

THE PACIFIC TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS



No One Does More for Veterans
Loyalty, Duty and Honor

Volume XXVII, Number 2

September/October 2023

FREE

PATRIOT DAY & POW/MIA DAY



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Patriot Day, holiday observed in the United States on **September 11** to commemorate the lives of those who died in the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Virginia and those who perished when the hijacked United Airlines Flight 93 crashed in Pennsylvania. The holiday also recognizes those who died attempting to rescue people trapped by the attacks.

By a joint resolution of the U.S. Congress on Dec. 18, 2001, September 11 was designated as Patriot Day. The resolution calls for the president of the United States to issue a yearly proclamation requesting that all U.S. flags be flown at half-staff. Further, Americans are asked to honor the dead with a moment of silence beginning at 8:46 AM, Eastern Standard Time, the time that the first airplane struck the World Trade Center, and to respect the ceremonies of remembrance when they are conducted.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day

The **third Friday in September** is recognized as POW/MIA Day, a time to remember the sacrifices of prisoners of war (POW) and servicemembers who are missing in action (MIA). Until 1979, there was no formal recognition day set aside for these important men and women in uniform. POW/MIA Day will be observed on Friday 15 September 2023.

[Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency](#)



September 15, 2023 | #NotForgotten | www.dpaa.mil



COMMANDER'S CALL

Greetings Comrades!

As we dive into the new VFW fiscal year, we face the challenge that requires the collective strength and unit of our membership.

Our Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento, launch the “Meet the Challenge” recruitment campaign with the aim of bolstering our VFW membership and expanding our voice in Washington DC. I firmly believe that by working together we can take on the challenge and make a greater impact on the lives of our Veterans, their families.

Our organization has been an integral part to those who have served our country, providing much needed support, camaraderie, and specially all the vital resources. By increasing our membership, we resonate our voices and our ability to properly advocate for the rights and benefits of our Veterans nationwide. We will be able to support their needs and ensure that the sacrifices of our veterans will never be forgotten.

Every one of us play a crucial role on this challenge head-on. You can show your dedication to the VFW by wearing your VFW uniforms, displaying sticker on your car, proudly wearing your VFW Lapel pins and sparking conversations about the mission of the VFW. Reach out to fellow veterans, active-duty service members and their families. Share your personal experiences and the benefits you have gained for being a VFW member. Utilize the power of social media and spread the wealth of information by providing photos, stories, and testimonials that highlights the incredible support network that we provide. Encourage everyone to connect with us on DPA 2.0 Facebook page and to get involved. Engage with local and civic organizations to create cooperation and collaborate community projects that serves your community and raise awareness about our VFW.

Remember, every new member we recruit strengthens our ability to make a difference. Together we can achieve remarkable things and to ensure that no veterans are left alone or forgotten. I encourage all of you to participate in the “Meet the Challenge” campaign and help us succeed on our membership goals for this year. If you have any suggestions or ideas or questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our DPA Membership Team, our DPA SVC Mike Lutman and our Certified National Recruiter Larry Lyons. Thank you for your continued dedication to the service of our Veterans, and their families. Let us all meet this challenge head-on and make a lasting impact together! Yours In Comradeship and Service!

Alexander Fores
Commander
Department of Pacific Areas
Loyalty, Duty and Honor



Commander

Alex Fores



COMMANDER'S CALL

PACIFIC TIMES CONTRIBUTORS

GROUP 1

Elected

Commander

SVC

JVC

Quartermaster

Surgeon

Chaplain

Appointed in Bylaws

Adjutant

Chief of Staff

Inspector

Judge Advocate

DSO

Appointed Otherwise

Membership Chairman

National Council Member

National Certified Recruiter

Immediate Past Department Commander

Commander, Grand of Pacific

GROUP 2

VOD/PP/TA Chairman

VMS/MAP Chairman

POW/MIA Chairman

National Legislative Chairman

National Home Chairman

Buddy Poppy Chairman

GROUP 3

Woman's Veteran Chairperson

Safety / Public Servants Chairman

Scouting Chairman

Historian

Americanism/Loyalty Chairman

Convention Chairman

Year in Review Chairman

C of A Mid-Year Chairman

Audit Committee Chairman

Required

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

EVERY ISSUE

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EVERY ISSUE

SEP/OCT, MAY/JUN*

SEP/OCT, MAY/JUN*

SEP/OCT, MAY/JUN*

SEP/OCT, MAY/JUN*

SEP/OCT, MAY/JUN*

SEP/OCT, MAY/JUN*

SEP/OCT*

SEP/OCT*

SEP/OCT*

SEP/OCT*

SEP/OCT*

MAR/APR, MAY/JUN*

JUL/AUG*

SEP/OCT, NOV/DEC*

SEP/OCT*

ISSUES: JUL/AUG, SEP/OCT, NOV/DEC, JAN/FEB, MAR/APR, MAY/JUN

* Submit additional articles as desired AND as requested by the CDR.



Commander

Alex Fores



SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

Greetings Comrades! WOW.....was that 124th National Convention HOT or what? I roasted my sweat glands off. Seeing so many Pacific Areas Comrades there was a blessing and meeting new and lifelong friends from other states was even more amazing. Cheers to Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento, Senior Vice Commander in Chief Al Lipphardt and Junior Vice Commander in Chief Carol Whitmore and their incoming staff. If you have never been to a convention, and this was my first...wow...if you can make it, then GO! Now, let's do some BID-NESS!

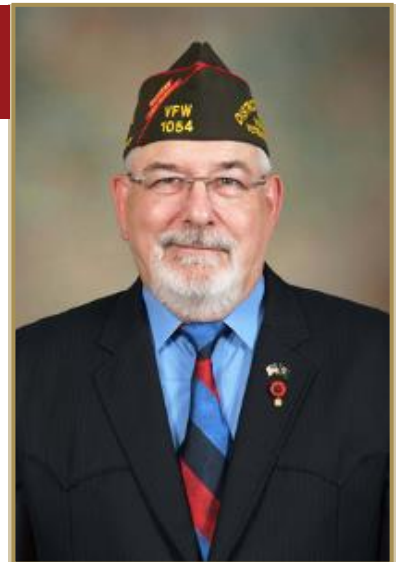
THANK YOU SO MUCH for electing me as your SENIOR VICE COMMANDER for the 2023-2024 term. It is my hope and prayer that I meet your expectations as that guy. Please don't hesitate to let me know when you think I'm coming up short. I am not perfect, but I try pretty hard. Speaking of trying hard, and as we ALL know, MEMBERSHIP is the life blood of our organization. National Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento has set our ALL AMERICAN membership level at 102% and we must MEET THE CHALLENGE! Some of you might not get why that is but let me tell you this. In order to grow and prosper (meet our obligations to our Veterans now and in the future) we need to be a robust organization with a collective voice that can NOT be turned away. Through our MEMBERSHIP, we are that voice. We speak loudly in the halls of Congress and in every legislative artery in the body of our great nation. The VFW not only SPEAKS for us, but they also ADVOCATE for each of us and our family members. The gas that drives the engine of representation is each and EVERY member of our great organization. Membership MATTERS and we must MEET THE CHALLENGE!

102% - MEET THE CHALLENGE!

SO.....hey SVC, how do I help fuel this engine? Comrades, the answer is easy. If each and every one of us recruits just ONE person, we will lay waste to any obstacles in our way as it applies to the strength and impact of the VFW. Don't sell yourselves short. With 12,000 members in our department, imagine the inspirational impact that would have. It would DOUBLE our membership and add an already keen edge to the sword that is the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America. Anyone who has ever served in a Post, District, or any part of our organizations knows it is the needs of the many that fuels the needs of the few, or the one.

We have some serious heavy hitters out there helping to make these goals a reality. Our ALL WORLD National Recruiter Larry Lyons is a GANGSTER when it comes to leading us in our overall recruiting effort. He, and many like-minded Comrades, put in the effort and attend the recruiting tables throughout our awesome Department. Past Commander in Chief Timothy Borland is also personally making the rounds throughout the VFW this term to assist in recruiting as a National Recruiter. All of you are well advised to emulate their efforts and put forth the tables, the booths, the conversations and the effort to reach more and more of our eligible Comrades waiting to hear from you. They will join, but... YOU MUST ASK THEM!

Another important part of our membership program is Legacy Life. Not only can it perpetuate annual funds into our posts (for LIFE), but more importantly it serves to remember those Comrades who made that membership commitment. Even though I was marked as deceased on our Legacy Life list during our department convention in Phnom Penh, I assure you I am alive and well, ready able and willing to assist any and all Comrades who would like to become a Legacy Life Member. We can also choose to remember past Comrades. How many members of your Post, who



Mike Lutman



Sr. Vice Commander

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

are now serving on the staff of the Supreme Commander, deserve to be recognized in your Post Legacy Life roles? I'm sure there are many and it is up to us to make sure their contributions to our great organization are not forgotten. Signing them up as Legacy Life members is a GREAT way to do that.

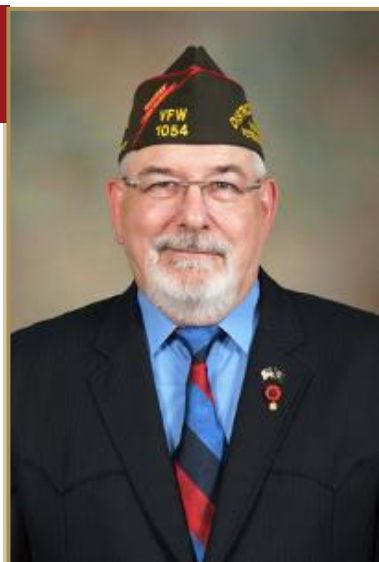
Ultimately, your success in recruiting will support your efforts in achieving ALL STATE and ALL AMERICAN recognition. It is NOT too early to focus your troops on those goals. The good news is that while doing what you do to support all the programs that we support in the VFW, we check off those boxes. Everything we do to support our great organization leads us to that ultimate goal. The ONLY thing that will keep you from reaching it is YOU and the will of your Post or District. As Yoda said, there is only DO, there is no try.

On a final note, be sure to interface with your program Chairman and report your progress and accomplishments to them for record keeping in the ALL STATE and ALL AMERICAN dashboards. I will be working with them closely as we track the progress of our Posts and Districts. For any questions regarding ALL STATE or ALL AMERICAN, I'm yer Huckleberry. Hit me up as required for any and all information regarding VFW Programs at svcdpa@vfwpacific.org

Thank YOU for all YOU do!!! It is an honor and a privilege to serve with you as part of the "Loyalty, Duty & Honor" team. Let us serve together in true Comradeship as we work to assist Veterans and their family members and in doing so, Honor the Dead by Helping the Living.

Yours in Comradeship and Service,

Mike Lutman
Senior Vice Commander
Department of Pacific Areas
Loyalty, Duty and Honor



Mike Lutman



Sr. Vice Commander



JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

Greetings Comrades,

I hope this finds each of you and your families in good health as we begin this VFW Year, Firstly I wanted to say, Wow! What a great convention that was held in Phoenix, Arizona. We now have a true supporter and brother of the Pacific Areas leading the charge of VFW National in Duane Sarmiento. If you get a chance, please take the time to listen to his acceptance speech which can be found at vfw.org under Thursdays business session, You can fast forward the video to the 1:51 mark.

As most of you know, As your Junior Vice Commander, I am responsible for the monitoring and approval of the CSR activities of your post as well as the administration of this year's award programs.

In an effort to help you submit CSRs that meet National requirements, and to aid you in the submission process. The following are a few of my observations from the first quarter. Needless to say, but we need to fine tune some of our entries to ensure compliance with CSR requirements. Along those lines, if you have feedback for me on how to improve the current system, please send me your comments and recommendations for improvement.

Here are some areas for improvement:

- AA Meetings at Post (if not attended by Community members, it is Post business)
- A CSR needs to have at least one (1) member involved and recorded on the input. (You cannot have a CSR activity where at least one member did not participate in the contribution, scheduling, or execution of the event.
- Volunteer at RAO (Needs information on what was done, and if possible, with how many veterans. It is also VETERANS SUPPORT and not just COMMUNITY SERVICE, OTHER). When you select other, you need to tell us what the other was.
- Veterans Support Luncheon (if it is just Post members, then it is not a Community Service event).
- Any entry that starts with POST (unless it includes community involvement). The idea is to quantify the activity if it is, if only plainly stated, a Post event.
- When submitting CSRs for community events such as meetings. Your attendance at such must be qualified. How did your presence contribute to the event? Being an attendee only does not qualify as a CSR event.
- Details of your CSRs need to be as specific as possible. Tell us what you did!
- Re-occurring events, such as repeated assistance to infirmed veterans can be completed with a single monthly CSR for that activity. Just ensure the member count includes each visit for that month.

If you submit an entry that is missing data and wish to modify it. Send me an email and I will make the necessary changes. If I come across questionable entries, I will notify you accordingly. Your timely response to my inquiries will ensure the timely correction and approval.

At the end of the day, we are looking for complete, compliant, and solid submissions that support our communities.



Junior Vice Commander

Jack Farrell



JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

EXAMPLE: Conducted local Veterans Support Luncheon discussing mutual support efforts, counseling and material needs. Event was attended by 2 local (Non-US) Veterans /Community leaders.

EXMAPLE: Held Recruiting Table during Community Safety Fair, providing safety information to the local public (approximately 20 persons stopped by), provided membership and benefits information to eligible Veterans (and if accomplished) recruited X new members.

EXAMPLE: Conducted, Scheduled, or Attended AA Meeting at the Post attended by X community members.

EXMAPLE: Supported base National Night Out with VFW Safety coloring books/ crayons for kids and Child ID Kits for parents. Provided VFW membership and benefits information. Recruited two new Life Members and contacted approximately 70 community members.

EXAMPLE: Provided food and clothing to one local community member in need.

EXAMPLE: Volunteered time and service at local RAO providing information and referrals to military retirees, their dependents and surviving spouses to include support for taxes, death/survivor benefits, pay, legal issues, generalized living information, benefits, medical, etc. Assisted 2 Veterans.

EXAMPLE: Taught English class to X local community members.

And don't forget to enter your post number, number of members and hours/miles and donations.

Finally, please be sure to take time and select the most appropriate submission category. I see a lot of Veterans support entries simply marked COMMUNITY SERVICE, OTHER. If in doubt, send me an email and I'll be more than glad to help you with your entry.

To all our Chairpersons running all the Community Support programs. Thank you for your time and efforts put forth in our communities.

Awards

As the Awards Program Chairman, I want to reiterate the importance of collecting the applicable data to support your award submissions. It is often the case where we tend to wait till the last possible moment to start the collection of data in support of award submission. Let's stay on top of it and ensure we are recognizing those VFW contributors who have gone above and beyond in their efforts. Please ensure the posts in your districts are notified accordingly and ensure that your individual award boards have completed their business in time to meet the submission deadlines.

To our Post Commanders, and District Commanders, please ensure you have a plan in place to grade your programs / award submissions and get them submitted in time to your Award chairperson and Award committee.

Award Due Dates:

DPA Community Service Award: Due to DPA JVC NLT 01 April 2024.



Junior Vice Commander

Jack Farrell



Jr. Vice Commander



JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

NOTE: The Community Service Award is submitted directly to the DPA JVC from the **Post Commander** and **NOT** the district.

Post Awards: Due to District Award Chairman NLT 15 April 2024 District Awards (1 each category) **Due to DPA JVC NLT 01 May 2024.**

There will be additions to National awards this year to include:

- VFW Employer of the year,
- JROTC Cadet of the year,
- VFW Member of the year.

Additionally, VFW National Programs has updated the Fred C. Hall and Outstanding Community Service Post award programs starting this program year. Please click the icon at the bottom of the next page for the updated guide reflecting this. Please share this guide with your Community Service Chairpersons.

There will no longer be a Post Special Project application for the Fred C. Hall award, and each department will have only one Outstanding Community Service Post. These award winners will be determined by the end of year community service reports on July 1 and total impact (Dollars Donated + Volunteer Hours + Mileage = Total Impact).

The new programs are as follows:

FRED C. HALL MEMORIAL AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Each year on July 1, the national Programs office will determine the top community service Posts in each conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact from July 1 to June 30 the previous year. Your community service total impact is figured by the money spent to host and organize the community service event plus total hours all volunteers participated, plus the mileage for all volunteers (Dollars Donated + Hours + Mileage = Total Impact).

These 4 Posts will be awarded the Fred C. Hall Memorial Award for Community Service and will be invited to attend the VFW National Convention. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations for 5 nights, and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POST OF THE YEAR

Each department will have an OCSP Winner based on total impact. National will select based on end of year reports on July 1. Winners will also be published in the Convention program booklet and receive a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

NATIONAL AWARDS AND CITATIONS

The National Awards and Citations Committee will meet prior to the Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. to discuss and choose recipients for the awards to be given at the National Convention in Louisville, KY in 2024 upon approval from the National Council of Administration at the Legislative Conference.

The following awards we are asking for nominations are as follows:

- VFW Distinguished Fraternal Award
- VFW Distinguished Patriotic Award



Junior Vice Commander

Jack Farrell



Jr. Vice Commander



JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

VFW Distinguished Historical Award
VFW Distinguished Citizenship Award
VFW Distinguished Educational Award
VFW Distinguished Service Award

The Department input for these awards is due to National NLT February 2nd. Keeping this in mind, please ensure that your District award committee's plan accordingly to get your inputs to me NLT January 19th to allow the Department awards committee to make the final selection and ensure their timely submission to National.

Please distribute this information thru out your districts and encourage post participation in recognizing our comrades, and communities for going above and beyond in support of our efforts.

As always, I am here to assist. Do not hesitate to reach out if needed. Yours in Service to Veterans.

Jack Farrell
Junior Vice Commander,
Department of Pacific Areas
Loyalty, Duty and Honor



Junior Vice Commander

Jack Farrell



Jr. Vice Commander



**VFW COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
CHAIRPERSON'S
GUIDE**



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



VFW Post 12130 doing their quarterly donation to the Lit'l Lambs orphanage. Pictured L-R are daughter Catherine and wife Dominica and Comrade QM Darrell Duffy along with the Lit'l Lambs staff.



We could not travel 2 hours north of Cebu City to visit the Japanese Surrender site in Cebu due to unpredictable weather on August 28, 2023. Comrade Chuck Hayes managed to find a small break in the weather and established a wreath, originally designed for the Japanese Surrender site, and placing it on our Post name Ulysses G. Buzzard burial site.

In the SPOTLIGHT



In support of the Philippines Department of Education "Balik Eskwela" (Back to School) program, members of VFW Robert W. Zaher Post 2485 and Post 2485 Auxiliary purchased and donated a total of 150 school backpacks filled with school supplies for underprivileged children attending the following schools: 1) Aug. 3, 2023 Sitio Baag Elementary School, in San Jose, Tarlac. 2) Aug. 18, 2023 Malabantias Integrated School, in Angeles City and 3) Aug. 21, 2023 Sapang Bato Elementary School, Angeles City, Philippines.

In addition to the school supplies, some toys, clothing, cookies and candies was given to the families and children in attendance at each event. This is the 2nd consecutive year VFW Post 2485 has provided school supplies to needy children in our community.

In the SPOTLIGHT



**Yep, this space
could have been
used to showcase
your post.**

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

DPA ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER

Comrades,

There have been many questions about Buddy Poppy orders. The main question has been concerning the new metal Poppy. National is still working out the procurement for the metal Poppy. Once they come available a new order form will be created. As a reminder, for All-State a Post needs to buy 500 poppies and All-American is 3 poppies per member. Posts may also donate instead of receiving the poppies. Quarterly audits should be sent to me by the end of the month. All Quartermasters should have their Bond Certificate. Please review to ensure that your Post name and the amount of the Bond are correct. If there are any errors, please let me know. If you need a Canteen Manager Bond, email me and I will send you the forms that are needed.

YIC

Shawn Watson
DPA Adjutant / Quartermaster



Buddy Poppy's

Before Memorial Day in 1922, we conducted our first poppy distribution, becoming the first veterans' organization to organize a nationwide distribution. The poppy soon was adopted as the official memorial flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, as it remains today.

During our 1923 encampment, we decided that VFW "Buddy"® Poppies would be assembled by disabled and needy veterans who would be paid for their work to provide them with financial assistance. The next year, disabled veterans at the Buddy Poppy factory in Pittsburgh assembled VFW Buddy Poppies. The designation "Buddy Poppy" was adopted at that time.

In February 1924, we registered the name Buddy Poppy with the U.S. Patent Office. A certificate was issued on May 20, 1924, granting our organization all trademark rights in the name of Buddy under the classification of artificial flowers. No other organization, firm or individual can legally use the name Buddy Poppy.

The VFW Buddy Poppy program provides compensation to those who assemble the poppies, provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the [VFW National Home](#). Show your support today. Host a Buddy Poppy drive in your town, or [have your local government issue a special proclamation](#).

Hear from those who assemble the mighty little flowers in our ["Behind the Buddy Poppy" video](#).



Department of Pacific Areas

Adjutant / Quartermaster

Shawn C. Watson

"In Flanders fields
the poppies blow
Between the crosses,
row on row,
That mark our place;
and in the sky
The larks, still
bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid
the guns below."

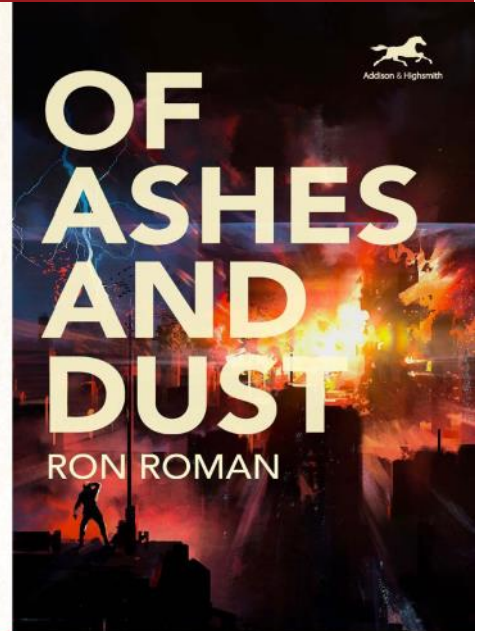
**JOHN MCCRAE, WORLD WAR I
SURGEON AND POET**



OF ASHES AND DUST

BY RON ROMAN

At the time of the Millennium three people struggle for survival in a small New Hampshire town as the world spins into chaos, not realizing that each harbors secrets that will eventually pit them against one another. The story evolves from the U.S. Government's earlier two classified secret projects during the Vietnam War (the USAF's revelation about UFOs and Project Sixty-Seven). *Of Ashes and Dust* is a no-punches-pulled apocalyptic tale of mesmerizing intrigue and gut-retching survival told as an alternate-history thriller during the Last Days of a global Armageddon culminating in a totally unexpected and explosive ending.



“Distinguished by sparkling prose and an immersive narrative style, Roman’s story of liberty and revolution offers readers more than a vision of an American dystopia and a terrifying global conflict, reflecting the faultlines of real-world politics. His descriptions of the state’s increasing encroachment on civil liberties have persuasive power, as does his plausible portrayal of the failure of governance and a gradual descent into anarchy.
— Publishers Weekly

Of special appeal to fans of dystopian novels, *Of Ashes and Dust* is a compelling read that showcases author Ron Roman’s genuine flair as a novelist with respect to his impressive originality and narrative driven storytelling skills...highly recommended, especially for community library Alternate History and Dystopian Fiction collections.
— Midwest Book Review

OF ASHES AND DUST
Ron Roman

Available From
Amazon
Baker & Taylor
Ingram
Libby
Hoopla

Addison & Highsmith
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\$9.99 e-book

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ron Roman (WWW.WRITERRONROMAN.COM) was an Associate Professor of English, ESL, and Humanities who had taught with the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC- Asia) since 1996. He has written extensive travel, academic, and political articles for regional and national publications. He studied writing (both fiction and creative) for his third graduate degree (Humanities) from Wesleyan University. Currently, he resides in South Korea, where he writes and has acted in numerous Korean TV dramas and motion pictures, like *Operation Chromite*, portraying Admiral Forrest Sherman opposite Liam Neeson as General Douglas MacArthur.



NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

Greetings Comrades,

The National Convention was a great success on many levels. If you have never been to one, you might consider adding it to your to-do list. You really get a feel for our great organization and a sense of the commitment so many of our comrades have for helping their fellow veterans, their families, communities, and our country.

The DPA had a great showing. There were 15-20 comrades who attended, and we all learned a lot and the camaraderie was amazing.

The business portion of the convention was very productive. Various committees presented their recommendations to the delegates and decisions were made to improve our organization by amending Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure. We also were presented with many resolutions that stated our support for various issues and to underscore important VFW legislative goals that impact veterans.

There were 9 Bylaw amendments proposed, 3 were approved. 7 Amendments to the Manual of Procedure were proposed, and 3 were approved.

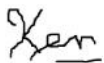
71 Resolutions were proposed and 56 Approved. These resolutions are statements intended to demonstrate to the public, congress, and other political leaders the VFW's positions on National security, Foreign Affairs, and veterans' services. Some examples of resolutions passed include the continued support of Taiwan and the state of Israel. The support and commitment to preserving the all-volunteer force. The VFW supports full concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and VA disability compensation. We insist on an adequate budget for the VA, and the need to fix the Foreign Medical Program. Many other resolutions were passed. Click the convention logo below to view the official information from the 124th National Convention. Click [HERE](#) for a link to the results of the resolutions from the National Convention.

Some of the key speakers included the Secretary of the VA, the Vice Minister of the Taiwanese Veterans Affairs Council, the Deputy Director of the POWMIA Accounting Agency, to name a few.

We are fortunate to have as our new Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento as he is a huge supporter of the Department of Pacific Areas. His membership program calls for an increase in membership of 2% across the board. So to qualify for All American your post and our Department must have 102% increase over the previous year. We accomplished that goal last year and I am sure we will do the same and more this year.

Again, another great convention, if you can find a way to attend in the future I strongly recommend you do so. Next year the VFW National Convention will be held in Louisville KY.

Yours in comradeship and service to veterans,



Kenneth A. Stein
National Council Member 2022-2024
Pacific Areas



Ken Stein

VFW Service to Veterans

From lobbying Congress and monitoring the Department of Veterans Affairs to assisting veterans filing claims, the VFW remains a dedicated advocate for America's veterans, service members and their families.

National Veterans Service (NVS)

NVS is responsible for accrediting and training VFW's global network of professional service officers. NVS provides annual training to VFW Service Officers. NVS staff represents veterans at the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington, D.C. Each year NVS provides more than \$2 million to VFW Departments in support of their veteran service programs.

• Department Service Officers (DSOs)

A global network of highly trained and accredited service officers helps veterans navigate the complex VA claims process. Department of Veterans Affairs statistics show that for 2022, the VFW helped recoup \$11.2 billion in earned benefits on behalf of more than 550,000 veterans. The VFW's Pre-Discharge claims representatives also filed nearly 13,500 VA claims resulting in more than \$64 million in disability compensation for transitioning service members. The VFW always provides this service FREE OF CHARGE.

• Tactical Assessment Center (TAC)

The VFW's TAC operates a toll-free hotline for veterans with questions or concerns about VA health care programs and VA benefits. The number is 1.800.VFW.1899. Veterans can also email vfw@vfw.org.

• Health Screenings

The VFW hosts a health fair at its national convention. Attendees can receive an array of free services to include health screenings, eye exams, cholesterol checks, respiratory function testing, blood pressure screening and blood glucose testing. Many lives have been saved thanks to these free screenings.

• Pre-Discharge Program

Introduced in 2001, the VFW's pre-discharge program (formerly known as Benefits Delivery at Discharge) provides claims assistance to separating military personnel on more than 20 military installations and military populated regions throughout the country.

• VFW PACT Act Information

The VFW is committed to providing all veterans timely and accurate information about this landmark legislative victory. To see if you or a loved one may qualify for benefits, please visit our new website and referral tool at PACTActInfo.org to be referred to a professionally trained, VA accredited VFW Service Officer for assistance never at any cost to the claimant.

National Legislative Service

The NLS educates Congress and advocates for policies that improve the lives of veterans, active-duty military, and their families.

• Action Corps

This grassroots lobbying effort has more than 300,000 volunteer advocates who write, call and visit lawmakers to discuss issues related to veterans. Also, Action Corps members receive the *VFW Action Corps Weekly*, an e-newsletter relating to current legislation and events.

VFW FACT SHEET

- ***Your Voice on Capitol Hill***

VFW members live in every congressional district. The VFW's membership size and effective advocacy ensures that members of Congress do not ignore the needs and preferences of those who have worn our nation's uniform. The VFW testifies up to 30 times every year before Congress, including before an annual Joint Senate and House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Hearing to consider the VFW's Priority Goals.

National Security and Foreign Affairs

The welfare of active duty, Guard and Reserve personnel and their families is of a prime concern to the VFW.

- ***POW/MIA***

The VFW national officers visit Asian and European countries to meet with host-country officials to stress the importance of conducting MIA investigation and recovery operations, as well as gaining access to documents and archival research facilities.

Employment Services

The VFW is a strong supporter of veterans' preference in government positions. The Washington Office actively works to advance veteran-specific employment legislation and works with the U.S. Department of Labor to ensure veterans have resources in their communities to find quality post-military careers.

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CERTIFIED NATIONAL RECRUITER

Good Morning Pacific Area,

What a great VFW today is going to be! Just finished reviewing the MEMSTATs and Recruiters reports from the National WEB Site and we are not looking that bad so far.

As of 16 August, Department of Pacific Areas has 41 recruiters so far this year and we have only been in the new year 47 days thus far! These recruiters have recruited 28 Annual Members along with 4 Reinstated Annual Members. We also had 53 of our Annual Members from last year already renewed their membership.

However, what you cannot see that I can see in the recruiter's report that is not yet posted on MEMSTATs is that these recruiters have also recruited a whopping **57 LIFE MEMBERS** so far this year. Folks that ain't bad at all! (*Sorry about the bad English but sometimes it's also good!*)

Here in the Pacific Area, we pride ourselves on our Life Membership Program that is what keeps us on top of our National Membership Program ever year. I encourage each Post and District to look hard at their Membership Program and see where they can maybe offer an incentive to Annual Members to go Life with a possible rebate from their Post General Fund or hold a special Fund Raiser to cover that!

I would like to thank all of our 41 Recruiters for doing an outstanding job so early in the year and wish them all success and I want to be able to pass out tons of VFW Gift Certificates at the CofA in Saipan this coming December.

Our Top 3 Recruiters thus far are: Cliff Wilsey of Post 2485 with 13 Recruits, next is a tie for 2nd and 3rd place, John Bowers of 9723 and Terrance Hebron of 12146 both recruiting 5 members each this year! Again, thanks to all our recruiters.

Additional thanks to all the VFW Members that are out there in your communities doing the other VFW Programs that your Community sees that makes Recruiting a lot easier!

Yours Always in Comradeship,

Larry Lyons
Certified National Recruiter
Past Department Commander 08/09
Department of Pacific Areas



Department of Pacific Areas

National Certified Recruiter

Larry Lyons



MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Captain Steven L. Bennett elected to ditch in the Gulf of Tonkin, although he knew that his cockpit area would very likely break up on impact. No pilot had ever survived an OV-10 ditching.

The OV-10 was a twin-turboprop short takeoff and landing aircraft conceived by the US Marine Corps and developed under a US Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps tri-service program. The first production OV-10A was ordered in 1966, and its initial flight took place in August 1967.

The Bronco's missions included observation, forward air control, helicopter escort, armed reconnaissance, gunfire spotting, utility and limited ground attack. The USAF, however, acquired the Bronco primarily as forward air control (FAC) aircraft. Adding to its versatility is a rear fuselage compartment with a capacity of 3,200 pounds of cargo, five combat-equipped troops or two litter patients and a medical attendant.

The first USAF OV-10As destined for combat arrived in Vietnam in July 1968. A total of 157 OV-10As were delivered to the USAF before production ended in April 1969.

On Jun. 29, 1972, Captain Steven L Bennett, a USAF FAC, was flying an OV-10 Bronco on an artillery adjustment mission near Quang Tri City, South Vietnam. A Marine gunfire spotter occupied the rear seat of the lightly armed reconnaissance aircraft.

According to Air Force Historical Support Division, after controlling gunfire from US naval vessels off shore and directing air strikes against enemy positions for approximately three hours, Captain Bennett received an urgent call for assistance. A small South Vietnamese unit was about to be attacked by a much larger enemy force. Without immediate help, the unit was certain to be overrun. Unfortunately, there were no friendly fighters left in the area, and supporting naval gunfire would have endangered the South Vietnamese. They were between the coast and the enemy.

Captain Bennett decided to strafe the advancing soldiers. Since they were North Vietnamese regulars, equipped with heat-seeking SA-7 surface to air missiles (SAMs), the risks in making a low-level attack were great. Captain Bennett nonetheless zoomed down and opened fire with his four small machine guns. The troops scattered and began to fall back under repeated strafing.

As the twin-boomed Bronco pulled up from its fifth attack, a missile rose up from behind and struck the plane's left engine. The explosion set the engine on fire and knocked the left landing gear from its stowed position, leaving it hanging down. The canopies over the two airmen were pierced by fragments.

Captain Bennett veered southward to find a field for an emergency landing. As the fire in the engine continued to spread, he was urged by the pilot of an escorting OV-10 to eject. The wing was in danger of exploding. He then learned that his observer's parachute had been shredded by fragments in the explosion.

Captain Bennett elected to ditch in the Gulf of Tonkin, although he knew that his cockpit area would very likely break up on impact. No pilot had ever survived an OV-10 ditching. As he touched down, the extended landing gear dug into the water. The Bronco spun to the left and flipped over nose down into the sea. His Marine companion managed to escape, but Captain Bennett, trapped in his smashed cockpit, sank with the plane. His body was recovered the next day.

For sacrificing his life, Captain Bennett was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. The decoration was presented to his widow by Vice President Gerald R. Ford Aug. 8, 1974.

Read the citation [HERE](#).



CHAPLAINS CORNER / TAPS REPORT

Comrades July and August allowed us to transition into the new VFW year with a newly elected and installed Department of Pacific Area Commander, Alex Flores and National Commander in Chief, Duane Sarmiento. I pray and hope all Comrades that traveled to the 124th VFW National Convention experienced a rewarding and informative conference. As I hope it gave an opportunity to meet fellow comrades from across United States and foreign posts to share and practice common VFW comradeship.

As each of us prepares to execute our individual office in which we were elected or appointed let's not lose focus on our purpose to assist and help our veterans. As I will continue to reiterate throughout my term of office; continue to take care of our Veterans, their families, our Active-duty service members and less fortunate in our communities. With a "Buddy check" this task can be accomplished with a simple phone call, email, or text to ensure we all stay in touch and connected to our Comrades. And let's not forget our Sick and Shut-in with home and hospital visits. If there is a Veteran in "CRISIS" during any time of day or night, you may call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 or your country Emergency designated number. If you are eligible, file your PACT Act claim or submit your intent to file for your benefits.

As we kick-off the first half of 2023-2024, September and October are filled with an abundant of Commemorative events. I pray and wish that everyone in charge of an event enjoys a wonderful and meaningful experience while paying remembrance to our country Patriots and POW/MIA, that all elected and appointed officers are successful in the execution of their office. "Strength in Numbers"! Ready to travel as required.

TAPS report, continue to Email your reports to: chapdpa@vfwpacific.org which is linked to my personal Gmail account.

Let us remember the following comrades who passed away since our previous report:

Post	Name	Date of Death
12074	Hill, Ronald Ray	31-Jul-23
12074	Shepanak, Paul Robert	01-Aug-23
12130	Adams, Lee Coleman	18-Jul-23

Yours in Comradeship

Robert S. Chatman
Chaplain DPA

As comrade after comrade departs, we march on with our ranks grown 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.



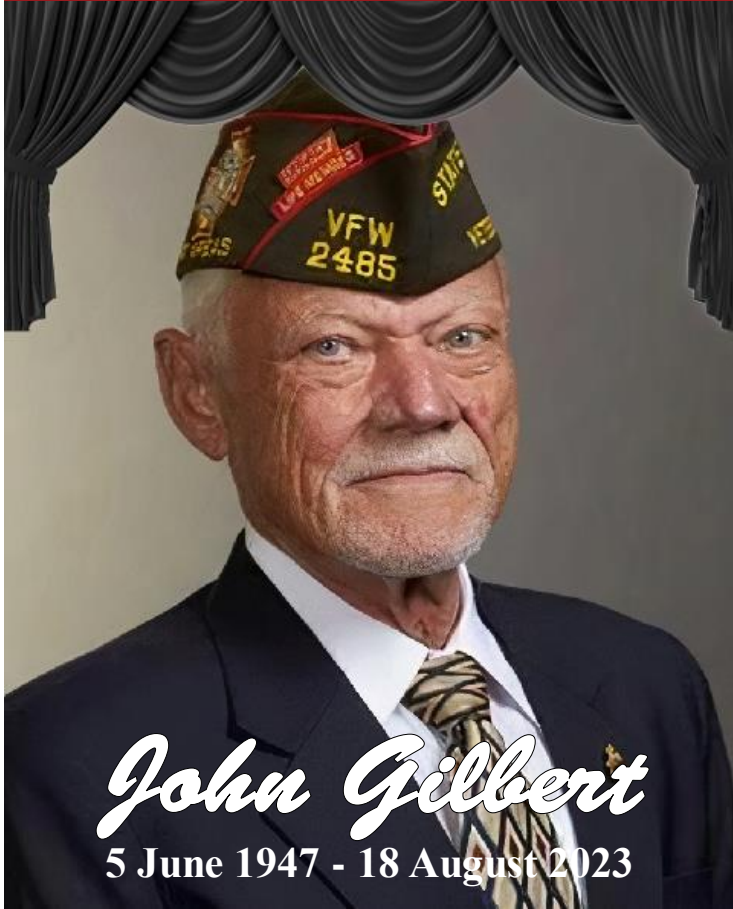
Department of Pacific Areas

Chaplain

Robert Chatman



IN MEMORIAM



John Gilbert
5 June 1947 - 18 August 2023

John Gilbert served as Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2485 Commander from 2012 to 2014 and twice led our Post to All-State and All-American status.

Serving concurrently as Post Commander and seven years as DPA Clark Veterans Cemetery (CVC) Chairman, John Gilbert officially handed over Clark Cemetery from VFW Post 2485 stewardship to permanent caretaker status by the American Battle Monument Commission (ABMC) in 2013. Post 2485 maintained CVC for over 20 years when Clark Airbase closed in 1991 until the transition to ABMC. VFW Post 2485 stood watch over the hallowed grounds raising money, hired a maintenance crew, burying veterans with full military honors. Although maintaining CVC in the deserved state of dignity was far beyond our post's capability, John's efforts at the Department and our Post ensured CVC will be preserved in a state of majesty for posterity.

Significantly, Post Commander Gilbert transformed our Post Canteen into a contract concession to eliminate financial losses commonly experienced with Post Canteen operations. Contracting our Post Canteen provided a guaranteed monthly income allowing our Post to excel in membership, Legacy Life, community service, Post Home improvement, membership relief, and VFW programs.

John Gilbert earned All-State VFW District VII (Philippines) Commander in 2014 and was subsequently elected Commander of VFW Department of Pacific Areas on June 14, 2017. His area of responsibility included 26 VFW Posts across nine countries.

First Sergeant John Gilbert served in the United States Army from 1970 until 1993 with tours of duty in Berlin, Germany, Korea, Japan and the Middle East. Among his numerous awards and decorations, John was awarded five meritorious service medals. He retired from the US Army following the Persian Gulf War and received the Bronze Star as the Chief Operations NCO for US Army Forces Central Command. Following Military Retirement, he completed a second career as a High School Teacher and Counselor in Public Education. John earned his Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is a graduate of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy.



DEPARTMENT SURGEON

Comrades, continue to take care of each other, Veterans, their families our Active-duty service members and the less fortunate in our communities, let's discuss a topic near, dear and essential to us all, the food we eat. A Closer Look at What You Eat Food provides energy and nutrients that are essential for your health. These include proteins, carbohydrates, and fats (called macronutrients), and vitamins and minerals (called micronutrients).

Having a balanced diet helps ensure you get all the nutrients your body needs. Macronutrients make up the bulk of the calories you eat each day. They provide the nutrients that your body needs to make energy. They also give your cells important building blocks needed for all their different functions, like fighting diseases.

Your body needs only small amounts of micronutrients. But they are critical for healthy development and disease prevention. To find the amounts of different nutrients in a food, look at the Nutrition Facts label.

You can also find resources about nutrients in foods at Nutrition.gov (USDA) (link is external). Limiting how much added sugar you eat to no more than 10% of your daily calories can help lower your health risks. So can choose more complex carbohydrates, like whole grains, beans, legumes, and starchy vegetables. Complex carbs can help you get more fiber, too. Fruits and vegetables are also a great source of fiber and are rich in micronutrients.

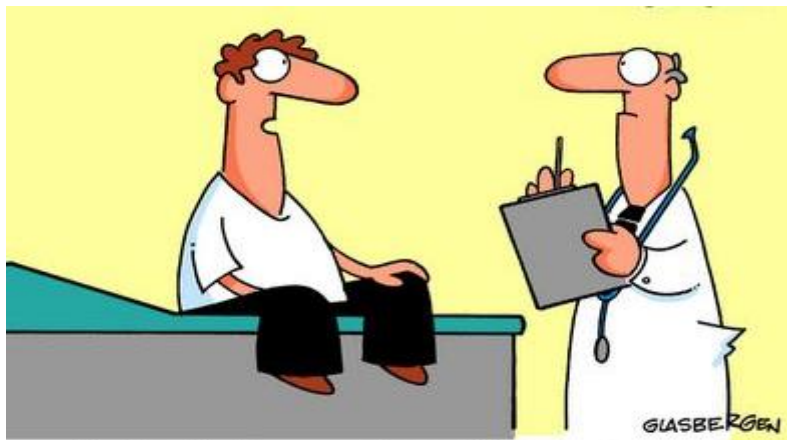
Getting personal, our genetic makeup interacts with our diet and may affect how each person's body breaks down food. Scientists are now digging deeper to better understand these differences. NIH has launched a precision nutrition study to learn more about how various food components affect people differently. The study is enrolling 10,000 people to learn what factors predict how people's bodies will respond to different types of foods.

In the end the researchers hope to learn how to tailor what you eat based on your genes, culture, and environment to improve your health. Learn more at Nutrition for Precision Health

Did you get up and out and walk today, ride bicycle, take your significant other out for a walk or grab a fellow Vet and exercise. Your activity does not have to be rigorous a simple dip in the pool a swim will suffice. If you're a smoker get off the butts!

Yours In Comradeship

Lou Holub
DPA Surgeon



**"I already diagnosed myself on the Internet.
I'm only here for a second opinion."**



Surgeon

Lou Holub

CHIEF OF STAFF

From the desk of the Chief of Staff,

Let's get the year started at a steady pace for all Posts to achieve All-State and All-American this year. I say steady pace, so we don't end up running to the finish at the end of the year.

There are changes to both the All-State and All-American Programs this year, here they are.

First off is the 102% membership for All-American. This is achievable by all Posts and Districts. If you need some ideas for recruiting events, please feel free to ask our very qualified Certified National Recruiter Larry Lyons pdcl-ions935@gmail.com. There also has been changes made to the All-American Dashboard. Now the Top Five (CDR, SVC, JVC, QM, and ADJ) can submit entries. Also, all donations (VOD, Patriot's Pen, Teacher's Award, and VMS) will now be made by the Quartermaster from the All-American Dashboard through the VFW Programs Donation [New VMS Donation Entry Process for All American Dashboard](#). Last, but not least, there are changes to the Buddy Poppy Program as well. This year every Post needs to order three Buddy Poppies per member and there is also a new way to order [Guide to New "Buddy" Poppy Ordering Method](#).

The big change for All-State Program is that the Legacy Life Member has been brought back.

With both the All-State and All-American Programs, make a steady effort to get all the requirements accomplished by the CofA. Don't want to see anyone sprinting to the finish at the end of the year.

Let us all work together to make this another All-American year for the DPA and Commander Alex Fores. And remember, I'm not here just to assist the Commander, I am here to assist every one of you.

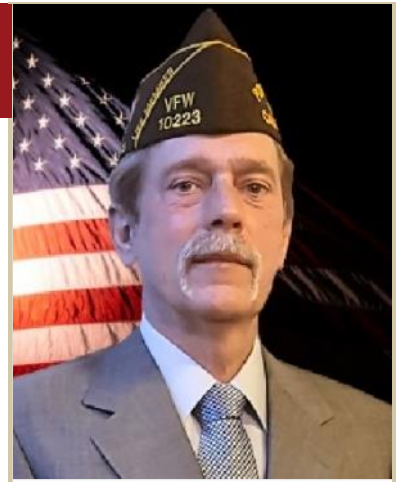
And finally, I would like to welcome to the DPA VFW Post 12224 in Puerto Prince-sa City Palawan, with a scheduled installation for October the 22nd.

Let's all **MEET THE CHALLENGE** through **LOYALTY, DUTY, and HONOR**.

Don Kelley
DPA Chief of Staff
cosdpa@vfwpacific.org



"We're out of crayons ..."



Donald E. Kelley

DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR

Comrades,

The Department of Pacific Areas will begin the District and Post inspections in October 2023. The goal for inspections is to be completed before the C of A in December 2023, however, the last date to be completed is 30 April 2024.

District Commanders have already provided their District Inspectors. No Inspector shall inspect his or her own Post/District. Please review CDR Fores 2023-2024 inspection program by visiting the DPA website. Click programs then under programs click Inspections. There you will find forms, instructions, and general information.

One item on the inspection forms I would like to address is proper types of insurance. The second paragraph in Section 709 of the VFW National Bylaws states: Any Post, District, or Department owning and/or operating, directly or by reason of a holding company or other entity substantially controlled by the Post or its members, a canteen, clubroom, or other facility available to members or guests must maintain general liability insurance, including, if necessary or appropriate, liquor liability insurance. Such insurance must be of a type and amount sufficient to protect the Post and must name, as additional insureds, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, and the Department in which such Post is located.

So, if a Post is required to have insurance, the Post must have VFW National and DPA as additionally insured. If anyone has questions, please email me at inspd-pa@vfwpacific.org.

Barry Larson
Inspector
Department of Pacific Areas



Department Inspector

Barry L. Larson



10 STEPS TO SUCCESS

1. Try
2. Try again
3. Try once more
4. Try a little differently
5. Try it again tomorrow
6. Try and ask for help
7. Try to find someone who has done it
8. Try to fix what is not working
9. Try to expand what is working
10. Just keep trying until you succeed



JUDGE ADVOCATE

Greetings Comrades,

Our Department Bylaws have been sent to National for review and approval. Upon approval I will send it to all post commanders and have Augie post them on the DPA website.

Approved amendments to the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure have been posted on the VFW website. SEE RESULTS HERE:

https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/MY_VFW/ConventionResolutions/Online-Version_Combined---Final.pdf?v=1&d=20230803T185810Z&la=en

A couple of important changes this year are:

- Bylaws Section 416 has been amended to changing the District Chaplains Office to an appointed position.
- Manual of Procedures Section 706 was renamed as “National Home Funds”
- Manual of Procedures Section 803; Under Cap, “The color shall be green, shade 51; Suntan; or other colors as the National Council of Administration may dictate.”
- And Resolution 610 regarding the Foreign Medical Program (FMP) was approved.

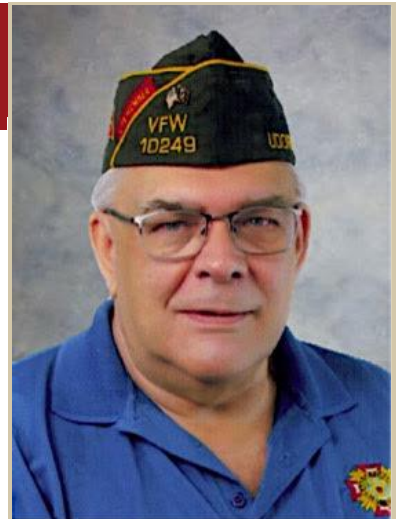
The 2024 PODIUM EDITION should also be available soon for download on the VFW website.

Yours in Comradeship and Service

Delbert “Bert” Marohl
DPA Judge Advocate



“Judge Wycoff is a strong advocate of swift justice.”



Judge Advocate

Delbert "Bert" Marohl

PODIUM EDITION

2023

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES



CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER
BYLAWS
MANUAL OF PROCEDURE
RITUAL

As amended July 19, 2022
Effective August 20, 2022

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Oliver Anthony's Facebook post "It's been difficult as I browse through the 50,000 messages and emails I've received in the last week. The stories that have been shared paint a brutally honest picture. Suicide, addiction, unemployment, anxiety and depression, hopelessness and the list goes on.

I'm sitting in such a weird place in my life right now. I never wanted to be a full time musician, much less sit at the top of the iTunes chart. Driven from RadioWv and I filmed these tunes on my land with the hope that it may hit 300k views. I still don't quite believe what has went on since we uploaded that. It's just strange to me.



People in the music industry give me blank stares when I brush off 8 million dollar offers. I don't want 6 tour buses, 15 tractor trailers and a jet. I don't want to play stadium shows, I don't want to be in the spotlight. I wrote the music I wrote because I was suffering with mental health and depression. These songs have connected with millions of people on such a deep level because they're being sung by someone feeling the words in the very moment they were being sung. No editing, no agent, no bullshit. Just some idiot and his guitar. The style of music that we should have never gotten away from in the first place.

So that being said, I have never taken the time to tell you who I actually am. Here's a formal introduction:

My legal name is Christopher Anthony Lunsford. My grandfather was Oliver Anthony, and "Oliver Anthony Music" is a dedication not only to him, but 1930's Appalachia where he was born and raised. Dirt floors, seven kids, hard times. At this point, I'll gladly go by Oliver because everyone knows me as such. But my friends and family still call me Chris. You can decide for yourself, either is fine.

In 2010, I dropped out of high school at age 17. I have a GED from Spruce Pine, NC. I worked multiple plant jobs in Western NC, my last being at the paper mill in McDowell County. I worked 3rd shift, 6 days a week for \$14.50 an hour in a living hell. In 2013, I had a bad fall at work and fractured my skull. It forced me to move back home to Virginia. Due to complications from the injury, it took me 6 months or so before I could work again,

From 2014 until just a few days ago, I've worked outside sales in the industrial manufacturing world. My job has taken me all over Virginia and into the Carolinas, getting to know tens of thousands of other blue collar workers on job sites and in factories. I've spent all day, everyday, for the last 10 years hearing the same story, people are SO damn tired of being neglected, divided and manipulated.

In 2019, I paid \$97,500 for the property and still owe about \$60,000 on it. I am living in a 27' camper with a tarp on the roof that I got off of craigslist for \$750.

There's nothing special about me. I'm not a good musician, I'm not a very good person, I've spent the last 5 years struggling with mental health and using alcohol to drown it. I am sad to see the world in the state it's in, with everyone fighting with each other. I have spent many nights feeling hopeless, that the greatest country on Earth is quickly fading away.

That being said, I HATE the way the Internet has divided all of us. The Internet is a parasite, that infects the minds of humans and has their way with them. Hours wasted, goals forgotten, loved ones sitting in houses with each other distracted all day by technology made by the hands of other poor souls in sweat shops in a foreign land.

When is enough. enough? When are we going to fight for what is right again? MILLIONS have died protecting the Liberties we have. Freedom of speech is such a precious gift, Never in world history has the world had the freedom it currently does. Don't let them take it away from you.

Just like those once wandering in the desert, we have lost our way from God and have let false idols distract us and divide us. It's a damn shame."

Click [HERE](#) to hear the song that started it all. Make sure you watch the second video as well!

IMMEDIATE PAST DPA COMMANDER

Comrades,

We just left Arizona from the 2022-2023 National Convention and the Pacific Areas had a great showing this year. I want to congratulate you all for earning the title of All American Department, Districts and Post. Amazing job you have all done and let's keep the train moving forward. New CIC has said his goal is 102% for All American, and if you look at the past years numbers you were at 102% across the board, so you know you can do it. Good Luck and I know you can do it...

During the Department convention there was a question brought up by an incoming Commander and I verified with our JAG Bert...

Question was: "When a Past DPA CDR. or District CDR says "I am voting WITH THE POST", does the Post receive 1 additional vote?" Basically they are saying they agree with the Post and wanted their vote to reflect the same...

So I asked Bert to verify and he let me know the following:

When a member votes with the post they DO NOT receive an additional vote. Their vote as a PDC is not counted. Therefore your vote is voided.

SO think about that when you are voting, make your vote count, example if the Post has 20 votes and you have 1, if you vote "With the Post" they still ONLY have 20 votes and your vote is no longer counted.

Lastly, please continue to use my maximus556656@gmail.com to contact me, sometimes my VFW accounts do not get to me. Every email matters.

Yours in Comradeship

Max

Commander
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Immediate Past DPA Cdr



Immediate Past DPA Cdr

Warren "Max" Maxson



DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER (DSO)

Greetings Comrades,

Each month Post Service Officers are required to provide the DSO with a recap of the services they are providing for our Veterans and their families. This data is used to evaluate the workload and determine how many Accredited Service Officers, if any, are needed to enhance serve to our veterans and their families in your area. This is an overview of the reports received.

POST SERVICE OFFICER REPORTING

Post S.O. Reports	Number of Posts		Claims Filed	
	Reporting	No Report	July	This Term
	8	17	27	27

DSO Service Officer Training	Number of Posts		District S.O.	
	Training C/W	Awaiting Training	Training C/W	Awaiting Training
	13	12	3	4

NOTE: One of the requirements to qualify for All-State this term is that your post service officer is required to attend training provided by the Department Service Officer. Attendance is taken and reported to National Veterans Services.

Who should file a supplemental claim?

A Veteran may file a supplemental claim if they have new and relevant evidence related to a previously claim. As part of continued modernization efforts from VA, Veterans can now file supplemental claims online at VA.gov. Filing a supplemental claim is an option for Veterans who disagree with a previously denied claim decision regarding VA disability compensation or pension benefits.

This new functionality enhances the Veteran digital experience while delivering timely and accurate notification to Veterans regarding their claim decisions.

<https://www.va.gov> new online filing tool speeds claims decisions to Veterans by:

- Saving time with supplemental claims submitted directly on VA.gov, with step-by-step, interview-style questions.
- Allowing secure and quick uploads for additional evidence and records.
- Saving progress so Veterans can leave and pick up where they left off.

In addition, Veterans can use their smartphone or other mobile devices to apply online, or if they would prefer, submit supplemental claims by mail if that option better meets their need.

Who should file a supplemental claim?

A Veteran may file a supplemental claim if they have new and relevant evidence related to a previously denied claim for VA disability compensation or pension benefits. New and relevant evidence is defined as evidence not available at the time of the previous claim decision, which may change VA's decision regarding a claim.

Veterans may also file a supplemental claim if they would like VA to review their



DSO Pacific Areas

Al Fitchett



Service Officer

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER (DSO)

claim based on new legislation, for example, the newly implemented PACT Act.

If filing a supplemental claim for a newly presumptive condition due to the passage of the PACT Act or similar legislation, submitting new and relevant evidence may not be required but is still highly recommended. Veterans are encouraged to submit or identify medical evidence documenting the diagnosis and severity of the claimed condition and proof of qualifying military service. Otherwise, the Veteran can ask VA to obtain some documentation, including medical records from a VA Medical Center or private insurance provider.

Filing online provides an improved experience

VA gathered valuable feedback from Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs), and VA employees while creating the online application to improve Veterans' digital experience and ensure a smooth, logical and secure process for submitting supplemental claims online.

Filing online reduces the wait time associated with traditional mailed claims since applications are received immediately instead of working with the delay that comes with physically mailed documentation. In addition, records sent through a secure network safeguards Veteran's personal information. Submitting supplemental claims online will help VA quickly deliver the benefits and services Veterans have earned while protecting the security of their confidential information.

To file a supplemental claim online, visit the [File a Supplemental Claim webpage](#) on [VA.gov](#) and complete the form.

Feel free to contact me with your questions and concerns at: dsodpa@vfw.org

Al Fitchett
Department of Pacific Areas
dsodpa@vfwpacific.org



DSO Pacific Areas

Al Fitchett



Service Officer

YOU FOUGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY. NOW JOIN US IN THE FIGHT FOR VETERANS.

We understand the unique bond you share with other veterans of overseas conflicts because we, too, have been there. No matter which conflict called you to service, we invite you to join us as we continue to fight for all that's good FOR VETERANS.



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.



vfw.org/join

BIG BUG SQUEAKS



Big Bug

David Gley



Click each Logo above
for Websites

Fellow Comrades,

(ST) I am preparing my visit to the Philippines where I will meet with Pup Tent 15 in Angeles City and Pup Tent 11 in Subic Bay. I am also going to be heading down to Tacloban for the Leyte Landing ceremony. I look forward to seeing my fellow Comrades and Cooties.

What is a Cootie: First of all, we are VFW members FIRST and ALWAYS; we are the ones that a VFW Post noticed were consistently active in the Post and decided we deserved to be part of the honor degree. The one that regardless of circumstances will drop everything to help a fellow comrade in need.

Our primary mission is to take care of one another and ensure anyone in the hospital does not miss out on that comradery that we value, "Keep 'em Smilin' in Beds of White"; and we have a little fun while we do this. If you want more information on the Cooties, please ask one or you can go to the Grand webpage at

<https://mcpacific.org> or Supreme webpage at <https://www.lotcs.org>.

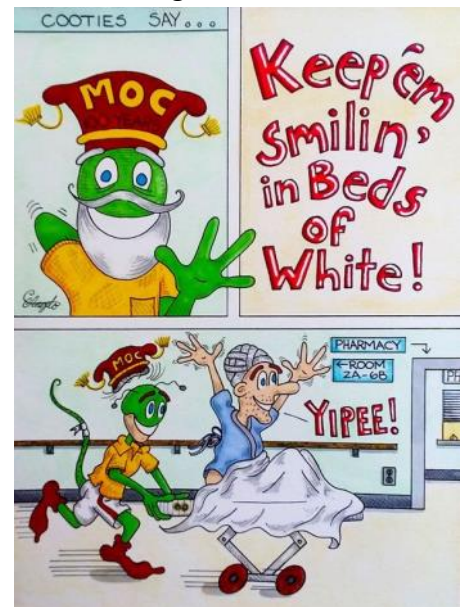
If your Post does not have a Pup Tent and you want to be a Cootie, reach out to a Pup Tent in your area, as you do not need to be a member of a specific Post to be a member of its Pup Tent. Your Post would just need to let the Pup Tent know that you are a hard-working VFW member and deserve to be part of the honor degree.

If your Post does not have a Pup Tent and think you have enough support to create one, please let us know and we will definitely look into it. As Cooties are always looking to "Increase and Multiply". I ask all of you, learn who volunteers in your areas; if they are not VFW members and eligible, recruit them into your Post or Auxiliary. If they continue to produce, vote them into a Pup Tent.

There is also a Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary (M.O.C.A.), if our current or future VFW Auxiliaries want to know more, please contact us. The Supreme M.O.C.A. website is https://www.lotcs.org/MOCA/moca_index.html.

The Cooties do not recruit just to make numbers; we make sure that they are hard workers and supporters of the Post; we are all VFW members first. Let us continue to keep our fellow comrades in our thoughts by performing buddy checks, even if you can only reach them by phone or video calls. Through this we will be "Stronger Together"

David B. Gley, Jr.
Commander
Grand Pup Tent of the Pacific Areas



VOD/PP/TA CHAIRMAN

It was great seeing a lot of you at the convention. I want to congratulate our new Department commander, Alex and the new DPA officers; I stand by to assist you with anything you need as well as the VoD, PP, and TA chairs that need it. I look forward to working with you for my second year; lets see if we can get a first-place winner at National for the Pacific. Please send me the name and email address for your District Chairs

For All-State, one VoD and one PP needs to be submitted or a \$100 donation for each program on the All-American dashboard. For All-American, one VoD, one PP, and one TA (of any category) or a \$100 donation for each program on the All-American dashboard.

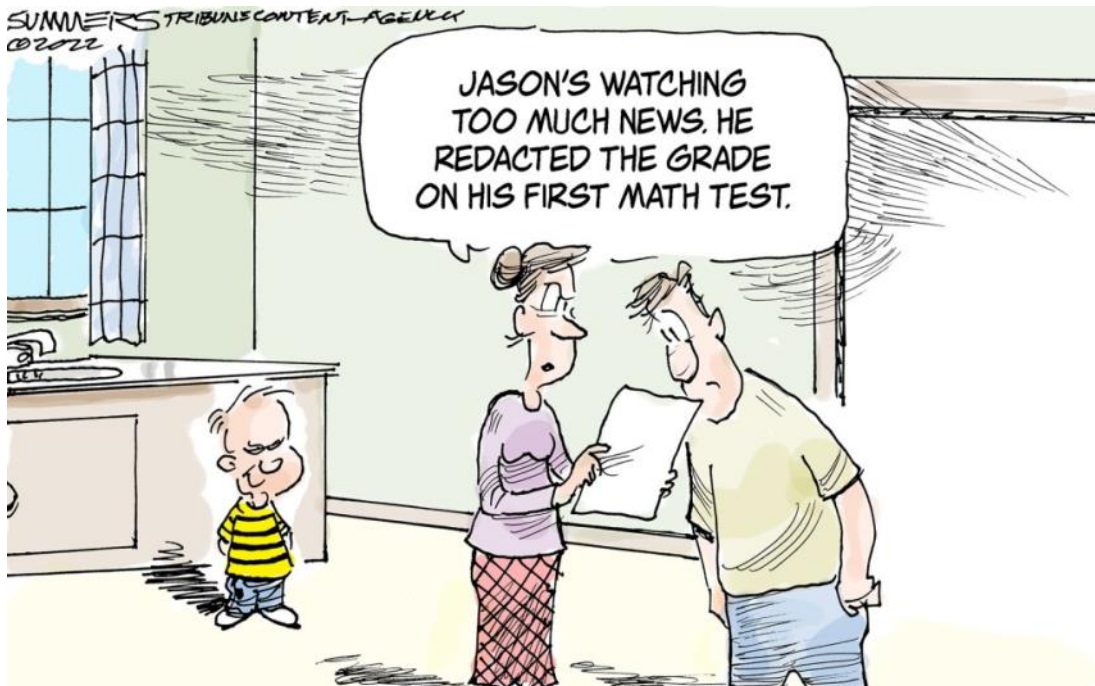
This year's topics are: VoD – "What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?" & PP – "How Are You Inspired by America?". Please get these out to schools, homeschools, and youth centers so that children can start working on them now. I also want to encourage you to work with the schools more to try and get them more involved with the program. One way is to get some teachers to help with the voting as it suggests in the VoD/PP Chairman's guide.

Deadlines: 31 October to the Post and 21 November to me from the Districts. This gives three weeks for Post and District level. Please know the rules on what is allowed in the essays. If there is any doubt if a submission may not be valid, please get with me ASAP so we can check and give a youth plenty of time to fix it before it is too late. The last thing I want to do is invalidate an entry.

Yours in comradeship and service,

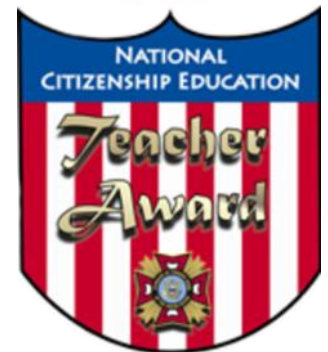


David B. Gley, Jr.
Voice of Democracy / Patriot's Pen / Teacher's Award Chairman
Department of Pacific Areas
vodppdpa@vfwpacific.org



VOD/PP/TA Chairman

David Gley



POW/MIA CHAIRMAN

Never Forget and Never Give up the Search!

The Pacific theater has seen some of the largest Wars in history of the United States. This has resulted in large numbers of MIA's and Presumed KIA's that are still unaccounted for today. The VFW continues to encourage and support the US Government in its efforts to search for and recover the remains of our missing service members.

The number of missing personnel is a staggering 83,000 + and the efforts to locate and identify those personnel must continue until all of our fallen comrades have been brought home to the greatest extent possible.

The primary agency in this effort is the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency located in Hawaii and they have a continued presence in the Pacific Theatre, in countries such as Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, etc.

You can visit their website for more information on their activities and for additional resources: Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA): <https://www.dpaa.mil/>

VFW Department of the Pacific Areas Posts are encouraged to Participate in the following POW/MIA Events.

- National POW/MIA Recognition Day.
- National League of Families' POW/MIA Bracelet Program.
- National POW/MIA Memorial Service.
- National POW/MIA Vigil.
- National POW/MIA Day of Prayer.

We must never lose site of the efforts to continue the search for our missing and fallen comrades.

YIC

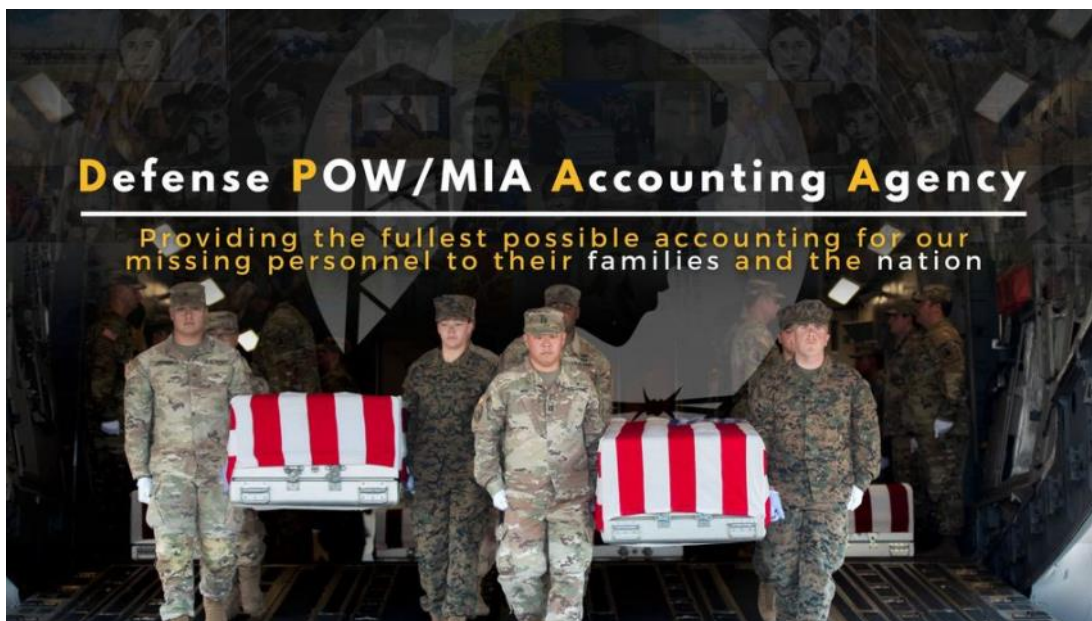
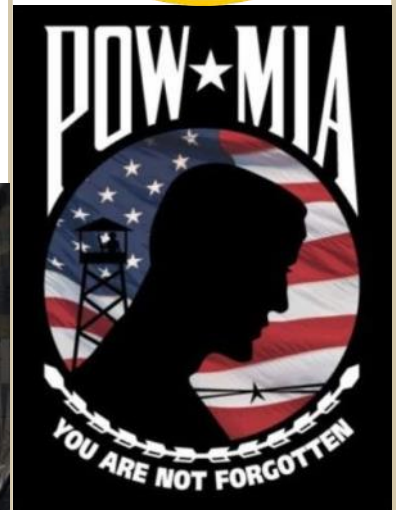
David Ingram
DPA POW/MIA Officer



Department of Pacific Areas

POW/MIA Chairman

David Ingram



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

10 interesting facts about Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt

1. As a child, Roosevelt witnessed the Abraham Lincoln funeral procession. There is a photo of the young Roosevelt perched in a window watching the procession in New York City in April 1865 that surfaced in the 1950s. Young TR and his brother were at his grandfather’s mansion.
2. Theodore Roosevelt had a really, really good memory. Roosevelt claimed he had a photographic memory, but it is a statement that can’t be easily proven today. But biographer and historian Edmund Morris cited several documented cases where Roosevelt was able to recite obscure poetry and other content well over a decade after he read the documents.
3. What’s the deal with how the Roosevelts were related? Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt were fifth cousins. Eleanor Roosevelt was Theodore’s niece. And Uncle Theodore presented the bride at Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt’s wedding.
4. The Republican leaders really didn’t want Roosevelt as President. As a young Bull Moose Republican in politics, TR had angered top GOP honchos by refusing to appoint Republicans to bureaucratic positions. Party bosses Mark Hanna and Thomas Platt were able to “kick Roosevelt upstairs” as the vice presidential nominee in 1900 for the incumbent President, William McKinley. Roosevelt agreed because he was thinking of running for President in 1904. No one thought that Roosevelt would take over for McKinley later in 1901.
5. Roosevelt was the first President to win a Nobel Peace Prize. As President, Roosevelt adopted an aggressive foreign policy, but he also saw America as deserving a role as a global peacemaker. In 1906, he convinced Japan and Russia to attend a peace conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire to end their conflict. TR was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts. Roosevelt also settled a dispute between France and Germany over the division of Morocco.
6. Roosevelt was a prolific writer. Aided by his excellent memory and his always-high energy level, TR wrote about 35 books in his lifetime and an estimated 150,000 letters. And he did write an autobiography!
7. He was also the father of the modern U.S. Navy. To say Roosevelt was obsessed with naval power would be an understatement. As an undergrad at Harvard, Roosevelt’s scholarship on the U.S. Navy during the War of 1812 is still cited today. He also served as the Undersecretary of the Navy as the conflict started with Cuba in 1898, and he sent the American navy on a worldwide tour in 1907 as a show of strength. And then there was his ultimate naval power achievement: the Panama Canal.
8. Roosevelt was a grad college dropout. While Roosevelt graduated from Harvard, he left law school at Columbia without receiving a degree. Roosevelt had become focused on local politics and lost interest in a legal career.
9. Roosevelt was blind in one eye after a boxing injury in the White House. The President continued with his hobby of boxing well into his presidency. He suffered a detached retina in a bout in 1908, and stopped fighting. He switched to jiu-jitsu instead.
10. What is the deal with the Teddy Bear? While on a hunting trip as President, guides in Mississippi had arranged for Roosevelt to shoot an old bear they had tied to a tree. Roosevelt refused to do so, on sporting grounds. (Instead, he had someone else shoot the bear.) The first part of the incident became a newspaper cartoon, which then inspired a shopkeeper to sell stuffed bears, with Roosevelt’s permission.



LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

Comrades,

Do you realize that you can assist the VFW with modifications to our Legislative Bills? These proposed changes, once endorsed, will guarantee that Veterans receive proper care considering the constantly evolving laws. You can do your part by signing up to receive the ACTION CORPS weekly newsletter. Click [HERE](#) to sign up. In addition, be better informed with pending Legislation that the VFW is supporting and working hard to get signed into LAW. By signing up to receive VFW ACTION ALERTS. Click [HERE](#) to sign up to show your support and stand with the VFW National Legislative Service.

Once you sign up to the Action Corps, please be so kind as to and send me an email at legdpa@vfwpacific.org so I can track the members in the DPA.

With the passing of the PACT Act, as a veteran you may have a lot of questions. Click [HERE](#) for PACT Act and Toxic Exposure Information.

Currently on the Floors of the House and the Senate is this little bill. H.R. 1282: Major Richard Star Act

Major Richard Star Act This bill 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.

Explanation:

Category: Key Bills in Congress

To: Amend title 10, United States Code, to expand eligibility to certain military retirees for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation. Read the complete bill and current status [HERE](#).

Read all pending legislation [HERE](#).

Read the current edition of Action Corps Weekly [HERE](#)

Yours in Comradeship,

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



Legislative Chairman

Randell Himes

WOMEN'S VETERAN CHAIRPERSON

Women Veteran's Health and the PACT Act;

By the time this article is published, I sincerely hope that my sister veterans have completed their "intent to file" a claim with the Veterans Affairs (VA); which was extended to 14 Aug 2023 to receive benefits backdated to 10 Aug 2022, when the PACT Act was signed into law. Form: File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors pension and/or DIC (VA Form 21-0966)

If you haven't filed yet, its never too late to file for your benefit claims. File your claims with an accredited Service Officer. The Department of Pacific Areas has a DSO (Department Service Officer) located in Thailand and ADSO's (Assistant Department Service Officer) all over the Pacific rim, who are very knowledgeable and capable to file your claims. Contact your Post Service Officer who can assist you and make contact with an ADSO or to the DSO himself. Don't pay to file your claims. Your hard earned benefits are yours, don't give it to others for their financial gain.

Women Health is uniquely ours as such, the VA has acknowledged this and have established the Center for Women Veterans (CWV) <https://www.va.gov/womenvet/>. Its goal is to provide health care services, benefits and programs to women veterans. In addition, the Center is a proponent for cultural transformation and serves to increase awareness of the need to treat women veterans with respect and dignity.

Furthermore, the VA wants to hear from women veterans and they want to hear your voice. The VA has established the Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) and can be contacted by dialing 1-855-VA-Women (1-855-289-6636) or visiting <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov>. or visit CWV as mentioned above for information on resources, services and benefits that are available to you.

Lastly, Women Veterans not using their earned VA Benefits & Services, the VA would love to hear from you too. Please take the survey, it only takes 5 minutes and is anonymous. <https://survey.voice.va.gov/?cwv-women-veterans>.

As a women veteran, I believe that health is wealth and partnered with the VA; we are armed with information and resources that can only propel us forward to do better and be the best versions of ourselves. Don't delay, file for your benefits claims, we all have earned it.

Janet Alford
Women's Veteran Chairperson
Department of Pacific Areas



Woman's Veteran Chairperson

Janet S. Alford



VA Center
for Women
Veterans



WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE
PACT Act and Women Veterans

VA  U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
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AMERICANISM/LOYALTY DAY CHAIR

Americanism, also referred to as **American patriotism**; however, for many U.S. veterans' organizations, *Americanism* is an ideology, or a belief in devotion, loyalty, or allegiance to the United States of America, or respect for its flag, its traditions, its customs, its culture, its symbols, its institutions, or its form of government. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "Americanism is a question of spirit, conviction, and purpose, not of creed or birthplace."

The meaning of Americanism today, nevertheless, is very different. To the extent that the term is even still used, its meaning has been hijacked by both the Left and the Right. The Left most often identifies Americanism with multiculturalism, relativism, environmentalism, regulation, and welfarism — in other words, with progressivism. The Right typically identifies Americanism with Christianity, school prayer, tradition, family values, and community standards — in other words, with social conservatism.

None of these values are uniquely American. In fact, in one form or another, they all have a distinctly European provenance that is set in direct opposition to the native meaning of Americanism.

So, Americanism ideas can be defined through several areas:

Government – Americanism clearly stresses a collective political identity based on the principles of the Constitution (and our Founding Fathers). These would include freedom, liberty, individualism, human rights, and the rule of law.

Culture – Americanism embraces a collective cultural identity based on the traditions and cultural artifacts of our country, the Flag of our country, apple pie, baseball, and blue jeans.

Symbols – Americanism often attempts to collect a set of common icons to showcase the American identity, which, includes the U.S. Flag, Great Seal, Star-Spangled Banner, Pledge of Allegiance, and the bald eagle.

These identities and icons came into a more realization and reality with September 11 and POW/MIA recognition days.

On September 11, Patriot Day gives all of us time to reflect on the devastating terror attacks that took nearly 3,000 lives. We commemorate those who we lost and give thanks to the brave first responders who put their lives on the line. Please don't forget to take a moment to consider what we stand for as a nation and how we can work together to make the world a better place for all. These are the symbols of Americanism that are constantly displayed around our nation.

This was a terrifying day on September 11, 2001 (also known as nine-eleven). When hijackers flew three planes into iconic buildings: the Pentagon in Washington DC and the Twin Towers of The World Trade Center in New York. While a fourth plane was stopped by the passengers and crashed in a field in Pennsylvania.

The impact of this attack was devastating. Around 3,000 lives were lost between plane passengers, those in the buildings that were struck, and front-line workers trying to save people. It was the biggest act of terrorism ever in the United States. It was a heartbreaking attack, which is why Patriots Day was proclaimed by President George W. Bush and is recognized every year on September 11.

On Patriot Day, U.S. flags are lowered halfway, and there is a country-wide moment of silence at 8:46 a.m. (Eastern Daylight Time), which is when the first plane crashed into one of the Twin Towers. Although the attacks were in the U.S.,



Americanism/Loyalty Day Chair

Randy Riggs

AMERICANISM/LOYALTY DAY CHAIR

Patriot Day is recognized worldwide as the news devastated and impacted people all over.

POW/MIA Day is recognized on the third Friday in September, this is a time to recognize and remember the sacrifices of PRISONERS OF WAR (POW) and service members who are MISSING IN ACTION (MIA).

The POW/MIA flag was created for the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia and is officially recognized by the U.S. Congress in conjunction with the Vietnam War POW/MIA issue, *"as the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation."* National League of Families national coordinator Evelyn Grubb, wife of a POW, oversaw its development and also campaigned to gain its widespread acceptance and use by the U.S. federal government, local governments, and civilian organizations across the United States. The POW/MIA flag was flown over the White House for the first time in September 1982. As the 101st Congress passed the US Public Law 101-355, recognizing the POW/MIA Flag and designating it "as a symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of American still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for those families and our Nation.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) still shows many of our personnel are still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. This organization is responsible for investigating the status of POW/MIA issues. This is a continuous effect to recover our lost comrades.

The National POW/MIA Flag Act ensures that the POW/MIA Flag is displayed whenever the U.S. flag is displayed at certain locations. Those locations include the U.S. Capitol, the White House, the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, every national cemetery, the buildings containing the official offices of the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Veterans Affairs, the office of the Director of the Selective Service System, each major military installation (as designated by the Secretary of Defense), each Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, clinics and Veterans Benefits Administration offices and each United States Postal Service post office. Private organizations such as Veterans Of Foreign Wars also observe the day with events and activities at individual "posts" nationwide.

Randy Riggs
Americanism/Loyalty Day Chairman



Americanism/Loyalty Day Chair

Randy Riggs



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.®

VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.®

Photo by Gregory Smith, The Operations of Department of Defense (DoD)
Visual information does not imply or constitute DoD endorsement.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIVE DATES



Veterans Day, a federal holiday that falls on November 11, is designated as a day to honor the more than 19 million men and women who have served in the U.S. military.

It was first observed on November 11, 1919, as Armistice Day in honor of the first anniversary of the end of World War I, which officially ended on the “eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month” in 1918. In 1926, Congress called for an annual observance of the anniversary and by 1938 it was an official federal holiday. A few decades later, in 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower officially changed the name of the holiday from Armistice Day to Veterans Day, as it is currently known today.*

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day in 2023 will be observed on Thursday, December 7th. This day commemorates the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese Imperial Navy during World War II on December 7, 1941. It is a day to honor and remember the lives lost and the sacrifices made during the attack. Various events and ceremonies are held across the United States to remember this historic event and pay tribute to those who were affected.*

Other Important Dates

- 1st Monday of September - **Labor Day**
- September 14 - **VFW Auxiliary Founded (1914)**
- September 17 - **Constitution and Citizenship Day**
- September 18 - **U.S. Air Force Established (1947)**
- September 29 - **VFW Founded in 1899**
- October 13 - **U.S. Navy Established (1775)**
- 1st Tuesday of November - **Election Day**
- November 10 - **U.S. Marine Corps Established (1775)**
- November 21 - **Grenada Campaign Ended (1983)**
- December 13 - **National Guard Established (1636)**
- December 15 - **Iraq War Ended (2011)**
- December 20 – **U.S. Space Force Established (2019)**
- December 31 - **Official End of WWII (1946); Kosovo Campaign Ended (2013)**

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

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Notice

Districts, to offset the costs of our website and newsletter please find at least one Sponsor of \$100 for a year. Congratulations to District 5 for going above and beyond!!

We ask each District to submit at least one DPA Website Sponsor. Each Sponsor must donate a minimum of \$100. The term is one year and their Logo will be included on our Sponsor Website page and here in our Bi-Monthly newsletter. Contact the Webmaster at webdpa@vfwpacific.org or The Pacific Times Editor at pacifictimes@vfwpacific.org for information on how to submit your Sponsors.