2010 and 2011-2015
- Post 10223 All American Commander, 2010-2011
- District 3 Quartermaster, 2005-2009 and 2014-present
- District 3 All American Commander, 2011-2012
- DPA Audit Committee, 2020-2024
- Pup Tent Quartermaster, 2006-2020
- Pup Tent Commander, 2020-present
- Grand Audit Committee, 2021-2024
- Assistant Grand Quartermaster, 2023-2024

If elected to serve this great department as your quartermaster I promise to fulfil the requirements of the office to the best of my ability. I respectfully ask for your support and confidence in allowing me to serve the comrades of the Department of the Pacific as their Quartermaster.

Yours in Comradeship

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Beck Jr.'.

George E. Beck Jr.

Gold Legacy Life Member

Candidate for Department of Pacific Areas Quartermaster

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIVE DATES*



March 24 - Start of Kosovo Campaign 1999* In 1999, once all diplomatic avenues had failed, NATO launched an air campaign to halt the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Kosovo. Operation Allied Force started on 24 March 1999 and was suspended on 10 June, lasting a total of 78 days. On 10 June 1999, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia accepted the withdrawal of its military, police and paramilitary forces and the deployment of an effective international civil and security presence.



March 29 - National Vietnam War Veterans Day* On March 29, 1973, combat and combat support units withdrew from South Vietnam. Generations later, Veterans of this time period are gaining the respect that was not so freely given upon their return. Involving five U.S. presidents, crossing nearly two decades and 500,000 U.S. Military personnel, it left an indelible mark on the American psyche. Returning veterans did not always receive respectful welcomes upon their arrival on American soil. Over 58,000 killed, never to return.



March 31 - End of Operation Restore Hope—Somalia 1995* 25 March 1994 Most of the American troops were out of Somalia, ending Operation Continue Hope the follow-on mission to Restore Hope. Only a few hundred marines remained offshore to assist with any noncombatant evacuation mission that might occur in the event violence broke out that necessitated the removal of the over 1,000 U.S. civilians and military advisers remaining as part of the U.S. liaison mission. All UN and U.S. personnel were finally withdrawn almost a year later in March 1995.



April 9 - National Former POW Recognition Day It was officially designated by Congress in 1988 as a Presidentially-proclaimed observance. National Former POW Recognition Day commemorates the 9 April 1942 surrender of approximately 10,000 United States military personnel and 65,000 Filipino soldiers on the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines by Major General Edward P. King to the invading Imperial Japanese Army headed by General Masaharu Homma. This is the largest surrender in US history. The surrender was followed immediately by the infamous Bataan Death March.



11 April - Persian Gulf War Official Cease-Fire On 11 April 1991, less than 90 days after the U.S.-led offensive against Iraq known as Operation Desert Storm began, the United Nations Security Council declared the conditions of Resolution 687 in effect, making the cease fire official and formally ending the Persian Gulf War. The definitive victory elevated the United States as the preeminent global super power and the number one partner of choice for its allies around the world.

Other Important Dates

3rd Monday in January - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 27 - Signing of Vietnam Peace Accord (1973)*

January 31 - Panama Campaign Ended (1990)

February 15 - Sinking of U.S.S. Maine, 1898*

February 28 - Liberation of Kuwait—Operation Desert Storm 1991*

3rd Monday of February - Presidents' Day

March 29 - National Vietnam War Veterans Day

***Posts should arrange special ceremonies and all commanders shall alert comrades to their obligations for the appropriate commemoration date.**

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