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June-August 2025 Sept 2025

Commander's Message



State Commander
Doug Hoffman
US Navy, Post 3160

Your Vote, Your Voice, Your Mission

As proud members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, we've already answered the call to serve our nation. Now, we must answer another call, one that continues our legacy of leadership and civic duty: voting in local and state elections.

Virginia is home to over 700,000 veterans, making up 1 in every 12 Virginians. We have the second largest population of women veterans per capita, and the largest number of veterans under 39. With 27 plus military bases, 34 VA benefits offices, and 4 VA hospitals, Virginia is a national leader in veteran infrastructure and support.

Yet, despite this strength, only 55% of Virginia veterans regularly vote in local, state, and federal elections. That means nearly half of our voices are missing when decisions are made about our

healthcare, benefits, and community resources.

Local Elections Directly Impact Veterans. Local and state governments decide on: Funding for VA clinics and veteran care centers; Support for housing, mental health, and job training programs; Public safety policies and emergency services; Education and community development

These decisions affect our daily lives far more than national elections. By voting, we ensure that leaders who understand and support VFW Priority Goals are elected.

The oath we took to defend the Constitution didn't expire when we left active duty, it lives on in our civic actions. Voting is a continuation of that service. It's how we protect the freedoms we fought for and ensure our values are represented in government.

How can we lead the charge? Host voter registration drives at your Post. Provide transportation for elderly or disabled voters. Attend town halls and ask candidates about veteran issues. Volunteer for campaigns that align with your values **(as individuals, not as VFW representatives)**.

Remember: while VFW members cannot endorse candidates on behalf of the organization, you can wear your VFW cap at public events to show your presence and concern for veteran issues.

We've led in service. Now let's lead in civic action. Every vote cast by a VFW member strengthens our community, protects our benefits, and honors our shared mission.

Your vote is your voice. Let it be heard.

Doug Hoffman
State Commander
VFW Department of Virginia



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Please visit our website at
www.vfwva.org

From the Editor's desk

I am excited to continue as your Newspaper editor for another great year. Please keep the Department of Virginia VFW informed of all your accomplishments by submitting your articles and pictures to me, for the Virginia Veterans Newspaper.



Randy Coker
Department Judge Advocate
Department News Paper Chairman

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

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Doug Hoffman

Surgeon
Todd Taylor

Senior Vice Commander
Mark Maggio

Past Commander
Mitch Rubenstein

Junior Vice Commander
Charles Bush

Chaplain
Robert Ruffalo

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We reserve the right to edit all submitted articles for timeliness, clarity and syntax.

*Note: **Deadline for the next newspaper is:***

Dec 1, 2025

Honoring the dead by helping the living



Unwavering support for uncommon heroes

National Commander N Chief Al Lipphardt was the National representative for the Department of Virginia State Convention for 2025.



2025-2026 Line officers and District Commanders



2025-2026 Line officers



Joint Memorial Service



Joint Memorial Service



Past Department Commander Rubenstein, State Chaplain Robert Ruffalo, State President Dawn Kuhn, and National Auxiliary Rep Past National President Virginia Carmen opening the Joint Memorial Service.



2024-2025 All State Commanders & Quartermaster with National Commander and Chief



State Honor Guard ready to present the colors at the Joint Opening ceremony.



Presenting the Colors



March on the Colors



Joint Opening ceremony



Left; VFW Commander and Chief Al "the real deal" Lipphardt speaking to the Joint Opening,



Lower Left; Chaplain Ruffalo delivering the opening Prayer

Right; Past State Commander Rubenstein and Commander and Chief.



The Department of Virginia was lucky enough to be able to help Commander n Chief celebrate his birthday.



Commanders Club luncheon



Past State Commander Doc Crouch, pins the Past Department President Pin on Dawn Kuhn



Newly installed Department Auxiliary President Kelli Levitt addresses the Auxiliary and guests after being installed by Past Department President Darlene Mays Tittman.



Incoming State Auxiliary President Kelli Levitt escorted in by husband & incoming District 10 Commander Tom Levitt



2025-2026 Line Officers being installed by National Commander n Chief Al Lipphardt



Doug Hoffman being sworn in as the new Department of Virginia Commander by National Commander n Chief, Al Lipphardt.



Department Auxiliary President
Dawn Kuhn addresses comrades



Department Commander being pinned by his wife Tracy



Department Chaplain Robert Ruffalo
and Past D10 Commander Ray
Delpesche



Newly installed Commander Doug Hoff-
man addresses the comrades



Department Junior Vice Commander Charles Bush accompa-
nied by his wife Danielle



Department Senior Vice Commander Mark Maggio and his
wife Roseanne.



Karla Coker manning the credentials
table.



Past Department Auxiliary President Patricia Jurgenson
and Jerry Miller.



Hard at work at the registration table, the Department Headquarters crew.



Past Department Commander Doc Crouch with the State Photographer Jim Reid



Post 1503 crew at the Joint opening ceremony.



Past Department Auxiliary President Kathy Graham, Post 7589 Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill and Past Department President Marcia Semones



LEFT: Department commander presenting all State hats

RIGHT: Past National President, Dee Guillory, Past Department Presidents Patricia Jurgensen, Shema Peppers, Fred Jennings, Carol Vangi Vicki Butler and Rebecca Mason



RIGHT: Early check in, and time for some drinks at the hotel bar.

LEFT: Incoming Department Auxiliary President Kelli Levitt.



National Convention — Columbus, Ohio — September 9—13



Virginia State Commander Doug Hoffman announces our vote for Senior Vice Commander in-Chief.



Virginia's delegation applauds the results of the rollcall vote where we posted over 500 delegate votes.



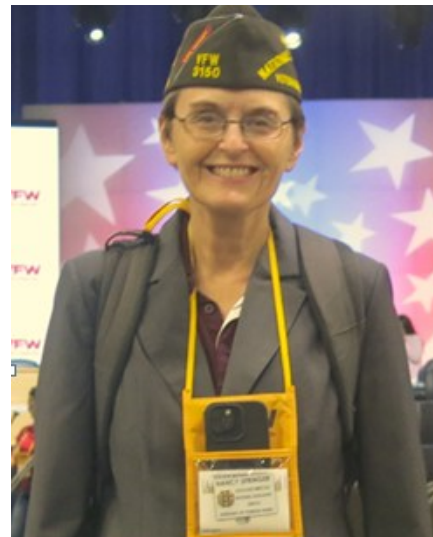
Newly elected Commander-in-Chief Carol Whitmore escorted by VFW Sergeants at Arms leads the Parade of the States.



Virginia Past State Commander Chris Birch at the head of Virginia's delegates at the Parade of the States.



Virginia's All-American District Commanders



Nancy Springer from Post 3150, also a staff member at the Washington office.

Virginia's All-American officers who were invited to walk the stage

There were many more All-American commanders, but only a few from each state are selected. If all were selected the procession would probably take days. Congratulations to all of Virginia's All-American Commanders.



CIC Al Lipphardt & State Commander Mitch Rubenstein



District 2 Commander Ron Riffle



District 8 Commander Todd Taylor



District 10 Commander Ray Delpesche



Post 392 Commander James Wikkerink



Post 1503 Commander Ben Guinan



Post 3219 Commander Joe Perkins



Post 9808 Commander Paul Smith



Post 12218 Commander Pat Crowley



Post 12225 Commander Matthew Mayer

Haymarket Post 12218 holds their first meeting of the new year.

District 8 Commander Tony Lunn visits Haymarket Post 12218 as they bring in the new year with their first meeting. Post 12218 had a jam packed agenda, with a special tribute and presentation of a quilt of valor to VFW Life member Bill Keys. Also in attendance was Sergeant at Paws "Kozzi", rocking the new Department Commanders pin.



VFW Post 1503 in Dale City named Virginia's Top Community Service Post for 2024–2025



Reports

Reports

Potomac News

VFW Post 1503 in Dale City, known as the General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller Post, has been named Virginia’s National Community Service Post Award recipient for 2024–2025. This honor recognizes the post’s outstanding service to veterans and the broader community over the past year.

According to a memorandum from the VFW National Programs Office, the award is based on a post’s “total impact,” which includes volunteer hours, mileage, and financial contributions toward community service efforts. Post 1503 stood out for its extensive outreach, including school supply drives for local elementary schools, support for youth sports, and assistance to veterans filing benefit claims.

The post also hosted events such as the Department of Virginia’s 3rd Annual VFW Riders Rally and multiple VFW Day of Service projects. Notably, Post 1503 partnered with Mr. Handyman to provide home improvement services to a veteran family in need.

As part of the award, Post 1503 will receive a commemorative street sign and be featured in an upcoming issue of VFW Magazine. The post, which is the largest VFW post in the world, continues to embody the VFW’s mission of “Veterans helping veterans” through its dedicated community service.

Post 1503 conducts its semi annual flag retirement ceremony at the Prince William County Fire Training Center.





Post 7589 Flag Retirement continued:



The 18th Annual National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day Commemoration

On July 23, 2025, VFW Post 1177 Honor Guard provided the service flag display (Army, Navy, Marine, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, VFW flags) and the Honor Guard members presented the US colors and POW/MIA flag.

The 18th Annual National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day Commemoration held at the Cannon House in Washington, DC. The members who participated were the Honor Guard Captain Jason Cound, Sr. Vice Commander Lee Gortman, Quartermaster Les Flores, Past Commander Max Gutierrez and Past Honor Guard Captain Bob Cranson.

The 18th Annual 727 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day Commemoration is a ceremony to mark the signing of the Korean War ceasefire agreement on July 27, 1953, as we honor the enduring legacy of Korean War veterans and stand together in support of peace on the Korean Peninsula.

This event was held in the historic Cannon Caucus Room on Capitol Hill and featured remarks from Members of Congress and veterans; Korean traditional performances; and a candle lighting ceremony at 7:27 PM—a powerful moment symbolizing remembrance and hope.





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NETWORK



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the Virginia Veterans Network,
visit **dvs.virginia.gov**.

VFW-funded field trips bring Patrick Henry's Scotchtown to life for Hanover sixth-graders

Nestled in the tranquil countryside of Beaverdam, Patrick Henry's Scotchtown doesn't just preserve history, it invites you to step into it.

Site coordinators Patrick Laird and Dawn Burnett are passionate about sharing Henry's legacy at Scotchtown, where the Hanover County native lived with his family from 1771 to 1778. It's also where Henry developed the ideas that shaped his renowned "Liberty or Death" speech.

Henry's preserved home — the only original structure remaining on the property — is now a museum that immerses visitors in the life and legacy of one of America's most influential Patriots. Earlier this year, following extensive research, a furnishing project was completed to help the home's spaces more accurately reflect how they would have looked during Henry's time there.

"It's a very different house than it was last year," Laird said.

For the past three school years, Hanover County Public Schools sixth-graders have visited Scotchtown, where they explore Henry's history through hands-on activities, historical interpreters and engaging educational programs. **The trips are made possible by VFW Battlefield Post 9808 in Mechanicsville**, which has donated more than \$15,000 and committed an additional \$6,000 to continue the program this school year.

Burnett said the sensory-filled experience leaves a lasting impression on students.

"When you visit a historical space like this or other museums in Virginia, it really makes an impact because you're feeding all the senses in a way that books or computers can't," she said. "Engaging with our passionate interpreters and staff has just as much impact on the kids as anything else."

Joanne Smith, treasurer of VFW Post 9808, said the 850-member organization has long been committed to community service, supporting numerous local causes with funds raised primarily through twice-weekly bingo games. Soon after voting to fund the field trips, some members toured Scotchtown and were impressed by what they saw.

"We absolutely loved it," Smith said. "Our membership is deeply committed to our community and wants to be a partner in it. We're all on board with anything that helps youth and education."

Hanover native Bob Seifert was instrumental in initiating the VFW's support for the program after joining Post 9808 four years ago. Following his retirement from a long career in the U.S. Air Force, Seifert returned to Hanover and began exploring the area's history. Years earlier, during a visit to Hanover, he had an eye-opening first experience at Scotchtown.

"All I knew about Patrick Henry then was his 'Liberty or Death'

speech," said Seifert, who now serves on the Hanover County School Board and is active in local history organizations. Seifert brought the idea of funding field trips to Post 9808's leadership, and its members enthusiastically embraced it.

Joe Gorman, a sixth-grade social studies teacher at Bell Creek Middle School, said the Scotchtown visits deepen students' understanding of U.S. history to 1865 — a major focus of the sixth-curriculum. Gorman said classroom lessons are supplemented with guest speakers, including Hanover Tavern Foundation Executive Director David Deal, who discusses Henry's early life working at the tavern and learning about law by observing court cases at the courthouse across the street.

"Patrick Henry was the voice of the Revolution," Gorman said. "He rode on horseback from Scotchtown to St. John's Church in Richmond, where he gave his 'Liberty or Death' speech on March 23, 1775 to the Second Virginia Convention. That fiery speech persuaded many to support the Patriot cause. The next year, we declared independence."

During their two-hour visit, students tour Henry's home, participate in a scavenger hunt to learn about research and primary sources, and play colonial games.

"These trips help to bring history to more kids," Laird said. "We show them it can be fun and educational and offer activities that get them involved so they aren't just listening."

With the VFW's continued support, Scotchtown is now reaching even more students in Hanover.

"It has made a significant difference and impact," Burnett said. "VFW members have come out to see the program firsthand, and they're very excited about what we're doing here."

"There's so much history in Virginia," Laird added, "but sometimes we forget it's right in our own backyard."



Post 3150 Past Commander Jim Tingler honored



Past Post Commander Jim Tingler, 1974-75, was honored at US Capitol Canon Building by the Ambassador of Republic of Korea, for his service in Korea during the so-called "Forgotten War" (1951 – 1953). He was accompanied by his wife Martha, four time Past President, and daughters Marcie and Ginger. Marcie was also Auxiliary President and both she and Martha were District Presidents. Also known to be present were, at least, Past Commanders Nick Knowles, Sam Wong and Senior Vice Commander Fritz Gottschalk. Sam Wong was instrumental in arranging the ceremony.

VFW Commander-in-Chief visits Post 3150



Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt and Post 3150 Commander Sam Wong



(L-R) Chief of Staff Jeff Carroll and his wife, Carol Lipphardt, Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt, Post 3150 Commander Sam Wong and VFW Washington Office Executive Director (and Post 3510 member) Ryan Gallucci

Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt and his wife Carol, along with Chief of Staff Jeff Carroll and his wife, VFW Washington Office Executive Director (and Post 3510 member) Ryan Gallucci (right), were welcomed to Post 3150 on Memorial Day by Commander Sam Wong. The visit followed appearances at several Washington Memorial Day events and provided an opportunity to meet John Lyon members and guests, enjoy some barbecue and camaraderie. It was the first Commander-in-Chief visit to Post 3150 in about 25 years, although several Vice Commanders-in-Chief have visited since.



VFW Day of Service: Vietnam and Clarendon Memorials

Six John Lyon Post members joined members of the VFW Washington Office to wash the Vietnam Veterans Memorial during the VFW Day of Service event. And then five John Lyon members went to Arlington's Clarendon War Memorial, in connection with the Arlington County Parks Department, to clean the memorial grounds and repaint the artillery pieces and other metal objects at the site. Among those helping in the two projects were Jim Bertine, Fritz Gottschalk, Rob Green, James Pierce, Nancy Springer, Jonathan Sutton, Sam Wong, and friends of the Post, PK Jones and Raouf Kheir.

Post 3150 Memorial Day Weekend

John Lyon Post 3150 started the long weekend by decorating graves of members and their families at two local cemeteries and Arlington National Cemetery. We were joined by personnel from our partners at Home Depot. The holiday was started with a wreath-laying ceremony at the Arlington Clarendon Memorial. Special guests attending included Takis Karantonis, Chair, Arlington County Board, Board members Susan Cunningham, Matt DeFerranti and his daughter, and J.D. Spain Sr (also a Post 3150 Life member), and representatives from the Arlington Historical Society. The ceremonies at the "John Lyon Memorial" were also joined by Cunningham and Spain. The day continued with installation of new officers on the Post and Auxiliary, the obligation ceremony of a new member. Open House featuring BarBQ, and the visit of VFW Commander-in-Chief of VFW Al Lipphardt and several staff members, concluded the day.



Post 7589 Memorial Day Ceremony



Tina Bliem delivered opening remarks.



Mary Corkhill and Cub Scouts placed a wreath at the Veterans Memorial with appropriate honors.



Scouts, parents, VFW members and guests gathered at the Francis Cannon gravesite.



Mary Corkhill and Scouts do honors at the Francis Cannon gravesite.



Post 7589 hosts Auxiliary Tea for appreciation of how our Auxiliary supports us

Catering provided by The Things I Love in Manassas

Too often we take for granted the things our Auxiliary does in support of the Post. On July 14 Jerry Martin, Wayne Moore and Rick Raskin hosted a surprise tea party prior to the Auxiliary's monthly meeting. Auxiliary members who attended were really surprised that the Post cared enough to do this event. Catering was provided by a local business, *The Things I Love*.



Scones, sandwiches and treats provided by *The Things I Love* in Manassas



Judy Shepard

Jerry Martin, Wayne Moore and Rick Raskin served as waiters



Judy Shepard



Janet Raskin and Rosa Maggio



Lorie Allen Smith, Mary Corkhill and Ellie Smith



Yvonne Sullivan and Marie Arthofer



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