

Testimony

9:00 am Finance and Audit: 10:00 Convention meeting: 1pm Council Meeting

Uniform of the Summer uniform (white and grays) All Meetings held at the Caribou Post 9389.

> June 23rd> Bangor Grand Hotel

2. Council of Administration: Meeting will be held on 20 April @ 1pm @ Caribou Post 9389, Caribou ME. See attached flyer for hotel and banquet information.

23 June State Convention, Bangor Grand Hotel.

3. Proof of Eligibility Requirements for Officers: All Posts, Districts and Departments should be reminded of the provisions of Sections 216, 416, and 516 of the Manual of Procedure that officers, elected and appointed, shall not be installed, or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted to the respective Adjutant and properly reviewed.

4. PCI Publishing: The Department is working with PCI Publishing to create an oral history of our members. They are sending out yellow postcards to all our members, they will continue to send out these postcards until August of 2024. There is no obligation to call, but they will keep sending postcards until you do or August.

5. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, which provides that each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten-dollar (\$10) delegate fee. Posts are encouraged to register their Post delegate(s) online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or by submitting their National Convention Post and Delegate Registration form that will be mailed to all Posts as part of the Election Report/Convention Registration mailing going out later this month. Registration forms for the 124th National Convention may be mailed to: Convention Registration, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.

6. Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure provides that delegates and alternates for the District Convention and meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected at a regular meeting in April. Posts are entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each thirty (30) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Post as of March 31.

7. Installing officers will see that the provisions of Section 216 of the National Bylaws and the manual of Procedure is properly carried out and that all officers are members in good standing and qualified to hold office prior to installing Post officers for the current year. Post officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Post Election Reports must be submitted following Post election of officers in April and no later than June 1 to the National Headquarters. We highly encourage all Post Quartermasters to use the online Election Report process featured in the Online Membership System (OMS). Post Election Reports received electronically will be forwarded to the Department Headquarters.

8. Resolutions: Posts desiring to submit resolutions for consideration by their District prior to the convening to the State Convention must present the resolution to their District in time for their District Conventions and upon approval by the district, copies of the resolution must reach the Department Adjutant in time to be prepared for the State Convention.

9. LOYALTY DAY AND MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE: Section 223 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure provides that each Post shall make the necessary arrangements for proper observance of Loyalty Day and Memorial Day. Officers should see that suitable grave markers, wreaths and flags of the United States are placed on the graves of deceased veterans.

10. "BUDDY" ® POPPIES DISTRIBUTION: The distribution of VFW "Buddy" ® Poppies will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in Section 711 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure. The Department, District, County Council and Post Commanders should now arrange for the distribution of Buddy Poppies in their respective areas. In the ongoing effort to provide as much assistance as possible to those serving in the military, we recommend that proceeds or portions from this year's annual poppy distribution be designated for the purpose of providing VFW support to our military. Posts and Departments now have the opportunity to assist qualified military personnel through the VFW Veterans and Military Support Programs. In keeping with the intent of Sections 219(a)(c) and 704(a)(c) of the Manual of Procedure "Relief Fund," this year's poppy campaign can play a direct role in demonstrating to those who are charged with protecting and defending our way of life that we appreciate and value their sacrifice.

11. Candidates for High Office 2023-24: Any member wishing to run for any high office are to notify the State Adjutant office via e-mail of their intent for publishing in the GOs.

12. Convention Book Advertising: Consult Tele-Communications from Londonderry, NH is soliciting ads for our State Convention book throughout the State of Maine. Any business calling your Post respectively, inquiring about the solicitation, please inform them that they are the sole company that sells ads for the Department of Maine.

13. VFW DAY OF SERVICE Opportunity "If there are any posts or Veterans still looking for a May Service Day project, House in the Woods, Lee ME, will be hosting a workday in May. Exact date still to be posted. Work will include work on their new Pavilion, grounds clean up, Maintenance projects in the Lodge, and other tasks. All are invited to attend and lend a hand at whatever skill level they can contribute. A great opportunity to see firsthand superb facilities and operations at House in the Woods! A worthy cause for a service day commitment." Contact Jim Manter at (207) 500-2603, or tampakayaker@yahoo.com for further details and coordination information. Hope to see you there!

14. Post Commanders: Sections 219 and 704 of the Manual of Procedure outline the various things for which the Post Relief Fund can be used. Several years ago, the phrase "To foster true patriotism through, historical and education programs," was added to this section. This allows the Post to use the relief funds for the Voice of Democracy program or other Americanism programs that are educational. This does not include Post building projects, hall remodeling, color guard uniforms or any other expenditure that does not follow these guidelines.

15. Dates to remember

State Convention 21-23 June, Bangor, Me
National Convention 27 Jul- 1 Aug, Louisville, KY

16. Candidates for Department High Office 2023-2024: Any member wishing to run for any high office is to notify the State Adjutant office via e-mail of their intent.

Department Commander > Anthony R Kimble > Post 3108
Department Sr. Vice Commander > Amy Hope Meuchel > Post 6859
Department Jr. Vice Commander > William E Day > Post 7997
Department Quartermaster > David D. Williams > Post 1641
Department Chaplain > Kevin G. Woodward > Post 11553
Department Judge Advocate > Roger A Stevens > Post 2197
Department Surgeon > James Ewing > Post 1605
Department Surgeon > Randolph Michaud > Post 2599

Candidates for National Council Member of Maine 2025: Any member wishing to run for Council member is to notify State Adjutant.

Anthony R. Kimble > Post 3108

Jennifer L. Lane > Post 1603

17. District Meeting Dates:

April 2024

D-1> 21Apr @ 1pm> Caribou Post 9389> SG Stevens

D-2> 6 Apr @ 1pm> Island Falls Post 7865> JVC Meuchel

D-4> 6 Apr @ 2pm > Ellsworth Post 109 > Cmdr Bouchard

D-5> 14 Apr @ > 1pm Fairfield Post 6924> Adj Lambert

D-7> 14 Apr @ 2pm > Mid Coast Veterans Center> SVC Kimble

D-8> 28 Apr @ 3pm> Winthrop Grange Hall> SG Stevens

D-9> 21 Apr @ 1pm> Auburn Post 1603> JVC Meuchel

D-11> 28 Apr @ 2pm> Sanford Post 9935> JVC Meuchel

May 2024

D-2> 4 May @ 1pm > Burlington Post 1605> SG Stevens

D-3> 19 May @ 2pm > Harrington Post 11553> Adj Lambert

D-6> 5 May @ 1pm> Northport Post> Cmdr Bouchard

D-10> 5 May @ 1pm > Portland Post 6859 > JVC Meuchel

BY COMMAND OF:

John Bouchard

John Bouchard

Commander

OFFICIAL:

Carl Lambert

Carl Lambert

Adjutant



State Commander John Bouchard

Hello everyone, hope you all had a good weekend went to Washington DC it was nice to see everybody. It was real nice to get back home I went to D.C. with a bad cold came not feeling got home Thursday Monday got to my desk and fainted got up felt pretty good drove myself to the hospital .They kept me there for two days this Tuesday went a meeting at the veteran cemetery after went to Presque isle to see Shirley Dumas in the hospital she is feeling a little bit better and also have to go to a post meeting .I hope this is the last snow storm so everybody take care. Congratulations to District 11 and Post 7529 for making 100%.

“Honor Their Courage.”

Yours in Comradeship,

John Bouchard

John Bouchard
Commander



Deceased Roll Call



Department of Maine, VFW
Kevin G. Woodward, Chaplain

28 February - 28 March 2024

“May our Comrades Rest in Eternal Peace in Post Eternity”

District 1

2599> David D Caron
9389> Roland G Guerrette
9699> Stephen G Ellis

District 4

3381> Donald H Luce
4633> Raymond E St Pierre

District 5

4298> Vernon H Smith

District 6

3108> Arthur E Maguire

District 8

887> Paul R Bonenfant
1285> Napoleon J Roy

District 9

1603> Vaughn P Estabrook
3335> Rene G Couture
Arthur Benedetto

District 10

10879> Frederick C Kennedy
Charles H Brown

District 11

5744> Gerald T Schulmaier
7997> Robert R Watson

Members At Large

15020> Robert M Day



SENIOR VICE COMMANDER
Patriot Pen/ Voice of Democracy/ Teacher of the Year
Anthony Kimble

Spring may have arrived on the calendar, but mother nature is not willing to give up on winter yet. Hope everyone is recovering from the latest wintery storms to come through their areas and power was restored as quickly as possible. The Legislative Conference was very rewarding as Commander John Bouchard, Legislative Chairman Steven San Pedro, Quartermaster Dave Williams, Life Member Jim Manter, and myself along with many of Department of Maine Auxiliary members met with Senators Susan Collins, Angus King, Congresswoman Chellie Pingree and Congressman Jared Golden to discuss veteran issues concerning Claim Sharks, veteran's re-entry into civilian life after their military service and the Richard Star Act. Please be safe and stay healthy and check in on one another to make sure everyone is doing well. Keep Up the Fire!!

Voice of Democracy/Patriots Pen/Teacher of the Year Congratulations to Department of Maine Voice of Democracy winner, Anna Seavy, from Standish, Maine, represented the VFW Department of Maine, and was awarded the \$2,000 All American Post 284 Scholarship (D.C.); Bernard J. Michels, Post 9610 and Auxiliary Scholarship (combined). Congratulations to Department of Maine Patriot's Pen winner Patrick Fahey, from Cape Neddick, Maine, represented the VFW Department of Maine, and was awarded the \$500 Department of Wyoming and Auxiliary Award.

2024-2025 Voice of Democracy Theme:

"Is America Today Our Forefathers' Vision?"

2024-2025 Patriot's Pen Theme:

"My Voice in America's Democracy."

Please feel free to start getting the word out to the students in your community around Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen essay entries for the upcoming year. Looking forward to making next year's program a great year.

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER
Historian/ Ways & Means
Student Veterans of America
Amy Hope Meuchel

JVC.
 I had a wonderful visit when I attended the district 1 Meeting in Caribou. Unfortunately, the District 3 Meeting in Calais got canceled and hopefully will be rescheduled. I haven't been too active this past month but looking forward to upcoming events. I am looking forward to my next trip to Eaton Rapids, MI for some JVC training. I hope to get lots of pictures so that you can all see what it's like on the inside.

Ways and Means:

As of right now this year we have raised \$1,357.00. I am still working towards that \$3,000 goal. Some have still not turned in their raffles and/or money. If you need more, I will be able to give them to your district commanders at the next CoA in Caribou.

Historian:

Please email or text me any pictures of your post that has held an event, appeared in public or any news articles.

Programs:

Unfortunately, as of March 25th, there were zero entries for VFW Member of the Year, VFW Employer of the Year and VFW JROTC of the Year. I am working on a few which I hopefully got before the deadline of March 31st to National. This was a brand-new program and if it continues next year, we will all need to work harder on this.

R/
 Amy

QUARTERMASTER
BUDDY POPPY ~ INSURANCE & BONDS
David D. Williams, PSC

Hello everyone, I hope you all had a good month doing what you do best. Last month I attended the VOD parade of winners in D.C along with visiting Maine's delegates. Steve SanPedro did a great job in getting the VFW points across.

Poppy: Here is what I know about Poppies. I order 500 of the original which I already reviewed. I also ordered 500 of the clip Ons which I was informed that they are on back order. We will see how long they take.

Quarterly Thanks to the Posts that are up to date still not too late to get them 8n if your behind I'd like to wish everyone a happy Easter enjoy.

JUDGE ADVOCATE
POW/MIA
William E Day

The Defense POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY REPORTS THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN RECOVERED AND ACCOUNTED FOR:

ARMY Sgt. Richard H. Hammond, 24, Northwood, NH
ARMY Pvt. Harold O. Poulter, 23, Charleston, IL
NAVY Seaman 2nd Class Michael Malek, 17, Chicago, IL
ARMY AF 1st Lt. Richard J. Kaston, 24, Kalamazoo, MI
ARMY AF 2nd Lt. Robert L. E. Porter, 23, Chicago, IL
ARMY Cpl. Julius G. Wolfe, 20, Liberal, Missouri
ARMY AF SSgt. Jackson M. Barbour, 19, Memphis, TN
ARMY Pfc. Noah C. Reeves, 26, Moulton, AL
ARMY AF TSgt. Paul F. Eshelman, Jr., 21, Pittsburg, PA
ARMY Cpl. Ray K. Lilly, 18, Matoaka, WV

I hope everyone enjoys a safe and healthy "Spring"! See you in Caribou.

SURGEON
Safety & Drug Abuse
Roger Stevens

We are entering the last quarter of the VFW year, and we still don't have our website up. A lot of posts aren't reported on safety, drug, and blood activities. Please send me an E: mail to rogerstevens120@gal.com regarding your post's activities and I will get them recorded. Congratulations to Post 2197, Topsham, Post 6187, Fort Fairfield & District 7 for hitting 100% in membership. The snow cover is gone for most of the state, and the experts are expecting a worse than normal tick population. We are all anxious to get outside, but make sure to brush your clothing off before you come in. Once in, check yourself over for them little critters. Remember, deer ticks are very small, until they are full of blood. Please take ticks seriously, lime disease can be very nasty. I know several people who have had long term debilitating issues from lime disease. Get out there and enjoy our next three seasons: mud, black fly, and mosquito, but be aware of them nasty ticks.

CHAPLAIN
MAINE OFFICERS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (MOLD)
WREATH ACROSS AMERICA (WAA)
Kevin G. Woodward, PSC

BEING A CHAPLAIN

You were elected to the office of Post/District Chaplain. You have an important responsibility to your Post/District. Whether you have been selected for your religious training or past VFW experiences, you are expected to be the spiritual advisor to your organization and its members. You are not expected to know everything but are expected to search for the answer and get back to the individual. Do not be afraid to ask questions when necessary. There are many ministers of faiths/denominations and chaplains that are willing to assist you. When you meet them, create a contact list and offer veteran/VFW/chaplain assistance when they need it. All will benefit from the experience.

PURPOSE OF CHAPLAINS

The office of Chaplain is not just to provide a religious officer to the organization to offer prayers at meetings. He or she has higher purposes:

- 1- To help persons grow in their relationship with God.
- 2- To help people grow in their relationships with one another and become a true comrade/sister to one another.
- 3- To serve as a reminder of the transcendent in life.
- 4- To develop an environment in which comrades and sisters are encouraged in their personal and collective moral and spiritual growth.
- 5- To remind all Americans that God is the source of all rights and privileges.

We must be reminded that the Veterans of Foreign Wars is comprehensive in nature, embracing all religions and faith groups within its ranks. The Chaplaincy, being non-sectarian must minister to the spiritual needs of all, without regard to either church/synagogue/mosque affiliation or non-affiliation. Chaplains will need to provide ministry to people wherever there is a need.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

WAA: National Wreaths across America Day 14 December 2024 the theme for the 2024 Wreaths across America Program is: "LIVE WITH PURPOSE". You can send your sponsorship checks to me, remember that the check must be made out to Wreaths Across America. In 2023, more than 3 million veterans' wreaths were placed by volunteers on headstones at more than 4225 participating locations around the country in honor of the service and sacrifices made for the nation's freedom, with each name said out loud. If you wish to do sponsorships online you can use this link.

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/20060/Overview/?relatedId=14720&modSw=donate>

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER, MAINE (NCM, M)
MEMBERSHIP
LEGISLATIVE
Steven J. SanPedro, PSC

Comrades,

I hope this finds all of you in good health. Also, I hope all of you have recovered from this last storm. If you need help, please reach out to your Post for assistance. Congratulations to Post 6187 Fort Fairfield and District 11 for meeting or exceeding their goal of 100%, great job by all! Will you Post or District be next?

National Council Member – Maine – I attended the National Council of Administration meeting while at the Washington Conference. I started with a long but productive budget meeting. Next, we had a workshop where we worked out all our issues. During the CoA we voted to accept the Life Members Payouts. They are as follows Plan ABC is \$10.50 with Post, Department and National all getting \$3.50, Plan D is \$11.46 with Post, Department and National all getting \$3.82, and Plan E is \$22.62 with Post, Department and National all getting \$7.54. Overall, it was a very productive few days.

Legislation – While in Washington DC we met with all four of our Legislators in person. There was a total of 9 VFW and Auxiliary Members in attendance. We were able to present the VFW Priority Goals and Talking Points to them. These meetings were very productive, and they supported everything we spoke about. Now we must keep the pressure on to make sure they come through on them.

Membership – The Department is currently sitting at 96.05% with 6275 Members which is an increase of 1.67% and 109 Members. We need 258 Members to reach 100% and 389 Members to reach 102%. We have increased our New Members by 1 and our Reinstated Members by 54 from this time last year. We have 9 Posts that have completed a Recruiter Event and submitted the proper paperwork to me. We have 22 Post that need 10 or less Members 17 of them need 5 or less Members. Let's close the deal on these Posts and get them over 100%. We must make sure we Retain, Reinstate and Recruit Members. Please read to make sure you understand the 2023- 2024 Department and National Membership Program have changed. If you have any questions on Membership, please contact me at 207-894-5260 or email me at sanpedro105@roadrunner.com

AMERICANISM/LOYALTY DAY
Michael A. McInnis, Chairman

There is still very little to report on for Americanism/Loyalty Day as I have received very few reports (if any at all) in the past 6-7 months or so. Hope to see all of you at the April COA and the Commanders/Presidents Testimonial in Caribou. All reports for Americanism/Loyalty Day can be mailed to Mike McInnis 15 Vines Road, Saco, ME 04072-1733. They can also be faxed to me @ 207-283-9357. Or at my email: qmvfw7997@yahoo.com

AUDIT & FINANCE
Alfred E. Michaud Sr., PSC

The next Finance meeting will be at the next COA. To all the incoming Department Chairman get your budget request in as soon as possible, so the State Quartermaster can work on the new budget for the incoming year. Don't procrastinate but participate.

Grants/ NVMS
Jennifer Lane, PSC

Grants: We are awaiting payment for our State of Maine VSO Grant for the additional \$29,000 we have been awarded. The State of Maine Homeless Veterans Grant of \$5,630.97 was received and all reporting measures have been completed. Did you know? The State VFW manages a grant for veterans that live in Piscataquis County for transportation to VA facilities and approved non-VA care. If you don't know where Piscataquis County is, peek at a map. Does Moosehead Lake ring a bell? How about Mount Katahdin or Dover-Foxcroft? So far, we have used over \$7,300 out of the \$40k that we have been awarded. Can you imagine how many more veterans we could serve if we got the word out? Information is good to have; Information is great when you share it!

Veterans and Military Support (VMS): The major programs that fall under VMS are Unmet Needs Program, Sport Clips "Help a Hero" Scholarship; Student Veteran Support Grant, Military Assistance Program (MAP) and Adopt-A-Units. *Sport Clips "Help a Hero" scholarship is open for applications for the 2024 Fall semester until April 30th. Applications are online at vfw.org/scholarships. *Burger King is a large supporter of the VFW Unmet Needs program. These campaigns run in July and November. Please refer to the information on vfw.org to support your local Burger King during their efforts or to get them involved. *We currently have 12 out of 43

posts that have donated to VMS according to National reporting. PLEASE consider donating soon to support all these programs! NOTE: ALL VMS donations MUST go through the Program Dashboard found online at vfw.org. National will no longer accept paper check donations and please do not send any to me or the Department QM. IF you need assistance with donations, please contact me at lanejena@msn.com.

4th Annual Armed Forces Day Ride: VFW Post 1603 is hosting their 4th Annual Armed Forces Day ride Saturday, May 18th L-A Harley. Registration 9-10:30 am, Ride departs 10:30 am with estimated time back to L-A Harley 12:30 pm. This is our biggest fundraiser for the Unmet Needs Program. Please come out and join us with food, music, raffles, etc. For more information, please contact Jen at (207) 514-4190.

HOSPITAL/VAVS
Michael W. Blair, Director

The total amount of donations was \$650.00. \$550.00 was given to Hospital / VAVS for care and needs of Veterans. \$100.00 was donated to the Recreation Department. I would like to thank Posts #6924 Fairfield, #6859 Portland, and #5744 South Berwick.

Scouting
Keith Davis, PSC

Hello Comrades, Spring is almost here. If the snow stopped flying, we could start to get some open water fishing in. Our department web page is mostly up. I received my first community activity input today and it was from post 7997. All post that was working on Scout of the year should have their packages completed and sent to me by the publishing of the April General Orders. They were due to me the Maine Department Scouting Chairman by April 1st The Department Scout of the year selection to National by May 1st.

Ensure that all documents that are listed on the program/application are submitted to include a picture of the Scout in uniform.

If you know of a scout that has completed his Eagle project and will be awarded Eagle rank, contact me. I have certificates that the Department can award to those Scouts.

Boy Scout Web Page

Pinetree Council <https://www.pinetreebsa.org>

Katahdin Council <https://www.katahdinareabsa.org>

Katahdin Area Council Boy Scouts of America, Northern Maine Boy Scouts

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE
Cornelius J. Ware, SO

1. Service Office visit procedures. VHA is still maintaining two entry points for now, Bldg. 200(main hospital) and Bldg. 205(primary care). A mask is not required unless you are suffering from cold, flu or Covid symptoms or you are going to an area where contagion is high i.e.: (ICU, Urgent Care, CLC Unit) just to name a few. Though we still continue to do appointments (this helps us with time management) walk-ins are welcome for disability claims issues. We welcome social calls but ask that you limit them to as short as possible so we can focus on the work at hand. Remember we are here to assist you, so please reach out to us as the need arises. You can continue to reach us at the VFW Service Office phone number (207)623-5723. Or send mail to:

VFW Dept. Service Office
VA Regional Office
P.O. Box 3311
Augusta, ME 04330-3311

Thank you for your understanding and support. You can also contact the Togus Benefits Office at (207)621-6938 for assistance in our absence. But for now, have a safe and joyous holiday.

2. Upcoming NVS Training. The office will be closed 20-24 April for the staff to attend NVS training in Annapolis MD and via Zoom. We will re-open on Thursday 25 April.

3. VA Direct Deposit Policy Change for Multiple Accounts Starting April 20, 2024, VA will no longer send a veteran's or family members' benefit payments to more than one bank account. This will require all veterans and beneficiaries who receive GI bill payments and other benefit payments across multiple banking accounts to select one account by April 20, 2024. For example, if a veteran receives GI Bill payments to one of their bank accounts and disability compensation payments to another, they will need to consolidate and select one account for all payments by April 20, 2024. This shift will impact nearly 50,000 of 800,000 total GI Bill beneficiaries VA will be aggressively reaching out to these students through text message, phone, and email on a weekly basis through April 20. VA is also working with schools, Veterans Service Organizations, and other relevant parties to make sure that Veterans meet the deadline. The easiest way for beneficiaries to make this change is to log on to Change Your VA Direct Deposit Information | Veterans Affairs. When they get the pay information, there will be a box for the bank account information of their education benefit, and a box for the bank account information for the other benefit they receive. The beneficiary should then update the bank account information to use the same account for all benefits. Importantly, no veteran will miss a benefits payment of any type. For any students who do not consolidate their bank accounts for benefits by April 20, VA will consolidate them on their behalf, electing their non-education benefit pay account as their primary bank account.

4. Mid-Coast Veterans Council (MCVC) Outreach in May. We will be available once again to assist veterans with claims at the MCVC 62 Pegasus St. in Brunswick (the old bowling alley at the old NAS Brunswick) look for the static P-3 A/C. We will meet with veterans from 10am to 4pm on Wednesday May 15. Please call (207)406-4103 to make an appointment, walk-ins are welcome. Please don't miss out on this opportunity to meet with our VSO's and get claims help and resource information.

5. Transition Assistance Program Seminar (TAPS) outreach. We will be attending a TAPS brief being held at USCG Station Southwest Harbor, ME on Wednesday April 10. We will be providing Benefits Deliverable before Discharge (BDD) brief and answer claims questions.

6. 24th Annual Tribal Veterans Representative (TVR) PACT Act Claims Clinic TVR training is being held in Bangor, Maine from April 22nd through April 25th, and finishing on April 26th with a PACT Act Claims Clinic. VA and VSO's will conduct the Claims Clinic on April 26, 2024, from 9:00am to 4:00pm. At Holiday Inn Bangor, 404 Odlin Rd., Bangor, ME

VETERANS ADVISORY TO VA MAINE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
Jo Ann Maynard, Chairperson

"With the coming of spring, I am calm again." – Gustav Mahler

Health care expansion! Beginning March 5, VA is making three new groups of Veterans eligible for VA health care years earlier than called for by the PACT Act: Veterans who were exposed to toxins or other hazards during military service; Veterans who were assigned to certain duty stations in Southwest Asia or parts of Africa; and Veterans who deployed in support of certain operations after 9/11. Here's what that means for Veterans: If you served in Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq or Afghanistan, you could enroll. If you deployed to any combat zone after 9/11, you could enroll. If you deployed in support of the Global War on Terror, you could enroll. And even if you never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or serving on active duty here at home—by working with chemicals, pesticides, lead, asbestos, certain paints, nuclear weapons, x-rays, and more—you can enroll, too. Bottom line: all Veterans who meet the basic service and discharge requirements and were exposed to toxins and other hazards—at home or abroad—are eligible to enroll in VA care beginning March 5. Presque Isle CBOC was accepted in February. VHA is now moving in. The expected ribbon cutting is April 26 with patients being received Monday April 29. Expect upcoming news on

the construction of a new inpatient rehabilitation facility here at Togus. And finally, the Office of the Inspector General (which oversees the VA) has released a comprehensive investigative report regarding the incident of the Veteran who took his own life at the Bangor CBOC Fall of 2022. I can get you this report if you wish. Normally I only report the facts. With this I feel led to give my humble take on things. Its s a tragic event any time we lose one of our veteran family...even more so when they choose the option to take their own life. There are a million questions that always pop up in the wake of such an event. Humans are reactionary. We wait for something to happen before we act. Reading this report, I choose not to judge. I choose not to lay blame or chase questions. Instead, I choose to reinforce my personal values and treat everyone with as much kindness and dignity as I can because you never know what someone might be dealing with. Be good to yourselves and be good to each other-Love Jo

Credentials/Public Relations
Jared Sawyer

53% of Posts in the Department were eligible to vote at the Department Convention last year, this year my goal is 75%, let's all work together to meet that goal! Per National and State By-Laws, to vote at the State Convention you must have turned in all 4 Trustees Reports, 2 of which should have been turned in at this point with the next one due at the end of the Month. Your Post must also have been inspected, your Quartermaster must be Bonded, all monies owed to the Department must be paid. ALL Post and Districts are required to be incorporated, the opportunity to do that opened January 1st, 2024, make sure you are incorporated and registered with the State of Maine. Check the State Quartermasters hit list in these GOs to ensure you are aware of all these items and where you stand. Your Post is entitled to 1 delegate and 1 alternate per every 30 members in good standing as of March 31st and has paid a registration fee for every delegate. You can vote as a Post Commander (1 Vote) or on behalf of them if you are a Post Senior or Junior Vice Commander, but you cannot then vote as a Post Delegate if you vote as the Commander. I have received delegate lists from a couple of Posts already via email, thank you! If you have questions about Credential requirements, Delegates, Alternates, or voting please reach out via email at QM6859@gmail.com

Beals House/VSO
Teresa Drag

VSO Chair receives feedback slips consistently reporting satisfaction with our VSOs. The survey form has been converted to a fillable PDF which will hopefully both increase the % of feedback received as well as save some postage costs.

Beals House had their quarterly meeting and continues to work with Togus on building maintenance. Additional donations received were delivered to Beals House treasurer.

Website/ Community Activities
Chief of Staff
Christopher Robison (PSC)

Website

The website (www.vfwme.org) is now up and running for reporting. The username is your membership number and password are your last name. Anyone can report activities, however, please have only one person reporting for a particular program or one person per Post. Receiving duplicate entries will only lead to longer delays in getting credit. The website is still a work in progress, please bear with us as improvements are made. Remember our old website was refined over numerous years. This new one will need some time for everything to be updated and bugs worked out.

Community Activities

More reports are arriving through the new website's reporting function. Please keep reporting! Any reports not made through the new website going forward and any not made on National's reporting dashboard on the National site (www.vfw.org) will not count for Community Service Post of the Year. The reports made on our new website automatically pass on to the National Dashboard. National makes their decision on the Post of the Year from each Department based on "impact" on National's dashboard. There is no longer any involvement from the Department.

Chief of Staff

Comrades, we need to do our due diligence when it comes to bringing in new members. We must adhere to the eligibility requirements set forth by the National Organization. We cannot let a person into the VFW without 100% verifying their eligibility, especially our Post Officers. It does not matter if they are your best friend, son, brother, cousin, etc. If they don't have a medal, campaign ribbon, hostile fire pays, hazardous duty pay, combat badge, etc. that meet the VFW's criteria, they cannot join our organization. The National VFW website has posters and booklets outlining the eligibility criteria available free. They also have the Podium Edition available online for free as well that spells out what qualifies a person for membership. If you have any doubt, use your chain of command.

**HOMELESS VETERANS, VETERANS' CEMETERY SOUTH,
MEMBERSHIP RECRUITER (South)
James E.N. Bachelder, Chairman, PSC**

Homeless Veterans: The Maine bureau of Veteran's Services in planning 4 Stand- Downs for this coming fall. Oct 2nd in Portland, Oct 9th in Lewiston, Oct 23rd in Bangor, and Oct 30th at Togus. All these days are Wednesdays. It has not been announced but the events usually run from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. Veterans Forward will apply for the Department of Labor Grant for the clothing and boots. They will also do the purchasing. In 2023, the VA 3 goals, the first goal was to house 146 Veterans, they surpassed that number by 141.1%. The total number housed was 206. The second goal was prevention of returning to homelessness, keeping it below 5% and 90% are rehoused or on pathway to permanent housing. They were at 4.9% for the year. Goal 3 was to engage with unsheltered Veterans. They had a goal to engage with 99 new homeless Veterans. The number they contacted was 166, that is 168% of the original goal. The state's goal to be functionals 0 homeless Veterans by 2025 is a possibility. The Veterans surge, "house 100 Veterans in 100 days" is still operating. They housed 80 Veterans in 100 days (unofficial). The funding is still available. There are many landlords involved and willing to house homeless veterans. Maine Veterans in Need had a change of command. David Patch is the new President. Michail Roy from Preble Street is still the Vice President, and I am the Secretary. If there are any questions on any subjects in this report, contact me at james.bachelder@metrocast.net or 207-432-7127 from 9 am to 9 pm.

Veterans' Cemetery South: The location for the Woman's Memorial has been set near the Memorial Walkway. Now the state says that area is for Nitch Wall expansion. For years we believed that more Nitch Walls would be in-between the wall already in service. The reason for not adding walls in this area is because on the impact on

a vernal pool. The now walls by the Memorial Walkway will block the view of the Woman's Memorial. The placement of these 2 items needs to be researched. This year we will have Senator Susan Collins as our Keynote speaker and Admiral George Emery as the Guest Speaker. The ceremony starts at 1:00 PM on Monday May 27th. The carved eagle from James McCain should be in-place in the committal shelter by the time these GOs are distributed. The students at the Sanford Regional Vocational School made the bracket to hold the eagle to the window frame. We raised \$500.00 to cover the cost of the material. We will be meeting on the second Thursday at the cemetery administration building at 9:30.

Enjoy the mild weather and longer Sunny Days

**Commanders Special Project
Herman Littlefield PSC**

A GOOD DAY TO ALL. Keep the faith.... Spring will return shortly.

Commander's Special Project: We are now over halfway through our 2023-2024 year of raising funds to support Commander Bouchard's project of the Make-A-Wish for Maine Foundation. There is still time for your post or district (or individuals) to end in your check in support of this very worthy project. We are hoping to raise enough funds to cover the complete cost of ONE Make-A-Wish recipient, which is about \$7,000. This is one way YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Let's all pitch in to make a child's dream come true. Remember to put "Commander's Special Project" on the memo line in the bottom left corner of your check. Please make that check out to Department of Maine, VFW. Please send that check along to me and I will record your donation and forward the monies along to our Department Quartermaster. Thanks to the So. Berwick Post and the Sanford Post healthy donations, we are now totaling \$4,644 being raised thus far. Great Job, Comrades.

Youth Activities: I still have not received any reports about Youth Activities. I know you are doing things, but please send me a report. Reach out and get involved with you in your community and schools. They are our future, our legacy. Share the mission of the VFW with them.



State Commander John Bouchard

President Lucy Salisbury



Testimonial

Let's all get together to honor our Department Commander & President

Location: Lister-Knowlton VFW Post 9389
253 Van Buren Rd, Caribou, ME

Date & Time: April 20, 2024
Social Hour – 6:00
Banquet – 7:00 pm

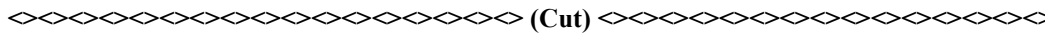
Banquet Ticket Cost: \$ 40.00

Dinner Menu: Buffet: Stuffed Chicken Breast
Baked Stuffed Haddock
Fried Rice ~ Mashed Potatoes
Key West Vegetable Blend
Tossed Salad w/Dressings.
Homemade Rolls
Coffee or Lemonade
Cash Bar

Dress Code: Casual

Hotel Information Caribou Inn and Convention Center, 19 Main St, Caribou, ME
\$155 per night * Tel: 1-207-498-3733 **Deadline March 19th**

Please inform the hotel you are with the VFW when calling for reservations.



(Cut)

Please Reserve the following

Meals: Total Tickets: _____ x \$ 40.00 = _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Make Your Check payable to: Department of Maine, VFW

Mail to: Christopher Robison

15 E. Bucksport RD, Orrington, ME 04474

Tel#:825-3874 * E-mail: clrobison1981@yahoo.com

Ticket Deadline: 7 April 2024

(No tickets will be sold after the deadline – Tickets will not be held without a payment)

(There will be no refunds on banquet tickets)



103rd STATE CONVENTION BANQUET

Bangor Grande Hotel and Convention Center

357 Odlin Rd, Bangor Maine

Saturday, June 22, 2024

SOCIAL HOUR: 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm - **BANQUET:** 7:00 pm

Bangor Grande Hotel and Conference Center – 357 Odlin Rd, Bangor (207) 904-2998

VFW Rate: \$ 89 + tax (King & Double/Double) including free breakfast

Queen City Inn with shuttle transportation – 482 Odlin Rd, Bangor (207) 942-6301

VFW Rate: \$ 90 + tax (King & Double/Double) including free breakfast

Please make your own reservations – State you are with the VFW

DEADLINE to reserve rooms under this rate is June 7, 2024

Tickets are \$ 45.00 per person

Menu - Choice of:

Buffet Style

Chicken Marsala

Stuffed Pork Loin

Parmesan Encrusted Haddock

Roasted Red Potatoes

Seasonal Medley

Mixed Greens & Seasonal Vegetables

Cake

Attire: Formal/Suit/Business Attire/Casual

Total Meals: _____ x \$ 45.00 = _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

NO ASSIGNED SEATING

Deadline for Banquet Ticket is 2 June 2024

No tickets will be sold after the deadline – Tickets will not be held without payment

There will be no refunds on banquet tickets.

Send ticket requests to: Mail to: Joan Hebert 41 Damy Dr. Apt. 91, Auburn, Me. 04210

Tel.# 207-782-2573 E-Mail: jocah66@yahoo.com

Make Checks Payable “Department of Maine VFW”



103rd State Convention
***** Pre-Convention Registration *****
Department of Maine VFW State Convention
21 – 23 June 2024



Bangor Grande Hotel land Conference center
357 Odlin Rd., Bangor ME

Pre-Registration Rates - \$ 5.00
Registration at Door - \$ 8.00

Come Celebrate the
103rd Department of Maine VFW State Convention
&
92nd Department of Maine Auxiliary State Convention

**** Pre-Registration Form ****

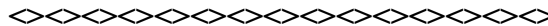
Please register the following members of Post/Auxiliary #: _____

<i>Name</i>	<i>VFW</i>	<i>Aux</i>	<i>Title/Position</i>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____

Total Amount Due \$ 5.00 x _____ = \$ _____

Please Print clearly the name you will be using and Post @ Auxiliary Number

Deadline: 11 June 2024



MAKE YOUR CHECK TO:

“Department of Maine, VFW” and earmark on the check “Pre-Registration”

MAIL YOUR CHECK TO: Peggy Whirley
80 Mill ST Apt 301, Auburn, ME 04210

Any Question –Call: Peggy Whirley @ 782-2856



VFW BOOSTER ADS

Each Booster Ad may have two (2) lines of copy
Each line limited to 27 characters or spaces (Maximum)

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

Deadline: < 3 May 2024 >

***** Print Name Clearly *****

1.	9.
2.	10.
3.	11.
4.	12.
5.	13.
6.	14.
7.	15.
8.	16.

Send all Booster Ads to:

Carl S. Lambert
Department of Maine, VFW
576 Prescott Rd., Manchester, me 04251-3011
Make check in the amount of: \$3.00 per name

Make your check payable to: **“Department of Maine, VFW”** and earmark **“Booster Page”**



~~103rd STATE CONVENTION~~



Convention Book Advertising Rates

Rates are for VFW and VFVA members advertising in the Convention Book

Back Cover –\$ 265.00

Inside Cover –\$ 210.00

Full Page –\$ 170.00

Half Page –\$ 115.00

¼ Page –\$ 65.00

1/8 Page –\$ 45.00

Please send your advertisement copy in a finalized format
Make check made payable to **“Department of Maine, VFW.”**

Mail to: Carl Lambert, *Adjutant*

576 Prescott RD, Manchester, ME 04351

All Advertising and monies must be received with the ad.

“CUT OFF DATE IS 3 May 2024”

DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
1	2	2599	Presque Isle	570	105	-20	-23	76	0	0	9	80.95%	\$36.50
1	2	6187	FortFairfield	228	50	1	0	41	3	0	7	102.00%	\$36.50
1	5	9389	Caribou	1393	392	-4	-12	301	5	18	64	98.97%	\$36.00
1	2	9699	Ashland	291	59	-2	-4	53	0	0	4	96.61%	\$36.50
1			TOTALS	2482	606	-25	-39	471	8	18	84	95.87%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
2	3	1605	Burlington	211	122	-5	-8	110	2	1	4	95.90%	\$33.50
2	2	7529	Island Falls	178	61	-4	-6	48	0	0	9	93.44%	\$36.50
2			TOTALS	389	183	-9	-14	158	2	1	13	95.08%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
3	3	9779	Calais	269	109	-10	-13	81	1	0	17	90.82%	\$35.50
3	3	11553	Harrington	237	111	-3	-6	98	0	1	9	97.29%	\$35.50
3			TOTALS	506	220	-13	-19	179	1	1	26	94.09%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
4	3	109	Ellsworth	355	150	-8	-11	104	0	0	38	94.66%	\$35.50
4	3	1761	Bangor	703	175	-17	-21	140	0	1	17	90.28%	\$36.00
4	3	3381	Old Town	604	177	-16	-20	142	0	1	18	90.96%	\$35.50
4	3	4633	Hampden	284	111	-1	-4	99	4	0	7	99.09%	\$35.50
4			TOTALS	1946	613	-42	-56	485	4	2	80	93.14%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
5	2	4298	Dexter	141	61	-9	-11	41	0	0	11	85.24%	\$35.00
5	1	5723	Jackman	57	10	-1	-2	4	0	0	5	90.00%	\$35.50
5	3	6924	Fairfield	436	98	-3	-5	91	0	0	4	96.93%	\$35.50
5	3	7865	Madison	163	169	43	39	121	7	46	38	125.44%	\$38.00
5	1	10881	Farmington	45	23	-1	-2	18	1	0	3	95.65%	\$35.50
5			TOTALS	842	361	29	19	275	8	46	61	108.03%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
6	3	3108	Belfast	597	155	-22	-26	108	2	0	23	85.80%	\$36.50
6	1	4169	Vinalhaven	81	12	-1	-2	8	0	0	3	91.66%	\$31.50
6	2	6131	Northport	230	62	-4	-6	46	1	0	11	93.54%	\$37.00
6	1	9437	Washington	135	34	3	2	32	0	3	2	108.82%	\$34.50
6			TOTALS	1043	263	-24	-32	194	3	3	39	90.87%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
7	2	2197	Topsham	114	95	1	-1	66	8	1	21	101.05%	\$35.00
7	2	7738	Bath	198	76	1	-1	70	5	0	2	101.31%	\$31.00
7			TOTALS	312	171	2	-2	136	13	1	23	101.16%	
DIST	Div	Post #	Name	HIGH	2023	3/25/2024	102%	LIFE	NEW	REINST	CONT	MEM %	DUES:
8	1	9	Gardiner	143	47	-5	-6	33	0	0	9	89.36%	\$35.00
8	4	887	Augusta	393	238	-17	-22	191	2	2	26	92.85%	\$40.50
8	4	1285	Waterville	600	203	-4	-9	189	3	1	6	98.02%	\$38.50
8	4	8835	Winslow	792	263	19	13	215	8	13	46	107.22%	\$37.50
8	1	9526	Winthrop	123	42	-4	-5	32	0	0	6	90.47%	\$35.50
8			TOTALS	2051	793	-11	-29	660	13	16	93	98.61%	

**"HONOR THEIR COURAGE"
JOHN BOUCHARD STATE COMMANDER**

DIVISION LEADERS <<>> MARCH 25, 2023

>> LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE OUR DEPARTMENT GROW <<

DIV. I (10-50) TOP 3 POSTS IN DIV.		DIV. IV (201-300) TOP 3 POSTS IN DIV.	
1. 9437 WASHINGTON	108.82%	1. 8835 WINSLOW	107.22%
2. 9328 HARRISON	103.33%	2. 9935 SANFORD	104.58%
3. 6187 FORT FAIRFIELD	102.00%	3. 7997 OLD ORCHARD BEACH	103.24%
DIV. II (51-100) TOP 3 POSTS IN DIV.		DIV. V (301-400) TOP 3 POSTS IN DIV.	
1. 1641 RUMFORD	108.21%	1. 9389 CARIBOU	98.97%
2. 7738 BATH	101.31%	2. 6859 PORTLAND	94.56%
3. 2197 TOPSHAM	101.05%	3. 1603 AUBURN	92.36%
DIV. III (101-200) TOP 3 POSTS IN DIV.		DIV. VI (401- HIGHER) TOP 3 POSTS IN DIV.	
1. 7865 MADISON	125.44%	1.	
2. 4633 HAMPDEN	99.09%	2.	
3. 11553 HARRINGTON	97.29%	3.	
TEN HIGHEST POSTS BY %		TEN LARGEST POSTS	
1. 7865 MADISON	125.44%	1. 9389 CARIBOU	388
2. 9437 WASHINGTON	108.82%	2. 1603 AUBURN	351
3. 1641 RUMFORD	108.21%	3. 6859 PORTLAND	348
4. 8835 WINSLOW	107.22%	4. 7997 OLD ORCHARD BEACH	286
5. 9935 SANFORD	104.58%	5. 8835 WINSLOW	282
6. 9328 HARRISON	103.33%	6. 9935 SANFORD	274
7. 7997 OLD ORCHARD BEACH	103.24%	7. 887 AUGUSTA	221
8. 6187 FORT FAIRFIELD	102.00%	8. 10879 GORHAM	217
9. 7738 BATH	101.31%	9. 7865 MADISON	212
10. 2197 TOPSHAM	101.05%	10. 1285 WATERVILLE	199
DISTRICT STANDINGS		MAGIC NUMBERS FOR 2022-2023	
1. District 5 CLUKEY	108.03%	WE HAVE = 6272	
2. District 7 HARMON	101.16%	WE NEED 261 FOR 100% 392 FOR 102%	
3. District 11 MCINNIS	100.42%		
4. District 8 LAMBERT	98.61%	ALL POSTS/DISTRICTS SHOULD BE AT 100%	
DEPARTMENT OF MAINE, VFW	96.00%	5 N/R MEMBERS & EARN A BLUE BALL CAP	
5. District 1 WATSON	95.87%	10 N/R MEMBERS & EARN A WHITE VFW SHIRT	
6. District 2 EWING	95.08%	ALL DEPT OFFICERS ARE ASKED TO RECRUIT	
7. District 3 BENNER	94.09%	LET'S ALL WORK AS A TEAM AND	
8. District 4 SLININGER	93.14%	RETAIN – RECRUIT & REINSTATE 3 MEMBERS?	
9. District 9 HATCH	92.69%	NEED HELP or HAVE QUESTIONS	
10. District 10 GOODMAN	92.08%	ASK ANYONE ON THE MEMBERSHIP TEAM OK?	
11. District 6 ARMSTRONG	90.87%		

RECRUITING EVENTS

Post or District# _____

Location of Event _____ Date _____ Time _____

VFW Member & Title Present at Event

Description of Event: _____

Approximate # of People Talked With: _____

of People Signed Up: New _____ Reinstated _____

Comments of Event: _____

Notify Membership Chairman Steven SanPedro of Event prior to Date of Event.

Submit a signed copy of this Report to the Membership Chairman Steven SanPedro, 251 Gray Rd., Windham, Maine 04062 or sanpedro105@roadrunner.com

Please include photos or news articles to be used in the Commanders Membership Book

Date: _____

Signature of Post Commander or Department Officer



ATTENTION

Membership benefits at no cost!

Through a partnership with American Income Life Insurance Company, servicing working families for more than 60 years, additional benefits are being provided to all members of

Membership benefits at no cost to you include:

- **\$ Group AD&D Benefit**
- **Child Safe Kit[®]**
- **Family Information Guide**
- **AILPlus Health Services Discount Program***

You will be receiving or have already received a letter regarding this AD&D benefit and other no-cost offers. Please be sure to return the reply card.

Or reply online at
MyBenefits.AILife.com
Enter access code:

An AIL representative will contact members who return the reply card to arrange a convenient time to deliver their certificate of coverage and other no-cost offers and review other supplemental insurance coverage that may be available.

For more information, please call:

AILife.com

*AIL Plus Health Services Discount Program is not available in NY. Lab Testing not available in MD, NJ, or RI.

WHERE HEROES SHOP

All honorably discharged Veterans and Department of Defense civilians with CAC can shop tax free at ShopMyExchange.com. In addition, the Department of Defense expanded in-store military exchange and commissary shopping privileges as well as MWR resale facility use to all Veterans with service-connected disabilities.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE BENEFITS
[SHOPMYEXCHANGE.COM/VETS](https://ShopMyExchange.com/VETS)

The Exchange is a Department of Defense Organization

