



DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS

CENTENNIAL

1920 ★ 2020



DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS
VETERANS OF FOREIGN
WARS

September 2021

GENERAL ORDER No. 2

*****ANNOUNCEMENT*****

VFW Expresses Condolences, Frustration Over Operations in Afghanistan

The following is a message from VFW National Commander Fritz Mihelcic

On behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, we are saddened and angered at hearing the news of the tragic loss of American and Afghan lives in the cowardly attack outside of Kabul airport today. So far, twelve U.S. service members died and fifteen were wounded standing up for one of the most fundamental principles of our military - 'leave no one behind.' They were deployed with the urgent mission of bringing home American citizens and offering safe passage to our Afghan allies in one of the most dangerous areas on earth, during one of the largest evacuations in human history. We honor the sacrifices of our comrades and send our prayers and condolences to the Gold Star families and the Afghan families alike grieving their loved ones lost in this reprehensible act of terrorism.

While we have all watched the collapse of Afghanistan in bewilderment, we can no longer hold back our frustrations over the dire situation our U.S. service members, U.S. citizens, Afghan and NATO allies are currently in. How is it that we placed our trust, the security of our operations and the lives of our nation's sons and daughters in the hands of the violent extremists we have been fighting against for the past twenty years? It is understandable an evacuation of this magnitude, under these circumstances, on this timeline would have some significant challenges, but this cannot be what right looks like.

We firmly believe in leaving the politics to the politicians, but the time for Congress to act, and act decisively, is now. We demand Congress follow through with investigating what led us to this point and bring forth swift answers to the public. We deserve to know, and our leaders owe those answers not only to the American people who elected them to office, but also to the families who are searching for some solace as they mourn the flag-draped coffins returning from Afghanistan.

To our brave men and women, thank you for everything you are doing on behalf of our nation. Continue to look out for one another and stay focused on your mission. We have your backs here at home.

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Our department has many Veterans who served in Afghanistan at some point over the last 20 years. Countless others know someone who has served there, been injured there, or who gave the ultimate sacrifice and never came home. Please do buddy checks and lead any who are in need to the resources where they can get some assistance and guidance. Here are some links to utilize.

The following resources are available from Veterans Affairs:

- **Veterans Crisis Line** - If you are having thoughts of suicide, call 1-800-273-8255, then PRESS 1 or visit <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/> For emergency mental health care, you can also go directly to [your local VA medical center](#) 24/7 regardless of your discharge status or enrollment in other VA health care.
- **Vet Centers** - Discuss how you feel with other Veterans in these community-based counseling centers. **70% of Vet Center staff are Veterans.** Call 1-877-927-8387 or find one [near you](#).
- **[VA Mental Health Services Guide](#)** - This guide will help you sign up and access mental health services.
- **[MakeTheConnection.net](#)** - information, resources, and Veteran to Veteran videos for challenging life events and experiences with mental health issues.
- **RallyPoint** - Talk to other Veterans online. Discuss: [What are your feelings as the Taliban reclaim Afghanistan after 20 years of US involvement?](#)
- **[Download VA's self-help apps](#)** - Tools to help deal with common reactions like, stress, sadness, and anxiety. You can also track your symptoms over time.
- **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)** - [Request a Peer Mentor](#)
- **VA Women Veterans Call Center** - Call or text 1-855-829-6636 (M-F 8AM - 10PM & SAT 8AM - 6:30PM ET)
- **VA Caregiver Support Line** - Call 1-855-260-3274 (M-F 8AM - 10PM & SAT 8AM - 5PM ET)
- **Together We Served** - [Find your battle buddies](#) through unit pages
- **George W. Bush Institute** - Need help or want to talk? [Check In](#) or call: 1-630-522-4904 or email: checkin@veteranwellnessalliance.org
- **Elizabeth Dole Foundation Hidden Heroes** - [Join the Community](#)
- **American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network** - [Peer Support and Mentoring](#)
- **Team Red, White & Blue** - *Hundreds of events weekly.* [Find a chapter](#) in your area.
- **Student Veterans of America** - Find a [campus chapter](#) to connect with.
- **Team Rubicon** - Find a [local support](#) squad.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is vital to the success of our organization and to the services we provide. Most of the time getting a new member is as easy as saying hi and where did you serve? Every community has younger veterans who are eligible, and it should be the priority of every post and every member to let them know the VFW is here and ready to serve them. Massachusetts has over 350,000 Veterans and of those it is estimated over 75,000 are eligible to be members of the VFW. If they are not members of any organization, their voices are not being heard. If we want to maintain the benefits and services we have worked so hard to obtain, we must remain a loud and viable voice in front of our lawmakers. The need has never been higher. All it takes is everyone just signing up one more person or getting that member who left for whatever reason to sign back up. Let's all work together to get our Department to a Membership level over 100% of last year!

See attached flyer for both National and State Membership Programs!

September Membership Contests

Posts New Members Monthly Contest: \$50.00 VFW Store Gift Certificate

Top Recruiter: \$50.00 Gift Card and Commander's Gift Set

COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

The next CoA meeting is scheduled for September 18, 2021 and will be at the **Whitman Post 697 located at 99 Essex Street, Whitman, MA.**

- Massachusetts VFW Foundation Meeting – the Foundation will meet at 09:30AM prior to the CoA. All members are encouraged to attend.
- CoA Meeting – the CoA will start promptly at 10:30AM.

MEMBER DUES

Members are reminded that under the subscription dues model, an annual member's dues expire on the last day of the month of which they paid the previous year. Annual members are encouraged to renew their dues prior to their anniversary month to avoid a lapse in continuous membership. Better yet, have them upgrade to a Life Membership!

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Life Membership: The VFW offers the lowest Life Membership fees of most organizations and even offers a 12 month no interest payment plan. It is Easy; It is Cheap, and you never have to worry again. Plan E Life Membership fees shall be charged in accordance with the following Plan E fee schedule effective January 1, 2007:

Plan E Life			
Attained Age	Member Fee	Attained Age	Member Fee
Through 30	\$425	61-70	\$290
31-40	\$410	71-80	\$225
41-50	\$375	81 & over	\$170
51-60	\$335		

The applicable fee from the effective life membership fee schedule will be determined using the applicant's attained age as of December 31st of the current calendar year in which the application is submitted, regardless of actual date of birth.

DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS

The Department has worked very hard to ensure that All members are getting communications in a timely manner. We have the VFWMA.org Web site, Department Newspaper (Published & Electronic), General Orders, Email directly from the State Adjutant and Email from our Communications team through Constant Contact. However, we are still getting members who are saying they are not getting communications.

We have provided all Posts and Districts an email account (Postxxx@vfwma.org or Districtxx@vfwma.org) through Go Daddy that **must** be used in addition to any other emails you are using. If you have given your Personal or separate Post/District email address to the Adjutant and the Communications team you should be receiving at least two (2) of the same emails from different sources. Please share this information with your Post members so they can get on the mailing lists if interested. If you have questions or need assistance with getting email contact PSC Eric Segundo at esegundo@vfwma.org or adjutant@vfwma.org .

ORDERS

- 1. Post Elections:** Attention is directed to Section 217 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure covering the nomination, election, and installation of Post Officers. Nominations of Post Officers shall open in March and remain open until the Post is ready to vote. Post officers shall be elected in April. The order of nominations and elections shall be Commander, Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, Quartermaster, Chaplain and Trustee(s). Post-Election Reports need to be completed with every position properly accounted for. Submission of incomplete or fraudulent election reports may lead to administrative action. Some things to watch out for;

Multiple Offices having the same contact information or using the Post as a contact.

Members who are listed as officers who are deceased or incapacitated.

Election reports containing out of service phone numbers, addresses, emails or other such information.

Election reports are legal documents and are to be treated as such.

PLEASE BE ADVISED: ALL NOMINATIONS ARE DONE IN MARCH AT THE POST LEVEL WITH ALL ELECTIONS HELD IN APRIL. INSTALLATIONS ARE DONE PRIOR TO THE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION BUT THE OFFICERS CANNOT ASSUME DUTIES BEFORE THE NEW DEPARTMENT COMMANDER IS INSTALLED. If your post does not do your elections this way, they are not in compliance with the National Bylaws. You should take steps now to correct that.

- 2. Organizations exempt from income tax under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code are generally required to file Form 990 by the 15th day of the fifth month following the close of their accounting fiscal year.** For the current IRS requirements (beginning on or after January 1), if the organization's annual gross receipts are normally more than \$50,000, the organization must file Form 990 or 990-EZ. Small tax-exempt organizations whose annual gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less are required to

electronically submit Form 990-Nalso known as the e-Postcard. There is no penalty assessment for late filling the e-Postcard, but an organization that fails to file required information returns for three consecutive years will automatically lose its tax-exempt status. The revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status will not take place until the filing due date of the third year.

If you have any questions concerning the Form 990 contact the Department office.

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- 3. Post Inspections:** Section 518 provides that the Department Inspector shall require that each Post be inspected in accordance with Department and National guidelines. The purpose of the inspection is to assure that the Post operates in a manner that supports the purposes set forth in the Congressional Charter, complies with the By-Laws, preserves the financial integrity of the Post and protects the interest of the member. Every Post is expected to be inspected at least once each year. It will also be a requirement for All State. It is the duty of the District Inspector to notify the Post Commander, Quartermaster, Adjutant and Trustees of the date and time that the inspection is scheduled. The inspector should allow you enough time to prepare for the visit. The Post inspection will go a lot smoother if it is conducted at some time other than a Post meeting night. If, for any reason, a Post cannot be inspected thoroughly, a report stating the facts must be submitted. It is the responsibility of the Post Quartermaster and Post Adjutant to provide the records necessary to complete the duties of Inspector. When the inspection of a Post is completed, the Post Inspection Form will be made out in triplicate. The yellow copy will be mailed to the Post Commander and a copy should be retained for your files.

*****ALL POSTS ARE TO BE INSPECTED BY ORDER OF THE STATE COMMANDER *****

- 4. All Commanders are reminded that Section 709, Manual of Procedure:** Control of Units, requires that any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or on behalf of a Post, District or Department shall be at all times under the direct control of such Post, District or Department and that all money, property or assets of any kind or nature, must be placed in the care and custody of the respective Quartermaster. All Commanders should ensure that all provisions of Section 709 are enforced. Any time a post wants to sell property or lease land use, the bylaws must be followed to protect the sale.
- 5. Websites and Information Resources:** The Department and National have websites set up to help with all aspects of running posts and participating in programs. These websites contain information for duties of officers, rules and procedures for fundraising, programs. Membership recruitment tools, medias which can be used by posts to help spread the word and many other items are also available at these websites.

a. **Department Website:** www.vfwma.org

b. **National Website:** www.vfw.org

- 6. Training:** The Department is committed to providing training throughout the year utilizing in person sessions and ZOOM sessions. We will notify all Districts of the dates as they are scheduled and will provide training materials as needed. Some of the topics and sessions will be for Quartermasters and other Post Officers, how to run a post, how to run programs, social media utilization. Stay tuned for further information

7. **Every Post chartered by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States will be expected to participate in the following programs during the 2021-22 year:** Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, “Buddy”® Poppy and Veterans and Military Support Programs. Additionally, it is necessary that all Post and Department Commanders comply with all provisions of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure and Ritual.
8. **U.S. Army ARDEC has issued guidance on the operation and maintenance of the M1 Garand.** The manual can be found in the VFW Training & Support section at vfw.org or you can visit the M1 Garand Associated Website: m1garandtraining.com.
9. **Attention of all members is directed to Section 901 of the National Bylaws,** “Discipline of Members.” Members who have committed offenses recognized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States may be subject to disciplinary action. Members are reminded that acts of Sexual Harassment, Racial or Sexual Discrimination, and all other conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline or conduct determined to be unbecoming of a member will not be condoned. In general, harassment and discrimination consists of any form of verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe and/or pervasive enough to have the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment or otherwise interfering with another’s ability to participate in VFW events. All members will be treated with dignity and respect.



COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Comrades. I hope everyone had an enjoyable (although a hot and wet) summer. It is hard to believe it is over 2 months since State Convention. We are continuing to do great things for our veterans. National Convention was scaled down to just business, but we still got the job done.

I have been traveling all summer and have been all around the State meeting you. This will continue throughout the year. As we move into the fall, we all need to remain focused. This is our busy time of year and all our programs are starting up. We will be meeting in person for the Council of Administration and I expect the entire Council to be present.

Of course you know I am going to talk about membership. The National and State Membership Programs are included. Please read them since they have some new requirements for All State and All American. We are down 30 from this point last year. We need to get back the members that lapsed over the last 2 years. Make phone calls or go visit our Comrades. Continue to recruit new members. All the line officers and District Commanders have "membership go bags". They have everything you need to set up a table. Use them.

If you would like me or any other line officer at one of your events, you must go through the office. They control the master schedule. The earlier the notice, the better.

Let's continue to take care of our veterans. Reach out to our Afghanistan vets especially now.

BY COMMAND OF:



Doug Wood, Commander

OFFICIAL:



William G. LeBeau, Adjutant

VFW DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS



DOUG WOOD

STATE COMMANDER
dwood@vfwma.org

Doug Wood was elected State Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Massachusetts at its 101st State Convention which was held at the Doubletree in Leominster, MA. Doug Wood joined the Navy in 1981 after completing 1 year at Southeastern Massachusetts University. Upon completion of Naval

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MICHAEL RAYMOND

SR. VICE COMMANDER
mraymond@vfwma.org

Michael Raymond joined the U.S. Army after graduating from high school. He served from 1987 – 1997 as a paralegal and recruiter, earning the rank of Staff Sergeant (E6) with duty assignments in Germany, Korea (Korea Defense Service Medal) and deployed for the Persian Gulf War in support of Operation D

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JAMES MORRISSEY

STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER
jmorrissey@vfwma.org

James Morrissey joined the Navy after high school and spent a total of 10 years on active duty. His assignments included the USS Macdonough (DDG-39), NAWS Pt. Mugu, and the USS Independence CV-62. He attended aviation ordnance school and F-14 Armament school. Jim earned his VFW eligibility by r

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JOHN LARNEY

STATE QUARTERMASTER
jjlarney@vfwma.org

John Larney joined the US Navy in 1961 after graduation from high school, he went thru boot camp at Great Lakes, IL and was assigned to the USS Antietam CVS 36 as part of an experiment to see if a short time at sea would improve the dropout rate from long technical schools. The sixty-day experiment

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JODY FREITAS

STATE JUDGE ADVOCATE
jfreitas@vfwma.org

Jody Freitas originally enlisted in the Massachusetts Army National Guard during his senior year of high school in February 1992. He completed basic training and AIT at Fort Leonard Wood Missouri. . After completion of Initial Entry Training he was assigned to the Carpentry Masonry Platoon of the

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TROY HENKE

STATE SURGEON
thenke@vfwma.org

Troy entered the US Army Reserve at 17 years of age during the summer of his Junior year, with the rank of PV2. He completed BCT at Fort Sill, OK. Subsequently returned home to graduate from St. Mary's High School in Westfield, class of 2001. Upon graduation he attended AIT at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD



JOSEPH J GALLICK

STATE CHAPLAIN
jgallick@vfwma.org

Fr. Gallick was commissioned a chaplain in the Pennsylvania Army Reserve National Guard in 1986. In 1987, he entered active duty, serving in numerous assignments until transferring to the Massachusetts Army Reserve in 1997, where he served until his retirement in 2009. While mobilized to Ft. Drum, NY, in

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BILL LEBEAU

STATE ADJUTANT
blebeau@vfwma.org

Bill joined the US Army Reserves in July 1987 and graduated from the US Military Police School in December of that year and served eight years with the 344th MP CO 1st Plt. Based in Worcester MA. He deployed in support of Desert Shield/Desert Storm in November 1990 until its completion in May 1991 which earned him his VFW eligibility. During Desert Storm his unit was assigned to the 503rd MP



ERIC SEGUNDO

NATIONAL COUNCIL
MEMBER 2021-25
esegundo@vfwma.org

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Eric moved to Massachusetts in 1999. In 2003 he enlisted in the United States Army where he served on active duty with the 3rd Infantry Division, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, in Fort Stewart, Georgia. During his time in the United States Army, Eric served as The Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the



RUSSELL JOBE

PAST STATE COMMANDER
rjobe@vfwma.org

Russell K. Jobe was elected State Commander of the Department of Massachusetts, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. on June 19th, 2020 during a special ceremony at the Townsend VFW Post 6538 in Townsend, MA. Russell served in the U.S. Navy from 1982-2003 as an Aviation Support Equipment Technician. His

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For more information about the Team, go to www.vfwma.org