

Valume 67 Issue 1

From the Commanders Desk:

**Combating Mental Health Challenges: Veterans** 

For veterans, the transition from military to civilian life can come with unexpected challenges. Experiences from service—whether combat-related, long deployments, or high-stress environments—can leave lasting effects on mental health. Conditions like PTSD, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse are common but not insurmountable. Here's how veterans can take proactive steps to combat these challenges and build a fulfilling post-service life.

1. Acknowledge the Challenge

The first and most important step is recognizing the need for help. Mental health struggles are not a sign of weakness—they're a normal response to extraordinary circumstances. By acknowledging the issue, veterans take the first step toward recovery and growth. 2. Seek Professional Help

Therapists, counselors, and psychiatrists trained in working with veterans can provide invaluable support. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers mental health services tailored to veterans, including therapy, support groups, and medication management. If accessing the VA feels daunting, our Veterans Service Officers can help you. Many nonprofits and private providers specialize in veteran care as well. 3. Connect with Fellow Veterans

There's strength in shared experiences. Many veterans find comfort and healing through peer support groups or organizations like our own Veterans of Foreign Wars or our special project Irreverent Warriors. Talking with someone who's walked a similar path can make all the difference. Post canteens can make huge impacts on mental health of our veterans. 4. Build a Support Network

Family and friends can be a vital source of support. Open and honest communication helps loved ones understand what you're going through and how they can help. Don't be afraid to lean on them—they want to see you thrive.

5. Embrace Healthy Habits

Physical and mental health are deeply connected. Exercise, a balanced diet, and regular sleep can improve mood, reduce stress, and enhance overall well-being. Activities like yoga, mindfulness, and meditation are also proven tools to combat anxiety and depression.

January 2025

#### 6. Explore Alternative Therapies

Programs like equine therapy, art therapy, and outdoor retreats have shown great success in helping veterans process trauma and reconnect with themselves. Don't hesitate to explore options that resonate with you. 7. Use Technology

Telehealth services make mental health care more accessible than ever. Apps like PTSD Coach, created by the VA, offer tools for managing symptoms, while virtual therapy sessions provide flexibility and convenience.

8. Know You're Not Alone

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that you are not alone. Thousands of veterans face similar challenges, and countless resources exist to support you. It's okay to ask for help, and doing so is a powerful act of strength.

#### **Final Thoughts**

Mental health challenges can feel overwhelming, but they are manageable with the right tools and support. As veterans, we've faced adversity before and emerged stronger. The same resilience can help overcome these struggles. Reach out, connect, and take action—your well-being is worth it.

Yours in LOTCS, Cory Mahan

Indiana State Copmmander





Greetings Comrades & VFW Auxiliary Members,

This year's National Convention will be very covenant as it will be located in Columbus, Ohio August 9 -13, 2025. If you are able, I strongly recommend that you attend. Among the many training courses/workshops that will be available free of charge, I highly recommend the National Chaplains workshop! Having attended the National Conventions for many years, I am always amazed that I learn something new every time I attend!

I have been given more time at our School of Instruction next year to go over the importance of reporting your deceased members. Our goal is to create an accurate database listing of all our deceased members with their final resting place so that we can provide which cemetery the Veteran is located when assisting extended family/friends requesting the information from our department. Our departments form is located on our State Website under the Resources tab, then Documents and scroll down to Post Forms and select <u>Graves Registration Report</u> (fillable); copy attached on page 42. The form can be sent directly to my Email address <u>lipatch@mail.com</u> or mailed to me at 9034 Eiderdown Way, Indianapolis, IN 46234. This information also assists me in sending out sympathy cards and creating the TAPS page in our Combat Veteran Newsletter. I have only received 5 reports from September 1 to December 31? I truly pray this means our membership hasn't suffered any other losses!

I have had an awesome year so far, and I look forward to getting to more of your District/Post meetings. I truly enjoy the comradery that you always share when attending meetings or when I'm just stopping at your posts in my travels.

I have added the information on page 25/26 for the National Chaplain of the year contest. Please contact me by email or text/call [317 450-9408] if there is anything I can assist you with.

Yours in LOTCS,

Larry Patch Department of Indiana Chaplain





















Indiana Combat Veteran



































































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VEW Day @ Indiana Veterans Home









































VFW Day

Indiana Combat Veteran

Veterans Home





@ Indiana





















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State Surgeon Ken Lange presenting a check from Carmel Post 10003 (District 6) for \$2,500 to Big Woods Pizza to cover the cost of 100 pizzas and 800 wings for the Troops.

#### Mission 22 Gala in November 2024



State Surgeon Ken Lange signing up a new Life Member for Post 7119 (District 11)









#### Indiana Combat Veteran

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Carmel Post 10003 (District 6) Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony 07 Dec 2024





Group photo from a State Recruiting event at the new Indy Fuel arena in Fishers, IN









MESSAGE FROM THE COOTES

#### **Greetings to all you Lousy Cooties & Cuties!**

**Burr..it's cold outside!!!** We had a very lousy time at the Big Ten Conference! It was cool to see that the Wisconsin/Supreme Cooties set up a booth at the Big Ten Conference! I know myself & that wacky Hide Gimlet Cootie #9 donated quite abit at the booth, but we got some real cool stuff! Have a few pictures in this issue of our adventures over the past few months!

We are depressed for the new year! We along with our cuties (MOCA) are actively working with the Brookview Care Center doing a Cootie Bingo night. Future events will be discussed in our scratches. Our scratches are still the 4th Tuesday of each month @ 6:30 p.m. rotating between posts 261 and 1587. Can't satisfy an itch if you don't attend a scratch!!! So, plan on attending our next one!

The Indiana Day National Home trip annual shenanigans were totally out of control. The bus trip was a hoot for sure. If you haven't gone to the National Home, you really need to put it on your bucket list.

The Indiana Veterans Home annual visit was well attended by our rowdy band! A big thanks to Post 1154 for helping us unwind and rest a bit for our trip back home! Plus the tacos were delouses tasty.

How about the *Army* - *NAVY* game!!!! :))

If you are interested in starting a pup tent, please reach out to Russell "Gabby" Pryor, Larry Patch, or Diane Pettit for further information. Please reach out to Indy Pup Tent 11 MOCA President, Jennifer Pryor for more information on joining the auxiliary.

#### "Keep 'em Smiling in Beds of White!"

In LOTCS,

Russell "Gabby" Pryor

Seam Squirrel











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Indiana VFW Auxiliary National Presidents Visit



#### Brenda Bryant National President 2024–2025

Brenda Bryant of Hawk Point, Missouri, was elected to the office of National President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) Auxiliary at its 111th National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

January 1, 2025



#### **Post Commanders**

The Veterans Foundation of Indiana has changed, the Foundation is now an official part of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Indiana. We are now the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Indiana Foundation. The Foundation annually reports our finances and accomplishments to the Council of Administration.

The primary goal of the Foundation is to provide financial support to Indiana Veterans in need. Currently the Foundation proudly supports the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen programs of the VFW Department of Indiana. We want to ensure the State level winners receive an award that will actually provide some assistance with tuition. The Foundation established and funded the higher dollar awards for both Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen, invited the multiple Patriot's Pen winners to the Spring Conference and coordinated the tour of the Indiana War memorial for all the winners.

The Foundation needs the support of all Posts and members throughout Indiana. In 2023-2024 many Posts donated a portion of their charitable gaming profits to the Foundation. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The Foundation will send the Post a letter acknowledging the donation.

Please consider donating to the Foundation so we can continue to grow and support Veterans of Indiana.

Commanders, any donation is appreciated, we understand your Post has other programs that you support but please consider donating to the Veterans Foreign Wars Department of Indiana Foundation. If you or your membership have questions, please contact me at <a href="mailto:rwleirer@yahoo.com">rwleirer@yahoo.com</a> or 317-696-0126.

Thank you for your consideration.

~ Indiana Veterans helping Indiana Veterans ~

Richard Leirer VFW Department of Indiana Foundation

Please send donations to: Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Indiana Foundation ATTN: Keith Rohloff Secretary/Treasurer 100 Brinegar Drive Springville, IN 47462

#### Indiana Combat Veteran







#### National Chaplain of the Year Award

At the National Council of Administration workshop held on Sunday, August 27, 2016, provisional approval was given to move forward in presenting a National Chaplain of the Year Award.

The following criteria will constitute the basis for nominations, and a proposed procedure and timeline to receive nominations for this award.

#### Chaplain of the Year Criteria

- 1. Performance of Duties:
  - A. Exemplary character and conduct: e.g., A person of upmost integrity, professional execution of duties, dependability, punctuality, and timely submission of reports, etc.
  - B. Exemplary performance above and beyond the normal expectations of the position and duties.
- 2. Personal attitude which is positive and professional in all contacts with others and which represents the VFW and the Department in the best possible way.
- 3. Commitment to the ministry and duties of the Chaplain, as reflected by service to comrades and their families and responsiveness to needs.
- 4. A member of the VFW in good standing with the Post, District, and Department.

#### **Review Committee Composition and Instructions**

- 1. A committee assembled by the National Chaplain will review nominations for the award and recommend a recipient.
- 2. The committee shall include:
  - A. The National Chaplain
  - B. Three Past National Chaplains
  - C. The most recent past recipient of the Chaplain of the Year Award.
- 3. Instructions to the Committee
  - A. The committee shall follow procedures and criteria as outlined in this document. However, if no candidates are nominated or judged by the committee to meet the criteria for Chaplain of the Year, the committee shall not recommend a recipient.
  - B. All proceedings of the committee must be kept strictly confidential.
  - C. The National Chaplain will review with the National Commander and the National Adjutant General the recommendation for Chaplain of the Year prior to announcing the award recipient.

#### Procedure

The following procedure is recommended for receiving and reviewing nominations:

- 1. Information concerning this award will be distributed to the National Council of Administration each year following the National Council of Administration August meeting. The members of the National COA can then present this information to their respective Department Commanders and Adjutants when they give their report.
- 2. The National Chaplain will email information concerning the Chaplain of the Year Award and begin to solicit nominations from Department Commanders and Adjutants, beginning in October.
- 3. All nominations should be submitted to the National Chaplain by April 1. Nomination letters should be emailed, faxed, or sent USPS to the National Chaplain. Contact information is listed below.
- 4. A nomination shall address the above criteria and shall not exceed two type written pages.
- 5. The committee shall review each nomination according to the selected criteria and recommend a recipient by April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- 6. The National Chaplain will review the Committee's recommendation for Chaplain of the Year with the National Adjutant General.
- 7. The Chaplain of the Year Award will be presented at the recipients Department Convention.
- 8. The National Chaplain will notify the respective Department, and if feasible, request attendance to present the award.
- 9. The recipient's Department will notify the recipient of the National Chaplain of the Year Award and request attendance at the Department Convention to receive the award.

#### Rev. Peter R. Hook

National Chaplain 2024-2025 Veterans of Foreign Wars 534 Parkvale Ave. Langhorne, PA 19047 267-229-7722 Fax 215-750-1511 PeterHook@verizon.net



#### **Indiana Combat Veteran**

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SALE! ON ALL

SALE! RACING T-SHIRT Navy blue, 100% preshrunk cotton with screened designs. VFW Racing with flag on back. Combat Tested logo on left sleeve. Imported; decorated in the USA 7406 S-3XL \$14.50



SALE! RACING **CREW POLO** 100% polyester with sublimated designs. Zip placket with snap down colİar. Ryan

Roulette logo on left sleeve. "12" on right sleeve. Combat Tested logo on back. Imported; decorated in the

USA. 7191 M-3XL

\$24.00





#### NEW

**NEW! POPPY SEEDS** Grow your own red corn poppies. This annual can grow to 12" to 30" tall. Plant in full sun. Approx. 350 seeds per packet. **1250 \$3.00** 



#### ANNIVERSARY BLANKET

Recycled and organic black cotton blend with logo woven in design. Machine washable. 72 x 54". Made in the USA.

SALE! BLACK AND TAN RACING CAP Six-panel cap with embroidery and adjustable buckle

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

back. Imported.

#### SALE! RED AND WHITE RACING CAP Five-

panel cap with embroidery and adjustable cloth strap with brass sliding buckle. Imported.

Prices valid through 8/31/2025

To place your order, call 1.833.839.8387 or go online to

#### FLEECE HOODIE

Established 1899 screened on front. Set-in sleeves with rolled forward shoulder seam. 51/42/7 polyester/ cotton/rayon. Imported; decorated in the USA. 7648 S-3XL \$48.00

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#### No One Does More For Veterans!



Left: Post Commander Gene Richards conducting a fundraiser at the Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds raising \$1,330 on 7 SEP for the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life. Next: Vietnam Veteran Ron Gipson receives a \$500 donation check on 14 SEP during our monthly poker tournament. Next: Indiana VFW State Commander Cory Mahan and Post Quartermaster Paul Heslin address the participants of the 5K Run/Walk Event as part of the 6th Annual POW/MIA Commemoration at Columbian Park on 21 SEP. Right: Auxiliary Member Todd Hooker, who does a great job organizing and facilitating the Motorcycle Ride every year, deals the final card for the Poker Run at Memorial Island on 21 SEP.



Left: The Purdue University ROTC Joint Service Color Guard presents the colors during the National Anthem. Next: USAF Colonel-Retired and Post Jr. Vice Commander Seth Bretscher delivers the keynote address during our 6th Annual POW/MIA Commemoration. Thank you COL Bretscher for covering down since Vietnam POW Jim Pfister couldn't make it to the event. Next: Auxiliary President Renee Bauer-Wright presents a \$500 donation check to the IVH and Post Commander Gene Richards presents three separate \$500 donation checks during VFW Day at the IVH on 29 SEP. Next: A huge turnout for our first iteration of our monthly Free Breakfast for Veterans; the crowd here is applauding Sonya Baumis for all of her hard work and dedication to deliver a fantastic spread for breakfast. Right: Post Adjutant Ernie Shepard and Post Member Mike Wilson arrive in North Carolina delivering a 26-foot trailer full of donated cleaning supplies, non-perishable food, bottled water, diapers, clothes, etc. to the hurricane victims in the Hendersonville area on 20 OCT; a huge "thank you" to the Greater Lafayette Community for your outpouring of support and generosity to make this happen!





#### Indiana Combat Veteran



Congratulations to Jessica Chan for receiving the Indiana VFW JROTC student of the year. Jessica was Floyd County VFW Post 3281's entry into the contest. She is now continuing her studies at Indiana University Southeast. We wish her well on future endeavors.

## January 2025Indiana Combat VeteranPage 30We were able to feed 600 troops pizza and hot wings























We were able to feed 600 troops pizza and hot wings. Post 10003 and 1282 supported my idea and we ran with it. Shelby County businesses donated monies, and Hard Truth provided the best Pizzas and Hot Wings. Surgeon Ken Lange, State Service Officer Shawn and myself "Judy" talked about the VFW and Benefits. We were able to shake every Soldiers hand and tell them be safe and the VFW looks forward to welcoming you home after your deployment!

















**Indiana Combat Veteran** 

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BROOKVIEW CARE CENTER COOTIE STYLE BINGO!!

### DISTRICT 11

## VFW 261 Riders Art & Brews January 18th @ 3PM \$35 Tickets on Sale Now

Includes Supplies & Snacks Beverages Available for Purchase

> Proceeds to Benefit Camp Atterbury

endleton Pike Indpls (317) 823-04

#### Indiana Combat Veteran

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TOYS FOR LOVE at VFW Post 7119





David Sassman being pinned by AL Nat Cmdr



Sgt Sammy Davis, Mrs Dixie Davis and David Sassman in Martinsville "The Wall that Heals"



Indiana Combat Veteran

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Our PDC holiday get together. What a great time with the Past District Commanders dinner.



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# JANUARY **BAZAAR**

VFW POST 1587 @ 5183 W 10th st, Indianapolis

COME SUPPORT LOCAL VETERANS IN NEED THIS WINTER

OVER 25 LOCAL VENDORS SOME VETERAN OWNED & OPERATED

RAFFLE \$1 per ticket 6 for \$5 15 for \$10 25 for t\$20 (over 25 baskets) Blatz Bakery scentsy Paparazzi key lime cookies inc Permanent Jewelry White Tie Candle Co Sugar Creek Lavender Farm Once Upon A Tinsel And Many Many More!!!

Hosted by Ashley Williams

#### WHY MEN WHO HAVE BEEN TO WAR YEARN TO REUNITE

I NOW KNOW WHY MEN WHO HAVE BEEN TO WAR YEARN TO REUNITE. NOT TO TELL STORIES OR LOOK AT OLD PICTURES. NOT TO WEEP OR LAUGH.

COMRADES GATHER BECAUSE THEY LONG TO BE WITH THE PEOPLE WHO ONCE ACTED THEIR BEST; WHO ONCE SUFFERED AND SACRIFICED, WHO WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR HUMANITY.

I DID NOT PICK THESE MEN, THEY WERE DELIVERED BY FATE AND THE MILITARY. BUT I KNOW THEM IN A WAY I KNOW NO OTHER MEN. I HAVE NEVER GIVEN ANYONE SUCH TRUST.

THEY WERE WILLING TO GUARD SOMETHING MORE PRECIOUS THAN MY LIFE. THEY WOULD HAVE CARRIED MY REPUTATION... THE MEMORY OF ME.

IT WAS PART OF THE BARGAIN WE ALL MADE, THE REASON WE WERE ALL WILLING TO DIE FOR ONE ANOTHER. AS LONG AS I HAVE MEMORY, I WILL THINK OF THEM ALL, EVERY DAY.

I AM SURE THAT WHEN I LEAVE THIS WORLD, MY LAST THOUGHTS WILL BE OF MY FAMILY, AND MY COMRADES.

SUCH GOOD MEN!"



Indiana Combat Veteran

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#### District 5 Duane B Truss | Post 286 | 12/14/2024 District 10 Hal B Farmer | Post 2695 | 6/30/2024 District 10 Jerry B McIntyre | Post 2695 | 11/3/2024 District 10 Phillip S whitehouse | Post 2695 | 9/27/2024 District 10 Warren S Alvis | Post 2695 | 12/17/2024





#### **GENE RICHARDS Candidate for Surgeon Department of Indiana** 2025 - 2026Leadership in Action!

#### **Military Service**

U.S. Army Active Duty: AUG 1989 - JAN 2016; Major - Retired Enlisted Military Intelligence NCO (O5-H/98-H) 1989 - 1995 Green-to-Gold Scholarship/Distinguished Military Graduate at IU MAY 1998 Army Aviation Officer (15-B: UH-60 Blackhawk Pilot) 6 Qualifying Tours/Deployments for VFW eligibility **Combat Action Badge** Bronze Star Medal 5 Meritorious Service Medals (MSM) Afghanistan Campaign Medal (25th ID 2011-12) Korean Defense Service Medal Numerous other awards and decorations Flight Platoon Leader, C Co., 5-158 AVN, Germany 2000-01 Deployed to Mali, Africa in 2000 Company Commander, HHC, 1-228th AVN Regt., JTF-B, Honduras 2004-05 Battalion XO, Korean Service Corps BN, Yongsan, Korea 2009-10 Chief of Southeast Asian Exercises, USARPAC (4-Star HQ), Hawaii 2012-16

#### VFW Service

Joined Post 1154 in Lafayette as a Life Member JUL 2016 Post Jr. Vice Commander 2017-2018 Post Sr. Vice Commander 2018-2019 Post Commander 2019-Present District 2 Jr. Vice Commander 2020-2022 District 2 Commander 2022-Present Back-to-Back All-State & All-American Post 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 All-American District 2023-2024 VFW Distinguished Service Award 2024

#### About Me

Assistant Professor of Military Science at Purdue University Fall 2016 Assistant Professor of Military Science at University of Illinois 2017-2020 Own a small real estate investment/property management company Live in West Lafayette with my wife, Hyun (Lifetime Auxiliary Member), and three sons; James (22) and Robert (20) who attend Purdue University and Andrew (16) who is a Junior at West Lafayette High School Financially independent with time to dedicate to improving Indiana's VFW



## Keith Rohloff

#### Candidate for Surgeon Department of Indiana 2025-2026



Qualifications:

Eligibility: Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal-Operation Earnest Will - Persian Gulf (USS California CGN-36) (1987) Retired Navy Storekeeper Chief Petty Officer (SKC(SW)) (1984-2005)

- VFW Member since 2001, Gold Legacy Life Member

- VFW National Home Centennial Life Member
- American Legion Member (Post 184 Moore Oklahoma)

Member of Henry Dwyer VFW Post 9297 (Crane)(2006-Present) House Committee (2007-2009) Post Quartermaster (Feb 2009–2013, 2014-2019) Post Commander (2013-2014) Post Trustee/Service Officer (2022-Present)

Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Indiana Foundation Secretary/Treasurer (2023 to Present)

Department of Indiana District 7 Commander (2017-2018) Department of Indiana District 7 Quartermaster/Adjutant (2018-Present) Various other appointed/elected positions (2010-present)

Department of Indiana Voice of Democracy Chairperson (2018-Present) Department Disciplinary Hearing Panel Member Appointed Administration Board/Trustee Member National By-law and General Resolutions Committees (2021, 2022, 2024)

Awards

- All-State Post Quartermaster Team Captain (2009-10) (Orval B. Holycross Award)
- All-State Post Quartermaster (2010-11)
- All-American Post Commander (2013-14)
- All-American District Quartermaster (2022-2023)
- National Aide de Camp (2010-11)(2015-2016) and (2016-2017)

I am married to Cyndi, (Retired Navy Chief Petty Officer (NCC(AW/SW) (VFW Life Member) and we have 2 children Britni and Andrew (both Auxiliary Life Members) and I have their full support.



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to provide quality, consistent care and services to Veterans, families, Caregivers, and Survivors. VA's mission allows no exception to this standard even when operations are limited by the absence of appropriations (commonly known as a "Government shutdown").



In the event of a prolonged shutdown, VA will continue to review and update its plan in conjunction with the applicable legal requirements and circumstances. Please visit <u>www.whitehouse.gov/omb/</u> or <u>www.VA.gov</u> for updated information.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Download the VA Welcome Kit <u>www.va.gov/welcome-kit/</u> Subscribe to #VetResources <u>www.va.gov/vetresources/</u> Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988, then Press 1 Call 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411) or visit <u>https://www.va.gov/contact-us/</u>

January 2025
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#### Graves Registration Report Department of Indiana VFW



Mail to: Larry J Patch
Department of Indiana VFW Chaplain
9034 Eiderdown Way
Indianapolis, IN 46234
Or Email report to ljpatch@mail.com

#### Subject: Report of Deceased Comrade

Post # 1	District # regrets to r	report the death of	
(Last Name)	(Middle Initia	l)	(First Name)
Whose address was			
	During nch of Service) W		
Date of Death	Place of D	eath	
Place of Burial Ceme	ery		
Name & Address of n	ext of kin		
(Mailing Address)			
Relationship	Obituary Enclose	ed Yes/No	
Signed:	Name (Print N		Date



Let's share our special events to everyone! I will need all articles, pictures and special event fliers to me by April 22, 2025 for our May 2025 Combat Veteran newsletter! As far as format goes, articles can be in Microsoft word, Email text or Adobe PDF file. Pictures should be in JPEG but I have a pretty large selection of photography programs so I should be able to accommodate most formats. Fliers can be in Word, PDF or any Photo format. Please submit the items for the Newsletter to me at: (ljpatch@mail.com) or send to me at 9034 Eiderdown Way, Indianapolis, IN 46234. If you have any questions please Email me or call me (317)450-9408.

Yours in LOTCS,

Larry J Patch

Larry J Patch Combat Veteran Editor





## EVERYTHING WE DU. WE DO FOR VETERANS.



Learn more or join at vfw.org.