

Volume 7  
Issue 11  
April 2026



**Harvey F.  
Eckhoff  
VFW Post 7674**

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213 Carol Ave NW  
Fort Walton Beach, FL  
32548



2025 - 2026



Post: 829 (98.1%)  
District: 3466 (97.41%)  
Dept.: 52263 (101.28%)



# THE DISPATCH

## POST NEWS AND INFORMATION

John 15:13



“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

Americans across the country will observe Memorial Day on Monday, May 25, 2026, pausing to remember the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces who gave their lives in service to the nation.

Originally known as Decoration Day following the Civil War, Memorial Day has evolved into a national day of remembrance honoring all military personnel who died while serving the United States. The holiday is traditionally observed on the last Monday in May and has been recognized as a federal holiday since 1971. Communities nationwide are expected to hold ceremonies, parades, wreath layings, and moments of silence to honor the fallen. Many Americans will visit cemeteries and memorials, placing flowers and American flags at the graves of veterans. At 3:00 p.m. local time, citizens are encouraged to participate in the National Moment of Remembrance.

Military organizations, veterans groups, and civic leaders continue to emphasize the true meaning of the holiday — remembering sacrifice rather than simply celebrating a long weekend. The red poppy remains an enduring symbol of remembrance, inspired by the World War I poem “In Flanders Fields.”

In addition to local observances, memorial ceremonies will be held at American military cemeteries around the world through the American Battle Monuments Commission, honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom.

While Memorial Day weekend is often considered the unofficial start of summer, many families and veterans organizations remind Americans to reflect on the courage, service, and sacrifice of the nation’s fallen heroes.

“As we enjoy our freedoms, we must never forget those who paid the ultimate price to protect them.”



**Cooties, you all had another lousy month of nothing. But of course we know that it means you all worked your buns off! The hard work and volunteerism of each of you is what contributes to the success of our Pup Tent and our Post. We will be supporting the upcoming events at the Post along with a visit to the Meridian on Memorial Day to share a nice ceremony with the Veterans living their. I also want to commend Cootie Kei and James for keeping up the bi-weekly visits to our Veterans out at the Blake.**

**We still have some third degree work to do at the next scratch and we have been shaking the bushes and barstools for our next victims/candidates to become members of our crummy fraternity. Bring forward these nominations at our next scratch.**

**“keep'em smiling in beds of white!”**

**Kevin Thurman**

**Seam Squirrel**



**What:** The First Annual Armed Forces Day Pancake Breakfast honoring those presently serving, those who have served, and their families.

**Where:** At the Harvey F. Eckhoff VFW Post 7674, 213 Carol Ave NW, FWB (across from Home Depot).

**When:** Saturday, May 16, 2026 11:00.

**Cost:** FREE

Put on by organizations:



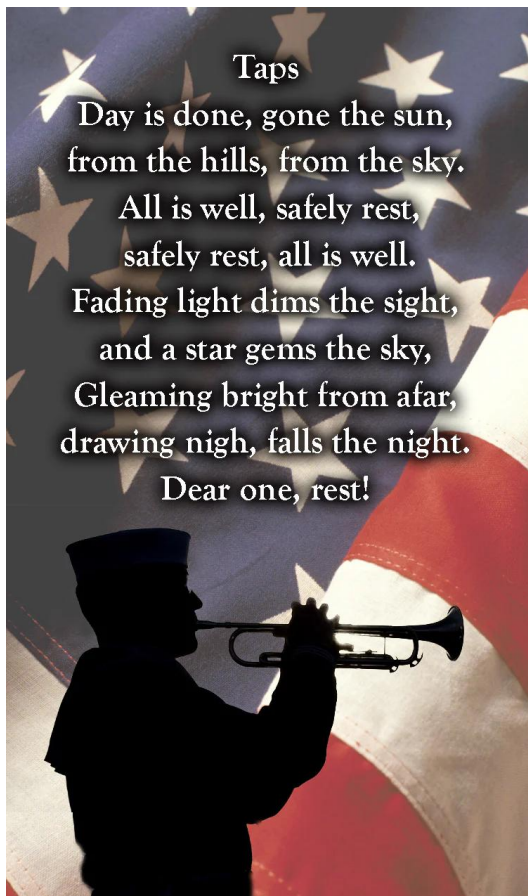
## **BUDWEISER POOL TABLE LIGHT RAFFEL**

**12:00 PM on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May**

**Do not need to be present  
to win**

**See Bartender for Tickets**

**Tickets are:  
\$1:00 a piece  
Or 6 for \$5:00**



## VFW Service Officer – Here to Help Veterans

Did you know our Post has a VFW Service Officer available to assist veterans and their families? The Service Officer provides guidance on VA benefits, disability claims, and other support programs to ensure veterans receive the care and recognition they have earned.

If you or a family member needs assistance, please reach out to our Post. This valuable resource is here to serve those who have served our nation.

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR A NEW SERVICE OFFICER FOR NEXT YEAR. OUR'S HAS MOVED ON. IF YOU THINK IT WOULD BE SOMETHING YOU WOULD ENJOY, PLEASE CONTACT THE COMMANDER.**



## RED HORSE BBQ

**MAY 8<sup>th</sup> AT 11:00**

**Volunteers are needed at 8:30 to help cook over 450 hamburgers and hot dogs for the families of the Red Horse Squadrons on Hurlburt Field Family Day. Sign-ups are in the Post Lobby.**



### Frank "Doc" Goldstein, Post Surgeon ALCOHOL AWARENESS

Your mental health is as important as your physical health. In fact, they affect each other. If you're depressed, anxious, uncertain, etc., the chances are good that you might be physically affected with headaches, stomach ailments, trouble sleeping, and skin issues, just to name a few.

Sometimes what to do or how to think is core to our discontent. When we are not sure if we are on the right course or making the right decisions, our ambiguity can cause us distress.

Sometimes the words of someone else can give us comfort, reinforce our opinions on doing the right thing, or doing the unpopular thing for the right reason. Or listening to someone else may just give us a different perspective.

I'd like to share with you the words of Pastor Martin Niemöller a German imprisoned for seven years for opposing the Hitler regime.

First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

His words are food for thought during tough times. We should never be afraid to state our position or beliefs, it's healthy. Remember our Veterans creed; "Maintain My Physical and Mental Discipline."

### IN-COUNTRY



**AT LEAST THE RED CROSS ASKED  
IF THEY COULD HAVE YOUR BLOOD!**

# MAY 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>31</b> <b>BREAKFAST</b> <b>8 – 11:30 AM</b>					<b>1</b> <b>CATFISH FRY</b> <b>5-7 PM</b> <b>B. T. Turner</b> <b>6:30 PM - ???</b>	<b>2</b> <b>CANTEEN</b> <b>INVENTORY</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> <b>VFW DAY OF</b> <b>SERVICE</b>
<b>3</b> <b>BREAKFAST</b> <b>8 – 11:30 AM</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> <b>5 – 7 PM</b> <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> <b>CINCO DE MAYO</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>BINGO</b> <b>5 - ???? PM</b>	<b>8</b> <b>COUNTRY FRIED STEAK</b> <b>5-7 PM</b> <b>THE “WRECKING CREW”</b> <b>6:30-????</b>	<b>9</b> <b>KATRINA</b> <b>6:30 PM - ????</b>
<b>10</b> <b>BREAKFAST</b> <b>8 – 11:30 AM</b> <b>MOTHER’S DAY</b> <b>(FREE BREAKFAST FOR VFW MOMS)</b>	<b>11</b> <b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> <b>VA CLINIC</b> <b>8 – 10 AM</b> <b>MOC SCRATCH</b> <b>6:01 PM</b>	<b>12</b> <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> <b>5 – 7 PM</b> <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>13</b> <b>HOUSE COMMITTEE</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> <b>OLD TIMERS</b> <b>5:00 - ????</b>	<b>14</b> <b>BINGO</b> <b>5 - ???? PM</b>	<b>15</b> <b>STEAK</b> <b>5-7 PM</b> <b>RANDY GARDNER</b> <b>6:30 - ????</b>	<b>16</b> <b>ARMED FORCES DAY</b> <b>(FREE PANCAKE BREAKFAST FOR ACTIVE, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS)</b>
<b>17</b> <b>BREAKFAST</b> <b>8 – 11:30 AM</b>	<b>18</b> <b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> <b>VA CLINIC</b> <b>8 – 10 AM</b> <b>POST MEETING</b> <b>6:30 PM - ????</b>	<b>19</b> <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> <b>5 – 7 PM</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>BINGO</b> <b>5 - ???? PM</b>	<b>22</b> <b>SPAGHETTI &amp; MEATBALLS</b> <b>5-7 PM</b> <b>BOBBY “D”</b> <b>6:30 - ????</b> <b>POPPY DRIVE</b>	<b>23</b> <b>POPPY DRIVE</b>
<b>24</b> <b>BREAKFAST</b> <b>8 – 11:30 AM</b> <b>BAKE SALE</b> <b>POPPY DRIVE</b>	<b>25</b> <b>MEMORIAL DAY</b> <b>9 AM Maridian</b> <b>10 AM Beal Cemetery</b> <b>1 PM Post (Burgers and Dogs)</b>	<b>26</b> <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> <b>5 – 7 PM</b> <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>BINGO</b> <b>5 - ???? PM</b>	<b>29</b> <b>PORK CHOPS</b> <b>5-7 PM</b> <b>BEACH BAR LOUIE</b> <b>6:30 - ????</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>POOL</b> <b>2 PM</b>	<b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> <b>VA CLINIC</b> <b>8 – 10 AM</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup></b> <b>MONDAY OF EACH MONTH</b> <b>(NO HOLIDAYS)</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b> <b>CRIBBAGE</b> <b>6 PM</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b> <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>DRAWING</b> <b>6 PM</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>MINDFUL YOGA</b> <b>9:30 AM</b>		<b>CANTEEN HOURS</b> <b>M-F 12 -10 PM</b> <b>Sat: 10 AM – 10 PM</b> <b>Sun: 8 AM – 10 PM</b>



## **Commander Thurman Gives His Thoughts About The Post**

**As the month of May is upon us it is time to reflect heavily on our military. It is the month of military appreciation along with a very somber holiday at the end remembering all those that paid the ultimate price for their service.**

**First, I want to congratulate Steve as our new incoming Commander and to Jean as the new incoming President of the Auxiliary. Their leadership is vital to the continued success of our Post along with the teamwork necessary to get the job done. I fully encourage everyone to congratulate them and their teams and to support them in every way that each of you can.**

**It is a very busy month with VFW Day of Service, Red Horse Family Day, Relay for Life Cancer Foundation Poker night, Armed Forces Day pancake feed, Poppy Drive, Memorial Day and installation of officers, as an example of just a few of the happenings from our Post members and volunteers. Please step up and find an event that you would like to support because it will take all of us to be successful.**

**I was hoping to be able to write that we successfully met our membership quota but unfortunately we only picked up another five members or renewals towards our quota so we will not make All American or All State on the first vote. We still have a chance if we make it by June 15 th , so we all need to push hard to get the last 25 to show that we are still the best Post in Florida.**

**Lastly, I want to THANK all of the officers, volunteers and members that supported me over the last 8 years. With out your dedicated TEAMWORK I would not have been able to bring the success to the Post that we have had. I want to also THANK our Auxiliary for stepping up and being such a great part of our TEAM. They were all in for everything that we did and we could not have done it without them. I wish nothing but GREAT SUCCESS for the Post and I will continue to support in many ways.**

**THANKS TO YOU ALL!**

**Kevin Thurman  
Commander**



# VFW AUXILIARY

UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

## Result of Election:

President:	Jean Greive
Sr. Vice:	JoAnn Kradel
Jr. Vice:	Betty Riker
Treasure:	Steve Gouthro
Chaplain:	Debbie Chapman
Conductress:	Alisha "Missy" Tomkins
Guard:	Cynthia Whitley
3 <sup>rd</sup> Yr. Trustee:	Eva Osorio
2 <sup>rd</sup> Yr. Trustee:	Marcia Mito
1 <sup>rd</sup> Yr. Trustee:	Ella Moon

Installation will be held at the May meeting.

FROM THE DESK OF THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT  
SUNSHINETeam Florida Building Bridges For Veterans

May 2026

Issue NO 11

As we finish up our year and elect our officers for the incoming year, these individuals will be instrumental in driving our department's growth. As we grow as a department, we will always remain committed to supporting our Veterans and families, while also working to make the community more aware of the sacrifices our Veteran heroes made for the freedom they enjoy.

As auxiliary members, we possess the power to make a significant impact each day by promoting our mission of patriotism in schools and at community events. These gatherings can enhance our visibility and potentially boost our membership.

Remember, fun is not a distraction; many times, it becomes a multiplier. It becomes an accessory; it often acts as a catalyst for deeper connections and greater engagement. Together, we can transform our collective efforts into meaningful change. Let's embrace this opportunity!

We have a great start to the new year in June; let us continue advancing toward making the lives of our veterans and their families a success.

Michael Yates President