



United We Stand



Indiana Combat Veteran

Volume 66 Issue 1

September 2023

From the Commanders Desk:

Greetings Comrades,

I have been Department Commander for just a little over two months. What a whirlwind adventure it has been! I want to thank everyone for the support and encouragement I have received.

Immediately after taking my oath of office, I hit the ground running. Just this last week I put over 500 miles on the State vehicle. I have been attending several meetings to help plan for future activities. The Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis, the BIG 4, Indiana Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) Commission Meetings, Indiana Semi quintessential Commission are just a few of the organizations we are working with. Many of these meetings are open to the public, and I encourage all of you to attend.

The VFW National Convention in Phoenix was very hot, but lots of fun. The Comrades and Auxiliary brought home many awards. Next year the convention will be in Louisville, I highly encourage ALL of you to attend. It is such a great feeling as you watch your friends walk across the national stage to be recognized for all their hard work.

The VFW Auxiliary and the Comrades make a great team. With us all working together things will continue to improve. I guarantee that Auxiliary President Gennie Pickens and I are working together to make this the best year ever.

Service office update. We are expanding to Fort Wayne and we will have a full-time Veteran Service Officer (VSO) who will be working out of the FT Wayne VA. When you have an event at your Post don't forget to invite one of your VSO's. Having VSO's at your membership recruiting events will help to increase your numbers. Please contact Shawn Ransford, to have a Veteran Service Officer attend your events.

Post 1108 Richmond Post did a marvelous job with the golf outing! The food and entertainment were great! If you ever get to the east side of the State please stop by, they will treat you right!

The school of Instruction had a good turnout. We had 155 people that registered, and the number of "first timers" was impressive. Thank you to all the instructors, headquarters staff, and Jerry Blake for orchestrating this event.

The Community activity report can now be entered online. Please reach out to Edie Toll-Seiler. She is the Community Activity Chairperson and she will be more than happy to assist you.

I combined the Commander's Manual and the 2023-2024 All-State Membership Program into one manual. Go vfwin.org under the Resource tab to view the manual. Please print the manual and review it. I am happy to answer your questions.

The State Membership Director is Ken Lange. He and his team are ready and willing to assist you with your membership recruiting events. They are available as a resource; however, the team cannot answer post-specific questions. That is why your post members are needed. When you have an event, I want you to be out there working alongside the membership team. Every one of us should be able to recruit one new member. If we did this our recruiting job would be complete.

Congratulations to Post 2395 Covington for re-opening! They had a fire in 2021 and the post was a total loss. Instead of rolling over, the Post is now back in service. Last year, despite not having a building, they made 100% in membership and fulfilled their Buddy Poppy requirement. Commander Jeremy Claypool and members, thank you for all you have done!

I look forward to all the events, I will be attending on your behalf. In September, we have POW/MIA ceremonies, 9/11 Remembrances, the National Home, State Camp out, and District meetings. It's going to be a fun but busy month.

As a reminder, if you have concerns, follow your chain of command. Many concerns are due to personality issues and should be first addressed at the lowest level possible.

Again, I want to thank you for all that you do. Indiana, is doing a great job! I am proud to represent each of you. Please reach out if you have questions.

Yours in Comradeship,

Sheila Corcoran

Sheila Corcoran
Commander



Greetings Comrades,

This has been a great start to a new year for the great state of Indiana and our new Commander. I hope your year is going great as well! I am looking forward to spending time with you throughout this year, and hope to further the mission of the VFW.

Let's not forget that we are here to help our fellow comrades and their families.

We have some items at the headquarters that we are wanting to give away, and we will give them away to whoever sends me an email. Make sure you put I want free stuff in the subject line, and put your name and post number in the body of the email. My address is at the bottom of this page. Items will be given out while supplies last, and will be available to pick up only at the fall conference.

I am looking forward to working with you over the next year. If there is anything I can do for you please let me know.

Cory Mahan

Cory Mahan

Department of Indiana

Sr. Vice Commander

cory.mahan.vfw@gmail.com



Greetings,

While at the National VFW Convention I was able to meet our new leadership which is now lead by Veterans on both sides of the isle as our new Auxiliary President is a dual member! I also attend another great and informative Chaplain workshop.

I have already started to receive your reports of deceased members and I have added a "TAPS" page to our Combat Veteran Newsletter. Your support in this area is truly appreciated. As our ranks grow thinner it is very important to recognize these comrades who are preceding us to our final roll call, and letting their families know that our VFW family shares in their loss and grief. Always remember, our mission is to "Honor the dead by serving the living".

It was great to see so many of our District Chaplains and Commanders at our recent School of Instruction. I presented the most recent VFW Chaplains Handbook to all in attendance. The handbook was prepared by Past National Chaplain Peter Hook and has been an excellent resource for me over the years.

Let us not forget our Veterans in the hospital or Nursing/Rehab homes. We are still unable at this writing to do mass visits, but we can all let them know they are not forgotten by providing gifts through donations to VA Volunteer Services.

I have been blessed with requests from several local Nursing Homes to attend special events at their facilities. The Veterans we visited with during these visits were very thankful for the opportunity to share their stories with fellow comrades.

Please contact me if you require guidance or information on how to assist our Veteran Community. My Email address is ljpatch@mail.com and my mailing address is 9034 Eiderdown Way, Indianapolis, IN 46234. My cell phone is (317) 450-9408.

In closing, thank you for your support in electing me as your 2023-2024 Indiana State Chaplain.

Yours in LOTCS,

Larry J Patch

Larry J Patch, Department Chaplain



State Officers 2023-2024



**Sheila Corcoran VFW Post 1587,
District 11 Department Commander**



**Cory Mayhan VFW Post 2714,
District 8, Department Sr Vice
Commander**



**Roger Ferguson VFW Post 1114,
District 8 Department Jr Vice
Commander**



State Officers 2023-2024



**Shelley Jacobs VFW Post 1282,
10th District, Department Judge
Advocate**



**Dave Hammons, VFW Post 908,
11th District, Department
Surgeon**



**Larry Patch, VFW Post 1587,
11th District, Department
Chaplain**



Congratulations State Commander Sheila Corcoran!





DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA

**DEPARTMENT
COMMANDER
SHEILA
CORCORAN**

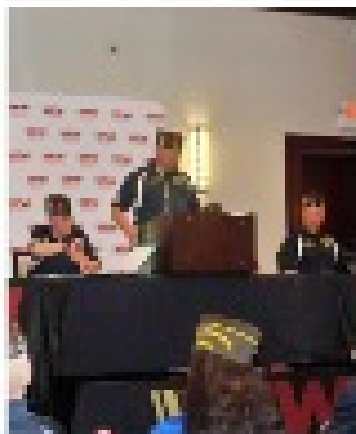
**DEPT. AUXILIARY
PRESIDENT
GENNIE PICKENS**







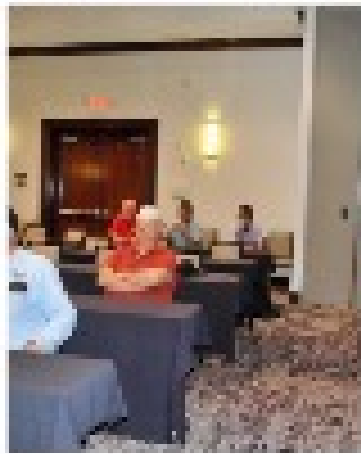

State Convention C of A



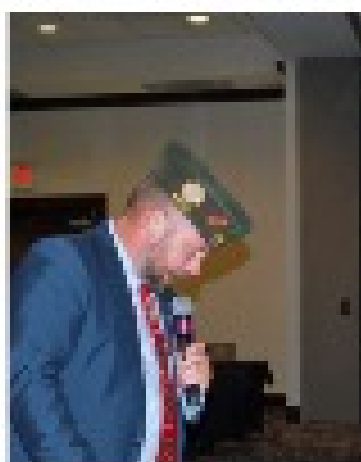
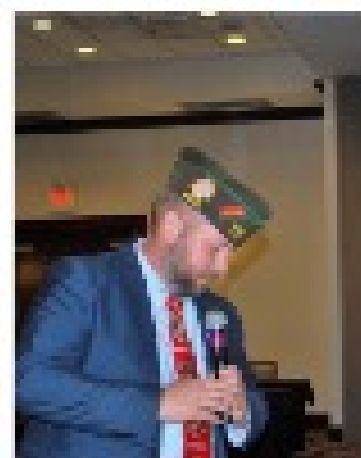
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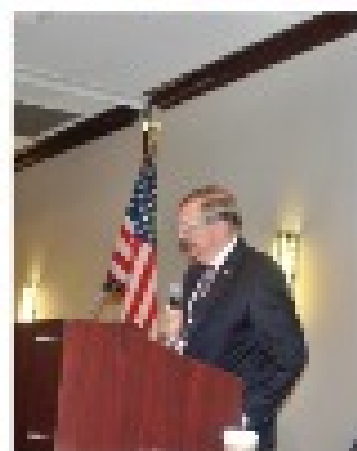
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State Convention C of A



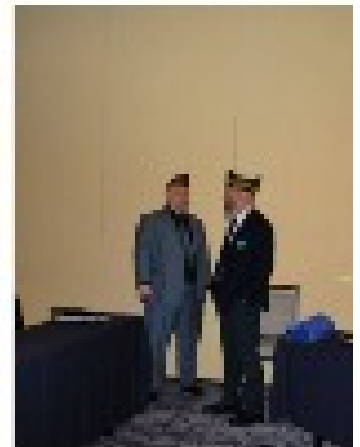
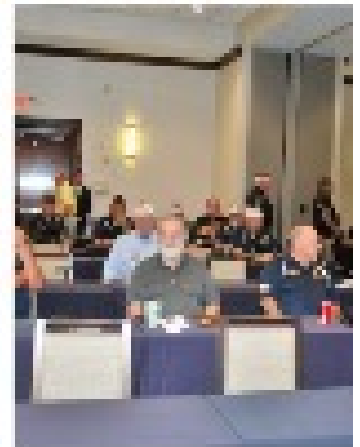
State Convention Business Session



State Convention Business Session



State Convention Business Session



State Convention Business Session



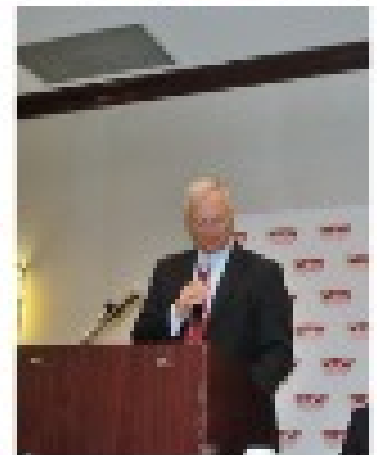
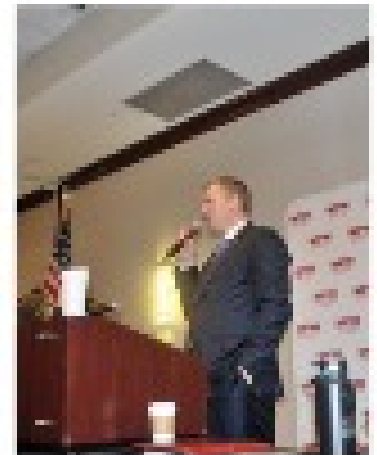
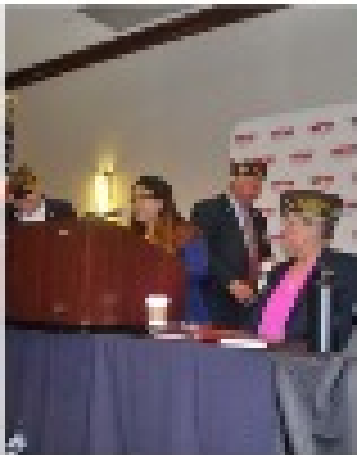
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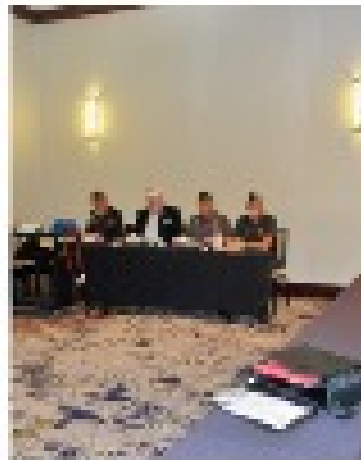
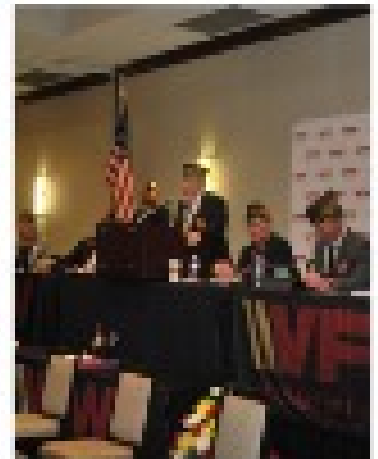
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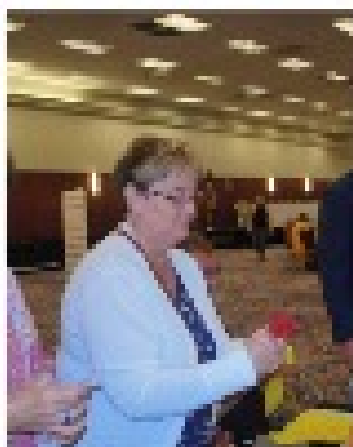
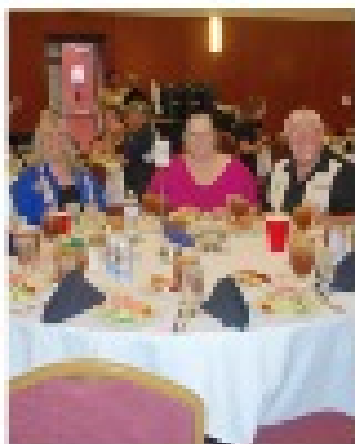
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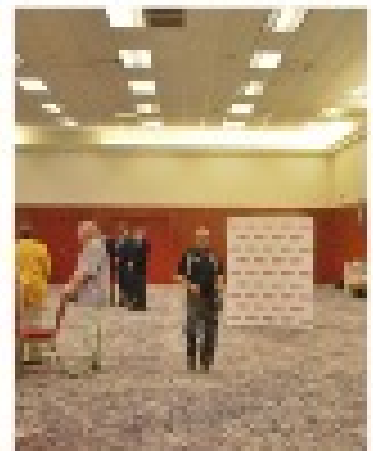
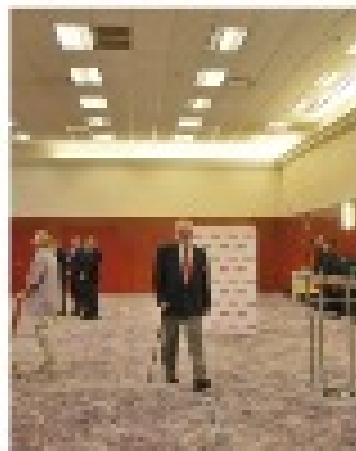
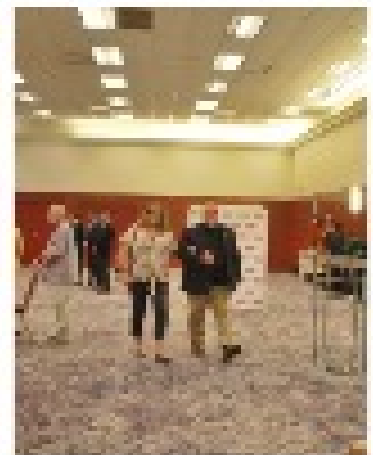
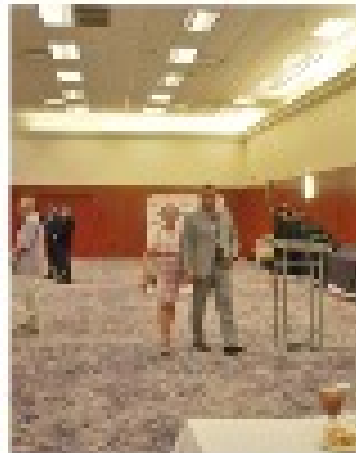
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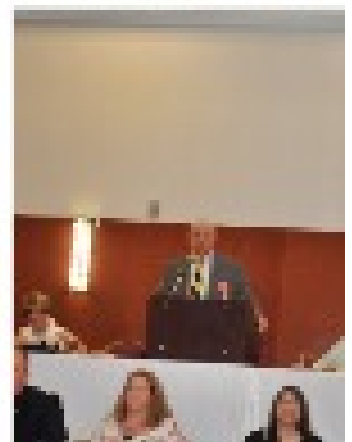
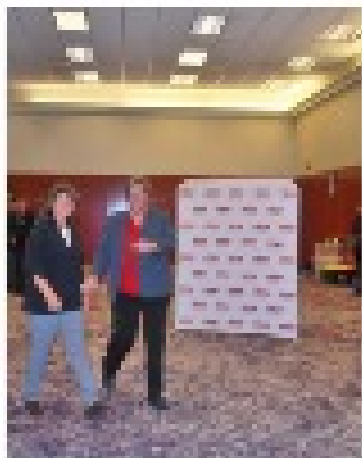
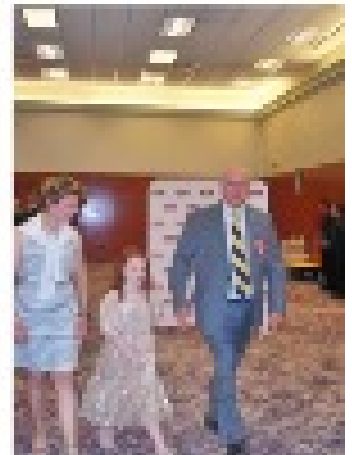
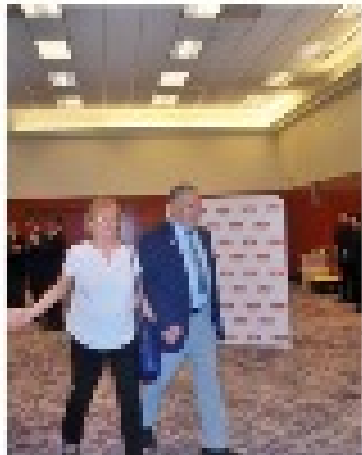
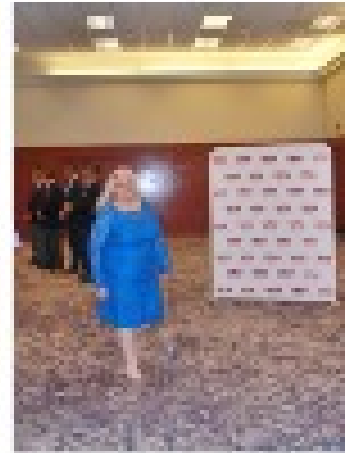
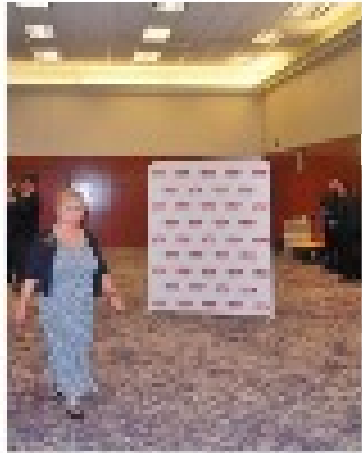
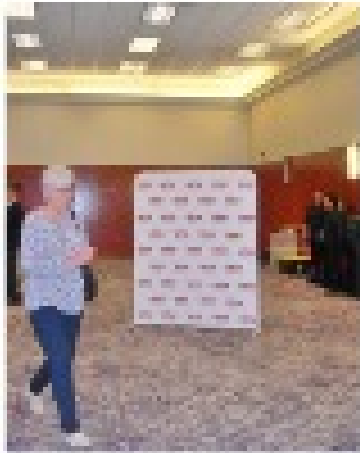
State Convention Banquet



State Convention Banquet



State Convention Banquet



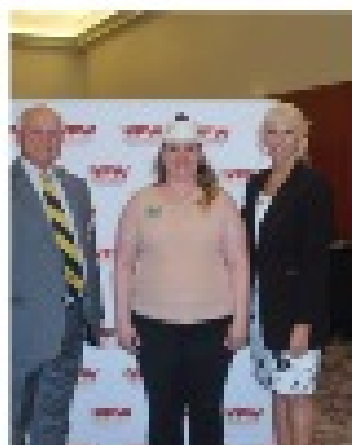
State Convention Banquet



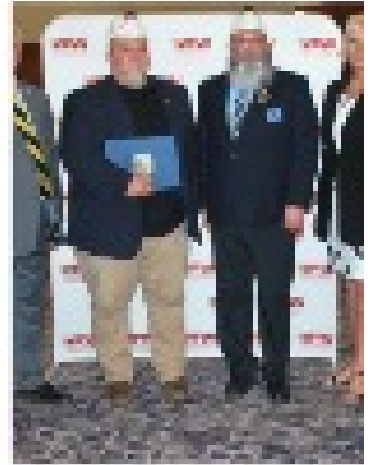
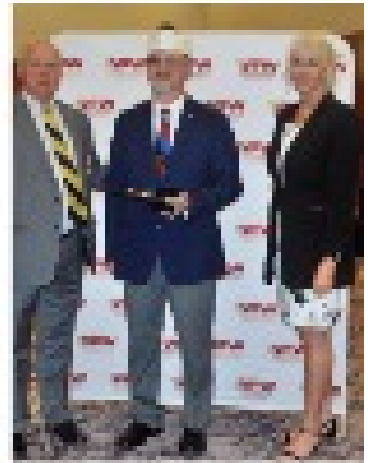
State Convention Banquet



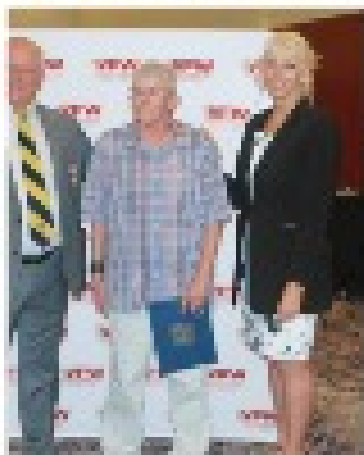
State Convention Banquet



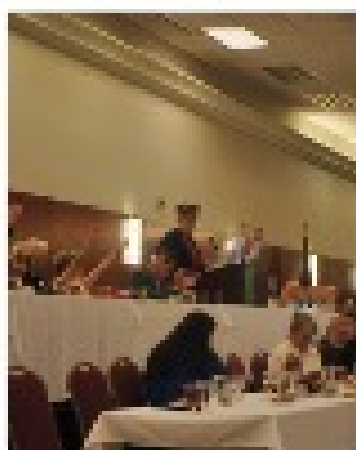
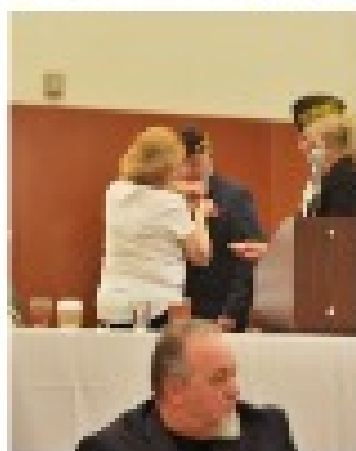
State Convention Banquet



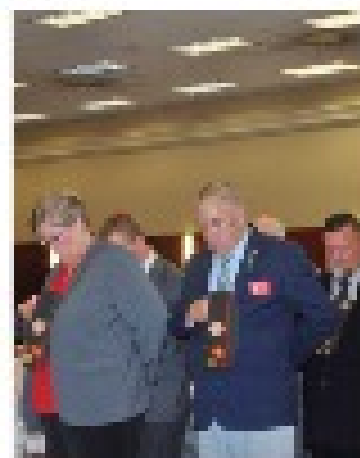
State Convention Banquet



State Convention Banquet



State Convention Banquet



Commander
Eddie Hummon
President
Carolyn Patch

**11th
DISTRICT**

11th District
Eddie Hummon
President

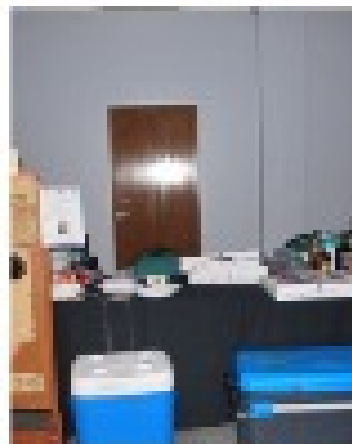
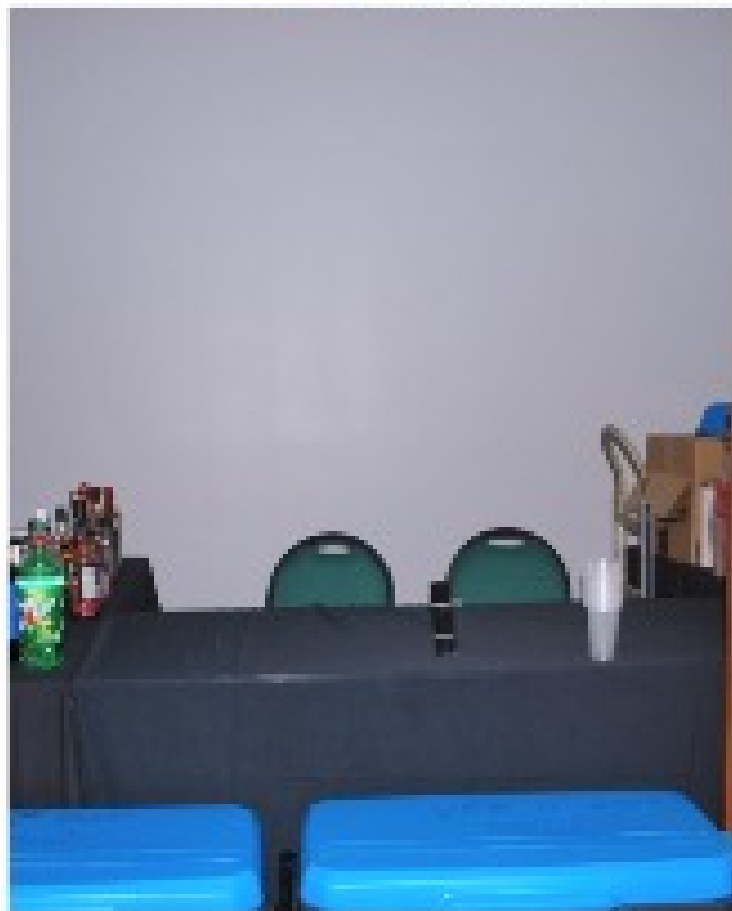
11th District
Carolyn Patch
President

11th District
Eddie Hummon
President

11th District
Carolyn Patch
President

11th District
Eddie Hummon
President

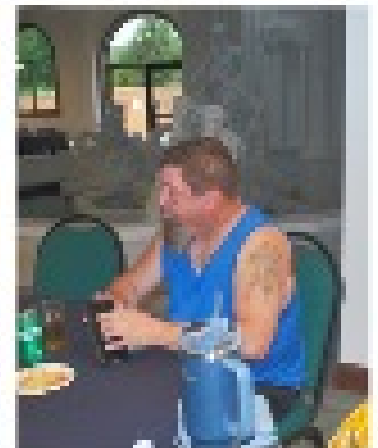
11th District
Carolyn Patch
President



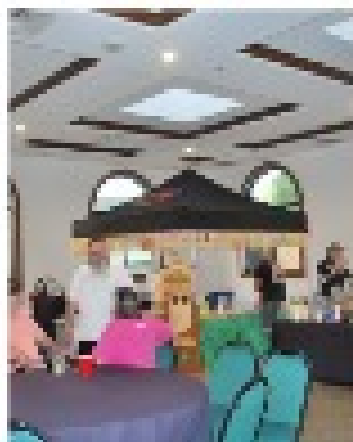
State Convention Hospitality Room



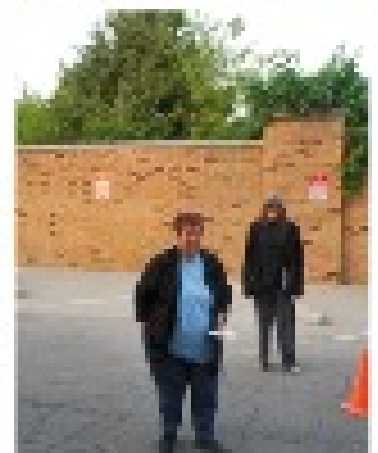
State Convention Hospitality Room



State Convention Hospitality Room



State Convention Hospitality Room



State Convention Sponsor Booths



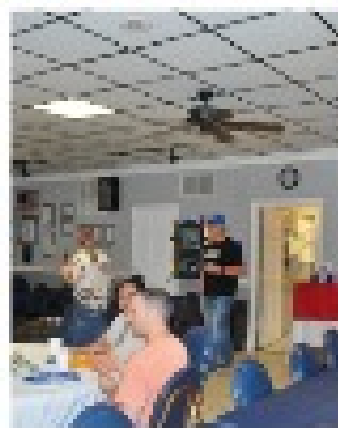
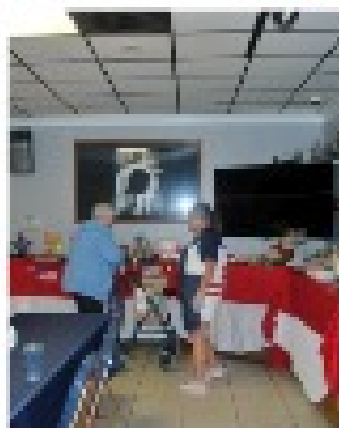
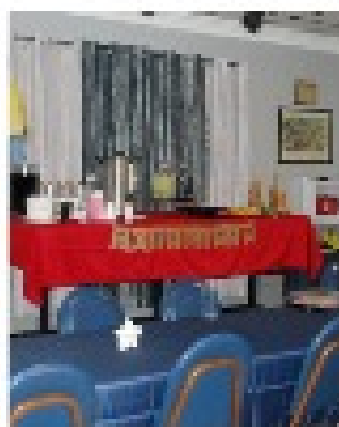
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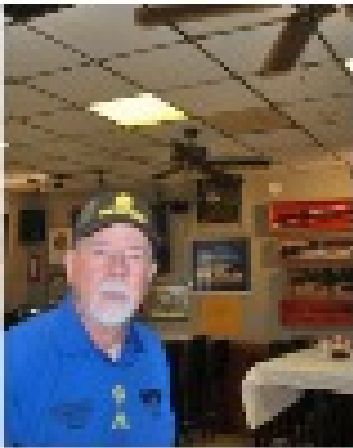
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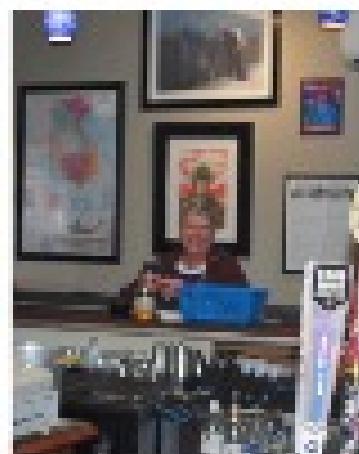
State Commander Reception



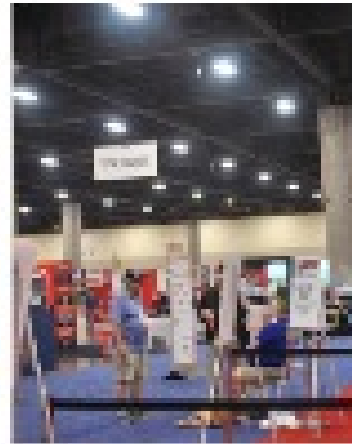
State Commander Reception



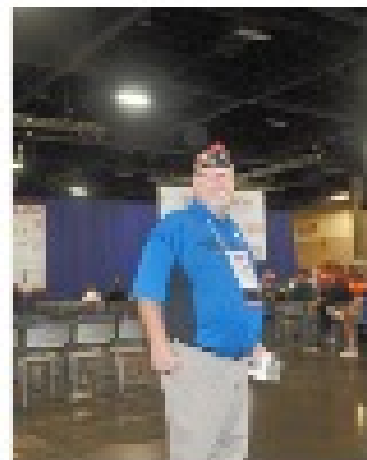
State Commander Reception



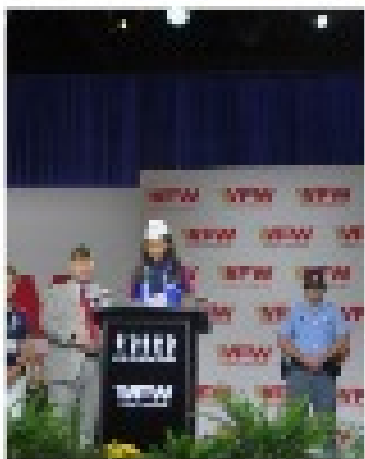
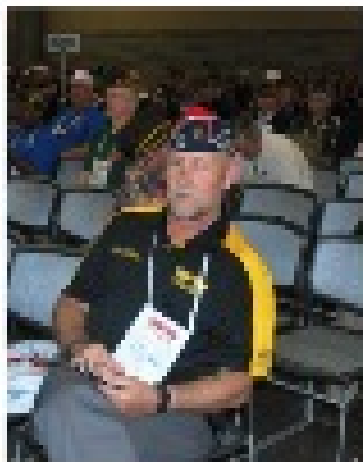
National Convention



National Convention



National Convention



National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



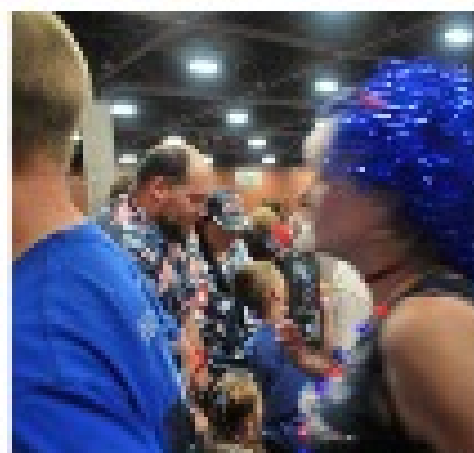
National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



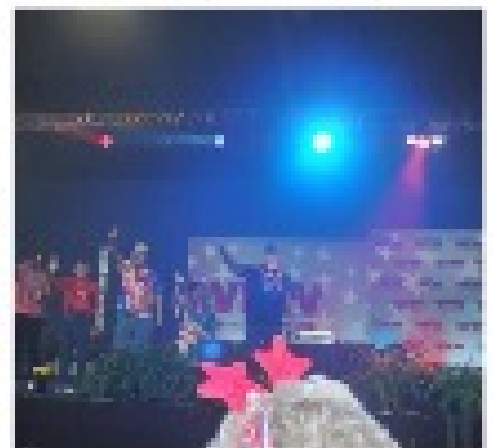
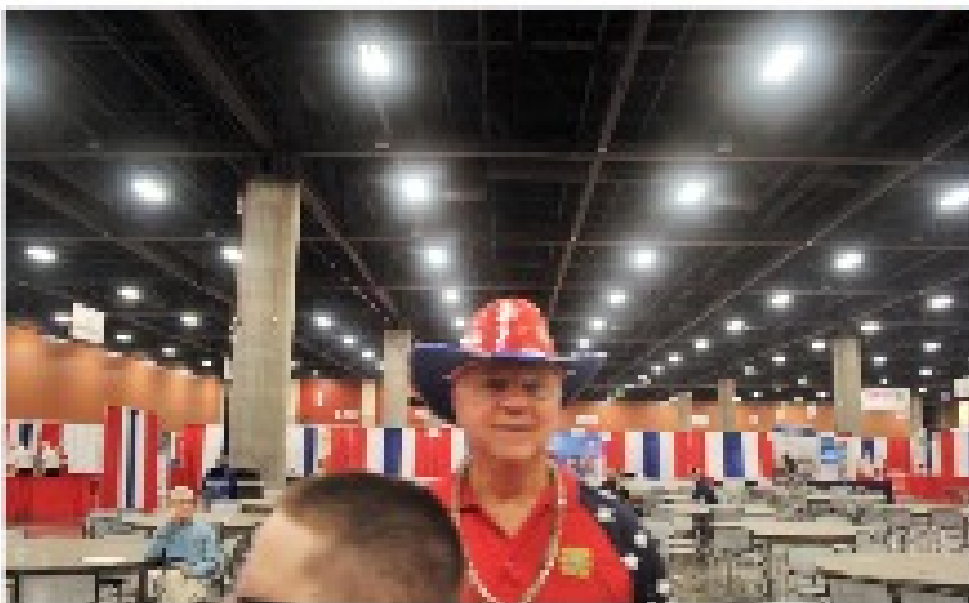
National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



National Patriotic Rally



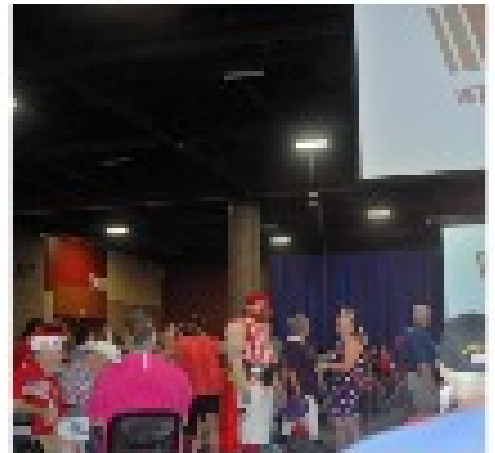
National Patriotic Rally



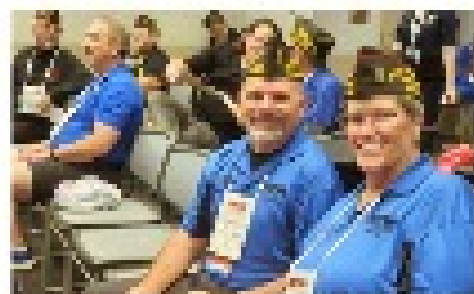
National Patriotic Rally



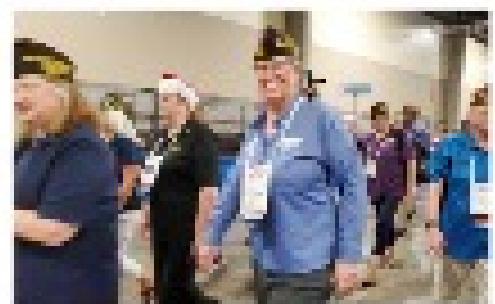
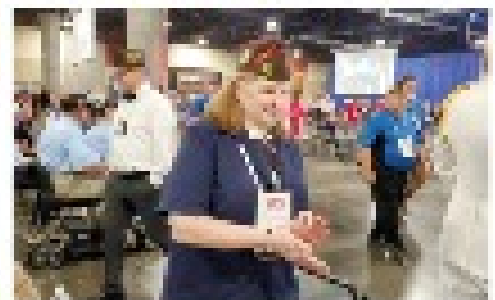
National Patriotic Rally



MISC PHOTO'S FROM NATIONAL CONVENTION



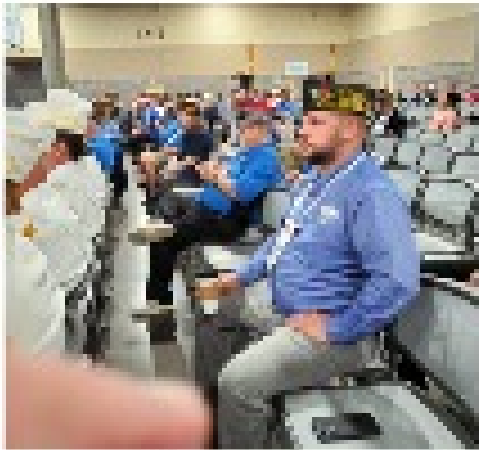
MISC PHOTO'S FROM NATIONAL CONVENTION



MISC PHOTO'S FROM NATIONAL CONVENTION



MISC PHOTO'S FROM NATIONAL CONVENTION





Duane Sarmiento of Gibbstown, New Jersey, was elected today as the new national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), a congressionally chartered veterans service organization comprised of approximately 1 million eligible combat veterans and military service members from all six branches of the armed forces.

“Today, I humbly stand here as a testament to the limitless potential of our great nation and a product of the American dream,” said Sarmiento during his acceptance speech. “As a kid from New Jersey, I never imagined I would be standing here to accept such a prestigious position in one of the most prestigious institutions in our country.”

Sarmiento’s election as the VFW’s 115th commander-in-chief occurred at the conclusion of the organization’s 124th National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. The gathering was the first national convention held there since 2009. More than 10,000 members of the VFW and its Auxiliary converged on the city to conduct the business of the organization, recognize individuals and organizations for excellence and to elect new leadership for the 2023 – 2024 year.

Sarmiento, who is of mixed Filipino and Italian heritage, is the first person of color elected to lead the 124-year-old organization. He delivered remarks to those attending in person at the Phoenix Convention Center and watching via livestreaming video.

Sarmiento joined the VFW in 1990 at Post 5579 in Gibbstown, New Jersey, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with his election as the VFW Department of New Jersey Commander from 2018 to 2019. On the national level, he served as the VFW Inspector General from 2019 to 2020, and served on the National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee, General Resolutions Committee, and as Special Aide-de-Camp. He is a life member of the Military Order of the Cootie, at Ky-Yi Pup Tent #1 in Delaware.

In addition to Sarmiento, other national officers elected were Al Lippardt, a Vietnam War veteran from the Department of Georgia, as Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, and Carol Whitmore, an Iraq War veteran from the Department of Iowa, as Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief.

Congratulations All American State Commander Richard Lerier



Triple
Crown
Winner!!!

Message from Past State Commander

I wanted to write an article in the Combat Vet to tell everyone in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of Indiana how grateful I am for all the support I received last year. For that matter the overwhelming support I have always received from the VFW members and Auxiliary. I would have never earned the coveted VFW Triple Crown without the help and encouragement of the members of the VFW of Indiana! I sure as hell didn't do it by myself. From the day Phil Seaman ask me to run for Post Commander many years ago I have received nothing but encouragement. Including the conference weekend where then SVC Johnny Capps asks me to be Legislative Chairman, District Commander and Voice of Democracy Chairman!

I owe so much to my Post, Carmel VFW Post 10003 and to District 6 for working hard years ago to be 100% membership. My Post had the option of holding a few members to make the next year a little easier but Tim and Ken without my knowledge put the members in to make the Post All American with me as Commander, THANKS.

District 6 was amazing, all 15 Post in the District made 100%, from the smallest in Cicero to one of the largest in the state Terre Haute, allowing me to be awarded All American District Commander and Round Robin. THANKS District 6.

This year was just incredible. I had the privilege of working one of the hardest working, caring for Veterans Auxiliary Presidents I know, Harriet Figg. Harriet, Julie along with Terri and I did events, parades, celebrations, visited Posts, District meetings and regrettably some funerals. I enjoyed every minute with this team of Veterans supports.

VFW year 2022-2023 was a great year! But it won't be the last great year and the Department of Indiana hasn't seen its last Triple Crown winner. Commander Corcoran, SVC Mahan, and JVC Ferguson are all in line to be the next Triple Crown winners. I know the membership Team led by Ken Lange will push Sheila over 102% and I'm certain Cory and Roger will have hard working membership teams. Remember membership is everyone's job, we all must be recruiting all the time. As Commander Corcoran said at the School of Instruction if we each of us recruit just "one new member" we will blow away the 102%.

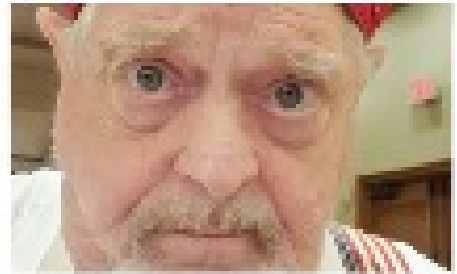
I know Sheila will have a great year, I hope every Post and District has a great year. Again, THANKS for all the support and I will continue to work for the Veterans in Indiana every day.

God Bless all the Veterans and their Families.

Richard Leirer
Past State Commander
2022-2023



Military Order of the Cootie Supreme Convention



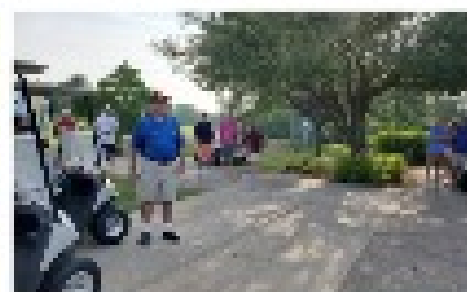
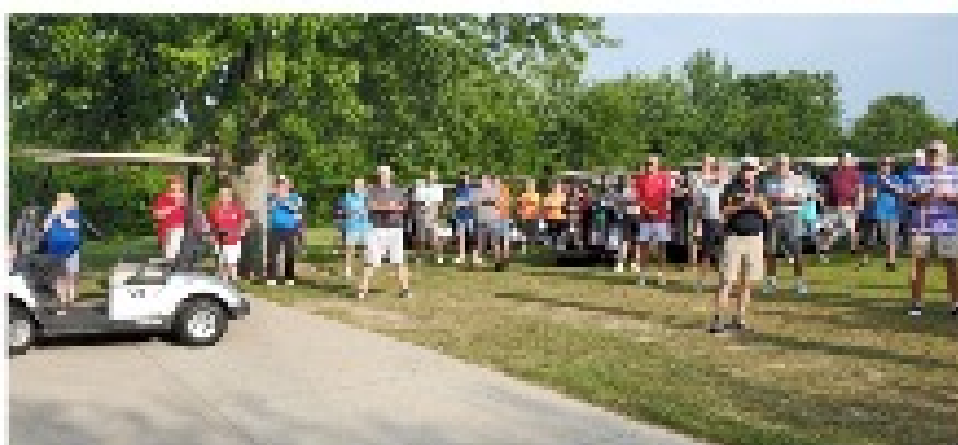
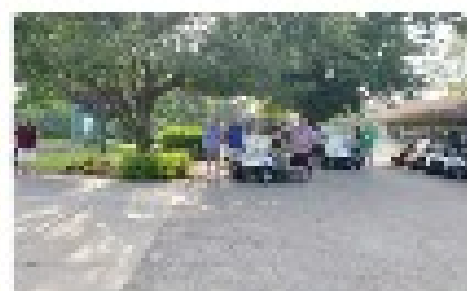
Military Order of the Cootie Supreme Convention



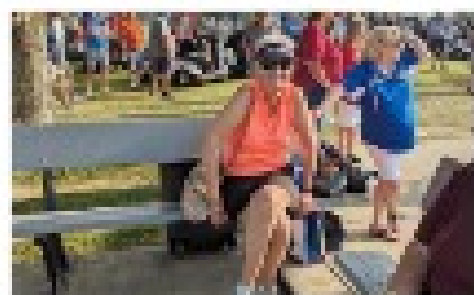
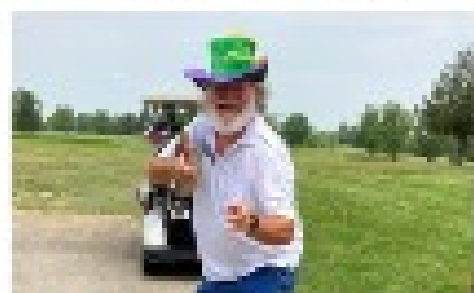
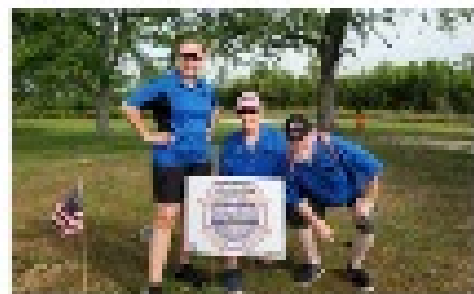
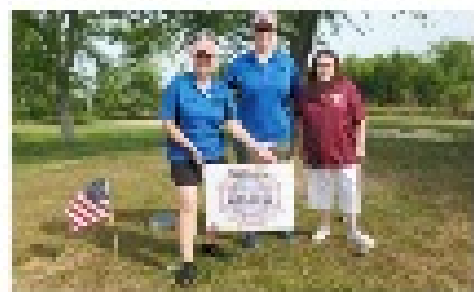
Military Order of the Cootie Supreme Convention



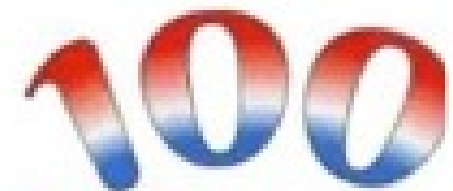
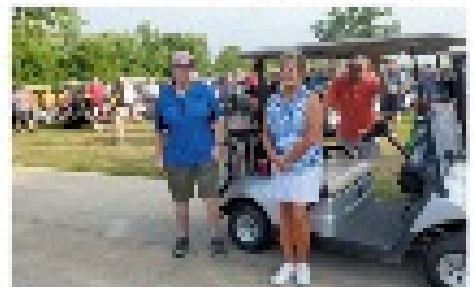
State Golf Outing



State Golf Outing



State Golf Outing



VFW Post 1108



State Golf Outing

 **VFW KIRK-LITTLE POST 1108**
218 S. 5TH STREET
RICHMOND, INDIANA
781-355-5441

THANKS TO ALL OUR POST VOLUNTEERS AND
STAFF WHO HELPED MAKE THE VFW STATE
GOLF TOURNAMENT A GREAT SUCCESS!

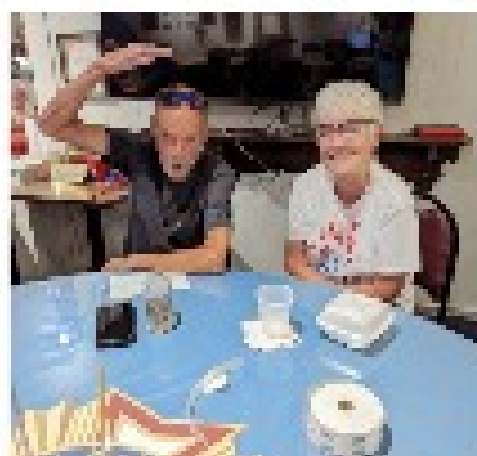
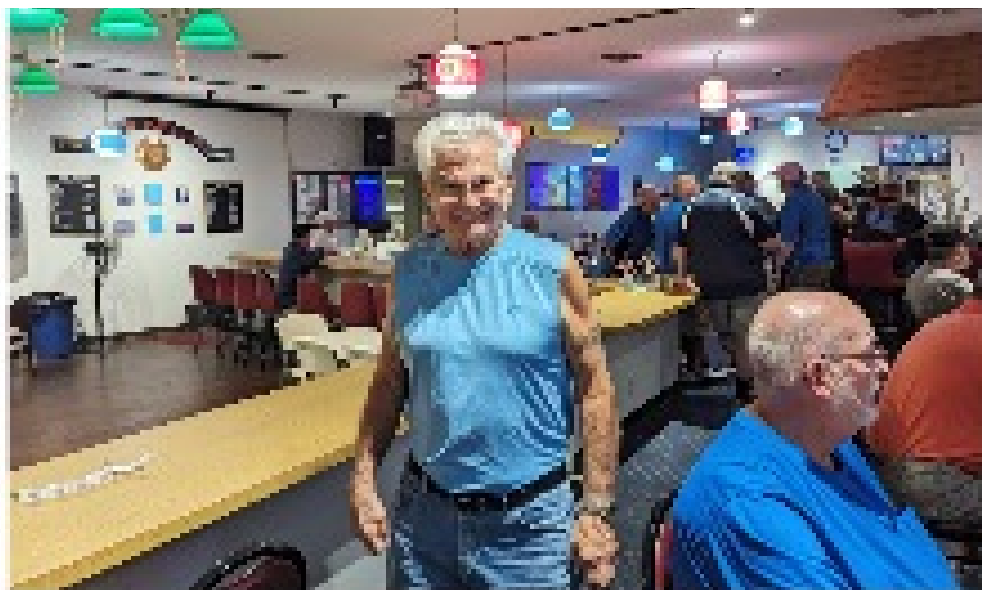
Wednesday, August 9th-Blind Drive CORNHOLE Tournament 5:00-8:00
Sign up by 6PM Start at 7PM

Thursday, August 10th-Aux Officers Meeting 8:30PM- Aux. MEETING Open

Saturday, August 12-Euchre Golf



State Golf Outing



State Golf Outing



100
VFW Post 1108
1923-2023

C of A & School of Instruction

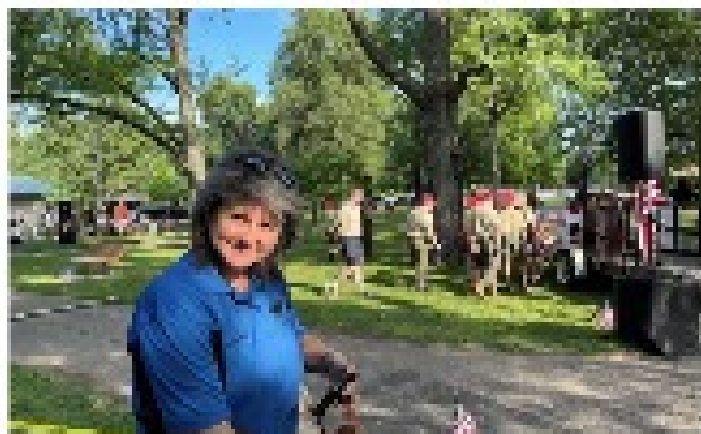
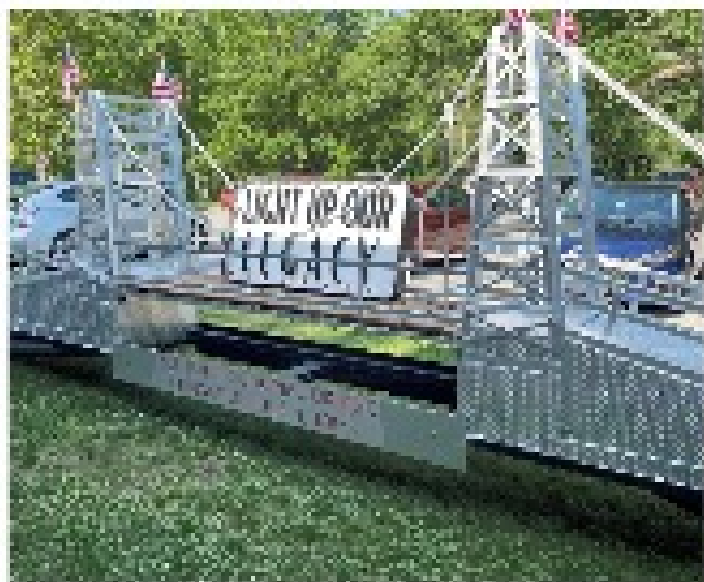


Commander in Action



Attending banquet for an All Purple Heart Recipient Honor Flight. 102 Purple Heart recipients will make the flight

Commander in Action



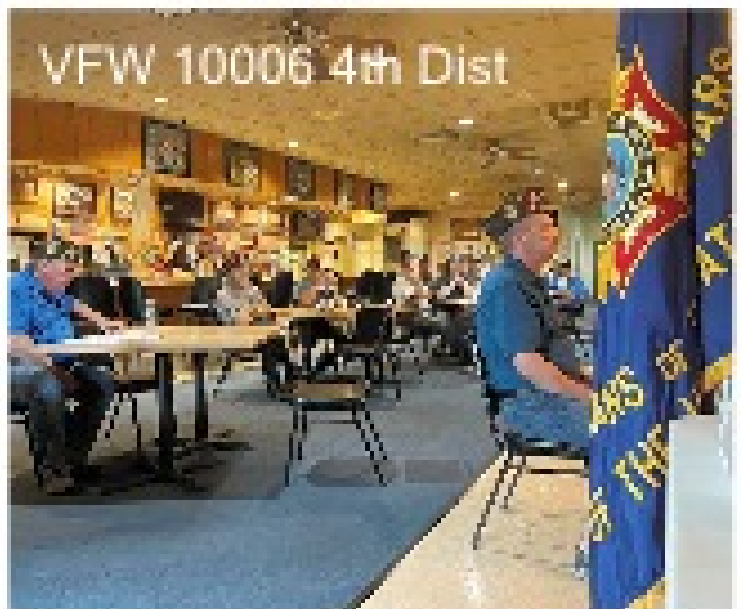
Commander in Action



Attending 6 District meeting at Post 8756



Frankfort VFW Post 1110



VFW 10006 4th Dist



Attending 6 District meeting at Post 8756



VFW Charlestown



Speaking at American Legion Department Convention

Commander in Action



Talking with Al Unser, Jr Ken Lange and Judy King at corn hole tournament! Sponsored by IDVA



2023 C of A prior to School of Instruction



Post 2695

Greetings Cooties and Cuties!!

I want to start by saying what a Lousy year we had last year, and I am not looking forward to this up-and-coming year. I do have to say Congratulations to our Blanket Bum Sheila Corcoran as she became the VFW Indiana State Commander for such a Lousy State and may she have a horrible year. The Cooties in Pup Tent 11 are very proud of you, and we are here to help in any way possible.

I truly am honored to be the Seam Squirrel; it is a lousy privilege. I am going to do my worst to bring the Indy Racers Pup Tent 11 to its knees! I hope all of this has made you smile as our motto is "to keep them smiling in beds of white"! As you will see I am not as well versed as my predecessor Larry Patch was, but I know if I need anything I can always reach out. I am very honored to have him as a mentor to help lead us into the new year. I wanted to let y'all know what we have been doing so far. As of now we are looking at starting to assist a nursing home off 21st and Shadeland, Brickyard Healthcare, which is right across the street from the Marriott East. This is a venture we are not taking lightly but are excited to be able to assist. We look forward to working with them.

Also, as several know, we have one of our own Patrick Mann battling Leukemia and we are doing what we can to help. The VFW Riders Post 261 held a ride on August 26th for his benefit highlighting Mental Health Awareness. We rode past Patrick's house sending our smiles and respect to him as he came out of his house to see 30 motorcycles come and stop out front. He was extremely happy to see the love and respect shown to him, saying we made his day!

As discussed at our last scratch, we will hold our next scratch Tuesday, September 26th at VFW Post 261, 10550 Pendleton Pike, Indianapolis 46236 @ 18:30. Tacos will be available for purchase. I hope to see many of you there! Boo!!!!

I send prayers for comfort and strength to all who are currently ill, hospitalized or have lost a loved one.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to congratulate and welcome our new Supreme Seam Squirrel Mark Larkin, from North Carolina. We hope he has a LOUSY year as well.

Yours in LOTCS,

Russell "Gabby" Pryor
Seam Squirrel Indy Racers Pup Tent 11
rlpryor613@gmail.com (317-937-5521)



Auxiliary Photo's



Auxiliary Photo's





Voice of Democracy Rules and Eligibility

WHO CAN ENTER

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

HOW TO ENTER

Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or – 5 second max.) audio essay on a flash drive, or other electronic device. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form. Provide these items to your school/group competition or VFW Post for judging.

You must be the sole author of your essay. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) although the recording & typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership. Your Voice of Democracy entry must be submitted to a participating VFW Post by the Oct. 31 deadline.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Originality is worth 30 points: Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points: Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to the other.

Delivery is worth 35 points: Speak in a clear and credible manner.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

2023-2024 Theme

“What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2023

Patriotic Audio Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$35,000 Award

What is the Voice of Democracy Program?

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW's) premier scholarship program. Each year, nearly 27,000 high school students compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme is, “**What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?**”

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. Department (State) winners receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington DC, to tour the city, be honored by the VFW and its Auxiliary and receive their portion of \$171,000 in national awards, the top scholarship being \$35,000.

The Rules

Who can enter?

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

What do I need to enter?

Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or – 5 second max.) audio essay on a flash drive, or other electronic device. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form. Provide these items to your school/group competition or VFW Post for judging. In addition you can submit your emailed entry form, essay, and audio file to the VFW Post upon approval. You must be the sole author of your essay. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. Hearing/speech impaired students should email the Voice of Democracy National Office at youthscholarships@vfw.org for special instructions. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) although the recording & typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership.

Where Do I Submit My Entry?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One winner for every 15 entries from each Post advances to District and one District winner advances to the state (Department) competition. If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions: First, visit this website vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find A VFW Post.” If you do not have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit this link <https://www.vfw.org/ContactUs/> and look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and email. If you still need assistance, please email us at VFW National Headquarters at youthscholarships@vfw.org

What Is the Deadline for My Entry?

All entries competing at the Post level must be in the hands of that VFW Post by midnight, **Oct. 31, 2023**. It is the responsibility of the student to meet this deadline by submitting their entry to the proper location by ensuring it is a participating Post.

What Are the Judging Criteria?

Originality is worth 30 points:

Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points:

Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to another.

Delivery is worth 35 points:

2023-2024 Official Entry Form

Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip
Phone

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in

Age

Jacket Size

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

()

Parent/Guardian Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian

Participant Agreement for Students Advancing to National Level

If selected as a first-place state winner, I have the consent of my parent/guardian and school to attend the Voice of Democracy National Finals in Washington, D.C. as a guest of the VFW National Organization. In consideration for permission to participate in the National Voice of Democracy Competition ("Competition") I do hereby, for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the Competition and/or arising out of any travel related to the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my audio file, essay, name and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

I Have Read and Understand the Rules and Participant Agreement

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post Level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature

Post #

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating

No. of winners advanced to District

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairperson
Signature

Dist. #

City, State,

()

Phon

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson
Signature

()

Email

The winner ☐ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

For assistance contact:

816.968.1155

Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____



Twisted X Brands
A Proud Sponsor



Patriot's Pen Rules and Eligibility

WHO CAN ENTER

Patriot's Pen is open to 6th, 7th and 8th-grade students enrolled by the Oct. 31 deadline in public, private or parochial schools in the U.S., its territories or its possessions. Home-schooled students also are eligible. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students or former winners that placed in the National contest are ineligible.)

HOW TO ENTER

Download and complete the Patriot's Pen entry form.

All essays should be typed in English with no color or graphics and 300 - 400 words in length (+ or - 5 word max). The essay must be contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. A contestant's teacher, counselor or parent may check the essay for punctuation, grammar and/or spelling, but the content must remain the contestant's.

Students can ask a teacher or youth group leader to supervise their progress in the competition. Your Patriot's Pen entry must be submitted to a participating VFW Post by the Oct. 31 deadline.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Knowledge of the theme is worth 30 points: You must show a thorough knowledge of the theme in your work. Demonstrate you have researched the issue extensively.

Theme development is worth 35 points: Answer all relevant facts about the theme such as the who, what, where, when and why. Relate the theme to your own experiences.

Clarity of ideas is worth 35 points: Write your essay in an easy-to-understand format. Leave your reader with a clear understanding of your explanation of the theme.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

2023-2024 Theme

“How are you inspired by America?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2023

Patriotic Written Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$5,000 Award

What is the Patriot's Pen Program?

Conducted nationwide, this VFW-sponsored youth essay competition gives students an opportunity to write essays expressing their views on an annual patriotic theme. We invite you to join the more than 73,000 students who participated last year in this contest.

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, State and national level. Department (State) winners receive a portion of \$55,000 in national awards. National Winners will receive at least \$500. **The first-place national award is currently \$5,000.**

The Internal Revenue Service requires a recipient awarded more than \$599 be given Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable income. This may require the winner to provide their social security number.

How Does the Contest Work?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post.

The contest consists of four levels. The first level (entry) is sponsored by VFW Posts. Post winners advance, one for every 15 entries, to the VFW District (regional) level where the one first-place winner is advanced to the VFW Department (state) level. The first-place winner at the Department level is then advanced into the VFW national competition.

Who Can Enter?

Patriot's Pen is open to 6th, 7th and 8th-grade students enrolled by the Oct. 31 deadline in public, private or parochial schools in the U.S., its territories or its possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Home-schooled students also are eligible. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students or former winners that placed in the National contest are ineligible.)

How Do I Get Started?

- Ask a teacher or youth group/club adult leader to supervise the Patriot's Pen writing contest.
- Contact a participating VFW Post and indicate your interest in

- Establish a contact person who is a member of that VFW Post or its VFW Auxiliary.
- Make sure that your essay is submitted to the VFW Post before the contest deadline of October 31, 2023. You can submit your essay and entry form by email upon the Post's approval. Entries sent to the VFW National Headquarters directly will be returned.

How Am I Judged?

Knowledge of the theme is worth 30 points

You must show a thorough knowledge of the theme in your work. Demonstrate you have researched the issue extensively.

Theme development is worth 35 points

Answer all relevant facts about the theme such as the who, what, where, when and why. Relate the theme to your own experiences.

Clarity of ideas is worth 35 points

Write your essay in an easy-to-understand format. Leave your reader with a clear understanding of your explanation of the theme.

What Is the Theme?

VFW's Commander-in-Chief annually chooses the year's theme. The 2023-2024 theme is:

“How are you inspired by America?”

Deadline Information.

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by midnight October 31, 2023.

Note:

If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions:

First, visit vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find a VFW Post.”

If you don't have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble contacting them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) headquarters office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit vfw.org/contactus to look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and email.

**For assistance contact
the VFW National Headquarters
at 816.968.1155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org**

2023-2024 Official Entry Form

Patriot's Pen
Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

()

Phon

Email

Grade in School

Essay Word

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if

To Be Completed by Student's
Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Date

()

Parent/Guardian's Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian's

What Are the Rules?

• You must write your own essay.

• All essays should be typed in English with no color or graphics. 300 - 400 words in length (+ or - 5 word max). Every word is counted regardless of length. The essay title (theme) or added footnotes do not contribute to the word count.

• In no way may contestants identify themselves within their essay (including, but not limited to, your name, school, city, state, race or national origin.) Do not put your name on the essay. The entry form is your essays cover sheet. Secure the Official Student Entry Form with a staple or other fastener on top of your essay. Contestants are allowed to enter only once each year if otherwise eligible (one Post competition).

• The essay must be contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. A contestant's teacher, counselor or parent may check the essay for punctuation, grammar and/or spelling, but the content must remain the contestant's. Contestants will be judged on the basis of their essay alone and are not required to present the essay orally. All essays become the property of the Veteran's of Foreign Wars. The VFW retains non-exclusive rights to the use of your essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

• At any time during the contest additional participant personal information (i.e. SSN, photo, etc.) could be requested by the VFW.

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Patriot's Pen Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature

Post#

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (If applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of participants

No. of winners

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarships awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (Banquet, Pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Patriot's Pen Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Department.

District Chairperson Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State,

()

Phon

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Patriot's Pen Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature

()

Daytime Phone

Email

The winner ☐ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____



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HVAF Stand Down



SEPTEMBER 7 | 12 - 3 PM
INDIANA NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY
3912 WEST MINNESOTA STREET

THURS 7 SEPT 23
**STAND
DOWN**
PRESENTED BY **HVAF**
of Indiana, Inc.
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FREE RESOURCES FOR VETERANS AVAILABLE:

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CLOTHING	FINANCIAL COUNSELING
HYGIENE ITEMS	VA BENEFITS ASSISTANCE
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	AND MORE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 317-951-0688

3912 West Minnesota Street,
Indianapolis, IN 46203

Senator Braun and Congressman Carson Academy Day

**SENATOR BRAUN & REPRESENTATIVE CARSON
INVITE YOU TO:**

ACADEMY DAY 2023

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH

5:00 PM EST

INDIANA WAR MEMORIAL

55 E. MICHIGAN ST.

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**OPEN TO: WEST POINT, NAVY,
AIR FORCE, MERCHANT
MARINE, AND THE COAST
GUARD**



Porter County Stand Down, September 15, 2023

MILITARY VETERAN STAND DOWN *With a Heart*



Supporting Indiana's Veterans



PLEASE BRING YOUR DD214 • MILITARY ID • VA HEALTH CARE CARD to Receive Services

2023 EVENT SCHEDULE

JUNE 16 ELKHART COUNTY
2:00 PM - 6:00PM EST
Ivy Tech Elkhart
22531 Co. Rd. 18
Goshen, IN 46528

JULY 14 ST. JOSEPH COUNTY
2:00 PM - 6:00PM EST
Jackie Walorski VA Clinic
1549 Trinity Place
Mishawaka, IN 46545

AUG 25 LAPORTE COUNTY
2:00 PM - 6:00PM CST
LaPorte County Fairgrounds
2581 IN-2, 46350

JUNE 30 KOSCIUSKO COUNTY
2:00 PM - 6:00PM EST
Warsaw Municipal Airport
3000 Airport Rd.
Warsaw, IN 46583

AUG 04 MARSHALL COUNTY
2:00 PM - 6:00PM EST
Plymouth Columbus Club
901 East Jefferson St.
Plymouth, IN 46563

SEPT 15 PORTER COUNTY
2:00 PM - 6:00PM CST
American Legion Post 502
429 County Rd. 750 N.
Valparaiso, IN 46385



Vendors, Volunteers,
& Veterans: Scan the QR
Code to Register today!

Interested in getting involved, contact: Jill Powers at jpowers@goodwill-ni.org or call 574.400.5487

**Delaware County Stand Down
September 19, 2023 (Tuesday)
10:00 AM-2:00 PM (Eastern)**



**Delaware County Fairgrounds
1210 Wheeling Avenue
Muncie, IN 47303**

PREMIER ARMS

22ND

ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATION

Saturday, Sept 9, 2023
@ 4:00 PM

TO
BENEFIT

VFW
 VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.
 DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA

VETERAN
 SUICIDE
 AWARENESS

22 VETERANS A
 DAY COMMIT
 SUICIDE
 ONE VETERAN SUICIDE IS
 ONE TOO MANY

FREE FOOD!

FREE DRINKS!

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FANTASTIC SILENT AUCTION

WORLD FAMOUS **PREMIER ARMS**
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& MUCH MORE!!

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 Call **PREMIER ARMS** Today to Become a Sponsor!!

RED SPONSOR: \$5000

WHITE SPONSOR: \$2500

BLUE SPONSOR: \$1000

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100% of ALL Donations & Sponsorships Will Go to the VFW Dept. of Indiana

SEE YOU

@



PREMIER ARMS

3754 S Green St
 Brownsburg IN 46112
 317-858-3030
 PremierArms.com



1:00 pm Showtime

@5139 West 10th St

September 16, 2023

Register by email at VFWPost1587@mail.com

OR

Call the Post at (317) 244-3073

\$20 EARLY T-SHIRT ORDER

**Until September 8th-
Shirt Order On and After
September 8th Are \$30**

SUICIDE IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM WITH MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1587 is striving to reach out to all brothers and sisters who are struggling.

Our annual suicide awareness walk raises money for non-profits to assist those contemplating suicide.



TOGETHER WE CAN SAVE LIVES.

COMMUNITY WALK ★ T-SHIRT ★ COOKOUT

SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES

DONATIONS ACCEPTED

100% of donations will go to Creative Arts for Vets (CAV) & Mission 22



Department of Indiana VFW State Campout

October 5-7, 2023

**Caldwell Pioneer Acres
3707 S. 200 West
Rushville, Indiana 46173**

Thursday is set up day. Registration fees are \$10 per person (Children 12 and under are free but they have to wear wrist band). \$10 per night for Camping.

All sites have electric. Water and Dump Station are available at the entrance of campsites. Trash Dumpster at camp entrance.

Fires must be in fire pit. No open fires.

Friday night Dinner is Beef Stew cooked over open fire in cast iron pot.

Saturday morning pitch-in breakfast @ 0900.

Saturday Fried Chicken Pitch-in Dinner @ 1800.

We will have L/R/C games and card games. Quiet walks over to the Old Steam Engines and walking trails.

Please RSVP to Don King (812-717-0646) hking1362@gmail.com or Jennifer Morris (812-236-4403) to ensure enough food is purchased for the weekend.



Family *Freedom*

Festival

**REVERSE
RAFFLE**

**GRAND PRIZE
\$1,000**

SEPTEMBER 30TH | 3PM - 10PM
FOOD & FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

VFW POST 261 AUXILIARY

10550 PENDLETON PIKE
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46236



Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge

The 100-year-old Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge was rededicated on July 32, 2023, in the Town Park of Winamac, IN. One of the oldest suspension bridges in Indiana, it was erected and dedicated shortly after the Great War. Still feeling the pain of loss, community leaders named the bridge Memorial in honor of “soldiers and sailors” from Pulaski County from all wars.

The celebration mirrored the one held on July 4, 2023, when the bridge was first opened to the public. The biggest difference was that in 2023, at the end of the ceremony, a switch was thrown to illuminate the bridge. This was the culmination of efforts to honor veterans and Gold Star Families by lighting their way home.

The activities on the day of celebration included youth baseball and softball games, live bands, and food vendors. The Culver Summer Schools & Camps, Naval Band was on hand throughout the day to play the National Anthem and other patriotic tunes. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts were on hand throughout the day to provide whatever assistance was needed, and two Uncle Sams provided toys for children and entertainment for all.

The rededication ceremony recognized veterans and provided formal recognition of POW and Gold Star Families. An Honor Guard crossed the bridge to end the program, and participants were excused to enjoy the amenities of the park until dusk.

At dusk, a grand finale preceded the illumination of the bridge. The closing ceremony featured veterans and volunteers who came forward to honor Pulaski County soldiers from every U.S. war. They wore their own uniforms, or vintage or reproduction uniforms provided by the Pulaski County Historical Society or the Winamac Community High School drama department.

It was for the Pulaski County soldiers who proudly answered the nation’s call to duty that this footbridge across the Tippecanoe River was dedicated in July 1923. Now – 100 years later – it was celebrated for that same noble reason.

The illumination project was supported through the years of fundraising activities by Winamac VFW Post 1728, Pfoest-Jones. Additional information about the illumination project and this historic bridge can be found at www.memorialswingingbridge.com.





This photo, courtesy of the Pulaski County Press from 2009, shows the Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge in majestic fall splendor.



July 3, 2023, drone photo provided by Cody Foust.

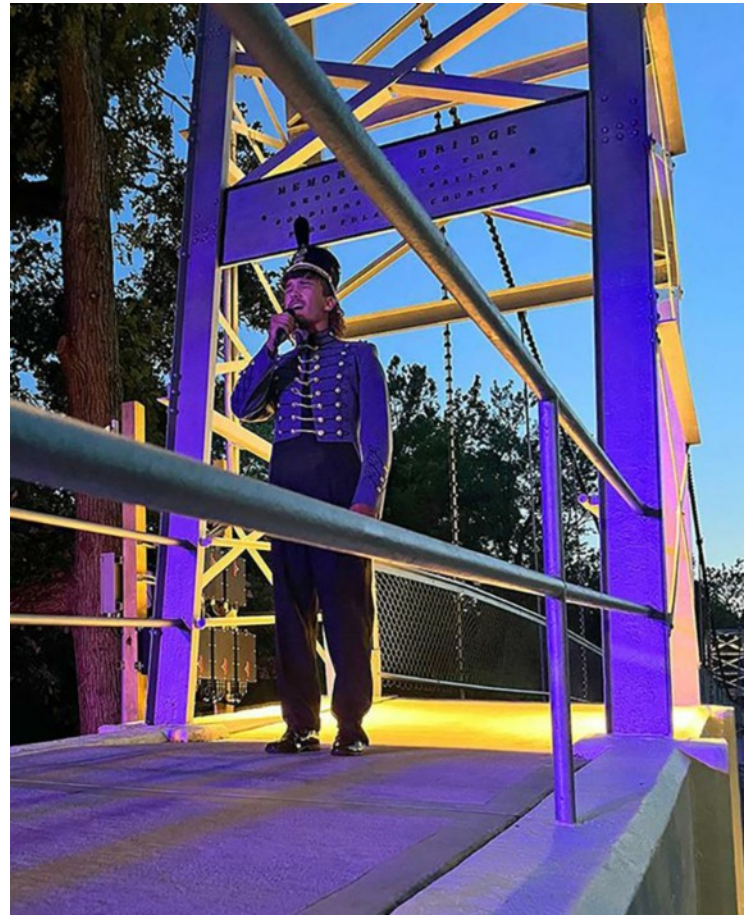
Masthead, original to Memorial Bridge in 1923, refurbished for 2023.



Sheila Corcoran, State Commander, VFW Department of Indiana provides an address at the centenary anniversary of the Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge on July 3, 2023. Pictured with her is Stan Chech, Commander, VFW Post 1728.



Photo provided by Meagan Galbreath, reporter for the Pulaski County Journal, July 3, 2023.



Maddox Bucinski, dressed as a soldier from the War of 1812, sings "God Bless the USA" as the bridge is illuminated. Photo by Karen Fritz, July 3, 2023.





Drummer Chad Watts, dressed in vintage military fatigues, crosses the bridge to begin the Patriotic Grand Finale of the "Lighting Our Legacy" ceremony. Photo by Karen Fritz, July 3, 2023.



A sample of color of the newly illuminated Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge. Photo by Kathi Thompson, July 2023.



A sample of color of the newly illuminated Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge. Photo by Kathi Thompson, July 2023.



July 3, 2023, the Honor Guard crosses the Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge to end the centenary celebration.



Dedication by Gold Star Families. Lance Corporal John William Parcel served in the U.S. Marine Corp: 1 year of service – 1967 – 1968; Tour of Duty Jan. 27, 1969 – KIA April 22, 1968; Hostile battle, operation Pegasus.



Gold Star Family members Mary Parcel Schultz, sister, and her husband Kent Schultz, crossed the bridge, tossing rose petals into the river, as Master of Ceremonies Stan Czech spoke of Lance Corporal Parcel's service to the nation.



Culver Summer Schools & Camps, Naval Band, under the direction of Dr. Michael Stone and assistant director Mr. Prince Alfaro, led by Drum Major Hunter Wise, plays “Anchors Aweigh” from the bridge during the centenary celebration, July 3, 2023.



Scenes from around the park.
Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge
July 3, 2023





Veterans Memorial Swinging Bridge

Centennial Celebration

July 3, 2023

4:00 Food Vendors open (may open earlier)

4:00 Live Band: Double Dose (until 7:30)

5:30 National Anthem: Culver Summer Schools & Camps, Naval Band, Field 2

5:30 Youth Ballgames: Warrior Youth Baseball, West Central Youth League, & Winamac Girls Softball

7:30 Centennial & Rededication Ceremony

National Anthem: Culver Naval Band, under the direction of Dr. Michael Stone and assistant director Mr. Prince Alfaro, led by Drum Major Hunter Wise

Pledge of Allegiance: Boy Scout Troop 229

Welcome: Stan Czech, Commander, VFW Post 1728

Invocation & Moment of Silence: Casey Stephens, American Legion Post 71

Recognition of POW & Gold Star Families: Stan Czech

Proclamation: IN State Representative Kendell Culp

Proclamation: Commissioner Maurice Loehmer

Comments: Todd Zeiger, Director, Northern Regional Office, Indiana Landmarks

Introduction of Major Donors: Stan Czech

Acknowledgement: IHEDA & Creating Places

Community Foundation of Pulaski County: Leeann Wright, Executive Director

CoBank/Carroll White REMC Sharing Success Grant

Program: Casey Crabb, Communications & Public Relations Manager, Carroll White REMC

Patriotic Medley: Culver Naval Band

Comments: VFW Department of Indiana, Sheila Corcoran, Commander

Rededication: The Honorable Mary Welker, Judge, Circuit Court & The Honorable Crystal Kocher, Judge, Superior Court

Benediction: Rev. Leroy G. Kinnaman, Winamac Kiwanis Club

Salute to Veterans: Winamac VFW & the American Legion Posts from Pulaski County

21 Gun Salute

Taps: Culver Naval Band

8:30 Live Band: Hidden in Plain Sight (until 11:00)

9:45 Patriotic Grand Finale

10:00 Lighting Our Legacy!



Presentation to Dirk Fentz who runs Indiana Bourbon, which has done several fundraiser's for police officer Lawson line of duty. This is a certificate from the VFW National Awards and Citations Committee and presented to him by PDC Eric Billman and Department Surgeon Dave Hammonds.



**5th Annual VFW POW/MIA Commemorative
5K Run/Walk and Motorcycle Ride
Saturday, 16 September 2023
Columbian Park, Lafayette, Indiana**



Motorcycle Registration – 12:00 PM at VFW Post 1154, 2660 Duncan Road
5K Run/Walk Registration – 7:00 AM at Memorial Island, Columbian Park
Registration Fee: \$20 per person/bike and the first 200 participants will receive a T-shirt
Commemoration Ceremony begins at 5:30 PM at the Memorial Island Amphitheater

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony will be conducted immediately following at 6:30 PM
at VFW Post 1154, 2660 Duncan Road, followed by food, fun and live entertainment.

Sponsored by:



Post 1154 Lafayette, Indiana

District 8 Photo's



**VFW POST 1114 AUXILIARY
AMERICANISM CHAIRMEN RITA ALLEGA
PRESENTING A \$ 500.00 CHECK TO
GLENWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!**

District II Photo's



Bloom at Eagle Creek Nursing Home, Larry Patch & Andy Campos gave a Memorial Day address to the Veteran residents and family members & staff. Carolyn Patch and Matilda Campos (Auxiliary members Post 1587) passed out Buddy Poppies to all in attendance. Very nice turnout and we met with and had some good visiting time with several of the Veterans and residents.



District II Photo's



VFW Post 1587 Flag Retirement

District II Photo's



This is why I am proud to be the Commander of Lavelle-Gossett VFW Post #908, our District Commander Larry Dennis, sent out an e-mail that read, 99 year old WWII Veteran in need of air conditioning, his went out. I went to talk to Mr. Higginson, came back to the post and talked to the membership, pictured is what came out of the talk. This is why we are here, Veterans taking care of Veterans. Special Thanks to Pat Wilson, Owner of Wilson Heating and Cooling for all the work he did to install the units! Dave Hammons



Taps



District 1

None reported

District 2

None reported

District 3

None reported

District 4

None reported

District 5

None reported

District 6

Post 910 M. Copeland 1/20/2023

District 7

Post 1111 Kendall Kinnaird 7/24/2023

District 8

Post 2939 Ron Carlson

District 9

None reported

District 10

Post 2695 Warren E Browning 7/23/2023 / Post 2695 William R Coffey 8/9/2023

District 11

Post 2839 Terry J. Bruning 8/17/1947

Terry J. Bruning



(July 23, 1948 - August 17, 2023)

75, Indianapolis, passed away on August 17, 2023. He was a US Army Vietnam Veteran. Terry received his Bachelors of Science degree from Butler University and an Executive MBA from Indiana University. He received the prestigious Sagamores of the Wabash award and was a member of VFW, Clermont Lions Club, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and AMVETS. Terry spent his career and retired from the banking industry. **From 2008 to 2014, he worked as the State Adjutant Quartermaster for the VFW Dept. of Indiana.** He was preceded in death by his parents Gilbert and Charlotte Bruning; brother Mike (Brenda) Bruning. Survivors include his wife Marsha Bruning; son Jason Bruning; step son Tony (Allison) Shriner; stepdaughter Michelle (Jason) Stewart; brother Keith (Nancy) Bruning; 16 grandchildren.



FACT SHEET

THE VFW'S VITAL

Educate separating service members about their well-earned VA benefits through private benefits counseling sessions with a VFW Accredited Service Officer.

Advocate for America's veterans and their families on Capitol Hill, ensuring *promises made* to veterans are *promises kept*.

Help cover rent, utilities or groceries for a military family struggling with the hardships of war.

Deliver morale-boosting "welcome home" celebrations for service members who have returned from combat.



2,300

Number of VA-accredited VFW representatives across America and abroad, helping veterans fight for the VA benefits they have earned.

3.4

million+
Number of service members and their family members hosted at VFW Military Assistance Program (MAP) events since 2005.

\$11.2

The total annual amount the VFW helped veterans recoup in VA disability compensation and pension benefits.

Amount of academic scholarships awarded to more than 2,700 veterans and service members since January 2014.

1

Number of times the VFW has testified to Congress in the last 12 months alone. The VFW has been instrumental in virtually every major legislative victory for veterans in the 20th and 21st centuries.

\$3

Amount of scholarships, monetary awards and other incentives the VFW distributes annually to middle and high school students through two major patriotic essay competitions.

\$12.9

Value of financial assistance awarded to military families since 2004 to help cover basic needs in times of crisis. 46% of the funds covered basic housing needs.



JOIN THE VFW

Connect With Us



Updated June

Learn more about the VFW's programs and



MORE FACTS

About the VFW

We trace our roots back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their service. Many arrived home wounded or sick. There was no medical care or veterans' pension for them, and they were left to care for themselves. In their misery, some of these veterans banded together and formed organizations that would eventually band together and become known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Our Mission: To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans.

Our Vision: Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.



The VFW by the numbers

1.5 million

Number of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members.

5,754

Number of VFW Posts worldwide.



1899

Year the VFW started to fight for veterans, service members and their families.



Helping struggling military families

11,509

Number of grants provided to military families facing financial hardship through *VFW Unmet Needs* since 2004.

\$5,917,950

Amount of grants provided through *VFW Unmet Needs* covering housing for struggling military families since 2004.

4,074

Number of military families who received assistance with housing needs since 2004.



Cutting red tape

115,000

Approximate number of veterans the VFW assisted in submitting new VA claims in fiscal year 2022.

Nearly 13,500

Number of VA claims filed by the VFW's Pre-Discharge offices in fiscal year 2022 resulting in more than \$64 million in disability compensation.

20+



Inspiring patriotism in young people

26,250+

Number of high school students who competed in the 2022-23 VFW Voice of Democracy competition.

66,800+

Number of students who competed in the 2022-23 VFW Patriot's Pen competition.



Improving life in America

5million

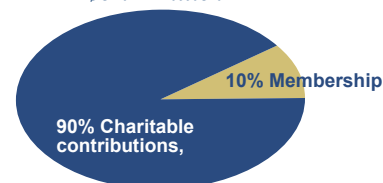
Number of volunteer hours contributed by VFW members annually.

\$44.5 million

The VFW Relies on Donations

The VFW is a 501(c), and programs are made possible through membership dues and tax-deductible donations from good-hearted Americans.

Cost of VFW Program Services: \$61.4 Million



Source: VFW 2022

Updated June

Learn more about the VFW at



**Deadline for the January 2024 Combat Veteran
is December 15, 2023!!**

Let's share our special events to everyone! I will need all articles, pictures and special event fliers to me by **December 15, 2023** for our January 2024 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



**IN THE DARKEST HOUR
WHEN THE DEMONS COME**



**CALL ON ME BROTHER
& WE WILL FIGHT THEM TOGETHER**

MILITARY HUMOR

IN-COUNTRY



THE ONE-DRAG, 4-PACK, C-RATION CIGARETTE.