

Volume 7  
Issue 10  
April 2026



**Harvey F.  
Eckhoff  
VFW Post 7674**

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213 Carol Ave NW  
Fort Walton Beach, FL  
32548



2025 - 2026



Post: 824 (97.51%)  
District: 3429 (96.37%)  
Dept.: 50692 (99.84%)



# THE DISPATCH

## POST NEWS AND INFORMATION



### Month of the Military Child

The Month of the Military Child (MOMC) recognizes that military kids serve our country too, as part of a military family ... not just in April, but all year long. These amazing kids face challenges and enjoy triumphs along the way, and while no military child's journey is the same, they each have a through-line that connects them by experience, globally.

Recognize the military children in your life, celebrate their global perspectives, and nurture the connections that help build a strong community.

#### Purple Up Day.

Wear purple on a special day to celebrate military kids! Purple has been chosen to represent all service branches, Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard, and Veterans. It blends each branch's colors: the Air Force, Navy, Space Force, and Coast Guard's blues, the Army's green, and the Marines' red.





Well another lousy month has gone by and yet we continue to accomplish a lot! The Post experienced an invasion by Pup Tent 1 when a couple of their Nits decided to show up and volunteer to work on some Post projects. A huge BOO to them for the lousy work they did! I personally want to THANK them for this kind gesture and completing three projects the Post just never seemed to be able to get to. We held elections at the last scratch and you probably won't recognize much change. We all held a great conversation about keeping Pup Tent 41 viable for the future and every one of us agreed that we enjoy and support keeping this Pup Tent alive! Congratulations to Cootie James for his completion of our Third Degree requirements and we look forward to torturing Cootie Karen at our next scratch.  
 Still "keeping 'em smiling in beds of white!"  
 Kevin Thurman  
 Seam Squirrel

## Final Round Of Nominations And Elections At The April Meeting

- Commander
- Sr-Vice Commander
- Jr-Vice Commander
- Quartermaster
- Trustee
- Service Office



## AUXILIARY ELECTIONS IN APRIL

Need members to step up and run for positions  
To keep the Auxiliary running.



**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 8:00am - 1100.

**Cost:** FREE

Put on by the following 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.**



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

Alcohol consumption, even at modest levels, can lead to health risks and negatively affect an individual's overall well-being, particularly among U.S. veterans. In this essay, we provide an overview of alcohol use among veterans, its consequences, and recommendations for preventing and treating alcohol use disorder (AUD) for veterans. Our essay is intended for the people and entities that are seeking to address and mitigate the harms associated with alcohol use, including federal, state, and local policymakers; organizations that serve veterans, including nonprofit and other veteran-serving organizations; health care providers who interact with veterans; researchers; and veterans.

Alcohol use is a major contributing factor to a myriad of health conditions, including liver and cardiovascular disease, mental health problems, and an increased risk of injury (Fuehrlein et al., 2016), as described in Table 1. The likelihood of adverse health outcomes rises according to both the frequency and quantity of alcohol consumption, and, for some individuals, continued use could develop into AUD—a chronic disorder marked by impaired control over drinking, despite the harmful consequences. AUD is often associated with worsening physical and psychological health, employment. Furthermore, excessive alcohol use is a leading factor associated with increased health care usage and costs (Geiling, Rosen, and Edwards, 2012).



**POST 7674 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR**

**FORT WALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICER  
Kylee Peyton**

### IN-COUNTRY



# APRIL 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 <b>BINGO</b> 5 -???? PM	3 <b>CATFISH FRY</b> 5-7 PM B. T. Turner 6:30 PM -???	4 <b>CANTEEN INVENTORY</b> 8:30 AM
5 <b>BREAKFAST</b> 8 – 11:30 AM	6 <b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> VA CLINIC 7 – 10 AM	7 <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> 5 – 7 PM <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> 6:00 PM	8 <b>OLD TIMERS</b> 5:00 - ????	9 <b>BINGO</b> 5 -???? PM	10 <b>PORK CHOPS</b> 5-7 PM THE “WRECKING CREW” 6:30-????	11
12 <b>BREAKFAST</b> 8 – 11:30 AM	13 <b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> VA CLINIC 7 – 10 AM MOC SCRATCH 6:01 PM	14 <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> 5 – 7 PM <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> 6:00 PM	15 <b>HOUSE COMMITTEE</b> 6:00 PM	16 <b>BINGO</b> 5 -???? PM	17 <b>STEAK</b> 5-7 PM <b>RANDY GARDNER</b> 6:30 - ????	18 <b>B.T. TURNER</b> 6:30-???? <b>DISTRICT 1 MEETING</b> POST 706 10:00 PM
19 <b>BREAKFAST</b> 8 – 11:30 AM	20 <b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> VA CLINIC 7 – 10 AM <b>POST MEETING</b> 6:30 PM - ????	21 <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> 6:00 PM <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> 5 – 7 PM	22	23 <b>BINGO</b> 5 -???? PM	24 <b>Country Fried Steak</b> 5-7 PM <b>BOBBY “D”</b> 6:30 - ????	25
26 <b>BREAKFAST</b> 8 – 11:30 AM <b>BAKE SALE</b>	27	28 <b>WINGS &amp; THINGS</b> 5 – 7 PM <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b>	29	30 <b>BINGO</b> 5 -???? PM		
<b>SUNDAY POOL</b> 2 PM	<b>COFFEE/DONUTS</b> VA CLINIC 7 – 10 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> MONDAY OF EACH MONTH	<b>TUESDAY CRIBBAGE</b> 6 PM	<b>TUESDAY QUEEN OF HEARTS DRAWING</b> 6 PM	<b>THURSDAY MINDFUL YOGA</b> 9:30 AM		<b>CANTEEN HOURS</b> M-F 12 -10 PM Sat: 10 AM – 10 PM Sun: 8 AM – 10 PM



# Commander Thurman Gives His Thoughts About The Post

Spring is here and we are at full speed. The biggest thing we have coming up is the Post elections on Monday, 20 April 2026. Your vote decides the way ahead for the Post. As most of you have heard by now, I will be stepping back after serving as your commander for the past 8 years. The team we built had numerous accomplishments throughout my time and the Post looks better than it ever has. We have put our Post on the national map by making All State for 7 straight years and All American in 6 of those 7 years. I hope to finish off this year with one more sweep of both the awards. Our volunteers have stepped up and made almost everything we do a total success. Poppies, food drives, Veteran visits, youth and teacher awards, weekly meals and community involvement are just a few of the things that we excelled at. Our current Adjutant, Steve Blackwell, has stepped up and accepted nomination for Commander and he has my full support and endorsement. He has been by my side for the past 7 years filling in positions of Adjutant, Quartermaster, Sr. Vice and House Committee Chairman. He truly knows the VFW inside out and will continue to lead our Post to even more success.

Our Auxiliary has also been a HUGE part of the success of our Post and President Betty Riker has done a GREAT job in leading them. Betty has also decided to retire from her position and we will need Auxiliary members to step up and fill all the leadership positions. Failure to fill all the positions will put our Auxiliary in danger of losing their charter and we just can't let that happen. With over 300 Auxiliary members we should easily be able to fill these positions but unfortunately we only seem to get the interest of about 12 members to come out to the meetings and show their support. April 20<sup>th</sup> will be the day that YOU decide if we continue to have an Auxiliary membership or it will be time to fold. As the third largest Post membership in the State of Florida, it would be pretty embarrassing to show that we can't do that, so please step up and make it out for the meeting and elections.

Here are the quick numbers on membership for the VFW. We currently have 824 members out of 845 needed for 100% and short 38 members required for the 102% All State and All American qualifications. There are still 27 members that have yet to renew and will expire by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Another 46 members have let their memberships expire and are no longer in good standing and will be ineligible to vote at the upcoming meeting. A list will be published shortly and all the privileges for those 46 members will be revoked effective immediately. In order for this to happen you will see a lot more of the 100% membership card inspections when you come into the canteen. Your key card IS NOT your membership card! Hopefully by the end of next month we will have the new key card reader installed and then we will go through the process of issuing out new key cards to all Post 7674 VFW and Auxiliary members. These key cards are only for Post members and cannot be issued to anyone from another Post or an "At Large" membership status. Your key card is one of YOUR privileges for being a member of Post 7674.

Lastly, I am putting out a plea for more volunteers. We have a bunch of events ahead and we need your help! VFW Day of Service May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Adopt a Unit Red Horse Home Coming Family Day Bar-b-que May 8<sup>th</sup>, Armed Forces Day Pancake Feed May 16<sup>th</sup>, Poppy Drive/distribution in 3 locations May 22-24<sup>th</sup>, Memorial Day Ceremony at 3 locations and Post remembrance May 25<sup>th</sup>. Each of these listed events will need lots of volunteers in order to make them a success and we are counting on more of you to step up and help us! Sign up sheets are in the lobby so let's fill these sheets up. Thanks for all of your support!

**Kevin Thurman**  
**Commander**

## VFW STATE CONVENTION OVER FLOW HOTEL



**JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup> – 14<sup>TH</sup> 2026**

CASTLE HOTEL, 8602 Universal Blvd, Orlando, FL 32819

For Reservations call 407-996-2787

Reservation link is

<https://app.marriott.com/reslink?id=1773943127649&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

Be sure to mention Veterans of Foreign Wars - State Convention for room rate of \$140.00 plus tax.

Reservation Cut-Off Date: Friday, May 8, 2026.

Check -in: 4:00 p.m.

Check-out: 11:00 a.m.

Parking will be \$30 per day

**STATE CONVENTION  
IS AT THE  
RENAISSANCE ORLANDO  
@ SEAWORLD**