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### **New Commander Takes Office**

Southwick, MA — The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of Massachusetts proudly announces the election of Troy Henke of Southwick, Massachusetts, as its new State Commander for the 2025–2026 term. The election took place during the annual State Convention held in Springfield, Massachusetts — the first time the event has returned to the city in two decades.

Commander Henke, a U.S. Army veteran who served during Operation Iraqi Freedom, brings over a decade of military and veterans service leadership to his new role. A Life Member of VFW Post 872 in Southwick, Henke has served the organization in numerous positions, including Post Commander, District Commander, and most recently, as State Senior Vice Commander.



### **2025-26 OFFICERS**



Commander: Troy Henke Sr. Vice: Craig DeOld Jr. Vice: Patrick Logue QM: Scott Carruthers

**Chaplain: Doug Wood** 

Judge Advocate: Heath Joseph

Surgeon: Joseph Zustra NCM: Keith Jackson

Adjutant: Bill LeBeau

# LETTER FROM OUR COMMANER

This year has definitely started off right, and the summer is the calm before things really start to ratchet up this month if you can believe it!

As I stated when I was first elected as your State Commander back in June, I am very excited to be serving our VFW as the commanding officer for the ensuing year. I have to say this Department is certainly keeping me busy and I'm loving every second of it!

We had an absolutely remarkable State Convention in Springfield from June 6-8. The energy and enthusiasm was palpable and our National Rep., who is now CIC Carol Whitmore was thoroughly impressed with Massachusetts. With the business that was accomplished along with the amazingly well attended banquet, it is obvious that we are going to have one heck of a year! I want to personally thank Districts 7 & 9 for their contributions that made Friday evening's hospitality event during convention so fantastic. Everyone, including me, was both surprised and impressed.



Not long after the conclusion of our State Convention, we held our National Convention in Columbus, OH from August 9-13. To say this convention was historic, hardly captures the magnitude of what transpired. It is clear now to even the most passive observer that the leadership and direction of the VFW is now firmly in the hands of the GWOT Veterans. The engagement on several resolution and bylaw amendments were so numerous it would take me an entire article just to list them all! Three of the most noteworthy in my opinion are listed here:

- 1. The establishment of the VFW Riders as a separate entity within the organization, identical to how the Cooties function. Our PSC, Russell Jobe is the Vice-Chairman of the Committee that will be tasked with establishing this.
- 2. The defeat of a bylaw amendment by roll call vote, that would have barred Past CIC's from accepting a paid staff position within the VFW for five years after leaving office.
- 3. A Resolution was passed calling on Congress and the DOD to repatriate our nation's first KIA's on foreign soil; 13 Marines killed during the second Battle of Tripoli Harbor in 1804 and who have been interred in small, protestant cemetery in Tripoli, Libya ever since.

And that was just some of what we accomplished on only the second day of business.

That Sunday evening Massachusetts was a part of the "Big East Blast" which replaced the traditional hospitality suites. It was a cooperative effort with all of the Departments in the Eastern Conference coming together to throw arguably the biggest party of the entire convention at a local Post. It truly was a blast and it will be how we conduct hospitality going forward.

### CONTINUE

The most astounding aspect of our National Convention took place on the last day, when for the first time since 1996 we had a contested election for Senior Vice-Commander-in-Chief. The results were a victory for the challenger, PSC Cory Geisler of Wisconsin over the incumbent, Timothy Peters of Montana. This vote played out in the purest sense following the bylaws; ensuring the proper execution of how a contested election is to be conducted. The victor was from a different conference, so the agreed upon rotation was disrupted for the first time since its inception. As such, the conference system is in need of reform and possible formalization within our bylaws, and we will be discussing this in depth during the Eastern Conference from October 24-26 in Wilmington, Delaware.

This year the Department has begun tracking submissions for all Post and District incorporations and 990's. Incorporation Annual Reports are due every November 1 and your officers must be updated along with the nominal fee of \$18 paid to the Secretary of State's office for the Commonwealth. Should you have any questions about how to file your annual report online or if you need to register a new incorporation with the State, please consult your District Commanders as they have the tools to assist you in completing the task. Once you have filed your annual report, you must forward a copy of your receipt to the Department HQ in the same manner that you submit your quarterly reports. Unfortunately, if your Post has not shown proof of incorporation to the office by December 1, we will be taking steps to ensure that your Post is in compliance with this very important requirement.

Our CIC, Carol Whitmore has stated that the VFW was founded on advocacy and that she wants to see us really make that a central focus this year. To that end, I have opted not to fundraise for my special project and instead, I am requiring each Post to advocate for something Veteran related in the community and/or with their legislators. We will be having State level legislative priorities this year and we will be disseminating them in the coming weeks. This will provide a great opportunity to cultivate relationships with your local leaders while assisting our State Legislative Chairman, PSC Doug Wood in his work on Beacon Hill.

Finally, as the summer travel season is winding down our programs are winding up! I want to encourage each of you to help your Posts participate in each of them; ie. youth scholarships, First Responders, Scout of the Year, Patriotic Art (which is an Auxiliary Program). Participate and make a big deal out of recognizing your winners in how you present them with their awards. Utilize the news media and social media to your full advantage!

We're off to an amazing start. Keep recruiting those new members and I'm sure we'll leave this year's standard of 101% in the dust!

STATE COMMANDER



# FROM THE AUXILIARY **PRESIDENT**

hank you, VFW Leadership, for allowing me to address the Comrades.

First, I would like to thank you for supporting all of us sisters, brothers, wives, husbands, mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, grandchildren, grandmothers, and grandfathers who are here because of your sacrifices and service.

Next, as I said to the Auxiliary, please don't be afraid to reach out to the VFW and work together. We are here to help. We are not here to get into VFW business, we are not here to be doormats, either. We are here to be partners.

We were here when you are serving the Country, and we are here when you come home. Let us work together and be one family as it should be.

Not every time is it 50/50 and it isn't always 70/30 there are times we need to adjust and we all will. If we don't reach out and work together, we won't be able to survive as an organization. Let's face it, our organization just like many others is getting smaller, so we all need to work together.

For every one of you, there may be 12 of us so please help us to get our membership up so that we can help you fight the legislative battles and also help in other ways such as greeting soldiers coming home and Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen Contests, Poppy Drives, and Hospital Visits. We can even help with those All-American requirements just as you can help us with our Auxiliary of the Year requirements.

Finally, to VFW Leadership, thank you for working with the Auxiliary Leadership this year and every year to make this Auxiliary a partnership. We look forward to another wonderful year in Massachusetts!

DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE PRESIDENT



The theme is Bridge the Gap for our Veterans and Families Representing how the VFW and Auxiliary can fill the gaps between the services and Service members/families by using our relief funds, the National Home, unmet needs, continuing our legislative fights, through scholarships, and other programs. By using these methods and trying to bring the services to the Veterans and their families we are trying to bridge the gaps in care.



### From the Desk of the State Quartermaster

#### Comrades:

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and recharged and are ready to have a great 2025-26 year!

June quarterly audits are past due at this point and bonds were due on 8/31. Make sure your post is compliant in these areas as being delinquent puts your post in jeopardy.

The half-off life membership special is still ongoing. There are no prerequisites, new or existing members are eligible. New members DO NOT need to first become an annual member. They can immediately join as a life member.

November is the month with Veteran's Day. If you're planning a Poppy Drive for Veteran's Day please get your order in ASAP.

In the coming months we're going to be putting out info on one or two banquets. The Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen banquet in late January and potentially a Commander-in-Chief's Banquet in early March (I say potentially because while traditionally the Chief visits Massachusetts each year there's a process for this that we're in the middle of). My main point here is PLEASE don't wait until the absolute last minute to order your tickets. It's not fair to the hotel/caterer and it's not fair to the office staff. We put the information out at least a month in advance, if not longer. We're going to start holding firm to the deadlines, so PLEASE get your orders in before the deadline.

State Convention this past June (and the next two Junes) was held in Springfield, MA at the Sheraton. We had a great bbq dinner Friday night and a delicious dinner at the Award's Banquet on Saturday night. We solicited feedback from the members asking what they liked and what they didn't. We also asked those who didn't come, why not and if there's anything we could do to get them to come. If you'd like to share your thoughts please email me at stateqm@vfwma.org as I'd love to hear from you. We're hoping to see more members at the business sessions and the evening festivities.

In closing, please continue to do the great things you do for your communities and your veterans every day, but don't let the administrative stuff fall through the cracks. Quarterly audits, bonds, inspections, and this year 990s and annual reports all need to be submitted to HQ by emailing the adjutant and cc'ing me. Let me know if you need any assistance.

Frnest "Scott" Carruthers Ir

## DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT



From the Adjutant's Desk,

Wow, that was a quick Summer. September means back to school and back to work. It also means it's time to roll up our sleeves and get our posts up to date. Each post should have turned in the June quarterly report by now and all posts should be bonded. The deadline was August 31st. Remember, we need a copy of the bond even if it is through a third party or for multiple years. Post inspections should be happening starting now. Remember, the inspection is a report. It should only take about 20 minutes to get done. It is not the Inspector's duty to fix anything. They are just responsible for making out the report. It is up to the Posts to be prepared. If you're not sure if your post is current, ask your post officers, district commanders or reach out to me. As always, items can be submitted electronically by email or text, or they can even still be mailed in. Please note, if you do send things by mail, everything is to be sent into the Boston office, no matter who the end recipient is. This includes Trustee reports, bond applications, correspondence, complaints, expense vouchers, life memberships applications using the Department incentive, just to name a few.

Bill LeBeau Department Adjutant

Starting on September 20th, the Department will be hosting OTI training in person. The first one will be held at the Forest Park VFW Post in Springfield starting at 9:00am. Please see the Department Calendar for more information. There are too many posts missing District meetings and training. It is important that all posts participate in the things that makes them a VFW post. It is not fair to all the members of a post that does not attend. The organization is growing again and there are a lot of programs and initiatives geared toward our younger Veterans. If a post does not attend, they are missing out. Let's encourage all of our posts to take care of the business of running posts and to participate in meetings and training sessions. Here's to another successful upcoming year.

### SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

Greetings, Comrades!

It is with much humility that I have the great honor of serving as your State Senior Vice Commander, 2025-2026! As we just finished an incredible year with Commander Jody Freitas, we are spring boarding in to an even more exciting and purposeful year with our new State Commander Troy Henke! Let's keep up the momentum!!

How can we do this, you may ask... Quite simply, we need to be the leaders in our communities championing Veteran issues, patriotic events and celebrations, and providing service and support to all Veterans. Your advocacy with your Town Meetings, Town and City Councils, and our state and federal legislators are key! Let them know, as often as you can, what our views are on the issues of the day that effect Veterans and our military and their families. We are coming into the 250th year of our Nation's Independence and many towns and cities are holding commemorative celebrations of key events this year. Make sure that our Posts are engaged at every level to assist in these celebrations.

Please ensure that our Posts are engaging with the communities for maximum participation in our Programs! Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen are sharing the same topic this year, "How Are You showing Patriotism and Support for our Country?" This thought provoking topic will surely bring in some outstanding entries for both levels!! I can't wait to see and hear this year's National winners from the Department of Massachusetts!! The outstanding educators that have developed our youth are also deserving of our recognition through the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship education Teacher Awards! Look to the teachers of our children and grandchildren for some outstanding candidates for this prestigious award! Don't forget the Scouts! The John Larney Scout of the Year Award is there for our aspiring leaders from the Scouting world! These future leaders have worked hard for their achievements and have done great work deserving of this recognition. Last, but definitely not least, are the Public Safety Awards for our Police, Fire, EMS, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, and Telecommunicators of the Year! These dedicated Civil servants risk their lives daily so that we may live a peaceful existence. We all know these dedicated professionals that live among us. Please participate in these programs at your Posts!!

The one topic that I haven't covered yet has been Membership. Membership is the physical lifeblood of our great organization. Without our Members, we are nothing. By being active in our communities in the above mentioned programs, our membership will grow because other Veterans will want to be one of us, doing the great work in our communities! Finding new members can be a daunting task, but we all know that we can "sniff" each other out. Look for the license plates, hats, and other clothing items that scream "I AM A VETERAN!" Talk to them! You'd be amazed that you will find someone that you served in the same area at a different time, or even the SAME time! Invite them down to your Post and welcome them in to our noble organization. Be the leaders! Be out front and center in our communities! Thank you for your continued service to our great nation! You do make a difference and I truly appreciate you all!

MASSACHUSETTS

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS

Yours in Comradeship,

Craig L. DeOld

## JR VICE COMMANDER



Greetings Comrades,

I am incredibly honored and humbled to have been elected as your Junior Vice Commander for 2025-2026. Thank you for your support, your confidence, and for everything you do every day for our veterans, our communities, and our great organization.

I am committed to the success of our VFW and look forward to collaborating with Commander Troy Henke to ensure Massachusetts has a momentous year!

As I step into this role, I am also proud to serve as the Department Chairperson for the VFW National Home and the Commanders Special Project. These are not just titles, they are opportunities. Opportunities to connect with each of you, support your Post and Districts, by promoting outreach to your local community veterans and aiding our fellow comrades.

You will see me on the road, visiting Post, attending events, and listening to your challenges and to the success that you have obtained. My commitment to you is straightforward, listen, provide help however I can and escalate concerns, so every Post in Massachusetts not only survives, but thrives.

From promoting the incredible community service work you do, helping the VFW National Home through donations and the Commander Special Project of outreach to local veterans and local veteran causes, we will promote the VFW as the organization that truly does more for veterans. I am ready to get to work, and I am excited to serve you!

Tatrick Jogue

STATE JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER PATRICK LOGUE

## STATE SURGEON

### **GREETINGS COMRADES,**

I am honored to have been elected as State Surgeon for the upcoming year. Additionally, I have been appointed State Chief of Staff by the State Commander, and I look forward

to fulfilling the responsibilities these positions entail. As State Surgeon, I will focus on three primary objectives during my tenure, guided by VFW National Health Care Priorities. I believe these objectives will have the greatest impact on our state's Veterans. Our population is multi-generational, and aside from a few larger population centers, our state is rural. Given these factors, I have selected three objectives that best address the unique needs of our diverse and largely rural Veteran community.

### **Comprehensive Mental Health Services**

Addressing mental health needs remains a critical priority, as numerous veterans continue to experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and an elevated risk of suicide. The VFW is dedicated to reducing the stigma associated with seeking mental health care and advocates for the following initiatives:

- Expanding access to counseling, therapy, and crisis intervention services—both in-person and via telehealth platforms.
- Increasing funding for evidence-based treatment and research related to mental health issues.
- Implementing suicide prevention strategies tailored to veterans, including outreach and peer-to-peer support programs.
- Integrating routine mental health screenings into standard VA care visits.
- Enhancing care for survivors of military sexual trauma through specialized resources and support groups.

#### Addressing Toxic Exposure and Service-Related Illnesses

Many veterans have experienced exposure to hazardous substances during their service, such as Agent Orange, burn pits, and contaminated water sources. The VFW strongly supports recognizing these risks and ensuring that affected veterans obtain appropriate healthcare and disability compensation. Our current priorities include:

- Ensuring full implementation of the PACT Act to extend toxic exposure presumptions to all impacted veterans.
- Eliminating administrative barriers to benefits and care for service-connected illnesses.
- · Supporting research into the long-term health effects of toxic exposures.
- · Conducting public education campaigns to help veterans recognize and report exposure-related conditions.

#### **Rural and Underserved Populations**

Geographic challenges can limit access to timely healthcare for veterans residing in rural and remote communities. The VFW continues to advocate for:

- Expanding mobile clinics and telehealth options to better serve these areas.
- Enhancing transportation support for veterans requiring travel to medical appointments.
- Providing incentives for healthcare providers to practice in VA shortage areas and underserved regions.
- · Improving broadband infrastructure to facilitate telemedicine in rural homes.

State Surgeon/COS VFW Massachusetts

### NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER



Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Massachusetts,

I am deeply honored and humbled to have been elected as your VFW National Councilmember. Thank you for placing your trust and confidence in me—this is a responsibility I do not take lightly.

As your National Council Member, I pledge to serve with unwavering integrity, transparency, and dedication. I will advocate for the values and mission of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, ensuring that the voices of our Massachusetts Membership is heard and respected at the national level.

Together, we will continue to uphold the proud legacy of service, camaraderie, and leadership that defines our department. I look forward to working alongside each of you to advance our shared goals and strengthen the VFW for generations to come.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with your thoughts, concerns, or ideas. I am here to serve you—and together, we will make a lasting impact.

With sincere gratitude,

Keith Jackson,

VFW National Councilmember

Keith Jackson

kjackson@vfwma.org

# HISTORIC GATHERING OF VETERANS AND VISIONARIES

Story by Keith Jackson, National Council Membe

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) National Convention is the organization's premier annual event, drawing thousands of delegates from across the country. It serves as a powerful platform to elect national leadership, set legislative priorities, honor exceptional service, strengthen bonds among veterans and Auxiliary members, and engage with sponsors, exhibitors, and military influencers. The 126th VFW National Convention was held from August 9 - 13, 2025 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH.

This year's convention was especially momentous, as Carol Whitmore was elected the VFW's 117th Commander-in-Chief, the first woman and the first Iowan to hold this prestigious position. Her inspiring remarks highlighted themes of unity, resilience, and the evolving role of veterans in community leadership.

The Newly Elected and Appointed Leadership

- Cory L. Geisler Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief
- Glenn R. Umberger Jr. Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief
- Dan West Reappointed Adjutant General
- Marc Garduno Re-elected Quartermaster General
- Darren Atkins Chaplain
- Ron Rusakiewicz Judge Advocate General
- Douglas Welch Surgeon General
- Kevin Jones Chief of Staff
- Chris Haynes Inspector General
- Brian Willette Sergeant-at-Arms

We had the pleasure of hearing from a lineup of high-profile leaders and influencers, including:

- VA Secretary Doug Collins
- Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther
- Deputy Minister Wu, Chih-Yang Taiwanese Veterans Affairs Council
- Medal of Honor recipient James McCloughan
- Executives from USAA, Oracle Health, Twisted X, and many more

With over 10,000 VFW and Auxiliary members in attendance, the event showcased strong engagement and organizational vitality. The city of Columbus, Ohio proved to be an exceptional host, offering top-tier facilities and accessibility that enhanced the overall experience.

The 126th VFW National Convention was a landmark event—defined by historic leadership, vibrant participation, and forward-thinking initiatives. It reaffirmed the VFW's unwavering commitment to advocacy, service, and unity among veterans nationwide.

"No One Does More for Veterans" than the VFW

# History in the Making

The Iowa native is the first woman elected to lead the 125-year-old organization



COLUMBUS, Ohio — Carol Whitmore of Des Moines, Iowa, was elected today as the new national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), a congressionally chartered veterans service organization comprised of approximately 1 million eligible combat veterans and military service members from all six branches of the armed forces.

"Standing here today, surrounded by such incredible people — fellow veterans, families and friends — I am filled with a deep sense of pride and humility," said Whitmore during her acceptance speech. "This is not just a recognition of me, but of all the men and women who have served in our armed forces."

VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore, 2025-2026Whitmore's election as the VFW's 117th commander-in-chief occurred at the conclusion of the organization's 126th National Convention in Columbus, Ohio. More than 10,000 members of the VFW and its Auxiliary converged on the city to conduct the business of the organization, recognize individuals and organizations for excellence and to elect new leadership for the 2025 – 2026 year.



Whitmore is the first woman elected to lead the more than 125-year-old organization. She delivered remarks to those attending in person at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and watching via livestreaming video.

"When I think back on my journey, I am sure it was just like many others — my reality is not necessarily the VFW reality," said Whitmore. "But I was driven by a sense of duty, a desire to serve something greater than myself. And little did I know that decision would shape me in ways I could never have imagined."

Enlisting in the Women's Army Corps in 1977, Carol's 36-year military career was marked by significant milestones, from integrating with men into the regular Army to becoming an Army nurse and later serving as a first sergeant for her unit while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. It was there that she earned her VFW eligibility. In recognition of her service, she received the Legion of Merit Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal (six), Army Achievement Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (two), National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Non-Commissioned Professional Development Ribbon (three), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon (three), Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device and the Combat Action Badge.

"As we look to the future, I believe that the strength of our veteran community is our greatest asset. We have so much to offer," said Whitmore. "We have lived through adversity, we have faced challenges that many can't even imagine and we've come out on the other side stronger. It's because of that strength that we are still serving our communities and our nation."

She joined the VFW in 2012 at Post 9127 in Des Moines, Iowa, where she maintains her Gold Legacy Life membership. She has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with her election as the VFW Department of Iowa Commander from 2018 to 2019, in which she achieved All-American status. On the national level, she served on the Legislative Committee, the General Resolutions Committee and on the National Council of Administration from 2019 to 2023. In 2022, she was elected as designee for National VFW Commander-in-Chief for the year 2025, becoming the first woman and first Iowan to hold the position. She is also a life member of the Military Order of the Cootie, the VFW National Home, and the American Legion and its Auxiliary.

During the speech, Whitmore emphasized legislative advocacy as a priority for her year, with a focus on fighting to get Congress to grant concurrent receipt for select combat-injured veterans through the Major Richard Star Act.

"Through advocacy, our legislative efforts need to be resolute," said Whitmore. "The [Major] Richard Star Act must pass this year. This effort was started in 2004, and the bill has repeatedly and shamelessly been voted down. Let's get this done already. Honor the Contract!"

Whitmore also spoke passionately about the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) mission and the key diplomatic role the VFW played in Southeast Asia during the early 1990s.

(ARTICLE PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2025 AT www.vfw.org)

Whitmore's Warriors Class of 2025-2026 Project

LET'S DO MORE
STOCK THE STORE





### Whitmore / Callihan 2025 / 2026

Store Equipment (Refrigerators, freezers, etc and Food)

Consists of purchasing equipment for the retail section including coolers and freezers for fresh and frozen food, and beverages, dry goods and other sundries that are deemed most useful to residents. This fundraiser will also purchase an honor system point of sale program that allows residents to enter the store with a swipe card, pick out items and pay for them with a credit or debit card both during and after business hours.



# **MEMBERSHIP**

As we begin the membership year in earnest, we currently stand at 78.16% with the standard this year being 101% for All-American and 100% + 1 for All-State.

Membership happens one new member at a time that you excite about joining your Post. To that end, it must be understood that Posts ultimately own membership as prospective members join a Post, not a District or even a Department.

Every Post has unique opportunities to recruit in their communities and it is imperative that you take advantage of them. If each active member recruits just one new member per year, that will put us way ahead.

We also have some exciting initiatives this year in our efforts to try and stand up three new Posts. Two within the City of Boston and one in western Worcester County. This will be a remarkable achievement if we're able to accomplish this lofty task and it will be a much needed boost to our overall force within the Department. Finally, your lapsed members are a great opportunity to re-engage and hopefully convince them to take advantage of the half-off life membership program that we are offering again this year while funds last. Both existing and new members can take advantage of this, and your District Commanders have this year's application. Many Posts throughout the State further incentivize this effort by paying half of the half, where the member only pays a quarter of the cost. It has never been more affordable to become a life member of our organization.

I am very much looking forward to recognizing your recruiting efforts as the year progresses and I thank you for your continuing efforts to ensure our vitality.

Please contact your District Commander for a copy of this year's State and National Membership Program.

Troy W. Henke, State Commander VFW MA. 2025-2026





NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS



# Life Membership Special!



Convert your annual membership to life today and we will cover half (1/2) the cost

More Info: www.vfwma.org

Limited life conversion grant funds available, so act now!

# Legislative Priority Goals



### **2025 PRIORITY GOALS**

#### Budget

To fully fund relevant programs for veterans, service members, and their families, Congress must:

- Ensure sufficient, timely appropriations and proper budget oversight for VA.
- Authorize VA to receive reimbursements from TRICARE and Medicare.
- Never reduce one veteran's benefits to pay for another.
- Modernize and reform VA and DOD programs that do not meet the needs of service members, veterans, and families.

#### **Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs**

To ensure veterans and their survivors have timely access to earned benefits, Congress and VA must:

- Crack down on unaccredited claims consultants known as Claim Sharks.
- Study all toxic and environmental exposures, and implement programs to ensure health care and benefits are provided to all exposed service members and veterans.
- Properly oversee and update the modernized appeals process, digital claims processing, and antiquated examination process.
- Increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, burial allowances, and other benefits for survivors.
- Improve the accuracy of disability compensation claims related to military sexual trauma.
- Ensure that earned VA benefits are never unjustly reduced.

#### **Education, Employment, and Transition Assistance**

To ensure veterans succeed after leaving military service, Congress, VA, DOD, and DOL must:

- Improve education benefits through modernized online student housing allowances, child care stipends, parity for Guard and Reserve members, and elimination of delimiting dates.
- Enhance outreach and counseling to veterans eligible for the Veteran Readiness and Employment program.
- Ensure parity of VA and DOD education programs with other federal programs.
- Expand small business, hiring preference, tax incentives, and entrepreneurship resources for veterans and military spouses.
- Increase funding for HUD-VASH vouchers, grant and per diem payments, and pilot programs to combat veteran homelessness.
- Conduct oversight of VA's Transition
   Assistance Program to ensure compliance with the law, and require the inclusion of accredited claims representatives.
- Eliminate red tape preventing effective use of education and employment benefits.

#### **Health Care**

To ensure service members and veterans receive timely access to high-quality health care without increasing cost shares, Congress, VA, and DOD must:

- Eliminate service member and veteran suicide.
- Reform the dysfunctional community care program at VA.
- Strengthen care and research for mental health and traumatic brain injuries.
- Research the efficacy of plant-based alternative therapies for PTSD.
- Improve oversight of Vet Centers to ensure adequate staffing, resources, and funding.
- Enhance programs and services for women and underserved veterans.
- · Preserve the integrity of TRICARE.
- Properly implement VA and DOD health IT systems.

- Expand nursing home eligibility and longterm care options.
- Modernize care for veterans outside of the United States.

#### **Military Readiness**

To maintain a strong and ready all-volunteer force capable of protecting American interests, Congress and DOD must:

- Enhance quality of life and health care programs that allow service members to focus on the mission.
- Ensure equity of benefits for Reserve Component service members.
- End the military retirement pay and VA disability compensation offset.
- Provide benefits enrollment for all transitioning service members.
- Eliminate sexual assault and harassment from the military.
- Increase military base pay comparability with private sector wages.
- Ensure that military housing and work spaces are safe and modern.
- · Eliminate food insecurity in the military.

#### National Security, Foreign Affairs, and POW/MIA

To fully support the all-volunteer force, protect our nation's citizens, and defend American interests around the world, Congress and DOD must:

- Ensure DPAA is fully funded to perform its personnel recovery mission.
- Deter threats to our national security by supporting our allies in Ukraine, Israel, Korea, and Taiwan.
- Ensure all service members who served in harm's way, to include foreign nationals, translators, and allies receive the recognition, care, and benefits they may have earned.

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.



# Community Service



Community Service reports are required in order to achieve All-American status, and these must be submitted every quarter through OMS. The Department no longer collects reports and submits them, we instead review your submissions and authorize their validity to National.

Post and District Commanders, Vice-Commanders, Quartermasters, and Adjutants can all submit reports through OMS for their respective elements. One person should be assigned to compile and submit these reports as necessary to ensure that there is no lapse.





Each and every one of you does fantistic work to further the mission of the VFW, and you should be getting credit for it.

Finally, the Day of Service requirement for All-American must be registered through vfw.org as well, and is only applicable during the month of May. We will have zoom trainings by our State Adjutant in the very near future on how to submit these reports, so please take advantage of them. Generally, these trainings are offered on Tuesday evenings but check in to ensure that there is indeed a training as there are times when scheduling conflicts do not permit this.

Keep making Massachusetts shine!

Troy W. Henke, State Commander VFW MA. 2025-2026

# Vietnam Veteran Ron Cabral, 81, Graduates from Bristol Community College: A Testament to Lifelong Learning and Veteran Resilience

By Dennis Cosmo

In a moment that inspired an entire community, 81-year-old Vietnam Veteran and Purple Heart recipient Ron Cabral walked across the stage at Bristol Community College's 58th Commencement Ceremony on May 17, 2025, earning his Associate in Arts in General Studies [1]. His achievement is more than personal—it's a powerful testament to the enduring spirit of Vietnam Veterans and the transformative power of education at any age.

Ron's journey back to the classroom after more than five decades exemplifies the courage and determination that defined his military service. His graduation was not just a milestone—it was a celebration of perseverance, purpose, and the belief that it's never too late to pursue your dreams.

His success was made possible in part by the MassEducate program, a groundbreaking initiative in Massachusetts that provides free tuition and fees for all eligible community college students, regardless of age or income [2]. Adult learners over 25 who have not earned a bachelor's degree can now attend any of the state's 15 public community colleges tuition-free, with additional allowances for books and supplies.

Ron's story also highlights the vital role of veteran support networks. His accomplishment was supported by a strong partnership between **Bristol's Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter**, **American Legion Post 303**, and **VFW Post 2045** in Swansea, MA. The SVA chapter at Bristol, led by nationally recognized advisor Dennis Cosmo, fosters a vibrant community of military-connected students and alumni, promoting academic success, leadership, and camaraderie [3].

Research shows that elder veterans returning to campus are more engaged, which enhances neural plasticity and contributes to a better quality of life. Ron's achievement is a shining example of this phenomenon — his intellectual curiosity and commitment to growth have not only enriched his own life but also inspired others.

As Ron crossed the stage to receive his degree, he carried with him the legacy of Vietnam Veterans and the promise of lifelong learning. His story reminds us that education is not bound by age, and that veterans continue to serve their communities in powerful ways long after their military service ends.

Watch Ron's inspiring story here: Ron Cabral Graduation video on Bristol's YouTube channel.

Dennis Cosmo is an Army Ranger with two deployments to Iraq. He is currently the Director of the Veterans Center at Bristol Community College and was the 2023 SVA Chapter Advisor of the Year. He is a member of American Legion Post 303 in Swansea, MA and VFW Massachusetts member-at-large.







Left to Right: Bristol President Sedgwick Harris, Ed.D. and Vietnam Veteran Ron Cabral, Bristol Class of 2025.



Left to Right: Bristol Veteran Max Poole (Legion Post 464) and Vietnam Veteran Ron Cabral. Both Max and Ron crossed the stage at Bristol's 58th Commencement as new graduates and alumni.



Left to Right: Bristol Academic Advisor John Previte, MBA and Vietnam Veteran Ron Cabral, Bristol Class of 2025. Seen with graduation mortarboard cap with 9th Infantry Regiment crest and 25th Infantry Division Combat Service Identification Badge with CIB.

# Bristol Community College Selected to Host Veterans Day 2025 Celebration

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Day National Committee (VDNC) has selected **Bristol Community College** as the official regional host site for **Veterans Day 2025**, a prestigious honor that recognizes the college's deep commitment to veterans and community engagement. Bristol's Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter was recognized as a **2024 SVA Chapter of the Year finalist**—a monumental achievement for a small community college. This national recognition reflects the chapter's outstanding leadership, advocacy, and support for student veterans on campus and beyond.

This year's celebration will bring together the entire **Southcoast Massachusetts veterans community** to honor the men and women who have courageously defended the Constitution and the citizens of the United States. Veterans, families, and supporters are invited to gather at Bristol for a day of reflection, pride, and fellowship. The year **2025** marks a powerful convergence of history: it is **America's 250th anniversary and 160 years since the end of the Civil War.** This Veterans Day is a special opportunity to reflect on our shared legacy, honor those who have served, and show **solidarity, community, and pride in one Nation**. Bristol Community College is proud to host this meaningful celebration at such a pivotal moment in our national story.

The event will feature a short speaking program with distinguished guest speakers:

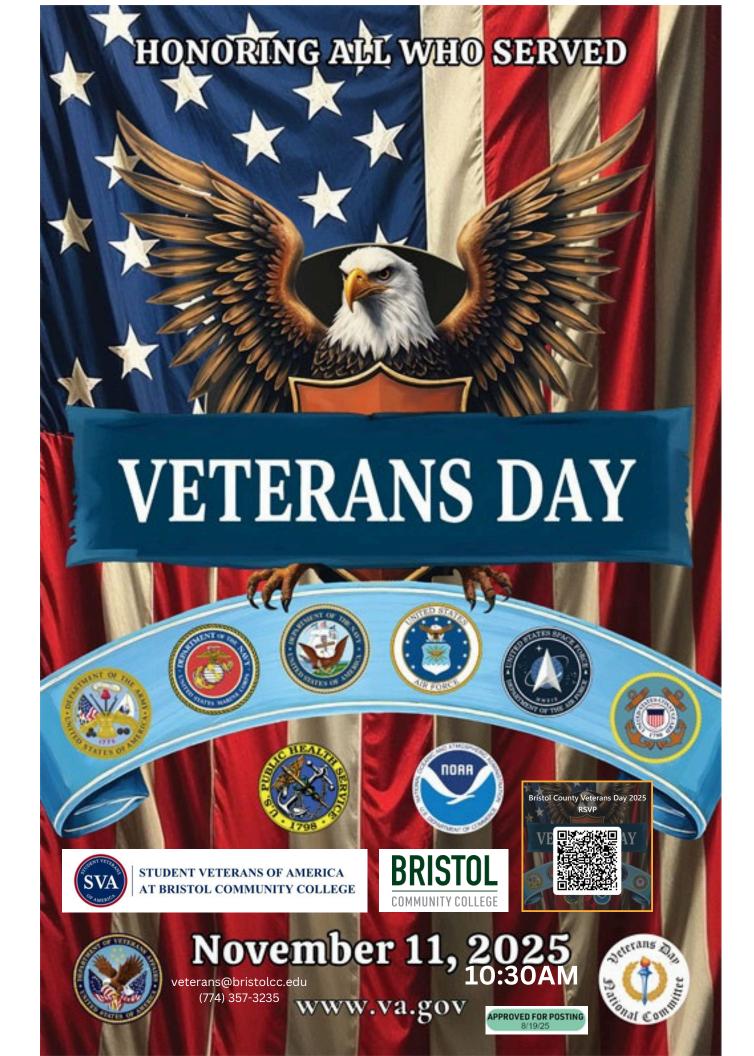
- · Justin Hsu, Naval Aviator
- · Daniel Goulart, Navy SEAL

Following the program, attendees are invited to enjoy a **luncheon** provided by Bristol Community College. To ensure adequate food preparation, **please RSVP in advance**.

All members of **American Legion District 9** and **VFW District 6** are strongly encouraged to wear their **member caps** to the event. This visible show of solidarity and pride will highlight the strength and unity of our veterans community and demonstrate your ongoing commitment to service and civic engagement.

Join us in celebrating the legacy, sacrifice, and strength of our veterans. Let's make Veterans Day 2025 a powerful reminder of the values we share and the heroes who protect them.





# Patriots Pen Chairperson

Comrades, it is that time of year again when we encourage sixth through eighth grade students to submit entries to the Patriot's Pen essay contest. This year is unique in that the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen share the same theme: "How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?"



Each Patriot's Pen first place state winner receives a minimum of \$500 at the national level, and the national first place winner wins \$5,000! Not bad for a 300-to 400-word essay. Students must submit their essay with a completed 2025-2026 entry form to a participating VFW Post by midnight, Oct. 31.

Note that posts may accept an entry from any student, even if the student does not reside in your city or town. Remember that this is a requirement to qualify for both All-State and All-American, so it's to your post's benefit! Here are some ideas for getting your local community involved in this essay contest:

- Encourage members of your post with middle-school aged children to complete essays. Often posts only receive one entry which means that entry is the automatic winner and advances to the district level! Most posts provide a monetary prize to the first place winner (and sometimes also to the second-and third-place winners).
- Reach out to the superintendent, principals, and guidance counselors (Tip: Visit the Massachusetts Department
  of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) School Finder
  [https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/search/get\_closest\_orgs.aspx] to locate your city or town's schools and contact
  numbers).
- · Give local school administrators copies a Patriot's Pen Poster (available through the VFW store)[ https://www.vfwstore.org/products/28509], filled out with that year's theme and Post contact info, that they can hang throughout the school.
- Contact English and Social Studies teachers and encourage them to make this essay a required or extra credit
  assignment. Also consider nominating these Social Studies teachers for a VFW Teacher of the Year award! Visit
  https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships for more information and applicable
  forms.

If you have any questions, please contact Patriot's Pen State Chair Dawn Slaven.

# VOD Chairperson



Comrades.

It's that time of year again for the annual Voice of Democracy essay contest. This years theme is "How are you showing patriotism and support for our country ". This year theme themes for Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy are the same. The National first place winner will receive a \$35,000 prize. The audio essay is 3-5 minutes long and must be submitted by October 31, 2025 with a completed entry form and a transcript of the essay. Posts may accept an entry from a student even if the student does not live in your city or town.

Participation by the post is a requirement for all-state and all-American.

If you have any questions please email the state Voice of Democracy chairman Heath Joseph at

Hjoseph@vfwma.org



**2025-2026 COMPETITION** 

# PATRIOT'S PEN AND VOICE OF DEMOCRACY





### **APPLICATION DEADLINE:**

**OCTOBER 31, 2025** 

### **PATRIOT'S PEN**

- Open to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students enrolled by the Oct. 31st deadline
- Submit a 300 400-word essay
- This year's theme is, "How are you showing patriotism and support for our country?"
- National Prize is currently \$5,000

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

Students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (for which the application has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity.





### **VOICE OF DEMOCRACY**

- Open to students in grades 9-12 enrolled by Oct. 31st deadline
- Submit a 3–5-minute audio and written essay
   This year's theme is, "How are you showing patriotism and support for our country?"
- National Prize is currently \$35,000





# SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD CITATIONS FOR ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

Hello Comrades! I would like to tell you about the Smart/Mahr VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Program. Every year the VFW provides a chance to submit a Teacher of the Year Program application for a teacher that you know who stands out as a patriotic member of our society. You can nominate a teacher of any grade level. The categories are grade school, middle school, and high school. Posts can have a nomination for all three categories. Nominations from VFW posts must be submitted by an October 31st deadline. To learn more about this program, just log on to the VFWma.org website. Click on the "Member Tools" category and scroll down to "VFW Programs". Then click "Find Out More". There you will find the Program Brochure link and the "New rules and eligibility requirements" link. The entry form is located under the overview of the program. If you have any questions, you can reach out to myself, Stephenie Jones, the department chair person at District12@vfwma.org or call the number below. Please consider nominating a teacher that you know for this prestigious award!

Stephenie Jones Commander, District 12 VFW Massachusetts

Each year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars selects elementary, middle and high school teachers to participate in the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher program. VFW Post Teacher Award Chairpersons may submit one candidate in each grade level to their District by Nov. 15. If your Department does not have a District judging, then submit to your **Department Headquarters and/or Department Chairperson by Jan.1.** The Department may select a single candidate in each grade level and submit them to **VFW National Headquarters, on the Dashboard by Feb.1, for National judging.** Department Teacher winners that are received at National Headquarters By Feb.1 will receive a VFW National citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

Simply visit **vfw.org/#login**, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on VFW Training & Support, then click on Community Service & Youth Programs, then look under Additional Resources. The Teacher Entry form, Instruction sheet, and Chairperson's Guide are up on the VFW website.

### Who Is Eligible?

- 1. Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime
  - candidates for this award. For example, do you know a teacher who plans field trips to city hall or organizes community volunteer projects? Maybe you know an instructor who invites veterans into the classroom to discuss their military experiences. Perhaps you are familiar with a teacher who fosters the development of democratic values and beliefs through special projects. If you know of such a teacher, honor them today. All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.
- 2. All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

#### **Documentation Required for all Candidates:**

1. All Post-level nominees should provide a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages, including the resume, as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: resume, references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves, if available. These items will be forwarded on to the District, if applicable, and/or the Department with the winning teacher entry form.

## 2025-2026 Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award



### Entry Deadline: October 31, 2025

### What is the Teacher Award Program?

Founded in 1899,theVFW highly supports the education of America's youth. VFW and its Auxiliary have developed a slate of programs dedicated to helping America's educators. VFW Citizenship Education programs stimulate interest in America's history, traditions, Americanism, civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism.

Teachers care deeply about America and its children. They're concerned about the perpetuation of America's noblest traditions and highest ideals. Wouldn't you like to see them get the honor they deserve? Now you can.

#### Why Should I Enter?

VFW wantsto identify and recognize America's best educators who instill a sense of national pride in students. The national awards include \$1,000 Smart/Maher award for each of the top K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses, \$1,000 award for each winning teacher's school, commemorative plaques and all-expense-paid trip to the VFW National Convention.

### Who is Eligible?

All currentcertified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national VFW winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

#### How are teachers nominated?

Fill outthe official entry form contained on the next page, and provide a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages, including the resume, as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: resume, references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo if available.

Please submit your completed entry form signed, along with the required documentation to your local VFW Post. Visit vfw.org/FindaPost for Post locations or call VFW Programs Department at 816.756.3390 ext. 6287 to find the Post nearest you.

#### What Is the Deadline for My Entry?

All entries competing at the Postlevel must be in the hands of that VFW Post by midnight, Oct. 31, 2025. It is the responsibility of the nominator to meet this deadline by submitting their entry to the proper location by ensuring it is a participating Post.

### What Are the Judging Criteria?

**Citizenship (1-25points):** On a scale of 1-25, to what extent does the teacher encourage and/or model good citizenship and community involvement?

**Innovation (1-25 points):** On a scale of 1-25, how much innovation (new ideas, new tools, new resources, and new approaches) does this teacher utilize in the classroom? Does this teacher's effort reflect an ongoing desire to stimulate the students with new things?

Resources (1-25 points): On a scale of 1-25, to what degree has this teacher demonstrated an ability to identify and utilize new and exceptional resources to fund, facilitate and provide materials for his or her classroom? Does this teacher tap into outside agencies, organizations and individuals to acquire materials and expertise in the classroom? As an example – bringing speakers, finding in-kind and monetary donations, or utilizing local opportunities like museums, field trips and local events.

**Passion (1-25 points):** On a scale of 1-25, to what degree does this teacher appear to be passionate about the profession of teaching? Are they regularly seeking to upgrade their skills? Do they try and find ways to encourage their students? Do they take a personal interest in their student's individual success?

If you have any questions, please call Mary Spencer, 816.756.3390, ext 6287 or mspencer@vfw.org.

#### **Local VFW Post Information:**

Contact: Name	, Title	
Phone	Best time to call	
Alternative Cor	ntact: Name, Title	

Phone Best time to call

### 2025-2026 Smart/Maher VFW National **Citizenship Education Teacher Award**



### Entry Deadline: October 31, 2025

### **202**5-**202**6 Official Entry Form **Teacher Award Competition**

Pleasetelluswhoyouarenominating—below in box.

Name: First	, M.I., Last
Address	
City, State,	Zip
( ) Phone	Email
Grade Level	(K-5, 6-8, or 9-12)
School Nam	ne
Addr	ess
School	
School Phon	e School Email
Person Noi	minating Teacher
Name:	
Address:	
City, State	, Zip:
Email:	
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### To Be Completed by the VFW District (If Applicable)

I certify that the teacher named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Teacher Award District Competition and is our entry into the Department judging.

District Chair	oerson's Signature	Dist #
Address		
City, State, Zi	p	
( )		
Phone	Email	
To Be Com <sub>l</sub>	oleted by the VFW Dep	oartment Ch <b>ạie</b> rson
the duly selec	the teacher named in the cted first-place winner of Competition, is our entry	the Teacher Award
()	Chaiperson's Signature	
Daytime Phor	ne Email	
The winner are the first-p	√ has been Mw ill be (check of ace Department winner on Submit My Entry?	one) notified that they 

All entries will begin at the local VFW Post level. Individual nominees may submit their entry directly to the Post. This VFW Post should be within your local area and within your U.S. state of residence. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One Post winner can be submitted for each level, and to District by Nov. 15. If your Department does not have a District judging, then submit to your Department Headquarters by Jan. 1. Otherwise, one District winner, at each level, may advance to the state (Department) competition. If you need help
finding a participating VFW Post in your area,
follow these instructions: First, visit vfw.org/ - FindaPost to find your local VFW Post. Be sure this Post is within the state you reside in. If you do not - have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your – VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit vfw.org/ContactUs and look for "Find a State —Contact" to get your VFW state office's phone number and email. If you still need assistance, please email us at VFW National Headquarters at

mspencer@vfw.org.



President Donald Trump reconnizes Purple Heart recipients, before signing the proclamation officially declaring National Purple Heart Day on August 7, 2025.

The ceremony featured a father-son combo, Kevin Willette and our very own Brian Willette, who both received the Purple Heart for their service in Afghanistan.





The President
requests the pleasure of your company
for remarks in recognition of
National Purple Heart Day
to be held at
The White House
on Thursday, August 7, 2025
at four-thirty o'clock

### VFW DISTRICT 5

Right: District 5 Commander Robert Santiago, as the Commissioner of Veterans Services for the City of Boston, addressing thousands of spectators from the balcony of the Old State House in Boston before leading them in the Pledge of Alegiance on Independence Day.

Bottom Left: District 5 Past Commanders Color Guard presented the colors at a recent Red Sox game before a sold out crowd at historic Fenway Park. L to R State Sr. Vice Commander Craig DeOld (PDC), State Quartermaster Scott Carruthers (PDC), Past State Commander Michael Raymond (PDC), and current District 5 Commander Robert Santiago.

Bottom Middle: Members of the VFW Boston Police Post 1018 manning an informational table at the recent City of Boston Veterans Resources Fair. L to R Post Commander Robert Santiago, Marty Swirko, Past Commander Bob Workman, Past Commander Grady Durden, and "Ranger" Ron Bagley.

Bottom Right: State Sr. Vice Commander Craig DeOld and State Asst. Sergeant at Arms Rene Fuertes represented the Department at a recent Hero Square rededication ceremony in East Boston for SGT John Scannapieco, US Army, who paid the ultimate price during the opening actions of the Battle of the Bulge. L to R State Sr. Vice Commander Craig DeOld, State Ass't Sgt at Arms Rene Fuertes, Comrade Andy Biggio, and Comrade Steve Ashman, both members of Beachmont Post 6712.









## VFW POST 2498 VETERAN RECEIVES GOVERNOR'S CITATION





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

#### Thaddeus Prorok

ON BEHALF OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

I AM PLEASED TO COMER UPON YOU THIS GOVERNOR'S CITATION IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR DEDICATION,
SERVICE, AND INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMONWEALTH AS A DISTRIBUTIONS TO MENT BY
THE MILITARY COMMUNITY IN MASSACHUSETTS, YOUR COMMITMENT EXEMPLIFIES THE HIGHEST IDEALS OF
DUTY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, AND WE ARE MONORED TO CELEBRATE YOU ON THE FIRST ANNUAL
MILITARY APPRICATION DO

THIS TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF MAY IN THE YEAR 2025



Kimberley Drivel
Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Military Appreciation Day, May 22, 2025. Massachusetts State House, is a NEW Annual **Tradition** Massachusetts, launched in 2025 by the Executive Office Of Veterans Services (EOVS)in partnership with the Massachusetts Legislature, Honoring Servicemembers, Veterans, Military **Families** and **Advocates** Massachusetts. Thaddeus(Ted)Prorok from Needham, Mass., was nominated by State Representative Josh Tarsky who represents the 13th Norfolk District. Approximately 145 Honorees from all over Massachusetts attended and were honored at the event.

Ted is a VFW Life Member and Post Adjutant from the Lt. Manson H. Carter VFW Post 2498 in Needham, Mass. Ted is in the photo with Representative Josh Tarskv in the House Representatives Chamber holding the Governor's Citation received on this first Military Appreciation Day. He is a Vietnam War Veteran who served in the U. S. Army with the 25th Infantry Division "Tropic Lightning" - "The Electric Strawberry", and the 65th Combat Engineer Battalion, stationed in Cu CHI Vietnam, 1969-1970.

### DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES and AUXILIARY

### JOINT HOSPITAL / VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT WORKSHOP



Saturday, October 4, 2025

Registration – 9:00 a.m. Workshop - 9:30 a.m. Needham VFW Post #2498 20 Junction Street Needham, MA 02492



The Hospital/Veterans & Family Support Workshop will be an informative session highlighting programs at the VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, and Soldiers Homes. Representatives from have been invited to speak about their particular issues and needs, and how we can assist them in contributing to the welfare of the patients. Guest speaker(s) will also be addressing you regarding Veteran issues.

Once again, we are asking Auxiliary members to deliver their hospital gifts directly to the facility of their choice. Upon completion, you will notify Hospital Chairman, Paul La Porte, of what was donated and to whom. Hospitals are asking that we DO NOT wrap the gifts and DO NOT decorate each with a Buddy Poppy.

Homeless Shelter representatives will not be present to accept donations of new and used clothing. Shelters are in need of towels, coffee, and new undergarments. "Glad Bags" for the homeless shelters, tied up with a poppy, will be appreciated. Remember, our Homeless Veterans include both men and women. Again, these are to be delivered directly to a shelter of your choosing, followed by a report to Veterans & Family Support Chairman, Mary Dobbins.

Continental breakfast will be served at a cost of \$9.00 per person. Please return the coupon

	cretary-Treasurer, Betty Rosa, if y t. of MA VFW Aux. Deadline for		
Enclosed please fin Hospital/Veterans	ad my check in the amount of \$& & Family Support Workshop in Need	for for	tickets to the 2025, at \$9.00 per ticket.
Name			
Address			<u> </u>
Post #	Auxiliary #	District #	

<u>DEADLINE FOR TICKETS IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2025.</u> EVERYONE MUST PRESENT A TICKET TO BE SERVED.

Return this coupon to VFW Auxiliary State Secretary-Treasurer Betty Rosa, 93 Church Street,

Fairhaven, MA 02719-3703. Make checks payable to VFW Aux. Dept. of MA.



### **DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS**

## Department Calendar 2025-2026 As of 8/20/25 2025

Date	Time	Event	Location
August 23	9:00AM	Auxiliary Kick Off	TBD
August 24	11:00AM	District 7 Meeting	American Legion Post 266 Granby/3104 Host
September 13	10:30AM	COA	North Attleboro Post 443
September 14	10:00AM	District 15 Meeting	Ashland Post 2331
September 15	6:30PM	District 12 Meeting	Plymouth Post 1822
September 20	9:00AM	ОТІ	Forest Park Post 7352
September 21	10:00AM	District 5 Meeting	Foxboro Post 2626
September 21	12:00PM	District 11 Meeting	Leominster Veterans Center
September 21	2:00PM	District 8 Meeting	Upton Post 5594
September 25		National CIC Homecoming	Des Moines, Iowa
September 27	9:00AM	ОТІ	Bridgewater Post 2125
September 28	11:00AM	District 7 Meeting	Florence Post 8006
September 30	5:00PM	POW/MIA Day	Bourne National Cemetery
October 4	9:00 AM	Hospital Workshop	Needham Post 2498
October 5	12:00PM	District 15 BBQ	Townsend Post 6538
October 11	9:00AM	ОТІ	Lexington Post 3007
October 18	9:30AM	Auxiliary COA	Methuen Post 8349
October 18	11:00AM	District 5 Annual BBQ/Pig Roast	Dedham Post 2017
October 19	10:00AM	District 18 Meeting	Waltham Post 10334
October 19	12:00PM	District 11 Meeting	Leominster Veterans Center
October 19	2:00PM	District 8 Meeting	Uxbridge Post 1385
October 24-26		Eastern Conference	Wilmington, Delaware
November 1	10:30AM	COA	Gloucester Post 1624
November 2	10:30AM	District 15 Meeting	Natick Post 1274
November 10	6:30PM	District 12 Meeting	Plymouth Post 1822
November 11	0.501 141	Veterans Day	
November 16	10:00AM	District 5 Meeting	Stoughton Post 1645
November 16	10:00AM	District 9 Meeting	Dalton Post 9566
November 16	12:00PM	District 11 Meeting	Leominster Veterans Center
November 16	2:00PM	District 8 Meeting	Uxbridge Post 1385
November 23	11:00AM	District 7 Meeting	Northfield Post 9874
December 6	12:00PM	Auxiliary Spaghetti Dinner/Auction	Dedham Post 2017
December 0	12.001 141		
	6:00PM	Canton Christmas Party	Canton Hospital
TBA  December 7	6:00PM 10:00AM	Canton Christmas Party District 18 Meeting	Canton Hospital Medford VFW 1012

Subscribe to VFW Massachusetts News Never miss an issue!

NEXT DEADLINE December 15, 2025



