

March 29, 2024

Greetings,

We hope you enjoy this week's National Council Weekly Update on the pertinent happenings of your VFW departments.

From the Office of the Adjutant General

We have started some social media advertising to raise awareness of the VFW and what we do as an organization. The first day we had 75,000 likes. If you cannot find the ad in your feed, you can always go to the VFW Facebook Page and find it there. Please watch, share, and leave a comment on what you, your Post, District or Department is doing.

We are also working on preparations for the implementation meeting April 14-17, held here in Kansas City for the 2024-2025 year that includes programs and budgetary projections. Immediately after the implementation meeting the Bylaws Study group will meet April 17-19, to discuss Bylaws being proposed by the Commander-in-Chief and other National Officers. Once that ends, we will kick off with the Department Senior Vice Commanders and Incoming Adjutants training April 18-21.

We have also gone through and readjusted some of our scheduled dates for Sr. Vice training in 2025 so it is not over Easter weekend as well as moving Jr. Vice training dates in 2024 and 2025 to not overlap with one or more conference meeting dates. These are reflected on the new calendars that went out with April National Headquarters Bulletin.

Most of you already know that we have also added a Department Adjutant/Quartermaster only training that will start in September of the 2024-2025 year. After this year there will no longer be a combined training and this change will save the organization approximately \$25,000.00+/-.

We have also started our preparations for the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky celebrating 125 years of service to veterans. Two key changes for the convention in Columbus, Ohio for 2026, is that it will be one day less per vote of the National Council of Administration at the recent Washington Conference which is expected to save the organization approximately \$100,000,00+/- . Next year as we are celebrating a milestone of 125 years incoming Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt has asked for us to prepare for a formal banquet to celebrate and recognize the occasion, more details about this will come out at some point in the future.

Dan West
Adjutant General

Development

It's been another impressive month of fundraising for March. As of March 25, we have already surpassed our projections, reaching \$4.2M and exceeding the anticipated \$3.8M.

This week's Development Campaigns are listed below:

- March 29 Appeals:
 - o Thank you eCard Vietnam Veteran's Day to all Friends of Freedom identified as Vietnam veterans.
 - o April statements to relative lapsed member and nonmember donors.

Contact: VFW Development Director Kelly Jones, KellyJones@vfw.org.

Human Resources

- Positions Actively Recruiting For:
 - o Claims Consultant – D.C.
 - o National Pre-Discharge Claims Rep – Norfolk, Virginia.
 - o National Pre-Discharge Claims Rep – Hawaii.
 - o National Pre-Discharge Rep – Joint Base Andrews, Maryland.
 - o Member Services Advisor – K.C.

Contact: VFW Human Resources Director Sari Maple, SMaple@vfw.org.

Programs

- VFW Combat Tested Gaming Update:
Season 3 registration is now open! For more information about Combat Tested Gaming leagues or to register, visit <https://vfwgaming.com/>.

One option is to sign up as a team if you have a full team ready to roll. The other is to sign up individually on one of our free-agent teams. If you go the free-agent route, we monitor those teams and will set the team as private once it's full. From there, we will email everyone and ask for an email response to confirm you are in to play. If we do not get a response, you will be removed from the team to open up the spot for a new player.

We are currently nearing 1,000 veteran gamers. Please share this and help us continue to grow.

- VFW National Convention 2nd Annual Cornhole Tournament:

Please support the 2nd annual VFW Cornhole Tournament taking place at the 125th VFW National Convention in Louisville!

The series will take place on Sunday, July 28, and Monday, July 29, 2024. All proceeds from the competition go to VFW PACT Act benefit assistance. For more information and to sign up for this event, which was an instant hit last year in Phoenix, visit <https://kccrew.com/leagues/vfwcornholetournament/>.

We need board sponsors and tons of teams from our membership. Please share this far and wide and support our amazing NVS PACTAct initiatives.

Contact: VFW Programs Director Lynn W. Rolf, III, LRolf@vfw.org.

Administrative Operations

- There are currently 48 Posts under suspension, one of which is new. There is one pending Post consolidation pursuant to Section 209 of the National Bylaws. The organization has 5,647 chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 18 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, 12 Administrative Removals/Actions and 11 membership eligibility challenges.
- Currently Administrative Operations has 121 Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review, 22 of which are new; current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 45-60 days.

Disciplinary Action Guide:

There have been recent updates to the Disciplinary Action Guide that outlines the process to successfully complete a disciplinary action. We have included information to the guide that encompasses sentencing guidelines which is located as an appendix at the end of the guide and outlines sentencing/penalty considerations, clarifications, and examples.

The guide is available on the Document Repository in the “Guide to Disciplinary Action” folder or on the VFW website behind the login under My VFW/Bylaws: Training, Forms & Templates/ Training/Training Guides & Standard Operating Procedures.

Department Inspections:

At the beginning of the 2023-2024 term, we planned for a total of 10 Department inspections. At this time a total of eight Department inspections have been completed with two scheduled and pending. All inspections will be completed by the end of April, at which time we will compile an updated list of common issues and best practices.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Quentin Carroll at QCarroll@vfw.org.

Election Reports:

2024-2025 Election reports have been mailed out. Per the Bylaws and Manual of Procedures, Posts should be opening nominations for the upcoming year in March and closing the nominations and electing the Post officers in April. To access the election report online; sign in to VFW.org and proceed to My VFW. Select Online Membership System (OMS), then press the drop-down menu on the left side of the screen for Election Report and select Post Election Report Filing.

The 2024-25 Election Report will be available in OMS on April 1, 2024. Please ensure when you file your Election Report for the new term that you have selected 2024-25 from the drop-down option as OMS will typically default to the current term.

NOTE: The National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure require a properly completed Election Report for the ensuing year to be submitted to Department and National Headquarters by June 1, 2024.

Contact: VFW Administrative Operations Director Quentin Carroll, QCarroll@vfw.org.

Membership

- Are your Posts engaging their membership? Join us on Monday, April 8, at 2:00 p.m. CST for another edition of Membership Monday where we will discuss the topic “Engaging your Membership.” We’ll be focusing on best practices for retaining Post members and planning activities to engage and attract members to the Post. Look for the Zoom link on the Membership Facebook Page.
- Looking for a pro tip to use in your discussions around membership and growing the VFW? Check out [Veterans Data Central](#), a tremendous online data tool that produces easy to read statistics on your state and county veterans to include population numbers. This site is easy to navigate and should be consulted when considering strategic recruiting and retention efforts.
- How familiar are you with OMS? Are you able to answer common questions from your Districts such as: “Where do I find my Post’s MEMSTATS?” or “How do I check a Post’s All-American Dashboard?” Do you know how to view and use your KPI Tools? If these are questions you cannot answer, chances are good there are leaders in your Districts that can’t either. If you need help in this arena, call us! We will help you!
- Need recruiting training/resources?! If you have a topic for training, we would love to hear from you! Contact us by emailing, Membership@vfw.org. Follow our Facebook Page, <https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembership>.

Contact: VFW Membership Interim Director Corey Hunt, CoreyHunt@vfw.org.

Meetings and Events

- Continuing to process Louisville exhibitor applications through the eShow platform. Current revenue from exhibits is \$76,000. Note: Raised exhibitor fees for 2024. The last increase was in 2010.
- Successful Washington Conference, making notes for items needing to be revised for 2025 conference.
- Taylor is working with Hyatt Regency Crystal City to revise contracts for 2025-26 Washington Conference – Hyatt Regency Crystal City.
- Convention housing opened March 18, 2024. To date, several Department blocks are showing as sold-out. Encouraging waitlisting new reservations as we move forward, will

work on the blocks to satisfy those who are waitlisted first before taking new reservations. Monitoring this process.

- Ongoing, working with Taylor on processes within department.
- Preparing for April 18-21, 2024, Senior Vice AQ training.
- Per Adjutant General, secured dates for fall AQ training.
- Upon NCOA approval to reduce convention by one day, Taylor is working with legal on finalizing the 2025 Columbus hotel contracts and convention center.

Contact: VFW Meetings and Events/Exhibits Director Vanessa Kane, CMP, CMM,
VKane@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service

- House Subcommittee Hearing on Pending Legislation: VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Kristina Keenan testified at a hearing on pending legislation before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. Among the proposals was the expansion of eligibility for the VA Home Loan Guaranty program to members of the National Guard and Reserves who have performed active duty for training, and the addition of co-op housing units to this program. Keenan also expressed support for key provisions of proposed legislation to improve service member transition. She stated, "The VFW strongly supports the provisions that would improve the transition to VA, including requiring accredited claims representatives be included in the Transition Assistance Program. This would enable service members to have a point of contact to begin their pre-separation claim. We also support the bill's inclusion of pre-enrollment in VA medical care during transition. This would provide veterans with their earned benefits the day they leave the military." [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 12:27 mark.
- VFW Testimony on VA Notice Letters: VFW National Veterans Service Director Michael Figlioli testified at a hearing of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on the need for simplifying VA's disability claims and appeals letters. In his written testimony, Figlioli explained that like the Veterans Benefits Administration, the Board of Veterans' Appeals also has its challenges with decision notices and explanations that can be too long and unclear. "Letters received by appellants are redundant in nature, generic in scope, and missing critical information specific to the appeal," he wrote. In his conclusion he offered, "The VFW is always willing to lend our assistance in making the claims process more seamless and accessible for all veterans, family members, and survivors. We are committed to working with VA across all departments and business lines to continue to develop notifications with a commonsense approach." [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 11:16 mark.
- VFW Meets with Senior Enlisted Advisor: In his first visit since becoming the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, SEAC Troy E. Black joined VFW Washington Office directors for a candid conversation about recruiting challenges, the meaning of service, transition, and veterans' issues. SEAC Black assumed his current post following his service as the 19th sergeant major of the Marine Corps.

Contact: VFW National Legislative Service Director Patrick Murray, PMurray@vfw.org.

National Veterans Service

- NVS leadership met with Booz Allen Hamilton at the VFW Washington Office to discuss how Booz Allen Hamilton can help support NVS and VFW initiatives.
- NVS health team participated in the VHA Health Outcomes Military Exposures quarterly meeting.
- NVS health leadership participated in the National Veterans Business Council meeting.
- NVS health team attended a virtual discussion with the VetResources Community Network.
- NVS health and training leadership attended a Survivor Summit with USB.
- VFW's NVS Pre-Discharge representatives briefed transitioning service members on VA benefits at military bases around the country.
- NVS BDD team collaborated at a quarterly all-hands BDD team meeting.

Contact: VFW National Veterans Service Director Michael Figlioli, MFiglioli@vfw.org.

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