

Presenting...



Oregon NEWS



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ANDREA SUMMERLIN, THE FIRST WOMAN TO COMMAND THE DEPARTMENT OF OREGON VFW, CELEBRATES THE 104TH CONVENTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OREGON VFW AND HER COUNTERPART, DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT DEBRA DUGGAN CELEBRATES THE 97TH CONVENTION OF THE AUXILIARY!



Dept. President Debra Duggan & Dept. Commander Andrea Summerlin receive a warm welcome from the Pendleton Roundup folks.



Sr. Vice President Denise Keeton & Sr. Vice Commander Bert Little entering Joint Opening.



Above: VFW Attendees at the 104th Convention of the Department of Oregon Veterans of Foreign Wars. Below: Auxiliary Attendees on Red Friday!



UPDATES

COMMANDER’S CORNER



Bert Little
Department Commander
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Greetings everyone. I would like to say we have started off the new year with great success. There have been some Schools of Instruction (SOI), set up in July and the first one has already been completed. The posts are already turning in their CSR on the department website, much better than the previous years. This shows our effort to train our membership is working! We will continue to hold training throughout the year. If there is a topic you are interested in getting more information on, please contact the Department Adjutant during working hours or email the requests so we can add them to the list. Our department plans to start some Zoom training once or twice a month on the topics the membership wants to learn about. (This will be starting after the National Convention is over). Our effort this year is to keep our members informed about what the department is doing by adding events to the website calendar for easy access.

Our webmaster is doing a great job in keeping up to date with information on the website. Please look at the different tabs and see what there is to discover.

Our department representatives, Tony Barber and Andrea Summerlin attended the UVGO (United Veterans Group of Oregon) quarterly meeting on July 12 and Andrea was elected First Vice Chair and Tony was appointed Chaplain. Congratulations you two for stepping up and representing our VFW Department.

We are looking for volunteers to help in the following membership drives. If we have enough volunteers, we will schedule events at the State Fair, the Air show, and Comic-Con.

I want to thank everyone for your support and efforts to continue working the VFW programs and the “Still Serving” motto.

Bert Little
Train—Share—Communicate

STATE QUARTERMASTER/ADJUTANT



Brandy Olmstead
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Bonding Season Arrives: Important Updates from the Quartermaster
VFW Department of Oregon – 2025–2026 Bonding Information

Comrades,
As we begin a new administrative year, it’s time once again for an essential responsibility—**bonding season**. Proper bonding helps safeguard our Posts, ensure accountability, and protect the integrity of our organization’s finances.

Bonding Packets Available

All Quartermasters should have received their **2025–2026 bonding packet** by email. If you haven’t received it, you can access it on our website:

Visit vfwor.org

- Click on “Resources”
- Select “Reports and Forms” to download the full bonding packet

Two Types of Bonds

1. Accountable Officer Bond

This bond covers key leadership positions such as **Quartermaster, Commander, and Senior Vice**, and is **required for all signers on any VFW bank account**. The bond is tied to the **office or role**, not the individual, ensuring continuous protection regardless of personnel changes.

Coverage Period: September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026

2. Club Employee and Bingo Bond

This bond covers **individuals**, typically club staff or bingo workers. Each person requiring this coverage must **complete and sign their own application**. This type of bond is essential for Posts operating a club, canteen, or bingo.

Coverage Period: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026

Application Process

- A **separate application** is required for each person or position needing bond coverage.
- Include the **appropriate payment** with your application.
- Carefully review the **type of bond** and **coverage period** before submitting.

JR. PAST DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



Debra Duggan
Dept. Jr. Past President
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What a wonderful year. Thank you all for your help in making my year as your Department President fun and successful.

I am humbled and grateful for all your help. We made Oregon shine once again. This could not happen without you. What a wonderful VFW family and Team we have. I will be proud to represent Oregon at the Circle of Excellence Ceremony at the National Convention.

Let’s continue this support for our incoming President Denise Keeton. Remember I am always available to help, listen or mentor. You each hold a very special place in my heart. Look for me as the incoming Membership Chairman for the year of 2025-2026.

Loyally,
Deb Duggan
Junior Past Department President

STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER



Greg Arnold
State Jr. Vice Commander
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“Shock and Awe” is the only way I can describe it.

I was shocked that I was selected as VFW Department of Oregon’s Veteran of the Year at last month’s Department Convention in Pendleton, Oregon. An honor I truly was surprised to receive.

I was awed at my nomination and election as Jr. Vice Commander. I came to the convention with the notion I would step down from the “chairs”, it seemed beyond my scope and abilities to proceed any further. During the convention many VFW and Auxiliary friends and comrades expressed their support and desire for me to remain in the line officer positions. That had a deep effect on me, I had a change of heart and a change of mind; being only human, I can do that... so I accepted the position of Jr. Vice when the nomination went to the floor.

Saying all that, I will do my best and be the best Jr. Vice Commander I can be.

To put it in nautical terms, being the old salty dog that I imagine I am (Ha! Ha!), I will hoist up the anchor, leave safe harbors, and set sail on a new adventure.

Also, the ancient Teutonic meaning of my last name is “Strong as an eagle.” I can only try to emulate that strength in serving the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Oregon.

So, I say –
Anchors Aweigh – Eagle Strong.

Greg Arnold
Dept. Jr. Vice Commander

STATE QUARTERMASTER/ADJUTANT Continued

Quick Reminders

- All **account signers** must be bonded under the **Accountable Officer Bond**.
- Submit bonding forms and payments by the deadlines to avoid gaps in coverage.
- Contact Department Headquarters with any questions or assistance needs.

Proper bonding is not just a compliance item—it is a key part of ensuring security, accountability, and trust in all we do within the VFW.

Together we can do great things,

Brandy Olmstead
Quartermaster
VFW Department of Oregon

UPDATES



CONGRATULATIONS ALL-AMERICAN HONOREES!



A **special congratulations** goes out to **District 4** for reaching the remarkable milestone of being named an **All American District** for the 2024–2025 year, achieving an outstanding **105.81% in membership!**

This incredible accomplishment reflects the **unwavering dedication, unity, and tireless efforts** of every member in the District. You have set a high standard for excellence and demonstrated what can be achieved through commitment and service.

Well done, District 4!



All American Posts – 2024–2025



Congratulations to the dedicated members of the following Posts for achieving **All American status** this year! Your hard work, commitment, and outstanding service to your communities are truly inspiring. These accomplishments are a testament to your **teamwork, leadership, and dedication..**

□ **Congratulations to all of you on this outstanding success!** Your efforts continue to strengthen our mission and represent the best of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Post #	Membership %	Post Name	Division
9448	107.03%	Fern Ridge–Jack Kelley Post	7
3440	106.92%	Frank C. High Medal of Honor Post	6
1325	106.42%	Peninsula Pep Post	8
3452	105.62%	Major Axel Rasmussen Post	4
584	103.92%	Linn Post	3
1324	103.39%	Three Rivers Post	4
4108	102.07%	Art Horsell Deschutes Post	3

WOMEN VETERANS COMMITTEE, SUBMITTED BY MARIE MCCANDLESS, Chair

This past year has been both remarkable and inspiring—marked by meaningful engagement, dynamic events, and continued growth. I extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your unwavering support, participation, and dedication to our mission.

Our committee was proud to represent and connect with our communities at various events throughout the year. One of the most memorable highlights was the State Convention, where Ashley Taylor was recognized as **Women Veteran of the Year**. Her leadership, resilience, and commitment to service exemplify the values we strive to uphold. Congratulations, Ashley, and thank you for your continued inspiration and advocacy.

During the convention, we hosted a **Women Veterans Luncheon**, which provided a wonderful opportunity to welcome new members, reconnect with familiar faces, and strengthen our community bonds. The conversations that emerged sparked new ideas and renewed energy for the road ahead.

Our mission remains steadfast: to encourage and empower women veterans across Oregon to continue their personal growth—fostering connection, acquiring new skills, building healthy relationships, and healing from past experiences.

This year, our committee actively participated in a range of impactful events, including:

- Veterans Day Parades in McMinnville and Albany, and 4th of July Parade in Warrenton
- Engage Conference at Pacific University
- Women Veterans Appreciation Dinner in Lebanon
- Paint Night hosted by Marion VFW Post 661
- Woven virtual Zoom gatherings
- Women Veterans Appreciation Presentation at Pacific University

Each of these experiences was not only enriching and educational but also deeply affirming the importance of our work. We are grateful to the organizers, partners, and supporters who made these opportunities possible. As we continue to grow, your help is essential—please consider inviting fellow women veterans to join our efforts and expand our reach.

Looking ahead, we are especially excited for the **Oregon Women Veterans Conference**, to be held on **Saturday, September 27, 2025**, at the Riverhouse Lodge in Bend, Oregon. Hosted by ODVA, this biennial gathering offers an outstanding opportunity to connect, learn, and share resources. Though I have yet to attend personally, I’ve heard exceptional feedback and strongly encourage all to participate.

We are also preparing for our return to the **Albany Veterans Day Parade**, where we will feature a special float in honor of women veterans. If you are interested in joining the planning or participating in the event, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

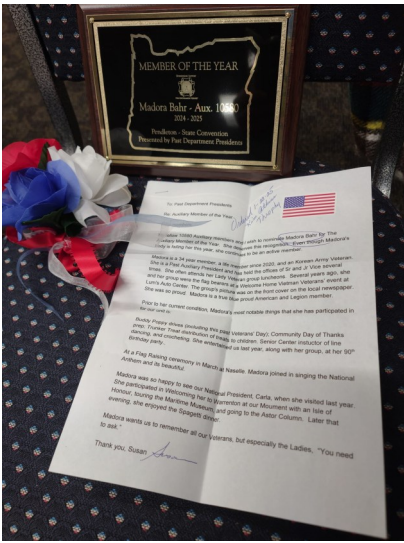
Thank you for your ongoing commitment and passion. It is an honor to serve as your Chair, and I look forward to the continued impact we will make—together—in the year ahead.

With gratitude, **Marie McCandless**—Chair, Women Veterans Committee

Below: Women veterans at Convention, including Auxiliary members Darlene Wisdom, Terri Steller & Denise Cody.



VFW AUXILIARY MEMBER OF THE YEAR—2025



Each year, the Past Department Presidents choose one member to receive the honor of “Member of the Year.” The 2025 honoree was Madara Bahr from VFW Auxiliary 10580, a veteran herself, nominated by Auxiliary Sister and Past District 2 President Susan Jensen. Unfortunately, Madara passed away one day before her 92nd birthday, so we were not able to present the award to her.

Instead, a plaque was presented to Susan that can be hung in the Auxiliary’s new Post home in remembrance of Madara and her service to the Auxiliary. Rest in peace Madara, you earned it!

UPDATES

DEPARTMENT SR. VICE COMMANDER



Joe Steller
Dept. Sr. Vice Commander
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Hello everyone, first I would like to thank everyone for putting your trust in me and allowing me to serve as your Department Sr. Vice Commander. I know I am starting a little bit behind, but we have a lot of great past Department Commanders that I can tap into for information. With their help and help from National, I will be able to come up to speed quickly to help Department Commander Bert Little and set some goals for next year.

During this year, I will be helping our Commander, but also gathering information from the posts to find out what they would like to see from department. During the month of July, the Department held several Officer Training Schools to teach our new Officers about their positions. Next year, I am also looking at holding Schools of Instruction at three different posts located around the state. When I started my journey in the VFW, I attended several of these schools and learned a lot about the programs that the VFW supports.

In August I will be traveling to the VFW National Convention to gain more information and tools that I can bring back to Oregon to help our state VFW grow. I believe the more you know, the better you can help others. So, please contact me with any questions or ideas you might have to make this organization better.

Working together, we can bring the past, present and future generations of the VFW together. Without our members, we will have no influence in congress to protect our VA benefits. Together we are stronger. I am looking forward to working with you all this year.

Loyally,
Joseph J Steller
Department Oregon Sr. Vice Commander, VFW \9408 SW Meadow Rd, Terrebonne, OR 97760



Humana Rep Dori Fritsch with Cindy Neuburger from Aux. 3973 and Stephanie Thompson from Aux. 584, the 2025 Volunteers of the Year.



Adjutant General Dan West addressing the Joint Opening of the 2025 Department of Oregon Convention.



National Councilmember #20, Erin Mezek addresses the Auxiliary.



The VFW Line comes to visit the Auxiliary.



Outgoing Dept. President Deb Duggan parading around the Auxiliary room in her new "Little Red Truck and special hat, courtesy of the Past Dept. Presidents.

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION COMMITTEE REPORT



Joe Steller
Convention Comm. Chair
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Hello everyone, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to read this. The convention committee is in the early stages of planning the next two state conventions. For 2026 we are looking to have it somewhere on the coast. We are looking at June 18-21. For 2027 we are looking to hold it somewhere in central Oregon, around the Bend area on June 12-20.

Right now we are gathering information on past conventions and what worked and what didn't. So here is what we need from you. Please send in your ideas on where you would like to see the convention, what you would like to have at the convention, and any other ideas that would make the convention better to draw in more members.

You can email me at joe.steller@gmail.com or call/text me at 541-233-7577. Texting works best to get a hold of me.

Joseph Steller
Convention Committee Chairman, VFW



Presentation of Flags and Banners 2025.



The Floor Team came in dressed as truck drivers in honor of Deb's theme. From left to right: Jessie Stober, Patricia Carroll, Lorraine Hansen, Cathy Barber, Tracy Bogard, Audell Osgood and Danny Case.

IN THE NEWS

MORE PICTURES FROM CONVENTION



VFW Post 3232 Color Guard prepares to post the Colors at the 2025 Dept. of Oregon Convention.



PDCs Bert Key, Rich Halverson, Dennis Guthrie and George Carroll present the Willie & Joe Lifetime Achievement Award to John Cook from Post 922.
Not pictured: The 2025 Veteran of the Year award was presented to Greg Arnold, Commander of VFW Post 1324 by the Past Dept. Commanders.



Left: A few of the award winners at the Banquet on Friday night pose with Dept. Commander Andrea Summerlin and Adjutant General Dan West.



Singer Cale Moon performs at a concert after the banquet on Friday night.



Convention Chair Daniel Helfrich presents Dept. Commander Andrea Summerlin with a plaque from Department.



Auxiliary Musician Nanette Chapman really spruced up for Red Shirt Friday!



Coyote Joe and Little Joe perform for the Convention.

2025 Installation of Officers



Past Department Commander Bert Key and Past Department President Valorie Wrinkle install the 2025-2026 Department Officers.



Right: PDP Valorie Wrinkle issues the oath to new Dept. President Denise Keeton. (Seated because she dropped the Auxiliary Charter in its wooden case and to protect it from breaking, she broke the fall with her foot!



Left: Auxiliary Musician Nanette Chapman from Auxiliary 4273 keeps cadence during Joint Installation.



IN THE NEWS



Adjutant General Dan West draws a Legacy Life ticket as Past Department Commander Bert Key and 2024-2025 Dept. Commander Andrea Summerlin watch.



Just some of the Food donations collected at Convention. The food will be put to good use! 1,623 lbs. went to Veterans Advocates of Idaho and Oregon and 1,502 lbs. went to the Milton-Freewater Elks Lodge Veterans Food Pantry.”

Nat’l VFW Rep, Nat’l Adjutant General Dan West presents 2024-2025 Dept. Commander Andrea Summerlin with a certificate from Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt.



Past Department Commanders Bert Key, George Carroll, Larry Alexander, Dennis Guthrie and Rich Halverson present Andrea Summerlin with her new PDC Vest.



Dept. Commander Bert Little and Dept. President Denise Keeton cut their cakes at their Reception.

THE WALL THAT HEALS IS COMING TO OREGON



The Wall That Heals
comes to
Independence, Oregon
September 18-21, 2025

HONOR YOUR VIETNAM VETERAN WHO RETURNED
HOME AND LATER DIED THROUGH THE
IN MEMORY PROGRAM



The Wall That Heals will be in
Independence, OR
from September 18 - 21st

To have your veteran included as part of the mobile Education
Center display when The Wall That Heals is on display in
Independence, apply by **August 17th.**



For more information, visit
www.vvmf.org/In-Memory-Program/
or scan the following QR code:

