



LAVA LEDGER

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State Convention Ala Moana, 2024

Message from our new Commander
Benedict Lui Lea'ana Fuata

Fellow Comrades of the Veteran of Foreign Wars Department of Hawaii and abroad,

Faafetai Talofa ma ia faatasi le Atua and aloha a na ke Akua pū me 'oe! Greetings and May God Be with you!

I am deeply honored and humbled to stand before you today as the newly elected Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Hawaii. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your trust and confidence in my leadership. This is not just a role; it is a profound responsibility and privilege that I accept with the utmost respect and dedication.

First and foremost, I want to express my sincere appreciation to our outgoing Commander Ron Schaedel. Your tireless efforts, unwavering commitment, and inspirational leadership have paved the way for the progress and successes we have witnessed. You have set a high standard, and I pledge to carry forward your legacy with the same vigor and integrity.

To my dear wife and family, as I step into the role of Commander of the VFW Department of Hawaii, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you. Your unwavering love and support have been my foundation, giving me the strength to take on this important responsibility.

To my fellow officers, I am excited to work alongside such a dedicated team. Together, we will face the challenges ahead, always with the goal of serving our veterans and their families. Your expertise, passion, and commitment are the foundation of our organization, and I am confident that together, we can achieve great things.

To all of our members, your service to our nation has been marked by courage, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication. As we transition into this new chapter, my focus will be on continuing to uphold the values and mission of the VFW. We will work tirelessly to ensure that every veteran in Hawaii receives the support, respect, and recognition they deserve, which aligns with my Motto of "Polynesian Pride - Where Veterans Matter Most!"

Our priorities are clear:

****Advocacy**:** We will continue to fight for the benefits and services our veterans have earned. This includes ensuring access to quality healthcare, advocating for mental health support, and addressing the unique needs of our women veterans.

****Community Service and Engagement**:** Strengthening our ties with the local community is essential. We will enhance our outreach programs, build partnerships with other veteran organizations, and engage in service projects that make a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve.

****Membership Growth and Retention**:** Our strength lies in our numbers. By fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment, we will attract new members and ensure that current members feel valued and connected. Our younger veterans bring fresh perspectives and energy, and we will strive to integrate their insights into our efforts.

****Education and Resources**:** Providing our veterans with the resources and information they need to thrive in civilian life is crucial. We will offer educational programs, career counseling, and support services to help them navigate their post-service journeys successfully.

****Honoring Our Legacy**:** We will continue to honor the memory of our fallen comrades and ensure that their sacrifices are never forgotten. Memorial services, historical preservation, and education about our military history will remain central to our mission.

As I stand here, I am reminded of the profound bond that unites us all—the shared experience of service and sacrifice. It is this bond that makes our organization strong and resilient. We are a family, and like any family, we may face challenges, but together, we will overcome them.

I am committed to open communication, transparency, and collaboration. Your voices are vital, and I encourage you to share your ideas, concerns, and aspirations. Together, we will chart a course that honors our past, serves our present, and secures our future.

In closing, let us remember the words of President John F. Kennedy: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

Fa'afetai ma Faamanuia le Atua i lo'u aiga ma uo, my esteemed comrades, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Aloha State of Hawaii, and the United States of America.

Together, let us forge ahead with courage, unity, and unwavering resolve. Polynesian Pride - Where Veterans Matter Most!



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

FOURTH OF JULY

Independence Parade, Oahu

The July 4th, 2024, Kailua Independence Day Parade remains a community highlight, attracting thousands of spectators and participants. This annual event showcases vibrant displays of patriotism with a variety of floats, marching bands, and community groups, all celebrating the nation's independence. The parade not only honors America's history but also unites residents in a festive celebration.

This year saw participation from residents, community members, and numerous military and veterans service organizations. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of Hawaii Commander and Staff, along with their Auxiliary and several Oahu base VFW Post members, proudly took part in the parade, continuing their five-year tradition. Their involvement highlights the event's importance in recognizing the sacrifices and commitment of the armed forces.

"Participating in the parade is our way of acknowledging and appreciating the efforts of our service members and veterans," said Comrade Dean Anzai.

The Kailua parade serves as both a tribute to veterans and a vibrant community event, fostering a sense of camaraderie and national pride among all attendees.









VFW Post 3830's Annual July 4th 5k Race

Every July 4th, the Hilo community gathers for an event that is both a celebration of our nation's independence and a tribute to those who have served it so valiantly. VFW Post 3830's (out of Pahoa) Annual Hilo Bay 5K Run and Walk, known as "A Salute To Our Veterans," is a day filled with patriotism, camaraderie, and heartfelt support for our local heroes. This year's event was a resounding success, drawing over 200 participants whose efforts will help make a significant impact on the lives of local veterans.

The race, which is professionally timed and administered, attracts a diverse crowd each year. From competitive runners striving for their best times to families and friends walking together, the event offers something for everyone.

This race is VFW Post 3830's largest fundraiser of the year. Every dollar raised goes directly to supporting local veterans. Commander of VFW Post 3830, Fa'amanu Teofilo, a dedicated leader and advocate for veterans, perfectly captured the spirit of the event. "Events like the Hilo Bay 5K Run and Walk embody the spirit of service and community. They remind us that while we may have worn different uniforms and served in different times and places, our commitment to each other and our country is unwavering. We are profoundly grateful for the support we receive from our community. Together, we stand strong."

The success of this event would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the Auxiliary Members who are a part of VFW Post 3830. Their commitment to our cause reflects the spirit of service that defines our organization. Looking ahead, the goal is to build on this year's success and continue growing the Hilo Bay 5K Run and Walk, further strengthening the community and support for local veterans.

VFW Post 3830 and their Auxiliary would like to thank everyone who participated, volunteered, and donated. Your generosity and dedication helped to make this year's event a success.



