



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS

Illinois

2023-2024 Series
General Orders No. 7
January 2024

STATE HEADQUARTERS HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The State Headquarters will be closed on the following days:

January 15th Martin Luther King Day

STATE CONVENTION

The State Convention will be held on June 6-9, 2024. The hotels for the State Convention are:

Wyndham City Center
700 E Adams
Springfield, IL 62701

President Abe Lincoln Double Tree Hotel
701 E Adams
Springfield, IL 62701

The VFW meetings will be held in the BOS Center at 1 Convention Center Plaza Springfield, IL 62701, which is located conveniently adjacent to both hotels. The VFW Auxiliary meetings will be held in the President Abe Lincoln Double Tree Hotel. Information on reserving your room for the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel or the Wyndham City Centre Hotel will be in upcoming General Orders and on the vfwil.org web page under "Events".

2024 CONVENTION RAFFLE AND PURPLE HEART TICKETS

Tickets for the 2024 Purple Heart and Convention raffle went out in the December issue of the Illinois VFW newspaper. Included were 2 sheets of 5 tickets (\$20 each) and two Purple Heart tickets (\$5 each). Winners will be randomly selected at our State Convention in June, for the following: \$10,000 grand prize, \$3,000 second prize, \$2,000 third prize, \$500 awarded to fourth through tenth place winners. Purple Heart Raffle: \$2,000 grand prize. If you have any questions or would like to request more tickets, please contact VFW Department Headquarters.

January State Commanders Membership Challenge

Top 2 Posts in each category and Top 2 Districts

Post Categories

99 and less members

100-199 members

200+ members

Largest % of increase of membership between 1/1/24 and 1/31/24

Winners receive 2 invites to membership luncheon at State Convention. The 2 people attending the membership luncheon must be from the Post or District that won the prize. Top Post in each category and Top District will also receive \$250 and second place in each will receive \$100

ALL-STATE POST AWARDS

The 2023-2024 Membership Program is designed to recognize exceptional leadership and teamwork, not only in Membership but in overall Post/District development and VFW Programs. If a Post qualifies to be "All State" all Post members will be recognized for this achievement because they are a team.

The 2023-2024 All-State Post Criteria is as follows:

- Membership greater than 102%
- Posts must hold 2 membership drives/events and submit report to Program Reporting Dashboard

- Posts must be 100% reported on the Department Programs Reporting Dashboard.
- Posts must have submitted all 4 quarterly Trustees Audits and audits were approved.
- Posts must be in compliance with all questions on the National and Department Inspection Sheets (for example: a post that is not incorporated shall not be eligible until proof is provided that they are in compliance)
- Posts must order at least 3 poppies per member with a minimum of 1,000 poppies.
- Posts must have one nomination for each of the programs of Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy, and Teacher of the Year or Employer of the Year submitted to District for judging.

Donations to Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen as stated in this manual will be accepted if a Post does not have a nomination.

- Posts must have representation at all properly called District Conventions or meetings.
- Posts must have representation at a minimum of 1 Commanders Calls. (Roll Call will be taken)
- Posts must make a \$50 donation to the Service Office Support Program (SOS) this is separate from the Red, White, and Blue Program donations.
- New Posts need a minimum of 50 members to achieve-All State

The All-State Program runs through **June 15, 2024**. To receive All-State Awards at the State Convention, the deadline for completion of All-State criteria is **April 30, 2024**. There will be no limits on the number of Posts that can achieve All-State status.

All-State Post Commanders will receive an All-State Commander cap and distinguished service lapel pin.

All-State Quartermasters may purchase an All-State Post Quartermaster cap and will receive a distinguished service lapel pin. All-State Post Members may purchase an All-Sate Post Member cap.

ALL-STATE DISTRICT CRITERIA

- Membership greater than 102%
- Districts must have 100% of Posts inspected and the inspections must be cleared by the state inspector by April 30, 2024
- Districts must hold a minimum of one School of Instruction and submit a report to State Headquarters.

- District must hold or participate in 2 membership drive/event and submit report to Programs Reporting Dashboard.
- Districts must submit 1 of each of the following to Department Headquarters for judging:
 - Patriot's Pen
 - Voice of Democracy
 - Teacher of the Year
 - Employer of the Year
- Districts must forward a record of the Roll Call of Officers and Posts of each District Meeting to State Headquarters.

ALL AMERICAN POST CRITERIA

- Membership greater than 102%
- Must conduct 2 membership recruiting events, submit reports through All-American Dashboard
- Post Election Report must be submitted to National
- Posts must meet all of the following Program Participation Criteria:
 - Voice of Democracy- minimum of one entry advanced to District judging.
(Overseas Posts can donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry).
 - Patriots Pen- minimum of one entry advanced to District judging.
(Overseas Posts can donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry).
 - Hold a fundraiser with the proceeds going to Veterans and Military Support Program Services. Minimum of \$100
 - National Citizenship Education Teachers Award - one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas Post can donate \$100 to National in Lieu of entry)
 - A Post must submit a community service report to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard. The quarters are July-September, October-December, January-March and April through June
 - Buddy Poppy - Purchase 3 per member in the Post

POST COMMANDER & QUARTERMASTER AWARD

The top 10 Post Commanders and Quartermasters in each division who report more than 50 new and/or reinstated members by January 1, 2024 will each be awarded:

- A travel charger with the official VFW Commander-in-Chief logo

FEBRUARY COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING

The February Council of Administration Meeting and 78th Annual Voice of Democracy Banquet will be held February 9-11, 2024 at the Crowne Plaza, 3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy., Springfield, Illinois 62703. To make a reservation for February, you may call the hotel directly at (217) 529-7777 and give them our group code: **V4W** or you may reserve a room online - go to our website at www.vfwil.org, under News, go to the Events page, click on the link for "**VOD and February Council Meeting Room Reservations**". The room rate is \$94 a night plus tax.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committee meetings will begin on Friday, February 9, 2024 at **1:00** pm at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. All meetings will run consecutively beginning with the Veterans Service Committee at **1:00 pm**. The *Illinois VFW News* Committee, Budget & Finance Committee, and The Foundation Committee will follow.

Members of the Veterans Service Committee are as follows:

Brad Gould, Past State Commander, Chairman
Laurie Emmer, Past State Commander
Robert Welch, Past State Commander
Bobby Edwards, Past State Commander
Bobby Nila, Commander
Maurice Bridges, State Sr. Vice Commander
Eugene Blackwell, State Jr. Vice Commander
Joe Bartley, State Adjutant-Quartermaster

The Illinois VFW News Committee will meet following the Veterans Service Committee...

Laurie Emmer, Past State Commander - Chairman
Barbara Wilson, Illinois VFW News Editor
Robert Welch, State Historian
Brett Nila, State Commander
Joe Bartley, State Adjutant-Quartermaster

The Budget & Finance Committee will meet after the Illinois VFW News Committee... Phil Maughan, Past State Commander, Chairman
Joe Bartley, State Adjutant-Quartermaster, Assistant Chairman

The Foundation Committee will meet after the Budget and Finance Committee...
Dave Stout, President
Todd Latham, Vice President
Barbara Wilson, Secretary
Joe Bartley, Treasurer
Brett Nila, Member
Maurice Bridges, Member
Eugene Blackwell, Member

COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING

The Council of Administration will meet on Friday, February 9, 2024 and Saturday, February 10, 2024 at the Crowne Plaza Springfield. The meeting will begin Friday at 3:00 pm until approximately 5:00 pm. It will reconvene at 8:15 am on Saturday.

All officers and directors are expected to be in attendance for all sessions of the Council of Administration. Past Department Commanders who are receiving Department paid rooms are highly encouraged to attend all sessions of the Council of Administration

All Program Directors will forward their written reports to State Headquarters by Wednesday, January 24, 2024 so it can be added to the book of reports to be passed out at the meeting. All Program Directors are expected to be present to highlight any changes or important information contained within your written report when called upon. Please mail, fax (217-546-3415) or e-mail (vfwil@vfwil.org) your reports to this office.

ASSIGNED TO THE COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

In addition to the Top 3 Chairs and the 17 District Commanders, the following State Officers and Program Chairmen are called to be at Council of Administration Meeting...

Gary Holmes, State Chaplain

Robert Bailey, State Chief of Staff

Ryan Higginbotham, State Surgeon
Robert Welch, State Inspector
Joe Bartley, State Adjutant-Quartermaster
Jay Hoffman, State Judge Advocate
Matthew Claussen, National Council Member
John McGlynn, State Membership Chairman
Georges Sanon, State Student Veterans Liaison
Rob Bland, State Blood Donor Chairman
Steve Eller, State Community Activities Chairman
Paul Bezazian, State Homeless Veterans Chairman
Jay Hoffmann, State Assistant Legislative Chairman
Kyna Simpson, State National Home Chairman
Evamarie Duff, State All-State Chairman
Barbara Wilson, State Public Relations Chairman
Robert Welch, State Veterans and Military Support Programs Chairman
Stephanie Kirksey, State Poppy Chairman
Clarence Caraker, State POW/MIA Chairman
Les Durov, State Safety Chairman
Josh Seed, State Yellow Ribbon Chairman
Robert Welch, State Historian
C. Maurice Theriac, State VFW/MOC Coordinator
Dave Darte, State Voice of Democracy Chairman
Kyna Simpson, Assistant Voice of Democracy Director
John Davin, State Youth Activities Chairman
PSC Brad Gould, Veterans Service Committee Chairman
PSC Laurie Emmer, Illinois VFW News Committee Chairman
Ray Bachawicz, State Sergeant-at-Arms
Jeff Britt, State Officer of the Day
Ron Milton, State Scouting Chairman

Josh Seed, State Assistant Quartermaster

Michelle Ramlow, State Assistant Youth Activities Chairman

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY & PATRIOT'S PEN WINNERS' TRIP TO SPRINGFIELD

Each student will receive accommodations for two nights at the Crowne Plaza, 3300 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62703. If the student would like to stay longer than two nights or would like to book additional rooms, the District should assist in making these arrangements and help cover the costs.

District Commanders or Chairmen may call State Headquarters to have these arrangements made.

Upon the students' arrival on Friday, February 9, 2023, State Headquarters will be hosting a pizza party!

The following morning, the students will meet in the lobby of the hotel at 8:45 am for the Land of Lincoln Tour. The tour will make the following stops: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, Staab Funeral Home, Lincoln's Tomb and the Illinois State Military Museum. Only Students and assigned personnel will be allowed on the bus. Following the 78th Annual State of Illinois Voice of Democracy Banquet, the students will be invited to enjoy an ice cream bar arranged by State Headquarters.

LINCOLN PILGRIMAGE

The Lincoln Pilgrimage will take place at Lincoln's Tomb in Oak Ridge Cemetery at 2:00 pm on Saturday February 10, 2024.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY BANQUET

The State of Illinois VFW will be celebrating its 78th Annual Voice of Democracy/Patriot's Pen Banquet on Saturday, February 10, 2024 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, IL. Tickets are available for \$45 per person. Tickets may be ordered online by making a donation at <http://vfwil.org/> - and allocating the funds to the *Voice of Democracy Banquet*. You may also call State Headquarters (217) 529-6688.

District Prime Tables will once again be available for \$450; they are to be ordered by and paid for by the District Commanders who will decide who will be seated at these tables. ***Reminder - these are tables of ten.***

Special Thank You to Humana for being a major sponsor of the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Banquet.

Other sponsorships are still available on a first come first serve basis

14th Place - \$300 Sponsored by 15th District

15th Place - \$300 Sponsored by 11th District

16th Place - \$300 Sponsored by Dave Edwards

17th Place - \$300 Sponsored by Post 11463

Ice Cream Social for kids - \$300 Sponsored by Mark Miller on behalf of District 6

Pizza Party for kids - \$300 Sponsored by Dave Edwards

Lunch for kids - \$300 Sponsored by Staab Funeral Home

Tours for kids - \$400 Sponsored by Spaulding Veterans Memorial

Book Bags for kids - \$400 ½ Sponsored by Post 10302 and ½ Sponsored by District 10

VOD Bus - \$1,600

Flowers - \$400

VOD Banquet Meals - \$945.00 Sponsored by District 5

Please contact State HQ if your District or Post wishes to sponsor any of these events.

PUBLICATION CONTEST

Editors of Post and District publications are invited to send in a copy of 1 issue published during the 2023 year for the Illinois VFW Publications Contest. Please provide the contact information for the Editor, as well as how often the newsletter is published. If you want to send a hard copy - mail to Barbara Wilson, Editor, 802 N. 3rd St., Riverton, Illinois 62561. You can also e-mail a copy to bwilson@vfwil.org.

VFW WEB PAGE(www.vfwil.org)

We urge everyone to make it a daily habit to visit our VFW State web page at www.vfwil.org.

- By clicking on the "Donation" link, you can pay for poppies and make your donation to Programs such as the Commander's Special Project, Homeless Veterans, MAP, SOS and National Home.

- Submit your Bond application or poppy order on-line
- See what is going on in your Post, District, State or National by clicking "News & Events".
- See the current issue of the *Illinois VFW News* and the Commander's Leadership Manual.

Corporate Transparency Act

This is reprinted from the January 2023 National VFW General Orders

We have received some questions recently on a new law that is about to become effective. The Corporate Transparency Act passed in 2021, included a reporting requirement called the Beneficial Ownership Information Reporting rule, which will go into effect on January 1, 2024. It generally requires entities doing business in the U.S. to disclose information to the U.S. Treasury, under the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), about individuals who directly or indirectly own or control a company.

Under this ruling, there is an exemption for tax-exempt organizations. The entity qualifies for the exemption if they are organized under 501(c) of the IRS Code of 1986 and are exempt from tax under section 501(a) of the Code. An entity also qualifies if it is described in section 501(c) of the Code and was exempt from tax under section 501(a) of the Code but lost its tax-exempt status less than 180 days ago.

In summary, Posts, Districts and Departments who are a 501(c) [including 501(c) (19), 501(c) (3), and 501(c) (4)] and who are currently exempt with the IRS do not have to report to the FinCEN. Also, Posts, Districts and Departments who are a 501(c) and have lost their exemption in the last 180 days do not have to report to the FinCEN. If a Post, District or Department has lost their exemption more than 180 days ago, they must file with the FinCEN, as must any entity not organized under 501(c).

For more information go to: fincen.gov/boi-faqs.

DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING

As a reminder - **Golden Rule Publishing ad salespersons** are out in our communities throughout Illinois selling advertising for the book. They contact local businesses in your communities to solicit advertising for our three program books throughout the year. **Please let the businesses in your community, Post members and employees know this is a legitimate solicitation on behalf of the Illinois VFW.**

BUDDY POPPIES

All Posts are urged to promote the use and distribution of Buddy Poppies. All money collected from poppies is to be placed in the Post Relief Fund to aid and assist needy veterans. **ORDER YOUR POPPIES NOW FOR YOUR MEMORIAL DAY DISTRIBUTION!** Please order your poppies 8-10 weeks in advance of your sale to insure you receive them on time.

TRUSTEES REPORT OF AUDIT REQUIREMENT

Per Section 218 of the National Manual of Procedure - Officers and Chairmen, Duties and Obligations, the ***Post Commander*** must assure that the ***Post Trustees*** have examined the books and records of the Post and prepared the Post Trustees Quarterly Report of Audit no later than the end of the month following the last day of each quarterly period. **Failure on the part of the Commander to strictly enforce Section 218 of the National Manual of Procedure may release the Bonding Company of all liability in case of theft or misuse of funds and subject the Post to suspension.** The ***duties*** of the ***Post Quartermaster*** include providing the ***Post Trustees*** with all records, files and statements required or necessary for the preparation of the Post Trustees Quarterly Report of Audit.

INSPECTION

Attention is directed to the importance of CONSTANT INSPECTION!! District Commanders will exert every effort to have each Post in their District inspected at least once annually. Posts Commanders will insist on Quarterly audits of records and books by Post Trustees, subject to penalties outlined in Section 213 of the National By-Laws. Post Quartermasters are reminded that they are to be bonded in **AN AMOUNT AT LEAST EQUAL TO THEIR LIQUID ASSETS.** It is important that the District Inspector contact the Post well in advance of their official inspection

advising the Quartermaster when they will inspect the Post and what items they will need to conduct the Inspection. Each District will be compensated at the rate of \$10.00 per Post Inspection at the time the District becomes 100% inspected **and approved by the Department Inspector.**

POST INSURANCE-ADDITIONAL INSURED

According to VFW By-Laws, each Post is required to maintain adequate liability insurance and ***they also require National and Department be listed as "additional insureds" on the Post policy.*** Posts *must have their Insurance Agent send a copy of the Insurance Certificate to both National and Department Headquarters. Posts that do not own property do not have to comply with this request.*

PROGRAM DONATIONS FOR DASHBOARD CREDIT

All Posts must donate a minimum of \$50.00 each to VFW State Headquarters for the Military Assistance Program (MAP), Homeless Veterans, Commander's Special Project, Service Office Support, and National Home to receive credit on the State "X" sheet. On-line donations are encouraged but ***don't forget to indicate your Post Number.***

MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

Members wishing to receive correspondence from the VFW at both the state and National level, please make sure your contact information is up to date. You can do so by logging in to www.vfw.org.

Join 2024 VFW Day of Service.

The VFW's third annual VFW Day of Service – a dedicated day of service led by VFW members throughout the country and the world – kicks off the first Saturday on May 4, 2024, and marks the start of veteran-led community service projects to take place throughout the month.

The VFW Day of Service is an outgrowth of the organization's #StillServing campaign launched in 2020 to recognize the ongoing dedication of veterans and service members who continue to serve their communities. VFW Day of Service, led by veterans and in concert with other organizations and civic groups, is open for anyone to participate.

We're urging all members and Posts to visit VFWDayofService.org to register their event on the interactive Day of Service map and receive a special participation decal, or find a local event to join and see what other veterans around the country are doing to make a difference.

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING CHANGE

125th National Convention housing will open, Monday, March 18, 2024. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Louisville, Kentucky – July 27-Aug. 1, 2024, and a tentative agenda.

NEW CENTURY RAFFLE

The New Century Raffle has officially started and will run through June 30, 2024. The tickets are just \$10.00 each. Each ticket entitles you to participate in a weekly drawing of \$100 from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Drawings will be held each Friday beginning July 1, 2023, with each week's winning ticket being returned to the barrel for the future drawings. This means each ticket has multiple chances to win. The seller of each ticket also has a chance to win \$10.00. If seller prints their name on ticket, they will receive \$10.00. If the seller does not sign the ticket, the \$10.00 will be automatically donated and split between Department's Unmet Needs Program and Children's National Home. Winners will be announced each month in the General Orders and posted on <http://vfwil.org> web site.

WEEKLY WINNER

<u>Date of Drawing</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Seller</u>
12/1/2023	Bruce Hazelman	No Seller Listed
12/8/2023	Dale Graff Sr	Dale Graff Sr
12/15/2023	Ted Tracy	No Seller Listed
12/22/2023	Paul Driscoll	No Seller Listed
12/29/2023	James Riforgiato	James Riforgiato

VETERAN OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to Jim Parker of Prospect Post 1337 on being selected as the December Veteran of the Month! Thank you to all who submitted nominations for this month, please continue to do so and for those that did not please look for those comrades from your post who stand apart from the rest by serving the community, Veterans and embodying the purposes of our congressional charter: to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead; and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United states from all her enemies.

By Order of:

Official



Joseph H. Bartley

State Adjutant/Quartermaster



Brett Nila

State Commander

Program Bulletin VOD 2024

The Department Voice of Democracy Program is entering its final stages. State judging will be completed in early January and plans are underway for another great Awards Program Weekend February 9-10 in Springfield to honor students and their families. A huge thanks to all comrades at post, district and department levels for sharing their time, talent, and treasure to make this possible. I hope it has been a rewarding and memorable experience for all thus far. Tickets for the Awards Banquet at the Springfield Crown Plaza Hotel Saturday February 10th, are still available at VFW Department Headquarters. (217-529-6688)