



# LAVA LEDGER



OCTOBER, NOVEMBER & DECEMBER, EDITION 16

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER JASON SEAL

Aloha and welcome to the latest edition of the Lava Ledger. I hope you and your families are enjoying the holiday season.

During November we gathered to honor Veterans Day - a day rooted not only in celebration but also in reflection. It was a reminder that our service, in all its forms, continues long after we remove the uniform. Whether on the front lines or in a support role, every Veteran in this Department has "borne the battle" and contributed to the preservation of our nation's security and our shared way of life. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all who participated in ceremonies throughout our Department, from Hilo to Honolulu, from Kauai to American Samoa. Your presence matters; it strengthens our communities and ensures that the legacy of service and sacrifice remains visible to the next generation.

November also brought us Thanksgiving, a holiday that encourages us to take stock of the blessings we often may overlook. For we who have served, gratitude carries a special weight. Not only did we give thanks to family and nation, but we also remember those who stood beside us, those who guided us, and those who never made it home. With those thoughts in mind, I hope you had a pleasant Thanksgiving day.

The Department was honored to host the Commander in Chief during the first week of December when she visited Oahu. Commander Whitmore experienced a tightly filled schedule of events which included: an interment ceremony at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific; a visit to the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum and also attending the Museum's annual Gala Ball; a meeting with the Director of the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System; attending the Department of Hawaii Council of Administration; touring the USS Hopper (DDG-70); and taking part in the December 7th ceremony of remembrance at Pearl Harbor. She was grateful for the warm hospitality she experienced throughout her visit and was impressed by the Department's dedication to Hawaii's Veteran community. Bravo Zulu.

To all of the Comrades and Auxiliary members of the Department of Hawaii - mahalo for your steadfast commitment to one another and to our mission. It is, as always, better to serve than to be served. Happy Holidays and a very Merry Christmas.

Semper Fidelis,  
Jason Seal, Commander





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# COMMAND AND POST



## HEALTH REMINDER

Comrades,

Our health risks don't end when our service does. Many Veterans were exposed to dust, chemicals, burn pits, power tools, or hazardous environments that increase the likelihood of preventable injuries and long-term conditions. This month's report highlights two major awareness topics—Eye Injury Prevention and COPD—with simple steps to stay safer and healthier.

### OCTOBER: EYE INJURY PREVENTION MONTH

Nearly half of all eye injuries happen at home, and most are preventable with proper safety eyewear. Everyday tasks like mowing, cutting branches, drilling, grinding, sweeping, or using chemical cleaners can launch debris or irritants into the eyes.

#### Workplace Risks

About 300,000 Americans go to the hospital every year for workplace eye injuries. OSHA requires employers to provide PPE that meets ANSI Z87.1 standards for impact, chemical, and dust protection. If your workplace lacks an EHS officer, ask HR about required protective eyewear, including prescription options.

#### High-risk occupations:

Construction • Manufacturing • Automotive • Healthcare

Bottom line: Wear proper-fitting safety eyewear for every task—at home or at work.

### NOVEMBER: NATIONAL COPD AWARENESS MONTH

COPD includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis—conditions that make breathing difficult and often go undiagnosed. Symptoms include chronic cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, and fatigue. Veterans exposed to smoke, dust, burn pits, or industrial fumes are at greater risk.

#### Reduce Risk:

- Avoid smoking/secondhand smoke
- Limit exposure to dust, fumes, chemicals
- Use respiratory PPE when needed
- Keep flu & pneumonia vaccines updated
- Seek evaluation for persistent breathing issues

Early detection helps many people maintain active, independent lives.

### FINAL REMINDER

Protect your eyes. Protect your lungs. Small choices today prevent major health problems tomorrow. Stay safe—and look out for your fellow Veterans.



# VFW NEWS

## OUR MISSION IS TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

THIS IS A SUMMARIZED VERSION OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
CAROL WHITMORE'S  
ACCEPTANCE SPEECH AT THE VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION.

Good afternoon, everyone. I thank each one of you for this extraordinary honor. This is not just a recognition of me, but of all the men and women who have served in our armed forces.

When I think back on my journey, I was driven by a sense of duty, a desire to serve something greater than myself. And little did I know that decision would shape me in ways I could never have imagined.

“  
These are all part of why the VFW was  
founded. We are a force that no one can stop.  
We are the frontline.  
”

To those who made the ultimate sacrifice, we owe them everything. Their courage and selflessness continue to inspire me every day. Their families deserve our deepest gratitude and support. The loss of a loved one in service is a pain that never fully heals, and it is something we must never forget.

We need to advocate for the care and resources that fellow veterans deserve, whether that is in health care, employment or mental health support. Too many of our brothers and sisters still face hardships when they return home. Our mission never stops. It never changes. It remains taking care of each other.

Through advocacy, our legislative efforts need to be resolute. The Richard Star Act must pass this year. This bill was introduced in 2004 and has repeatedly and shamelessly been voted down. Let us get this done already. Honor the contract.

Our service officers are the best. We need to support and utilize them in the best way possible, and ensure our fellow veterans have access to them. They are free. Stop the claim sharks.

And continuing our efforts for the POW/MIA program, bring them all home, or send us back. They deserve the final salute on American soil. These are all part of why the VFW was founded. We are a force that no one can stop. We are the frontline.

I stand here today, not just as an individual, but as part of something much larger than myself. I am part of a community, a brotherhood, a sisterhood that will forever be united by our shared experiences and our love for this great nation.

I may be the first female veteran to have been elected VFW Commander-in-Chief, but I will not be the last. And as I have said while campaigning, I am your sister by mud, by blood, by dust, by dirt, by sand, by land, by sea, by air. I am a veteran first.



# WESTERN CONFERENCE CONVENTION 2025

Members of the VFW Department of Hawaii leadership team traded in their slippers and shorts, and made their way to chilly Boise, Idaho to participate in the annual Western Conference meeting, which was held at The Riverside Hotel, November 7-8, 2025.

Commander Jason Seal, Junior Vice Commander Rodney Boucher, Quartermaster Norbert Enos, Adjutant George Barlett, National Legislative Committee Member Jame Schaedel, Past Department Auxiliary President Taka Shiroma, and Auxiliary 2875 Member Kappy Shiroma were in attendance.

Prior to the business session held on November 8, 2025, VFW members participated in the conference's first ever town hall to hear from our candidates for Junior Vice Commander in Chief (JVCIC) designee. Following the town hall, conference members made nominations for and elected new conference officers, who will take office at the Western Conference meeting during the VFW National Convention in Reno in July 2026. Mahalo to George Barlett for his years of service as the conference's Treasurer.

The conference concluded with a banquet and a motivating speech from Quartermaster General Marc Garduno. For more information about the conference's JVCIC designee candidates, please visit <https://vfwwesternconference.org/>, scroll down, and click on "MEET THE CANDIDATES."



Photo above: State and Department Commanders of the Western Conference who attended the 2025 conference in Boise, Idaho.



Photo right: Department of Hawaii Auxiliary representatives at the Western Conference. Photo taken by Gerri Dee Enos, Auxiliary Hawaii.





# DOWN RANGE



## Post 8616 Honoring Service at the Waikiki Natatorium War Memorial

Photos below: local news excerpts highlighting VFW attendance at the Veterans Day ceremony at the Natatorium in Honolulu. Chaplains Correa, Norbert Enos, and Jason Seal honored Veterans by laying a wreath at the monument.







### Veterans Day Parade in Hilo

Members of VFW Post 3875, Hilo, representing their post during the Veterans Day Parade in Hilo, Hawaii'i.





## Honoring Veterans at the Honolulu Vietnam-Korean and the WWII Memorials

VFW members attended Veterans Day celebrations at the memorials









### **Highway Cleanup with Post 2875**

Members of Post 2875 coming together for their Adopt-A-Highway cleanup, serving the community through dedicated volunteer work.





### **Commander-in-Chief and Adjutant General Visit Hawai'i in December**

During the first week of December, VFW National Commander-in-Chief Carol Whitmore and Adjutant General Dan West visited Hawai'i. Their time on island was filled with meaningful meetings, camaraderie, shared memories, and holiday cheer that will long endure beyond their visit.

The week also included moments of solemn reflection, as they honored the anniversary of the December 7th attacks at the Pearl Harbor National Memorial.

The dedicated members of the VFW Department of Hawai'i ensured the visit was a tremendous success. Mahalo to everyone who supported the mission and helped make this visit so memorable.











# POST

# MEETINGS



Post 94: Oahu Veteran's Center (OVC), 1298 Kukila St. in Honolulu. Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 0900 hours.

Post 110: OVC, 1298 Kukila St. in Honolulu. Meeting every last Thursday of the month at 1200 hours.

Post 352: First Baptist Church, 1233 California Ave in Wahiawa. Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 1800 hours.

Post 849: Pililaau Army Recreation Center, 86-010 Army St. in Waianae. Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 1800

Post 970: OVC, 1298 Kukila St. in Honolulu. Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 1900 hours.

Post 1540: Sacred Hearts Academy Library, 3253 Waialae Ave in Honolulu. Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month at 1830 hours.

Post 1572: Hawaiian Plantation Village, 94-695 Waipahu St. in Waipahu. Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 1000 hours.

Post 2875: OVC, 1298 Kukila St. in Honolulu. Meeting every last Saturday of the month at 0930 hours.

Post 3292: OVC, 1298 Kukila St. in Honolulu. Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 0900 hours.

Post 3391: American Samoa Veterans Memorial, Ottoville Rd. Equator Building in Pago Pago. Meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1000 hours.

Post 3830: Post 3830, 15-775 Maluhia Rd. in Pahoa. Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1100 hours.

Post 3850: Wilber Tom Post, 1136 Uluniu Rd. in Kihei. Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 1300 hours.

Post 3855: Kauai Veterans Center, 3215 Kauai Veterans Memorial Hwy., Ste H in Lihue. Meeting every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 1730 hours.

Post 3870: Molokai Veterans Center, 81 Kaunakakai Pl. in Kaunakakai. Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1000 hours.

Post 3875: Kamana Senior Center, 127 Kamana St. in Hilo. Meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at 0900 hours.

Post 8616: Elks Lodge 616, 2933 Kalakaua Ave in Honolulu. Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 0945 hours.

Post 10154: The Clipper Club at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, 44-245 Kaneohe Bay Dr. in Kaneohe. Meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1000 hours.

Post 10276: OVC, 1298 Kukila St. in Honolulu. Meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1000 hours.

Post 12122: Kailua-Kona Post, 74-5543 Kaiwi St. in Kailua-Kona. Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1130 hours.

Post 12138: Barbers Point Bowling Center, 91-1259 Saratoga Ave in Kapolei. Meeting every last Saturday of the month at 1000 hours.



# ACTION CORPS



## VFW ACTION CORPS: SIGN UP NOW!



The VFW Action Corps is a national grassroots advocacy network of over 300,000 VFW members and supporters dedicated to veterans' issues. They stay informed on challenges facing veterans, the military, and their families, and are ready to take action by contacting lawmakers. Open to all patriotic Americans, the Action Corps is free to join and helps amplify the voices of veterans' advocates across the country.

### MEMBERS RECEIVE:

- The VFW Action Corps Weekly newsletter, covering advocacy efforts.
- Access to contact information for elected officials nationwide.
- Regular "Action Alerts" to engage when veterans' issues require attention.

The VFW Action Corps strengthens the VFW's mission to support veterans, working closely with the National Legislative Service in Washington, D.C., to drive change.

### RECENT LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES INCLUDE:

- The PACT Act, expanding VA healthcare for veterans exposed to toxic substances.
- The SERVICE Act, improving VA mammogram eligibility.
- Reforms to the Uniform Code of Military Justice on sexual assault and harassment.
- VA's maternity care coordination program for women veterans.
- The PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act, providing service dogs for veterans with PTSD.
- Inclusion of bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism as presumptive conditions for herbicide exposure.
- The Deborah Sampson Act, addressing healthcare barriers for women veterans.
- Removal of the 12-year limit on using Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits.



JOIN THE VFW ACTION CORPS TODAY, OR ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO  
DO SO, AND BE PART OF THE MOVEMENT MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
FOR VETERANS.

TO SIGN UP, VISIT:  
[HTTPS://VOTERVOICE.NET/VFW/REGISTER](https://votervoicenet/vfw/register)





# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR OUR MAUI VETERAN COMMUNITY

\*Unhoused/Homeless Outreach.

Who: Veterans - contact information Salvation Army  
POC: Veteran Mark Saxon 808-871-6270. Then press 3.

### Upcoming Military Events on Maui:

\*Mission: Red Kettle Campaign (Salvation Army)

Post 3850 Auxiliary outreach program...Ring the bell for the holidays

Where: Walmart front door When: Dec 22 (Mon), 23 (Tues)

Time(s):10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

POC: Please contact Cassie via email at [cale.tlw@gmail.com](mailto:cale.tlw@gmail.com) to volunteer for two (2) hour blocks of times.

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## DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: A CENTRAL RESOURCE FOR ALL MEMBERS

All members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Hawaii - including those across the Hawaiian Islands and American Samoa - are encouraged to utilize the Department's official website as a primary source of information.

The site provides access to essential forms, official communications, program updates, leadership contacts, event calendars, and resources for both Posts and individual members.

To remain informed and mission-ready, please visit:  
[www.vfwhi.org](http://www.vfwhi.org)

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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Posts are encouraged to share information regarding upcoming events, fundraisers, service projects, and community outreach activities for inclusion in future editions of the Lava Ledger.

We also welcome event summaries, photographs, and highlights of recent initiatives to help showcase the continued efforts and impact of our membership across the Department.

Please send all submissions to:  
[chelsea.mack@gmail.com](mailto:chelsea.mack@gmail.com)

Content may be edited for clarity and space. Mahalo for helping us share the important work being done throughout the Department of Hawaii and its affiliated Posts.