

Presenting...



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KLAMATH FALLS POST 1383 CELEBRATES A CENTURY OF SERVICE

LEE JUILLERAT For the Herald and News
Jul 18, 2025

A century of honoring veterans was celebrated Friday, July 25, by the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Pelican Post in Klamath Falls.

Klamath Falls Post 1383 was formed July 25, 1925, and has been an active part of the community since then. The anniversary was celebrated with a dinner at the Post, 515 Klamath Ave. Along with local members, guests planning to attend included the mayor of Klamath Falls, three Klamath County commissioners, the Klamath County sheriff and Klamath Falls fire chief, among others.

"The local VFW intends to continue to provide a viable, dynamic, and healthy vitality that is best for our veterans and for the Klamath Basin," said Ron Johnson, the post's senior vice commander. "This year, the post has reached a milestone — its centennial. We will celebrate the history and contributions that reflected positively on the service of our men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families," he added. "Their valor was prominently recognized and remembered. The sacrifice was 'Not Forgotten' during these years."

Johnson, who serves as the local VFW post's commander, served in the U.S. Marines from 1974 to 1985. He spent two assignments in Okinawa and was also stationed in Quantico and Camp Pendleton. Johnson and his wife, Marle Jandreau, who had been in the reserves as a nurse, lived in San Diego before moving to Klamath Falls in 2012.



Past Post Commander, Ron Ballard, Cutting the Celebration Cake, which was enjoyed by all those in attendance.

The Pelican Post offers games of pool and shuffleboard, beverages and a place to "kick back and watch a sporting event on the big-screen TVs." Bingo is held on Tuesdays from 5 to 10 p.m. with karaoke on Thursdays and Fridays from 8 to 11 p.m. The banquet hall is available for meetings, wedding receptions, birthday parties, family reunions, fundraisers and other events. The hall can accommodate up to 200 people, has a 28- by 30-foot dance floor along with a full kitchen and service bar. For information on rentals, contact Duane Whitehead between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. at (541) 882-0057.

The Klamath Falls chapter hosts Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Chapter 29-6 meetings at 5 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month and the Post has a color guard that carries the U.S. and other flags in parades, ceremonies and events honoring "our fallen comrades." The

Color Guard is directed by Ron Ballard and includes members of the Pelican Post and the Marine Corps League Crater Lake Detachment 373.

In celebrating the centennial, Johnson and Post members issued a proclamation noting, "Whereas VFW Post 1383 is giving a tribute and a salute to our past colleagues, peers and comrades. Since 1925 the post has provided an archive of ceremonies each year in this community to recognize and remember our local servicemen and women, their families and our Armed Forces. Chronicling the difficult times of wars, conflicts and skirmishes, the Post prominently recognized, and remembered their valor."

It also notes the Post "has supported and partnered in this organization's success by showing their zeal, passion and the commitment to the Veteran; through these 100 years" and notes its "legacy of honoring the fallen, used the appropriate days to lay flags and wreaths at the grave sites in remembrance of the fallen Veteran and to commemorate with solemn reverence and to remember. The flags were predominantly displayed for public viewing coinciding with the appropriate Holidays — days of solemn, bold 'recollection.' All Veterans past and present remembered."

The Post has sponsored educational scholarships over the past 50 years and "has invested hugely in the local schools. The reasoning was to invest in the future leaders, promote patriotism, strengthen oral and writing skills and encourage insightful thinking." Johnson said the Post uses Veterans Park and its pavilion "to celebrate and commemorate the Armed Forces on the appropriate Holidays," such as Memorial and Veterans days, "to emphasize public awareness to the importance of our Veterans through speech, vigilance and perseverance." In 2024 the Post had 25 Color Guard assignments honoring deceased veterans.

The Post furnishes a ceremonial flag

A certificate recognizing seventy five years of service to the community. The Post now has a certificate for 100 years to hang on their wall!



and color guards "to our Fallen Veterans — a tribute to our deceased and their families — and collaborates with other military agencies for ceremonies that include a rifle salute, playing of Taps, and the display of an American Flag to provide 'closure to a special patriot.'"

Johnson said the Post partners with the Marine Corps League for parades that "stand as a salute to the Armed Forces and allowed the local public to thank the military for their service". Together, they host monthly Veterans Action Council meetings that involve 15 different military agencies, they promote the Buddy Poppy program that originated after World War I, and work closely with the auxiliary.

"The VFW will continue to be an active part and team player with the civilian community and Kingsley Field community," Johnson said, adding, "This collaboration is community strong and leadership intensive."

A Prisoner of War and Missing in Action is a ceremonial table set for one to honor or missing or captured prisoners of war.



Commander Ronald Johnson speaking about the many contributions of Post 1383 in the local community.



Continued in next column

UPDATES

COMMANDER’S CORNER



Bert Little
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We just returned for our National Convention in Columbus Ohio, where there were buddy poppy displays to look at from all the other departments and the silent auction had various awesome items to bid on. Oregon’s display was canned fish product along with some different fish jerky and crackers.

There were some resolutions reviewed and voted on for updating our VFW National Bylaw book. You will see them in the new addition of the Podium Edition 2026.

It is time for the post audits and district meetings, so please have all your paperwork ready for the inspectors.

School has started for the kids, so now is the time to promote the VOD, PP, and Teacher programs. This is going to be a fun year with the Mid-Winter being held in Seaside, Oregon. Tours have already been set up and we are working on rooms and meals.

I want to thank all the posts for turning in their election reports on time. Great job.

Everyone should have turned in a community service report for the 1st quarter by now. If not, please log into the “Members Only” tab on the vfwor.org website to fill out your reports. The posts are doing a fabulous job this year with community service, (well noted).

Oh! One last item. MEMBERSHIIP - this is always important for the VFW. We are doing a good job in keeping engaged with community involvement; being out there at fairs, school events, and public events; visiting your local city council meetings; and promoting our programs. Please continue looking for those new members to join our posts.

Bert Little
Commander

STATE JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER



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I don’t know about anyone else, but I left the VFW National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, feeling elated, energized and educated. It was a time to meet old comrades, acquaintances, and new ones. The Columbus Convention Center was a great venue for the VFW to meet. Every day was filled with activities and meetings and they all had a purpose. To see all the members from all the Departments as far away as Europe and the Pacific area, just reenforced in me how important and meaningful our organization is.

Some milestones about this year’s convention stick out in my mind:

- The VFW originally began in this city.
- The election of Carol Whitmore as the first female Commander-in -Chief (and surely not the last!).
- The passing of Article XIII in the national bylaws establishing the National VFW Riders.
- The approval of amending Sec. 803 to include an “Alternative Cap, a baseball style cap, black in color, lettered with VFW initials, Post numerals, state, rank of office (when applicable), Veterans of Foreign Wars and bearing the cross of Malta may be worn by members other than officers during meetings of the Post and District. Lettering on each cap shall be in Gold.” Look for it to be available a few months from now due to ordering/lettering lag time.

A lot more happened at this convention; both Monday and Tuesday’s business sessions went into overtime, way past the usual allotted time, but it was necessary to get all the issues done. Afterall, that was what the convention was about. I personally appreciated seeing democracy in action and how the parliamentary procedures worked. It was an education.

Next year’s convention is scheduled for Reno, Nevada. Comrades, dear Auxiliary members, that is just a day’s drive away for most here in Oregon. I can only

DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER



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Hello everyone,

State and National conventions are over and all the new officers have been installed for the coming year. Now, it is time to get down to business, but before we do, here are your National Officers: Carol Whitmore, Commander-in-Chief; Cory Geisler, Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief and Glenn R. Umberger, Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief.

For all you who could not attend, the National Convention was very educational. There were vendors, educational classes, meetings and even a CornHole competition for everyone to enjoy. If you were unable to attend this year's convention, I encourage you to go next year in Reno.

In the next couple of months, you will be holding your district meetings along with an SOI. Take notes on what you learn and what you would like to learn. Please take all of the topics you have questions on and send them to department adjutant (adj@vfwor.org) and Joseph Steller (joe.steller@gmail.com). The department is looking into having Zoom meetings to provide training on these topics throughout the year. Next year, I am looking at having three SOI’s located at different posts around the state to provide in-person training. So, the more feedback we get, the better we can provide the training and answers you need.

School is starting in a few weeks and deadlines for Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pin and teacher of the year are also fast approaching. Check with your post and districts to make sure that your scholarship chairperson has signed into the scholarship program. If not, please send their information to department adjutant to get them signed up. This year, national is running all the scholarships through the program. Remember, the deadline to turn in applications is October 31 to post. This year, midwinter is going to be held in Seaside. Hope to see you there.

Keep up with your programs and if you have any questions, please contact me and I will do by best to get you the answers. With everyone’s help we can have a great year.

Loyally,
Joseph J Steller

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



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Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

I hope August is finding everyone in good health and enjoying your summer.

We had a good training academy in July at the Redmond Post. I look forward to seeing everyone at the training academy in Oregon City on 23 August 2025. That one is at Post #1324. If not there, I hope to see you at the training academy on 6 September 2025, n Winston, at Post #9745.

I will be going to the National Convention this month in Columbus. We hope to bring words of wisdom to you at the training academy, on what we have learned.

I wish everyone a wonderful rest of your summer. Stay safe and be cool.

Thank you for all you do for our veterans and their families.

Respectfully and loyally,

encourage you to make the trip and get a broader sense and scope for what our great organization is all about. Perhaps you will come away feeling elated, energized and educated as well.

I am betting (Reno, right?) you won’t regret going!

Anchors Aweigh. Eagle Strong.

Greg Arnold
State Jr. Vice Commander

IN THE NEWS

VETERAN AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Brothers and Sisters,

I hope you are doing well and are connecting with our Veterans, Military, and their families regularly.

SUICIDE AWARENESS

September was Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

This month reminds us that every life matters and that reaching out for help or to support someone else can make all the difference. Suicide is preventable, and by talking openly, breaking down stigma, and connecting with resources, we can create a community of care where no one feels alone in their struggles.

We encourage everyone to take a moment to check in on friends, family, and colleagues, and to learn about the warning signs of suicide. Sometimes, just asking “How are you really doing?” can open the door to hope. Together, we can spread awareness, show compassion, and remind one another that healing and help are always within reach.

If you or someone you know is struggling, dial **988** to connect with the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for immediate support. You are not alone.

1. Plan an event with your local county offices and have a day to educate your communities on what Suicide Prevention can do for our Military and Veteran Community.
2. Connect with an organization to have a walk in October.
3. Promote the 988 Hotline. “**The Veterans Crisis Line**” serves Veterans, service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and those who support them.

Dial 988, then Press 1, chat live, or text 838255. A caring, qualified responder will listen and help.

MAP GRANTS

1. I sent an email to all Oregon VFW Posts/Auxiliaries that have a current Adopted Unit they work with and a list of current contacts last week.
2. Applications are open September 1, 2025, and can be found on the VFW Post Dashboard. Only VFW Posts have access to this feature and all grants must be filled out under the dashboard.
3. \$1500.00 is the maximum for each event
4. If you have questions, please contact me.

UNMET NEEDS (NEW NAME: VFW Financial Assistance for Service Members)

1. Service member or eligible Dependent enrolled in DEERS.
2. Soldiers who are deployed— their families can apply for up to \$2500.00.
3. To be eligible, you must be a service member who is currently on active duty (to include active guard and reserve members) whose financial hardship is a direct result of current deployment, military pay error at no fault of the service member or currently pending a medical discharge due to service-connected injuries and illnesses received while on active duty
4. All grants are paid directly to the creditor and not to the applicant.

SPORTSCLIPS HELP A HERO

1. Please share information with your local colleges and at your recruiting events to attract more veteran students to apply.
2. Participate with local SportsClips during November by getting a haircut or having a fundraiser with SportsClips to raise awareness about this amazing opportunity.

The VFW and Sport Clips Haircuts assisted 156 student veterans with \$740,000.00 for the 2025 fall semester. This program has awarded \$15.3 Million in scholarships to more than 3350 student veterans. Here are the 5 Oregon Students who received a scholarship:

- **Christina Medina** – Seaside - Pacific University – Navy Veteran
- **Fernando Garcia-Martinez** – Portland – PSU – Army Veteran
- **Stephen Anderson** – Coos Bay – PSU – Marine Corps Veteran
- **Shane Tidrick** – Beaverton – Texas A&M – Navy Veteran
- **Elliot Diaz** – Turner – Uit The Arctic University of Norway – Marine Corps Veteran

The VFW's "**Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship**" provides service members and veterans with the financial assistance they need to complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt. It’s just another way for us to say “thank you” to those who fought for our freedoms.

CHAPLAIN



Tracy Bogard
Chaplain
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With September being National Suicide Prevention Month, I am sharing a prayer for you to pass on to all at your meetings. Have a blessed Month.

Tracy Bogard Department of OR Chaplain

Loving God,

We come before You with hearts open for all who carry heavy burdens, seen and unseen.

We lift those struggling with despair, loneliness, or thoughts of ending their lives. Wrap them in Your light, remind them they are not alone, and fill them with hope for tomorrow.

We pray for families, friends, and communities touched by loss. Bring comfort to grieving hearts and the courage to speak openly about pain, healing, and love.

Bless the helpers—the counselors, teachers, leaders, healers, and everyday neighbors—who walk beside those in need. Strengthen them with compassion and endurance.

Guide us to be voices of encouragement, hands of kindness, and hearts of understanding. Help us to listen without judgment and to respond with care.

May this month remind us that every life is precious, every story matters, and every person is deeply loved. Grant us the wisdom to break the silence, the courage to reach out, and the grace to bring hope where it feels lost.

Amen.



Scholarship Details:

- Scholarships of up to \$5,000.00 will be awarded to qualified applicants.
- Awarded scholarships are limited to one per family per semester.
- Applications for the fall semester will be accepted Jan. 1 through April 30.
- Applications for the spring semester will be accepted Aug. 1 through Nov. 15.
- Fall semester scholarships will be awarded in August and spring semester scholarships will be awarded in January.
- Scholarships must be used by the end of the school semester for which the veteran is applying or they will become null and void.
- Scholarships are restricted for tuition and fees only and will be paid directly to accredited schools.

Eligible Applicants Must:

- Be a citizen of the United States.
- Be retired, honorably discharged, on active duty, or a member of the National Guard or Reserve.
- Have completed Basic Training and follow-on training (Advanced Individual Training, technical school, etc.).
- Separated with or currently hold a military rank of E-5 or below.
- Demonstrate a need for financial assistance.
- Participate in, be accepted to, or be currently enrolled in a VA-approved program or school at an accredited post-secondary institution.

Auxiliary in Action in July and August

- Lawrence Alberti 12140, Sandy 4273, and Sellwood Breakthrough 4248 Welcomed Home over 900 soldiers from our Adopted Units. The event was a huge success. Thank you to everyone for donating money for the event: Lynn VFW Auxiliary 584, Molalla VFW Auxiliary 3973, Sellwood Breakthrough VFW Auxiliary 4248, Sandy VFW Post and Auxiliary 4273, Lawrence Alberti VFW Post and Auxiliary 12140, Sue Miller, and Andrea Summerlin.
- Sellwood Breakthrough Auxiliary 4248 hosted a Freedom Festival to showcase all our programs.

I look forward to reading everyone’s activities in your Auxiliary Reports.

Thank You, Tracy Bogard

IN THE NEWS

GUITARS FOR VETS? WHATEVER... (By David Welch, District 14 Commander)

It's 2017, wait...I'm gonna need to go back to 2007 first. Guitars for Vets was and is the brainchild of guitar teacher Patrick Nettesheim and Vietnam-era Marine, Dan VanBuskirk. A program designed to help veterans facing mental health issues like depression, anxiety and PTSD. The thought was if you could give a veteran a tool to express themselves and block away the negativity, their overall health would be improved. Almost two decades later, it has been very well received and proven to be true. There are 10,304 graduates (at the time of writing) and 144 active chapters in the US and these chapters don't include the chapters that are all around the world either. There are chapters in Australia, Wales and Canada, too. So, what does this have to do with me?

Well, back to 2017. In April of that year, I left the military. After 13 and a half years serving in the United States Army, I was done. Two tours to Afghanistan and 12 and a half of those years spent at Fort Drum, NY, 10th Mountain, Light Infantry Division, the Army's Best Kept Secret (that's a joke). I remember driving into the base each morning and being greeted by that tag line from the gate guards. The 10th Mountain Light Infantry Division is the most deployed Division in the USA. You can expect to deploy, come back, wait a year, and head right back to whatever warzone. If the rapid training and deployment schedule didn't destroy your morale, the weather did. Weather training consists of going out into the field for weeks while sometimes surviving temperatures of negative 20 degrees and below. So, with that little background, yeah, I was burnt out.

I'd spent years going to the behavioral health clinic for anxiety, depression and... ADHD (later to be diagnosed with PTSD). You would think I would be skipping from pure bliss at the thought of leaving that world, but unfortunately that wasn't true. Maybe it was a kind of Stockholm Syndrome that had taken shape, or it could be that I was leaving a unit, people and structure that I had come to know for over a decade. So, why did I leave? Why not stick it out and hit my "20". The reason was I was fat, but the real, real reason... the honest truth is I was done. Mentally, physically, and damn, maybe even spiritually. I'd spent years working and trying to be a decent soldier while having my wires crossed in my head most of my life. Guitars for Vets saved my life.

April 10th, 2017, I walked upstairs into my bedroom and took off the uniform for the last time. I would like to say I handled that moment well, but I didn't. I broke down and cried. I cried harder than maybe I'd ever cried in my life. Who the hell was I now? Who was David? I didn't know the guy. Last time I heard, that 19 year old guy skateboarded and listened to Korn and Green Day. It was scary. I had gone through a transition program to help me find a job, but that turned out to be a bust. The program even admitted they couldn't help me after weeks of going through the processes. Fast forward to October and I'm stocking shelves at Home Depot part time. The bank was sending me letters saying they were taking the house. My two cars were supposed to be taken the same month.

I am a failure. I failed me, my wife (at the time) and the three kids who we had won custody of a year earlier. I had spent the last five years struggling with thoughts about suicide and this time the question wasn't "if" but "when". I walked into the VA clinic in Watertown, NY for another appointment with my psychiatrist. We went through the motions. She asked me how my day was and if I was depressed or thinking of hurting myself. I found myself saying, yes. Yes to many of the questions she was asking. For the first time in my life, I felt trapped. No, really, really trapped. I'd already called every Vet Organization I could think of. They all told me they couldn't help, but they could put me in touch with a therapist or counselor. That was not what I needed. I had an overwhelming sense of "it's all gonna end". She asked if I would like help and I said yes. A police officer came and drove me to the Samaritan hospital nearby. I was admitted into the mental ward for suicidal ideations. I would like to say sleeping on sandbag

pillows, hearing sounding bowls and bead art saved me, but after being released, all my problems were still there.

I returned to seeing my counselor at the Watertown Vet center when he told me I should try a new group there called Guitars for Vets. Jim and Mary, he told me, were a very nice couple that helped veterans learn to play the guitar as a tool to manage mental health issues veterans faced. I turned him down. In fact, I turned him down 3 or 4 times. Finally, he told me the program gives you a free guitar if you complete the program. He looked me in the eye and told me, "I need you to do this," and well, he was right. 12 weeks later, I was at my graduation. Me and a few of the guys that took lessons with me were turning in our student guitar and receiving our brand-new graduate guitar (crap, getting choked up remembering this). I played a graduation song in front of everyone; it was Elvis' "Can't Help Falling in Love". It wasn't perfect. In fact, it was right down kiddish sounding, but I was so proud of myself. I had friends and well, an old pal I hadn't seen in a long time... me. I grew up in a very musical family, singing in choirs and briefly learning to play the piano (not a fan). All that disappeared after I joined the Army. Either I was too busy or couldn't find a way to integrate it into my life at that point.

Now I was back, but learning to play the guitar still didn't fix my problems. Or did it? One thing about interacting with music is the way in which it helps to clear your head by dealing with the emotions behind your thoughts. My fear and anxieties were easier to manage because I had an outlet for those emotions. I had my VA disability re-evaluated and my disability percentage increased. I was able to call the bank and the car company to tell them I was able to pay them next month. I sent them a copy of my VA letter supporting this.

Now that that was taken care of, I needed to look at my daily personal situation. After 15 years of marriage, 7 marriage counselors, and the inability to deal with problems in a healthy manner, we ended our marriage. I moved back to Oregon where I had family and friends that I grew up with (a support system). What I didn't see happening was me running a Guitars for Vets Chapter.

In 2020, the Salem Vet Center had heard of Guitars for Vets and wanted to open a chapter there. They had guitars, music stands, turners, picks, but no instructor. I was going through counseling sessions when my counselor asked me if I would like to teach. I thought this was hilarious since I had only been playing the guitar for about two and half years. My counselor, and I quote, said "well, you can show them a few chords and how to hold it right"? I agreed. Three and a half years later, the program has graduated 80 students from the program. We still teach at the Salem Vet Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but with three instructors. Me, Lee Perin and Phillip Hudspeth. Rosy Marcelino-Macias, who also works at the Salem Vet center, helps immensely with intake of new students. She populates the student lists and sends notifications to each of the students when their class starts. Eight years later, I am married to the most emotionally supportive wife, Laura and I have built friendships with many of the people I volunteer with. I have a dog; her name is Betty White. She is an English Springer Spaniel (she was given to me by one of my students and I'm so thankful for her).

So, who am I? My name is David Welch, and I am a guitar instructor, a VFW District Commander and post quartermaster. A new husband, Singer and Songer writer. A performing artist, and a combat military veteran

...and I am happy...finally.

If you would like to know more, you can look at the national Guitars for Vets website at www.guitars4vets.org. If you would like to learn more about the G4V Salem Oregon chapter, you can find us by searching on Facebook: Guitars for Vets - Salem, OR. We have way more pictures of graduations and the local program.



IN THE NEWS

FROM THE DESK OF DISTRICT 2 COMMANDER — ODVA's WOMEN VETERAN'S CONFERENCE (By Ashley Taylor, Army Veteran)

Every two years in Oregon, Women Veterans meet in a town that will host the biennial Women Veterans Conference (WVC) hosted by the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs and their Women Veterans Coordinator.

I attended my first WVC in Oregon in 2023 (after moving here in 2021). I was still with Operation Red Wings Foundation and making my way networking with the Power Players here. I noticed right away what an amazing gathering of support, care coordination, and connection this conference built. I was inspired. I was focused. I knew where I needed to be.



(From Left to Right): Tonja Pardo (Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service), Ashley Taylor (VFW and VA) and Jessica Bradley (ODVA Women Veterans Program Manager) enjoy camaraderie at the Bend conference.

Fast forward to 2025, I've been in my dream role with VA for almost two years and I was truly honored to be on the core planning team for this year's conference along with ODVA's Jessica Bradley, and U.S. Department of Labor, Tonja Pardo. Oregon is so lucky to have leaders like Jessica and Tonja. I learned so much through their level of experience and I'm still in shock that I was able to be at their level.

Wow. Like wow. Totally surpassed all of my expectations and goals for being a part of this project! Oregon is truly special. The level of compassion, intention, and support throughout all phases was immense.

- Here's why:
- ★ Collaboration with local community partners. From the start, engaging with the lead orgs was pivotal. Created flourishing opportunities that turned out to be both pre and post conference happenings.
 - ★ An idea proposed by a community partner to have clinicians at the ready to provide individual support, if wanted. We dubbed this effort the 'conference care crew' made up of VHA, Vet Center, and local community MH clinicians. They exceeded the goal by being exactly what they needed to be when needed.
 - ★ Four out of the five VA Women Veteran Program Managers who cover Oregon were onsite to support attendees from all over the state.
 - ★ A shining star of VA Portland Health Care System, the incredible Lonnamae Ladke, was offering her award-winning compassion hosting the Clothesline Project and expert information in Mental Health support.
 - ★ Integration of necessary suicide prevention information and conversations. An amazing lethal means safety and personal account keynote from the incomparable Donna-Marie Drucker handed out over 100 gun safes! We would have handed out more, but we ran out! We will bring more for 2027!
 - ★ TWO retired Oregon-resident Women Veteran Generals who shared inspiring insight for our past, present, and futures.
 - ★ 300+ in attendance. 300 humans who shared inspiring connection, resource information, and simply holding space with each other. Beautiful.
 - ★ 10+ sponsors. We know we can't accomplish this without financial support from others. Check out who supports Women Veterans in Oregon! <https://wvc.oregondva.com>
 - ★ 30+ community partners sharing in this adventure offering unwavering support for Oregon's Women Veterans.

Extra mention! VFW Post 1643 donated their military branch flags. VFW Post 661 donated their Uniform Display Museum. And VFW Department of Oregon donated centerpieces for the 30+ tables for attendees.

- Ashley Taylor, Army Veteran

AUXILIARY CHIEF OF STAFF



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Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

We are in a new year and we have new opportunities to mentor and build up our Auxiliaries. It is the responsibility of all members to know if their auxiliary is a healthy auxiliary. I will be sending out the yearly Healthy Auxiliary Checklist. If you attend a Training Academy, you will receive one there.

- Which flag describes your Auxiliary? At your next meeting, check the 5 Essentials of an Auxiliary to determine what flag shows the status of your auxiliary:
- Green Flag Auxiliary
 - Yellow Flag Auxiliary
 - Red Flag Auxiliary

- 5 Essentials of an Auxiliary**
1. *Auxiliaries should have at least ten (10) business meetings per year. (Sec. 210).*
 2. *Dues should be paid on at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year. (Sec. 207)*
 3. *Up to date with submission of quarterly audits by Trustees. (Sec. 814)*
 4. *Officers elected, installed and reported to National Headquarters no later than June 30.*
 5. *The offices of President and Treasurer MUST be bonded by August 31.*

Please contact Debbie if you would like a copy of the "Healthy Auxiliary Checklist Auxiliary To-Dos and Deadlines".

This quick guide will help your auxiliary stay on target as a healthy auxiliary.

Good News – Our monthly virtual training sessions will begin again in September. I am planning two sessions, both will be on the second Tuesday of each month, one at 4:00 p.m. and one at 8:00 p.m. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, September 9th. Our first topic will be Member Resources. The training will include accessing Malta and how to utilize the resources found there.

"The best way to thank a mentor is to pay it forward, by becoming a mentor yourself." – Anonymous

Debbie "Cookie" Little
Auxiliary Chief of Staff



(From Left to Right): Ashley Taylor, VFW District 2 Commander and Community Engagement & Partnerships Coordinator with ODVA employees. Ian Michael (LGBTQ+ Coordinator); Donna-Marie Drucker, Oregon Firearm Safety Coalition Founder and President; and Jon Taylor (Tribal Veterans Coordinator).

IN THE NEWS

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

It is that time of year when we need to provide the Department of Oregon with the funds necessary to give Scholarships for our Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen winners. Each VFW Post in the Department is to contribute \$50 to each program. In the past several years, only a few Posts have made this contribution. We really had to scramble this past year to find the necessary funds! I must remind you that these are OUR youth that these scholarship funds go to support!

In an effort to raise funds to fulfill our commitment to our youth, we have initiated a new program. We are asking our Posts and Auxiliaries to help raise donations. Posts and Business/Organizations donating at least \$100 will be recognized in the Department VOD/PP Banquet Program. Additionally, if we can raise adequate funds, we plan to do the following:

- 1. Department of Oregon VFW plaques to the posts/auxiliaries raising the most money (3 plaques by membership size). This competition will include money donated by local businesses/organizations.
- 2. Department plaque to Businesses/Organizations donating \$500 or more.

In the future we may add:

- 3. Two banquet tickets to the Posts raising the most money (3 by membership), OR
- 4. Catered meals (pizza?) to the Posts raising the most money.

Remember, these funds are needed by the end of December to plan for the VOD Banquet held in January.

Thank you, Bob Beck, VFW Dept of Oregon VOD Chair

POW/MIA - VETERANS DAY 2025

*“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.
He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.”
The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.” Isaiah 2:3-4*

The sudden silence was almost deafening! Each soldier in the trench-line strained to hear what was going on. There, a noise! What was it? Oh, a bird, singing! (A sound nearly forgotten by the soldiers.) And then, another sound, was it near or far? It began somewhat softly, then began to swell – cheers from the soldiers, up and down the trench lines, from both sides of no-man’s line! The sound of cheers rose until the soldiers felt that it was nearly as loud as the artillery they had been experiencing. One soldier looked at his watch, it was just past 11:00! Eleven o’clock, the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 11:00, 11/11/1918. The war to end all wars was over, and these soldiers were still alive, unbelievable as it was!

And yet, even today we deal with war. We still experience distrust, hatred, racism; the War to End All War did not end war. We still bicker, we still complain about our neighbor, whether he lives next door or on another continent. We gripe about the politics of the other party, we even applaud the murderer, at least if he is on our side.

“He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples.” If we could only learn to listen? If we could only communicate with the other side to try to find a solution acceptable to both sides. If we could only act as Christ taught us to act, with compassion and love.

This Veterans Day, please thank a veteran. Thank him or her for their willingness to protect our freedoms. But above all, thank them for what they went through for the freedoms we all enjoy.

Bob Beck, VFW Dept of Oregon POW/MIA Chair

