



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS

Illinois

**2025-2026 Series
General Orders No. 2
August 2025**

ALL POST COMMANDERS

Your attention is directed to the provisions of our National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure, Section 218 - Officers and Chairmen, Duties and Obligations - which states in part under Commander's Duties and Obligations - *"Assure that the Commander or their representative attend all properly called District Conventions or meetings and County Council meetings (if applicable)."* Each State Commander is mandated to uphold the National By-Laws and this is just one small section that is being closely scrutinized by the National Organization. We appreciate the fact that Post Commanders may not always be available when District Meetings are scheduled; he/she can appoint any of his members to attend in his/her place.

Section 218- Officers and Chairmen, Duties and Obligations - which states in part 1 (j) under Commander's Duties and Obligations - *"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."*

SECTION 703 - BONDS

Please refer to Section 703 of the National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure regarding the bonding of officers. We quote in part from Section 703: *"Each officer accountable for funds or property pursuant to any provision of these By-Laws shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, he may be accountable."*

The bonds that are purchased through State HQ expire August 31, 2025.

SECTION 709 - CONTROL OF UNITS

We have had a few inquiries from VFW Posts considering the sale of their Post Homes and or purchasing Real Estate Property. Please be reminded that Section 709 - Control of Units in the National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure must be followed in its entirety.

"In addition to other legal requirements under existing local laws or Department By-Laws, no Post, County Council, District, or any holding company or corporation subordinate thereto, shall purchase, sell or otherwise transfer title or any interest in any real estate unless written notice of such proposal has first been given to each member of said unit ten (10) days prior to such regular or special meeting at which the proposal is to be considered, and then only by two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval of those members present and voting at such regular or special meeting. In addition, at least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting, notice shall be provided to the Department Commander who shall review any sale, purchase, transfer or encumbrance to determine whether such transaction serves the purposes of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States as prescribed in the Congressional Charter. Failure to comply with these provisions shall nullify said transaction."

REGULARLY HELD POST MEETINGS

"Sec. 203 - Regular, Special and Committee Meetings; Quorum; Authorized Attendees.

Regular Meetings. Posts shall hold at least one regular meeting each month. Failure to comply can result in immediate revocation of the Post Charter notwithstanding the provisions of Section 211 of the Manual of Procedure."

Posts MUST meet each month. Those that do not comply with this by-law are subject to adverse action. Post and District Commanders are expected to ensure compliance.

MEETING MINUTES

Keeping properly formatted meeting minutes is one of the most important duties you have to your post or district. There have been recent incidents of post meetings being held and important decisions, such as the membership approving to sell property, not being recorded in the minutes. If it is not recorded, it did not happen.

Meeting minutes must include the following.

- You need to include the date, time and type of meeting
- Meeting location
- Officers/members present
- Any subject brought to the meeting floor for a vote
 - The result of that vote
- Anything brought to the meeting floor for a discussion

Meeting minutes do not need to be a transcript-- just a summary. Your minutes need to be legible, and your minutes need to be read and approved at the next regular meeting.

For further information on how to properly record meeting minutes please refer to [Roberts Rules of Order \(Newly Revised\)](#) Section 48, paragraphs 1 through 8.

POST PURCHASES AND EXPENDITURES

We have a few inquiries from members and officers regarding the procedures for approval of purchases and expenditures in a Post. Specifically, they inquired about purchases or donations that were made without approval of membership prior to disbursement of funds.

Please refer to Section 218 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedures.

Sec 218(a)(1)f states that one of the duties of the Commander is "Approve all disbursements of funds properly authorized by the Post by use of voucher or payment order"

Sec 218(a)(5)c states that one of the duties of the Quartermaster is "Disburse funds as properly authorized by the Post using acceptable banking practices."

In both instances, it is very clear that Post expenditures can only be made after they are properly authorized by the Post, which means approval of the membership.

Please review the procedures that you are following to ensure all your expenditures and disbursement of funds are in compliance with National Bylaws and Manual of Procedures.

DEPARTMENT PURCHASES

"ARTICLE XII- Control of Department Purchases"

No Department Officer, appointive or elective, or Department Committee Chairman or Department Committee member, is authorized to purchase goods or enter into any agreement, expressed or implied, written or oral, providing for or involving the expenditure of Department funds without prior written authorization based on a requisition bearing the signature of the Department Adjutant and the Department Quartermaster."

RED, WHITE AND BLUE VETERANS SERVICE SUPPORTER PROGRAM

Districts, Posts and Individuals can once again show their support for our Veterans Service programs through our Red, White and Blue Supporter Program. We have established three levels of Sponsorships - Red for those making donations of at least \$1,000; White for those making \$500 donations; and Blue for those making donations of \$250. Individuals, Posts, Districts and Auxiliaries making donations in the above Supporter Levels will receive a beautiful plaque noting their level of support and signs noting donations will be displayed at the Mid-Winter Conference in February and our 106th annual State Convention in June, 2025.

AUGUST COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING

The first Council of Administration Meeting will be held August 22-24, 2025 at Tinley Park Convention Center' 18451 Convention Dr., Tinley Park, IL 60477. Hotel rooms are priced at \$169 plus tax per night. The cut-off date for reserving your room is August 1, 2025. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly at (708) 444-1100. The room block is IVF.

DISTRICT COMMANDERS/PROGRAM CHAIRS

Committee members for Committee meetings must be present. All other Officers and Program Chairmen are expected to be in attendance for all Council of Administration meetings. The committees being called into the August Council of Administration will meet on Friday, August 22, 2025, at 1:00 pm, and the August Council of Administration Meeting will begin at 3:00 p.m. The meetings will take place at the Even Hotel- Tinley Park. All Program Chairmen are expected to be

present and introduce themselves, outlining their programs and providing instructions on how to achieve program goals.

PROGRAM CHAIRMEN: If you require a PowerPoint presentation or any other visual aid, please get in touch with State Headquarters as soon as possible to arrange for its preparation. If you have documentation you would like to hand out, please forward it to State Headquarters by Monday, August 4, 2025!

IL VFW FOUNDATION MEETING

The Foundation meeting will meet at 1:00 pm

- President: Todd Latham
- Chairman: Eugene Blackwell
- Vice President: Brett Nila
- 1st Vice Chairman: Rob Bailey
- Secretary: Barb Wilson
- 2nd Vice Chairman: Ryan Higginbotham
- Treasurer / Quartermaster: Scott Swinford
- Member: Fritz Mihelcic

VETERANS SERVICE COMMITTEE

The Veterans Service Committee will be after the foundation meeting.

- Robert Welch, Chair
- Eugene Blackwell, State Commander
- Robert Bailey, State Senior Vice Commander
- Ryan Higginbotham, State Junior Vice Commander
- Scott Swinford, State Adjutant-Quartermaster
- Maurice Bridges, Past State Commander
- Brett Nila, Past State Commander
- Bobby Edwards, Past State Commander

ILLINOIS VFW NEWS COMMITTEE

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

- Brett Nila, Chair, Past State Commander
- Barbara Wilson, *Illinois VFW News* Editor
- Eugene Blackwell, State Commander
- Scott Swinford, State Adjutant-Quartermaster
- Bob Welch, Historian

COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING

The Council of Administration will meet at the Tinley Park Convention Center on Friday, August 22, 2025, at 3:00 pm. This meeting is scheduled to adjourn at approximately 5:30 p.m. and reconvene on Saturday, August 23rd, at 8:30 a.m. The following State Officers and Program Chairmen should be prepared to report on Friday, August 22, 2025.

Committee Reports

- Phil Maughan, Budget & Finance Committee Chair
- Sean Conner, Director, Veterans Service
- Barb Wilson, Illinois VFW News

Program Reports

- Mathius Carter, Membership Chair
- Steve Eller, All-State Program Chair
- Barbara Wilson, State Marketing/Public Relations Chair
- George Sanon, Student Veterans Liaisons
- Robert Bland, Blood Donor Chair
- Stephanie Kirksey, Buddy Poppy Chair
- Steve Eller, Community Activities Chair
- Paul Bezazian, Homeless Veterans Chair
- Jonathan Cooper, Legislative Chair
- John Lawson, Legislative Co-Chair
- Kyna Simpson, National Home Chair
- Clarence Caraker, POW/MIA Chair
- Bill Browne, MAP/Military Services Chair
- Nekohl Johnson, Women's Veterans Chair
- Barbara Wilson, VFW News Editor
- Glen Goodrich, Safety Chair
- Dave Darte, Voice of Democracy Chair
- John Davin, Youth Activities Chair
- Ron Milton, Scouting Chair
- Doug Jameson, VAC Liaison
- Brett Nila, ROTC/JROTC
- C. Maurice Theriac, VFW/MOC
- Josh Seed, VFW Riders
- Bobby Welch, Historian

AUGUST COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING

These additional State Officers will also be called into the Council of Administration
Duane Hisel, Emblem and Supply
Jimmie Waters, Assistant Emblem and Supply
Jeff Britt, Officer of the Day
Ray Bachewicz, Sergeant-At-Arms

STATE COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING

The Homecoming Dinner for Commander Eugene Blackwell will be held on Saturday, August 23, 2025 at Tinley Park Convention Center, use west side entrance. There is a flyer located in the back of these General Orders. You may purchase your tickets through State Headquarters by calling (217) 529-6688 or making a donation on <http://www.vfwil.org>. Tickets are \$50 each.

ILLINOIS DAY AT THE VFW NATIONAL HOME

"Illinois Day" at the National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, has been set for Saturday, September 20, 2025. We hope to have a large turn-out and would appreciate having a head count of the number of VFW and Auxiliary Members from each Post who will be in attendance. Please see attachment in the back for more information.

ILLINOIS VFW NEWS

The Illinois VFW News committee met June 5 to discuss the future of the Illinois VFW News. The committee recommended converting the Illinois VFW News to a digital-only product effective with the new fiscal year, July 1. The Council of Administration voted June 5th to adopt the committee's recommendation. The Illinois VFW News will be published in July, September, November, January, March, and May, and will be available on our website at www.vfwil.org.

Items to be included in the Illinois VFW News should still be submitted to Editor, Barb Wilson, at bwilson@vfwil.org. The deadline for each issue will be the 20th of the month preceding publication.

Any questions can be directed to Barb at bwilson@vfwil.org

ILLINOIS VFW 2026 CALENDAR

The Illinois VFW 2026 Calendar is now in the hands of our District Commanders. We are asking Posts and Districts to assist in selling the calendars. As a reminder, Posts and Districts selling Calendars can keep \$2 for each calendar as an incentive. The calendars are \$20 each, and the daily drawing begins January 1st. This is a fundraiser that the Council of Administration approved in August 2024.

2025-2026 TOWN HALL MEETINGS

State Commander Eugene Blackwell will be holding 5 Town Hall Meetings this fall at Posts around Illinois.

October 11, 2025

Fox River Post 4600
3002 W. Rt 120
McHenry IL, 60051

October 12, 2025

Princeton Post 4323
1549 W Peru St.
Princeton, IL 61356

October 25, 2025

Cronin Brother's Post 1756
915 5th St.
Lincoln, IL 62656

December 7, 2025

Cox Post 4753
302 Coal St.
Sesser, IL 62884

April 11, 2026

John H Kraus Post 454
1006 E. Lincoln St.
Bloomington, IL 61701

NEW CENTURY RAFFLE

The New Century Raffle has officially started and will run through June 30, 2025. Tickets are \$10.00 each. Each ticket entitles you to participate in a weekly drawing of \$100 from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2025. Drawings will be held each Friday beginning July 1, 2025, with each week's winning ticket being returned to the barrel

for 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 they print their name on the ticket. If the seller does not sign the ticket, the \$10.00 will be automatically donated and split between the Department's Unmet Needs Program and Children's National Home. Winners will be announced each month in the General Orders and posted on the <http://vfwil.org> website.

WEEKLY WINNER

<u>Date of Drawing</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Seller</u>
7/4/2025	Kerwood Watts	No seller listed
7/11/2025	Floyd and Laura Lomelino	No seller listed
7/18/2025	Eugene Leber	Geno Leber
7/25/2025	Gregory Storce	Gregory Storce

By Order of:



Joseph "Scott" Swinford
State Adjutant/Quartermaster

Official



Eugene Blackwell
State Commander

August Council of Administration

Tentative Agenda (*Subject to Change*)

Tinley Park Convention Center
18451 Convention Center Dr., Tinley Park, IL 60477

Friday, August 22, 2025

1:00 PM VFW Supply Sales Opens

1:00 PM IL VFW Foundation Meeting **Closed Meeting*
Veterans Service Committee
Illinois VFW News Committee
Budget & Finance Committee

3:00 PM Council of Administration Meeting

5:00 PM VFW Supply Sales Closes

Saturday, August 23, 2025

7:00 AM Church Services

8:00 AM VFW Supply Sales Opens

8:30 AM Council of Administration Meeting

9:00 AM Auxiliary Council Meeting

3:00 PM VFW Supply Sales Closes

Joint Homecoming (\$50 per ticket)

5:00 PM Cocktail Bar

6:00 PM Dinner

Tinley Park Conv. Center – West Side Entrance

The dress code for Friday is casual; with or without Commander's shirt.

The dress code for Saturday business meeting is VFW business attire.

The dress code for the Homecoming is casual.

Homecoming Tickets cost \$50.00 and can be purchased through Department HQ or online at
www.vfwil.org.

JOINT HOMECOMING HONORING
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS

2025 - 2026

VFW COMMANDER EUGENE BLACKWELL &
VFW AUXILIARY PRESIDENT DIANE AHRENS



AUGUST 23, 2025

TINLEY PARK CONVENTION CENTER

18451 CONVENTION CENTER DR., WEST SIDE MAIN ENTRANCE

TINLEY PARK, IL 60477

5:00PM COCKTAIL BAR

6:00PM DINNER

Donation: \$50pp



Tickets may be purchased via check or online at vfwil.org. To purchase online,
click on the "**Donate Now**" button and type in "Homecoming."

To purchase by mail, mail check earmarked
"Homecoming" to

Illinois VFW
3300 Constitution Dr.
Springfield, IL 62711

*The Tinley Park Convention Center is connected to the EVEN Hotel
Tinley Park. There is a EVEN Hotel reservations link posted on
the vfwil.org web page under "EVENTS." The room rate is \$169 per night
plus applicable taxes.*

All reservations must be guaranteed with a major credit card.

Check-In Time: 3:00pm Central

Check-Out Time: 11:00am Central

Benjamin O. Davis VFW Post 311 Good Ole Fish Fry

Friday, August 22, 2025

5:00PM - 8:00PM
or until sold out

MEAL INCLUDES

Catfish Fillet, Spaghetti, Corn, Coleslaw & Bread
Spaghetti can be substituted for Fries

Desserts Available

Benjamin O. Davis VFW Post 311

22341 Governors Highway

Richton Park, IL 60471

www.vfwpost311.org

2 piece dinners - \$18

1 piece dinner - \$15

Sandwiches - \$12
(no sides included)



PRE-ORDERING

CALL 708-679-0995

Illinois day ... September 20, 2025

National home's 100th anniversary
Join the celebration!

Event runs from 9am-2pm
Guided tours from 10-12
Lunch at 12 followed by program
A detailed program will be available closer to the event.

Location
VFW National Home
3573 Waverly Road
Eaton rapids, Mi 48827
Phone - 800- 424 8360

Activities

We will begin with a visit to the local (Rosehill cemetery) - national home section at 9am
Local time. Campus activities begin at 10am. Lunch is at noon followed by the program and
Silver march. Departure is at approximately 2pm.

We will visit the national home's beautiful campus with 43 homes on over 600 acres, Illinois
home 1 and 2 as well as the museum,
Gift shop, and Montana farmstead. There will also be lots of food, fun,
Games, prizes and good information about the home available in the gym.

Welcoming dinner

For those comrades arriving on Friday, September 19, we will have a welcoming dinner at local
VFW post 2406
In nearby charlotte Michigan at 695 Lansing street. (517-543 1719)
Cold beverages and camaraderie at 5 pm and dinner at 6pm.

Accommodations

We look forward to having a great trip and for those staying overnight on Friday, September 19
please make your own accommodations. Blocks of rooms have been set aside for us.
Please call and mention you are coming with the Illinois VFW for the annual visit to the national
home.

Here is a list of the local motels

Comfort inn
1302 Packard hwy.
Charlotte, Mi
517-543 7307

Holiday inn
500 Meijer St,
Charlotte, Mi
517-541 5000

America's best value inn
828 E Shepherd St.
Charlotte, Mi
517-543 8288

Our thanks go out to all of our Illinois VFW and Auxiliary members
And we look forward to a having a great trip!

Strategies for Successful Blood Drives

- Schedule drives far enough in advance that your donor base will know and not donate before your drives.
- If you are able, schedule drives every 8 or 9 weeks. This will set up a schedule that people who are dedicated donors will be able to keep on their donation schedule.
- Have a team to work the blood drive. Look at the strengths of your volunteers and use them for where they naturally fit. I have a volunteer that is great at making phone calls and getting people scheduled, I am not good at it. I am good at signing up people for the next blood drive while they are donating.
- Make sure to have a story about why you are running a blood drive. If you have a deeply meaningful story, tell it and listen to why others donate. If you are running the drive to help the community, be upfront with it.

Difference in Donating Blood vs Plasma

Why do we only count blood donations on the Dashboard and not plasma donations?

The first reason is that blood donation at a blood bank is a true donation, even if you receive a small gift for donating. When you give a plasma donation at a plasma center you get paid, which means it is not a donation, but a paid activity.

Secondly, blood donations are used to directly save lives, and most blood donations stay within the local community. Plasma donations done at plasma centers are primarily sold to pharmaceutical companies for research purposes.

Facts about blood donation from the Red Cross website:

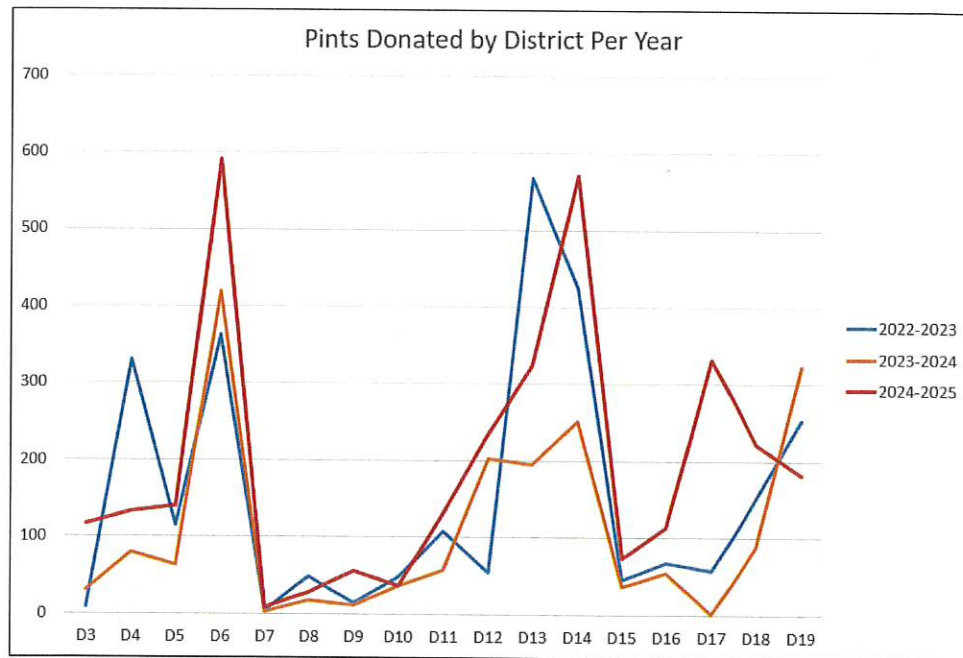
- Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood and or platelets.
- Approximately 29,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the U. S.
- Nearly 5,000 units of platelets and 6,500 units of plasma are needed daily in the U.S.
- Nearly 16 million blood components are transfused each year in the U.S.
- Sickle cell disease affects 90,000 to 100,000 people in the U.S. About 1,000 babies are born with the disease each year. Sickle cell patients can require blood transfusions throughout their lives.
- The average red blood cell transfusion is approximately 3 units.
- A single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood.
- Blood and platelets cannot be manufactured; they can only come from volunteer donors.
- The blood type most often requested by hospitals is type O.
- One donation can help save more than one life.
- According to the American Cancer Society, more than 1.9 million people are expected to be diagnosed with cancer in 2023. Many of them will need blood, sometimes daily, during their chemotherapy treatment.

The American Cancer Society projects as estimated slightly of 2 million new cancer cases to be diagnosed in 2025.

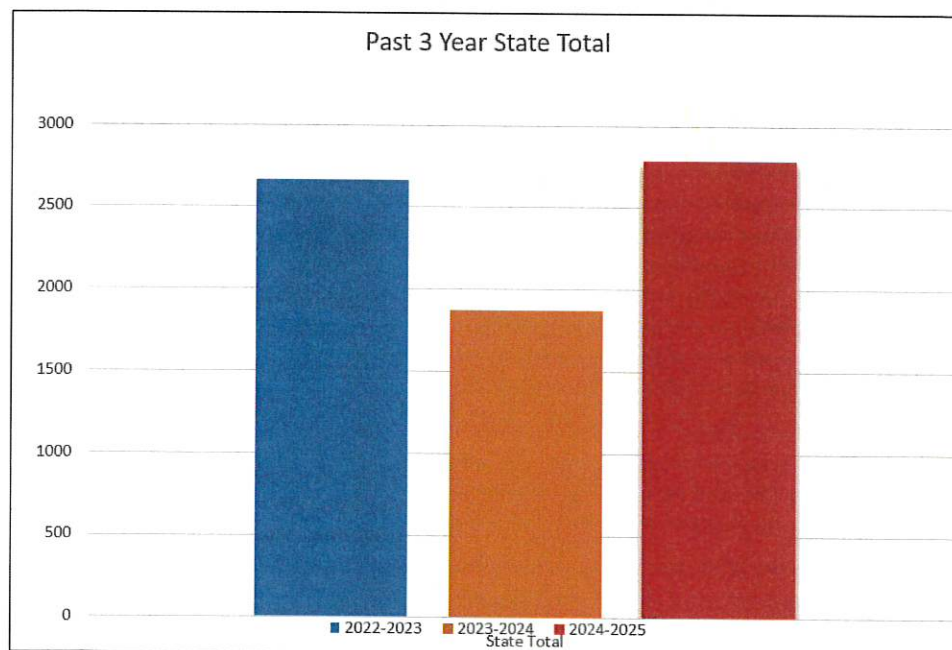
Rob Bland, Blood Donor

Blood Donor Report Aug 25

Past Blood Pints Donated by District:



State Total Pints Donated:



VFW SCOUTING REPORT

A new VFW year is here with new challenges and opportunities. With many of the scouting units also kicking off their scouting year by planning their unit's activities and programs, now is the time for our VFW posts to interact with the scouting units and offer our assistance to full fill the scouting unit's goals.

By helping with the scout units, we can also help with our goals of community service, Americanism, membership, VOD/PP, and Teacher of the Year/First Responder Recognition programs.

Do not wait until the last minute for working on our programs and mentoring our youth.

Ron Milton

State scouting Chair.

Usafret1@att.net

Department Officers for 2025-2026

COMMANDER

Eugene Blackwell Jr.

SR. VICE COMMANDER

Robert Bailey

JR. VICE COMMANDER

Ryan Higginbotham

ADJUTANT

Scott Swinford

QUARTERMASTER

Scott Swinford

CHAPLAIN

Gary Holmes)

CHIEF OF STAFF

Bobby Welch

DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF

David Long

JUDGE ADVOCATE

Jay Hoffman

SURGEON

Doug Jameson

ASSISTANT SURGEON

Damon Arnold

INSPECTOR

Cathy Stubbs

ASSISTANT INSPECTOR

Wallace Braswell

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER

Matt Claussen

DIRECTOR, VETERANS SERVICE

Sean Conner

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Raymond Bachewicz

ASSISTANT SERGEANTS-AT-ARMS

Roy Johnson

Steve Noodwang

OFFICER OF THE DAY

Jeffery Britt

EMBLEM & SUPPLY

Duane Hisel

ASSISTANT EMBLEM & SUPPLY

Jimmie Waters

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT

Jonathan Cooper

ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER

Bobby Edwards

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Mathius Carter

ASSISTANT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Josh Seed
Eric Morales
Alonzo Skipper
Evamarie Duff

MARKETING/ MEDIA RELATIONS CHAIRMAN

Barbara Wilson

IT/SOCIAL MEDIA CHAIRMAN

Barbara Wilson

STATE PHOTOGRAPHER

Arnold Taylor

ALL STATE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

Steve Eller

WOMEN VETERANS CHAIRMAN

Nekohl Johnson

ASSISTANT WOMEN VETERANS CHAIRMAN

Evamarie Duff
Amiee Louer-Wagoner

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN

Steve Eller

SAFETY CHAIRMAN

Glen Goodrich

BLOOD DONOR CHAIRMAN

Rob Bland

HOMELESS VETERANS CHAIRMAN

Paul Bezazian

P.O.W. /M.I.A. CHAIRMAN

Clarence Caraker

POPPY CHAIRMAN

Stephanie Kirksey

LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

Jonathan Cooper

LEGISLATIVE CO-CHAIRMAN

John Lawson

ASSISTANT LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

Dave Marsh

STATE PARLIAMENTARIAN

Fritz Michelcic

STATE HISTORIAN

Bobby Welch

VAC LIAISON

Doug Jameson

MOC COORDINATOR

C. Maurice Theriac

MAP/MILITARY SERVICES CHAIRMAN

Bill Browne

NATIONAL HOME CHAIRMAN

Kyna Simpson

ASSISTANT NATIONAL HOME CHAIRMAN

Mike Mc Grath

YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN

John Davin

ASSISTANT YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN

Michelle Ramlow

ROTC/JROTC

Brett Nila

STUDENT VETERANS LIASION

Georges Sanon

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY CHAIRMAN

Dave Darte

ASSISTANT VOICE OF DEMOCRACY CHAIRPERSON

Kyna Simpson

SCHOLAR'S APP COORDINATOR

David Long

Jake Wyatt

Kyna Simpson

SCOUTING CHAIRMAN

Ron Milton

VFW RIDER

Josh Seed

Scholar's App Problem Solvers

David Long at: sgtlongdis7@gmail.com

Lawrence Miller at: lrmsvm@comcast.net

Jake Wyatt at: jwyatt3@msn.org

Kyna Simpson at: fog4kat@me.com

Dave Darte at: ddarte@yahoo.com

Donna Brown: brniz696@aol.com