

Oct. 20, 2023

Greetings,

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

From the Adjutant General

Comrades Wednesday night was a historic moment for the VFW as VFW Post 12225 was instituted in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento via zoom from the Philippines. VFW Post 12225 was organized by Past CIC Hal Roesch who was present to install the new Post officers. Just under 100 new members of the Post were sworn in by Chief Sarmiento during the Post Institution who thanked them for seeing the vision of the VFW and our 124 years of history that started with veterans serving in both Cuba and the Philippines.

Many of you who receive the daily membership report via email or look at the National Membership Report for all Conferences online, will notice a new line at the bottom called Provisional at Large. This is where the annual members who are recruited at events are placed if they choose not to join a Post or Department or sign up online in accordance with the National Bylaws change to Section 102.

Dan West
Adjutant General

Development

This week's Development Campaigns are listed below:

- Oct. 17 Appeal:
 - o Veterans Day matching gift email #1 to all Friends of Freedom.
- Oct. 18 Appeal:
 - o October acquisition reminder package with nickel, coasters and check.
- Oct. 20 Appeal:
 - o October acquisition holiday card package with CD and check.

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

Human Resources

- New Hire:
 - Anthony Harris is a new part-time Shipping and Receiving Clerk in the VFW Store.
 - Sonia Conley is a new National Pre-Discharge Claims Representative, Bethesda, Maryland.
 - Traci Stroud is a new Member Services Advisor in Member Services.
 - Gabrielle Matos is a new Direct Mail Project Coordinator in Development.
 - Ryan Schultz is a new Direct Mail Project Coordinator in Development.
 - Alexys Leffer is a new Donor Services Coordinator in Development.
- Positions Actively Recruiting For:
 - National Pre-Discharge Claims Representative – Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

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

Administrative Operations

- Department Inspections: We are moving forward with the Department Inspection initiative for the 2023-2024 term and have plans to complete ten (10) inspections this year. The hope is that we will have the first inspection scheduled for the beginning of October and have all inspections completed by May 2024, prior to the start of Department conventions. In the coming weeks we will be reaching out to the Departments that have been selected by the Commander-in-Chief as well as the inspection team members to begin working through availability and scheduling. Additionally, the inspection team will be conducting initial and refresher training in September before we start our schedule.

We look forward to another successful year of inspections and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Quentin Carroll at QCarroll@vfw.org.

- There are currently 42 Posts under suspension, one of which is new. We have processed one Post consolidation pursuant to Section 209 of the National Bylaws. The organization has 5,673 chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 18 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, 13 Administrative Actions and 17 membership eligibility challenges.
- We have 63 Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions in for review, none of which are new; current turnaround time on Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation submissions is approximately 30 days.

Contact: VFW Administrative Operations Associate Director Zach Schwenk, ZSchwenk@vfw.org.

Membership

- As of Oct. 19, 2023, national membership is 811,572 members strong, putting us on track to reach 102.36% by June 30, 2024.
- Maintaining our membership is one of the three pillars of a strong membership program (recruiting, retention and mentorship). The Life member upgrade is one of the best ways to ensure your Posts maintain high retention. When discussing membership matters in your departments, plan to include Life member drives as part of your overall recruiting and outreach plan.
- For many of our Life members, the Legacy Life member program is the next step in ensuring one's contributions as a member are recognized for generations to come. Legacy Life upgrades can be purchased with a one-time payment or purchased using the installment plan. See, become, or upgrade to a Legacy Life member under membership links [here](#).
- 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.

VFW Foundation

- The 10th anniversary of the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" campaign will run from Oct. 8 – Nov. 11, 2023, with over 1,800 franchised stores participating. Join the campaign and donate at vfw.org/2023HAH.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations Brooke Brown, BBrown@vfw.org.

- The 2023-2024 VFW Foundation grant cycle opened on Oct. 1, 2023, and applications are available at vfw.org/Grants. VFW Posts, Districts and Auxiliaries may qualify for grant funding. A total of three reimbursement-based grant opportunities will be provided:
 - o #StillServing Grant (SSG) – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for expenses incurred while performing community service activities where Post/District/Auxiliary members engaged community members directly.
 - o Post Assistance Grant (PAG) – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$2,500 for expenses incurred from purchasing qualifying equipment or making repairs/renovating a Post owned property.
 - o Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) Grant – This grant provides reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for donations made to food insecurity organizations or for the purchase of food that supports a Post or Auxiliary ran food pantry.

Contact: VFW Foundation Director of Donor Relations Richard Freiburghouse, RFreiburghouse@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service

- National Buddy Check Week: The first annual National Buddy Check Week is Oct.16 - Oct. 20, 2023. In this new VA program, veterans are encouraged to contact 10 fellow veterans and check on how they are doing. The goal is to build peer-to-peer connections, improve mental health, and increase access to VA resources. Veteran family members, caregivers, and survivors are also encouraged to participate. [Learn more](#).

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

