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October 2022

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VOLUME MMXXI | ISSUE 7

WEB SITE: www.vfw683.org

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/VfwPost683



Next Business Meeting Tuesday October 11th, 2022 @ 7:00



Kristin Ashley **Commander**

Al Bragg
Senior Vice Commander

Carl Vickers
Junior Vice Commander

Melanie Morin
Quartermaster

Norman Hansen
Chaplain

Charles Lavelle
Judge Advocate

Dr. Olav Opedal
Surgeon

Dr. Olav Opedal
1 Year Trustee

Norman Hansen
2 Year Trustee

Charles Lavelle
3 Year Trustee

Ron Ness **Adjutant**

Dr. Olav Opedal
Service Officer

Youth Scholarships

The **deadline for submissions to our Post is 31 October 2022**. See our website for more details including eligibility, submission guidelines, and entry forms.



VFW's **Voice of Democracy** program is an audio-essay competition providing students in grades 9-12 the opportunity to express themselves in regards to democratic ideas and principles. The national first-place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship with other scholarships ranging from \$1,000—\$16,000.

The theme for 2022 is: **"Why is the Veteran Important?"**

See: <https://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/>

VFW's **Patriot's Pen** youth essay contest encourages young minds (grades 6-8) to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300- to 400-word essay, expressing their views based on a patriotic theme. The national first-place winner receives \$5,000.



The theme for 2022 is: **"My Pledge to Our Veterans"**



The VFW Department of Washington State offers an additional **Youth Essay** opportunity for students in Third, Fourth and Fifth Grades to submit a written essay of up to 250 words. There will be a Post winner FOR EACH GRADE, as well as a State Winner FOR EACH GRADE. Awards are at the discretion of the local Posts and their Auxiliaries, as are the District Awards.

The theme for 2022 is: **"Why are Veterans so important to us?"**

More information on both of these contests can be found at:

<https://vfw683.org/uploads/documents/>



In an effort to cut postage and printing costs, please send your email address to:

Commander	Kristin Ashley	760-957-5051
Quartermaster	Melanie Morin	509-929-0580
Chaplain	Norman Hansen	509-710-9959

vfwrodeopost@fairpoint.net

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Commander’s Corner

Ellensburg’s newly elected Rodeo Post 683 Commander.

I am a former Army Medic who served as an Army Medic from 2004-2009, including a 2006 tour for one year in Iraq and volunteering as a Vet Corps member through AmeriCorps for Kittitas County Veterans Coalition which is open 10 am to 3 pm Monday through Thursday. (I will not be there all of those hours.) We are looking for volunteers to keep the office open those hours and if VFW members who are willing to volunteer that will look great for our post. Thank you!

Kristin Ashley

THE KITTITAS COUNTY VETERANS’ COALITION
Is located at 507 N. Nanum St. #117
Ellensburg, WA 98926
(509)933—2932
kcvcoalition@outlook.com
The KCVC can assist veterans with:
Relief Benefits
Death Benefits
DD-214 Retrieval
Transportation Assistance
Mental Health Counseling

Post 24: Veterans participated in George Parade. Home Depot helped veterans in the areas.
Post 683: Ellensburg Farmers Market, Kittitas County Fair, September Veterans Fair, and Thorp Community Days Parade. Brett Wachsmith, County Commissioner, Dave Sturgell, Kittitas Veterans Coalition, Dennis Cort, Member VFW 683, Rubin Cardenas, Director Veterans Center at CWU, and Ron Ness, District Commander met September 27th to discuss the revamping of the Kittitas County Veterans Advisory Board and increase services funded by the Kittitas Veterans Fund.
Post 3617: Apple Blossom Parade, 350 banners paraded by veterans, Ramp-it-up program in July. Douglas County Veterans Service Officer, Sarah Simonson, has a new office and is no longer located at Post home. Douglas County Veteran Service Office, 110 2nd St. NE, East Wenatchee, WA 98802 509-683-3605 vso@co.douglas.wa.us
Post 6853: Support Quilters.
Post 7395: Honor Guard, support Quilts of Valor, donations to food band and flag replacements.

Borland’s election as the VFW’s 114th Commander-in-Chief occurred at the conclusion of the organization’s 123rd National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. The gathering was the first full national convention since 2019. During his acceptance speech, Borland urged the members, both attending in person and watching via live-streaming video, to welcome the new generation of veterans eligible for membership in the VFW, noting the significance of his election.

“There’s a new wave of veterans that have returned home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and they’re ready, willing and waiting to join our ranks. One of those veterans is standing right here behind this podium,” said Borland, referring to himself. “I am an Iraq War veteran and very proud to be the first as your Commander-in-Chief.”



Surgeon's Corner October 2022

VFW Post 683 Surgeon's corner

I have written about many of the common mental health problems facing veterans and started talking about treatment methods. The two methods discussed so far was the boxed breathing and the grounding exercise. This post will describe one of the treatment methods a therapist use to help veterans with their mental health problems. The Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, CBT, is a commonly used therapeutic method. CBT was developed by Aaron Beck and combined methods from behavioral therapy and cognitive therapy. Scientific research has found CBT to be an effective treatment method, and the VA provides mental health professionals and social workers training in the method. Here is a quote from VA clinicians helping homeless veterans: "Clinicians report that teaching Veterans specific skills within the context of CBT helps their Veterans take a more active role in their recovery, overcome barriers to maintaining housing and, ultimately, reach their goals". CBT is also used to help veterans with alcohol and drug problems, chronic pain, insomnia, anxiety, depression, acute stress disorder, ptsd, and many other mental health problems.

CBT helps the veteran reframe their ways of thinking when it is faulty or unhelpful. Unhelpful patterns of behavior leads to psychological suffering. CBT helps the client find better coping mechanisms, thereby relieving the veteran from symptoms leading to improved lives (APA, 2017).

CBT teaches the veteran how to recognize unhelpful thinking and behavior and to reconsider their thoughts and behavior based on reality, coping skills, and improved confidence. CBT also teaches veterans how to face fear and anxiety instead of avoidance, how to use role plays to help with difficult interpersonal interactions, and how to calm the mind. APA (2017) states: "CBT places an emphasis on helping individuals to be their own therapists". In other words, helping the veteran to learn how to themselves.

als learn
help



Resources:

If you are in distress, call or text 988

<http://veteranscrisisline.net>

https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/index.asp?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=search-va&utm_content=mental-health&utm_term=va%20mental%20health%20services&gclid=EAlaIqobChMIq6OkxcHx-QIVFA_nCh2KVg01EAAYyAAEgJgjfD_BwE

References:

<https://www.va.gov/homeless/nchav/education/cbt.asp>

https://www.va.gov/PAINMANAGEMENT/CBT_CP/Veterans.asp

<https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/patients-and-families/cognitive-behavioral>

<https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/patients-and-families/cognitive-behavioral>

Dr. Olav Opedal NCC LMHC
Psychologist & Data Scientist

September 26, 2022

Senate Hearing on Recruiting and Retention:

VFW National Legislative Associate Director Brittany Dymond provided a statement for the record to the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Personnel regarding military recruiting and retention. She conveyed the importance of military quality of life as it pertains to both the retention of current service members and recruitment of new ones. “Like any occupation, benefit packages will always fall short if individuals’ basic needs, or those of their family members, are inconsistently satisfied,” said Dymond. Sexual assault and harassment, military housing issues, and food insecurity were among the topics highlighted. She also illustrated the clear connection between successful military transition and future generations’ decisions to serve.

VFW Attends Roundtable with House Leaders:

The VFW attended a veterans organization roundtable hosted by House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Ranking Member Mike Bost (R-IL). VFW Assistant Legislative Director Kristina Keenan expressed the need to crack down on predatory claim consultants as more veterans seek VA benefits due to the passage of the PACT Act. She thanked Rep. Jake Ellzey (R-TX) for being the original cosponsor of H.R. 8736,

Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act or GUARD VA Benefits Act. This VFW-supported bill would reinstate penalties for charging veterans and survivors unauthorized fees to assist with claims for VA benefits. Keenan also expressed the need for more resources for Vet Centers to provide services in rural areas including mental health services, and more data from VA to better understand veterans at risk of dying by suicide.

2022 VA Suicide Prevention Report Released:

VA released its 2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report. The number of veterans who died by suicide in 2020 is the lowest annual number since 2006. According to the report, suicide was the second leading cause of death of veterans under the age of 45. The VFW has advocated for many years for VA to include all VA benefits usage in this report. The 2022 report shows data beyond the clinical interactions and provides a somewhat clearer picture of veterans who have no interaction with VA. “The problem of veteran suicide is a complex one that deserves serious study and academic rigor. I think the nation owes our veterans that much,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland.

No-Cost Flu Vaccines: The CDC estimates 5,000 to 14,000 flu deaths occurred in the last year. Eligible veterans can receive a no-cost flu vaccine from Sept. 1, 2022, to April 30, 2023. Use the VA locator to find a VA facility, pharmacy, or urgent care location near you. It is recommended that you call ahead to ensure availability.



VFW Announces Service Officer Accreditation Training

Humana donation to allow VFW National Veterans Service to reach more trainees WASHINGTON –

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is pleased to announce the VFW Service Officer Accreditation Training Scholarship for accredited service officers and claims representatives looking to attend the VFW's fall training conference in Annapolis, Maryland, this September.

“The VFW leads the way in veterans service,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland. “Most of those in our nationwide network of VA accredited service officers have accumulated more training hours than required by the VA. This scholarship will help keep our service officers who need financial assistance trained and up-to-date so they can continue to secure the benefits and compensation veterans and service members they've earned.”

This year, the VFW will select up to 10 exemplary applicants from around the country to attend service officer skill level accreditation training at the DoubleTree Hotel in Annapolis from Sept. 18 – 23. Each scholarship will cover hotel, transportation, conference fees and per diem for each recipient to attend the conference.

The scholarship were available thanks to a donation from Humana Inc. (NYSE: HUM) during the 123rd VFW National Convention in July. During the joint opening session of the convention, Humana presented VFW National Veterans Service \$25,000 to support the program that helps veterans get their earned Veterans Affairs benefits and compensation.

The VFW has chosen to dedicate these resources to help provide quality training to service officers who may not usually have the opportunity to train with the organization, allowing the VFW to reach deeper into communities to provide high-quality, free claims assistance to veterans. “Through Humana's generosity, the VFW is able to offer more accredited service officers the opportunity to hone their skills alongside some of the VFW's greatest veterans' advocates, making sure veterans have access to highly-trained service officers who can help them file for their hard-earned VA benefits,” said VFW National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci. “With the recent signing of the PACT Act, we know veterans will need skilled guidance in navigating their new toxic exposure benefits. We also know that non-accredited claim sharks are going to try and take these hard-earned benefits from veterans who deserve them. Humana is helping us meet these challenges through its strong support to the VFW's world-class training program.”

All applicants were currently accredited with the VFW through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of preparation, presentation and prosecution of benefit claims before VA on behalf of VFW claimants. This scholarship will focus heavily on cross-accredited VFW advocates and advocates who cannot regularly attend VFW training. The VFW training offered this fall is one of the ways the VFW satisfies VA Office of the General Counsel's continuing education requirements for its global network of accredited representatives and is subject to periodic audit from OGC.

“We do not recoup \$10 billion in benefits and compensation annually through happenstance,” said Borland. “Our service officers are trained, motivated and work tirelessly on behalf of veterans because EVERY VETERAN COUNTS!”

October 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4 Auxiliary Meeting 7:00 PM	5 Lunch Noon to 2pm	6	7 Afghanistan War Began 2001	8
9	10 Columbus Day	11 Pot Luck 6:00 pm Business Meeting 7:00 pm	12 Lunch Noon to 2pm	13 247th U.S. Army Birthday U.S. Navy Est. 1775	14	15
16	17	18	19 Post Dinner 6 pm	20	21	22
23 Grenade Campaign Began 1983	24	25	26 Lunch Noon to 2pm National Day of Deployment	27 Navy Day	28	29
30	31 Halloween					

Future Events

District 7 meeting November 19, 2022 @ East Wenatchee Post 3617 1:00 p.m.
 Mid-Winter Conference January 14-15, 2023 @ Yakima
 102nd WA Department Convention TBA