

JOHN WILEY BROCK



POST 6683

ENTERPRISE, ALABAMA

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Presents Randy Black, Immediate Past Commander
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JULY-AUGUST 2022 Newsletter





FROM THE COMMANDER *Robert Schmidbauer*

Greetings Comrades,

We had another great month of membership participation, and I am excited to see so many new members as well as many members who have not been active, reengage with our post.

Since our meeting in July, we have conducted several post maintenances events on our grounds. We presented the John Wiley Brock Post 6683 Teacher of the Year winner, Stephanie Underwood, who also won at District and State levels, a Certificate of recognition from the VFW National Headquarters. We had multiple members attend the Military and Veterans Affairs Quarterly breakfast, as well as the district meeting. Several volunteers over two days repaired the Post Storage Barn and repainted our kitchen cabinets. We held four committee meetings, CVMA utilized our post twice, the Girl Scouts utilized our Post twice and we had five Post Rentals. And lastly, we conducted our first Post Fellowship Dinner which was extremely successful. I would like to personally thank all involved for their time and efforts on all of these post activities and the preparation that went into their success.

Future events that will be happening prior to our next meeting are the Monthly Fellowship Dinner which will be Cajun Cuisine and the Patriots Day Ceremony at Johnny Henderson Park on Sept 11th. Our post Leadership will also be representing our Post at the Alabama VFW School of Instruction in Montgomery Alabama from 26 August-28 August.

Over the last two months, many of you have heard me say that my goal is to find ways to bring back our members who have not visited the post in a while as

well as find ways to bring in those eligible Comrades who served the 20 years after me. This was also the message at this year's VFW National Convention, where it was stated continuously that we need to find ways to get these current and future members involved with our Posts in order to survive and prosper in the future. This is not only the Commanders and leaderships responsibility, but you the members and you are answering my challenge. Thanks to many of you we have gained 10 new members since I took command, and we are receiving multiple inquiries from other eligible Comrades who are expressing interest in joining our organization. We have spent two years updating our Post for our safety and enjoyment, yet only a fraction of members attend meetings or events regularly. Many of you know members who are not showing up. Please contact those you know and encourage them to come to our Post for one of our events. Please call your buddy, your friend, or family and meet them at the Post to renew your friendship while enjoying our surroundings and friendly atmosphere





We need to also remember that many of our younger veterans have different issues, likes and dislikes than those of us who served decades ago, but their issues, likes and dislikes are no less severe or important than ours. Their interests are different, and we need to find a happy medium whereas all members can come to our Post and feel like they belong. Their health in the immediate and longer term was identified and is being addressed by Congress with recent bill signings such as the PACT Act.

As always, remember that this is your Post, I as well as the other elected leaders are simply your representatives. Make sure you come support your Post, express your ideas, participate in our community, and enjoy the comradery of your fellow members. Our Post is only as good as we make it together and we can always get better.



FROM THE SR VICE COMMANDER
Pamela Y. Smith

Center for Women Veterans (CWV)

Welcome all women Veterans, family members, caregivers, and advocates! The Center for Women Veterans' (CWV) mission is to monitor and coordinate VA's administration of health care, benefits, services, and programs for women Veterans. CWV serve as an advocate for cultural transformation and to raise awareness of the responsibility to treat women Veterans with dignity and respect to #BringWomenVeteransHome2VA.

Today's VA is focused on the needs of women Veterans and cultural transformation. VA aim to provide an environment free from harassment. VA has introduced [White Ribbon](#), a national call to action to eliminate sexual harassment, sexual assault, and domestic violence. VA Secretary McDonough is making accountability of those who commit harassment or sexual assault an important part of creating a culture that is free from harassment and sexual assault, without fear of retaliation.

We are women Veterans proud to serve our sister Veterans and those who serve them. Stay in touch, sign up for email, and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @VAWomenVets. CWV shares information on benefits and services, events, stories, research and more.

VA Women's Health Transition Training

The Women's Health Services Office at the Department of Veterans Affairs, in conjunction with the Department of Defense, is hosting a Women's Health Transition Training. The training will provide servicewomen with a deeper understanding of the women's health services available to them within the VA health care system.

The online, self-paced Women's Health Transition Training is available for servicewomen and women Veterans to take anytime, anyplace at TAPevents.mil/courses. This course provides important information for



transitioning servicewomen on women's health care services available from VA post-separation from the military. After participating in the VA Women's Health Transition Training, you will have a better understanding of:

1. How VA health care is designed to serve you.
2. Available women's health care services (e.g. maternity care, cancer screenings, whole health, and mental health care services).
3. The process and eligibility requirements for enrollment—you don't have to be disabled to receive health care at VA.
4. How to connect with other women Veterans through women-specific networks, resources, and programs post-service.
5. How to find your local VA facility and resources for additional support.

Visit the [women's health website](https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/) at <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/> and check out the comprehensive list of [women's health benefits and resources](https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/womens-health-needs/) at <https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/womens-health-needs/>

The Women's Health Transition Training course consists of five phases designed to help you understand how VA health care is designed to serve you as you transition from active duty and into the future:

1. Shift from Active Duty
2. Understanding the VA
3. Available Women's Health Services
4. Enrolling in VA
5. Transition Assistance

All servicewomen and women Veterans are welcome to participate. If you are a servicewoman who will be transitioning to civilian life or to the reserve components within the next calendar year, we strongly encourage you to take the training.

Testimonials

This course eased my anxiety about my future out of the military.

-Past Participant

Every service woman needs to hear what the VA has to offer. The VA is more than what people talk about, it's a robust system that is dedicated to providing health care to Veterans.

-Past Participant

I feel like I'm on a better path for the transition process. I felt like I was floating, but now have a plan. This was an eye-opener.

-Past Participant

Post Clean Up

I would like to personally thank everyone that came out Sunday to clean up our VFW Post. It looks fabulous and you guys did an amazing job on the building outside. And with Dawn Schmidbauer's supervision, our paint job wasn't too messy, because I am a messy painter.

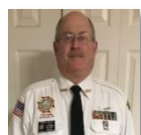
Again thank you all for what you do for Veterans, the community and our VFW Post. I salute you all!





FROM THE JR VICE COMMANDER
Clarence L. Carroll III

It is hard to believe that over two months have passed since being elected YOUR Jr Vice Commander. Time flies when you're having fun. As many of you know, I transferred my life-time membership from North Dakota to Alabama even before I officially moved to Alabama over two years ago. I tell you this because I am incredibly honored to be a part of a Post that truly serves! I am especially humbled when I see our leaders and members living out the purpose of our organization **"To serve our veterans, the military, and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans."** Maybe it's that we're coming out of the pandemic and volunteers are serving with a renewed vigor and passion. Regardless, it is a welcome pleasure to see so many people working toward one common goal again. Trust me when I tell you, not all Departments and Posts are as committed to our purpose. Thank you for welcoming me into Post 6683 and for trusting me to serve as YOUR Jr Vice Commander



FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST COMMANDER
CHAIRMAN, POST MANAGEMENT BOARD
Randy Black

Hello Comrades,

I would first like to say, that it has been an honor and pleasure to serve you for the past two tumultuous years as your Commander. With the pandemic that has plagued a lot of volunteer organizations, our post has faced many issues from membership, fund raising, community services, and the remodeling of our building. Your participation and aid in post activities during this time, helped our organization to meet our goals with Department, and National. I thank each one of you.

The new House Committee, to be known hence forth, as the Post Management Board has reprioritized our goals. There are multiple grants available to us, and many of our members have proven in the past to be quite versed in grant applications. Their skills will help us to receive some of those grants. The plans that PC Smith had laid out has been redefined as, Near, Mid, and Long range. The repair and improvements of the barn should be completed at the time of this edition of our newsletter. A lot of time and effort was expended to bring this task to a successful end, with only one injury. By the way, Ken is healing nicely. Next on the horizon, is to lighting the sign by the road, repair of the lawn mowers, and gutter repairs. More plans are in the future, please come to our monthly meetings for our progress. Your aid in these projects is essential in the growth of our post.

The Management Board meets on the first Monday of each month, 1800 hours at the post.

Again, I thank you for your past support, look forward to serving you on the Management Board.

Renovations continue at VFW Post 6683. Amazing effort by all involved.



<https://www.facebook.com/VFW6683>

2022-2023 Leadership

Elected Officers

Post Commander	Robert Schmidbauer	518-423-3390	robert.schmidbauer@yahoo.com
Sr. Vice Commander	Pamela Smith	808-561-6149	pysmith.pb@gmail.com
Jr. Vice Commander	Clarence Carroll III	910-584-8773	abnavnlte@yahoo.com
Quartermaster/Adjutant	James Stedum	907-854-1320	jagsted@gmail.com
Chaplain	Myroan Brown	334-389-7359	myroan.brown4@gmail.com
Trustee 3 year	Jeffrey Osler	678-372-5235	oslerj@hotmail.com
Trustee 2 year	Russel Smith	334-489-4197	russell8765@twc.com
Trustee 1 year	Malcolm Wise	912-271-2816	malcolmwise@hotmail.com
Post Board of Management 3 year	Thomas Grandinetti	520-249-0711	tcgrandin@gmail.com
Post Board of Management 2 year	Pete Hill	610-389-1041	petehill1956b@gmail.com
Post Board of Management 1 year	Larry Jones	334-447-9841	larry.jonescw5@gmail.com

Appointed Officers

Judge Advocate	Brett Feinstein	334-470-6804	bgoodmug@gmail.com
Service Officer	Mike Sutterfield	334-400-6133	michael.sutterfield@gmail.com
Surgeon	Bob Cooper	334-477-7076	bobbcooper@gmail.com
Officer of the Day/Sergeant of Arms	JT Coleman	334-494-0329	dianegrey62@yahoo.com

Permanent Committees

Chair, Post Board of Management	Randy Black	334-389-0738	gblack11265@roadrunner.com
Chair, Membership Committee	Ken Donahue	321-332-2902	rmeav8er@aol.com
Chair, Youth Activities Committee	Sam Baker	334-494-2599	gruntwithwings@yahoo.com
Chair, Poppy Committee	Pete Hill	610-389-1041	petehill1956b@gmail.com>
Chair, Fellowship and Fundraising Committee	Chris Wood	334-447-3790	cwwoodie@yahoo.com

Special Committees

Chair, Memorial Day Committee	Myroan Brown	334-389-7359	myroan.brown4@gmail.com
Chair, Christmas Laurel Committee	Vacant		
Chair, Patriots Day Committee	Mike Sutterfield	334-400-6133	michael.sutterfield@gmail.com
Chair, Bylaw Committee	Brett Feinstein	334-470-6804	bgoodmug@gmail.com

Editor/Publisher

Angel S. de la Cruz	334-477-2582	angeldiving@roadrunner.com
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Mike Sutterfield
VFW Post 6683 Service Officer

2023 VA Disability Rates (Projected): MASSIVE 8.9% COLA Increase Could Be Coming!

2023 VA disability rates will be officially released on October 13, 2022, with the implementation of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) 2023 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase, which could be as high as 8.9%.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) adjusts VA disability compensation rates each year based on the SSA's annual COLA increase.

The final VA disability rates 2023 will be based on the [Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\) report](#) of September 2022 inflation data.

What's the bottom line?

Veterans could see a gigantic **8.9% COLA increase** this year due to rising inflation in the economy caused by increasing consumer demand and decreasing supply (supply chain shortages), which has led to a significant increase in the cost of consumer goods and services.

Yes, disabled veterans with a 10% VA rating or higher will see an estimated 8.9% COLA increase on their monthly VA compensation payment beginning January 2023.

An **8.9% COLA** increase to VA disability rates in 2023 would be the largest boost in 40 years.



COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS (COLAs)

COLAs are based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). They are calculated by comparing the average CPI-W for the third quarter of the year in which the most recent COLA became effective to the average CPI-W for the third quarter of the current year.





DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE

PROVIDING PAYMENT SERVICES FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The Phased Elimination of the SBP-DIC Offset Begins in January of 2021

Congress enacted changes to the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) that will eventually eliminate the SBP-DIC offset for surviving spouses who are also receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

This change affects **surviving spouses who are, or who will become in the future, eligible for both Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payments and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments**, and who were previously subject to a full or partial SBP-DIC Offset.

Beginning in 2023, the law also affects the children of service members who died while on active duty or inactive duty, in the line of duty, who are currently receiving SBP payments because the surviving spouse chose the **optional child annuity (see Phase Three)**.

The changes will happen in three phases and only affect SBP and SSIA payments issued by DFAS. **The changes do NOT affect Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments** from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Eligible surviving spouses will continue to receive the **full amount of DIC** from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The most important action SBP annuitants can take at this time is to **ensure your annuity account information is up-to-date and includes your correct mailing address** so we can contact you, if needed.

Also, if you're not using myPay, **set up a profile now and add your email address**. Please note: only annuitants who are currently receiving an SBP or SSIA payment from DFAS can access myPay. Adding an email address in myPay will allow DFAS to update you via myPay SmartDoc emails as the phase-out unfolds. Updates via email SmartDoc will be more frequent than the annual paper mailing planned.

In addition, please note that if you previously received a refund of SBP premiums paid due to the SBP-DIC offset, you will **NOT need to pay back** that refund because of this change in the law.

To help you understand how the 2021 changes will affect your SBP and/or SSIA payment, we mailed letters with individual estimates for the first phase of the elimination to the spouse SBP annuitants who will be affected by the first phase. Please note these are pre-estimates based on current information (with a 1.3% COLA), and the actual amounts in 2021 may differ slightly from the pre-estimates.

Letters are mailed in groups and should arrive no later than mid-December (for U.S. addresses). Please **do not call our Customer Care Center for your estimate**.



Your individual letter will have the following estimates (the estimates include the 2021 COLA): A-2021 **Gross SBP** annuity estimate B-2021 **DIC offset amount** (amount of DIC that will be deducted from your gross SBP annuity) estimate C-2021 SBP annuity **payment after DIC offset** - estimate (before taxes) D-2021 **SSIA** payment – estimate

Please note that Amount “B,” the 2021 DIC offset amount, is an estimate of the amount of DIC that will be **deducted** from your gross SBP annuity in 2021 (2/3 of your full DIC amount). **It is NOT the amount of DIC you will receive from the VA.** This law does NOT affect the amount of DIC you receive from the VA. Unless there are circumstances other than this change in the law that affects your DIC, you should continue to receive the **FULL amount of your DIC** from the VA.

Please keep the letter for your reference. We will send you a new pre-estimate toward the end of 2021 for the second phase of the offset elimination that begins on January 1, 2022.

You will also receive a January 2021 Annuitant Account Statement (AAS) near the time of your February 1, 2021 payment that will show changes to your SBP and/or SSIA payment because of the first phase of the SBP-DIC Offset Phased Elimination.

Below is an outline of each phase of the upcoming changes to the SBP-DIC Offset.

Phase One – Offset Reduced to Two-Thirds – Begins January 1, 2021

In 2021, surviving spouse SBP annuity payments issued by DFAS **will be reduced (offset) by no more than two-thirds** of the amount of DIC (issued by the VA) rather than by the entire amount of DIC.

Eligible survivors will also continue to receive the Special Survivors Indemnity Allowance (SSIA), up to the maximum amount of \$327 per month (for 2021), or up to the amount of SBP reduced by DIC (if the amount of the reduction is less than \$327).

This means that spouse SBP annuitants with a gross SBP amount that is more than two-thirds of their DIC amount will see an SBP payment in 2021, some of them for the first time since they began to receive both entitlements.

Each month, beginning with the payment they receive on February 1, 2021, the spouse SBP annuitants in this group will receive:

- 1-Their **full DIC amount** from VA; and
- 2-The **SBP annuity amount that is more than two-thirds of their DIC** amount (issued by DFAS); and
- 3-**SSIA** up to \$327 (or up to the amount of SBP reduced by DIC if the amount of the reduction is less than \$327 – issued by DFAS).

Spouse SBP annuitants with a **gross SBP amount that is less than two-thirds of their DIC** amount will NOT see an SBP payment in 2021. They will continue to receive the full amount of their DIC from VA and SSIA up

to \$327 (or up to the amount of SBP reduced by DIC if the amount of the reduction is less than \$327 – issued by DFAS)

Phase Two – Offset Reduced to One-Third – Begins January 1, 2022

In 2022, surviving spouse SBP annuity payments issued by DFAS will be **reduced (offset) by no more than one-third of the amount of DIC** (issued by the VA) rather than by the entire amount of DIC.

Eligible survivors will also continue to receive the Special Survivors Indemnity Allowance (SSIA), up to the maximum amount per month, or up to the amount of SBP reduced by DIC (if the amount of the reduction is less than the maximum).

This means that spouse SBP annuitants with a gross SBP amount that is more than one-third of their DIC amount will see an SBP payment in 2022, some of them for the first time since they began to receive both entitlements.

Each month, beginning with the payment they receive on February 1, 2022, those spouse SBP annuitants will receive:

- 1-Their **full DIC** amount from VA; and
- 2-The **SBP annuity amount that is more than one-third of their DIC amount** (issued by DFAS); and
- 3-**SSIA** up to maximum amount (or up to the amount of SBP reduced by DIC if the amount of the reduction is less than the maximum – issued by DFAS).

Spouse SBP annuitants with a **gross SBP amount that is less than one-third of their DIC amount** will NOT see an SBP payment in 2022. They will continue to receive the full amount of their DIC from VA. They will also receive SSIA up to the maximum amount (or up to the amount of SBP reduced by DIC if the amount of the reduction is less than the maximum – issued by DFAS) The amount of SSIA paid cannot exceed the amount of the SBP annuity that is offset.

Phase Three - Offset Eliminated – Begins January 1, 2023

In 2023, the offset will be eliminated completely. That means, beginning In 2023, surviving spouse SBP annuity payments issued by DFAS will NOT be reduced (offset) by any amount of DIC (issued by the VA).

In 2023, full SBP payments will be made to all spouse SBP annuitants, even those who receive DIC from the VA.

SSIA payments will no longer be made.

Each month, beginning with the payment they receive on February 1, 2023, spouse SBP annuitants will receive:

- 1-Their **full DIC amount** from the VA; and
- 2-Their **full SBP annuity amount** (issued by DFAS)

Phase Three – Repeal of Optional Child Annuity for Active Duty Deaths and Restoration of Eligibility for Previously Eligible Spouses - Begins January 1, 2023

In 2023, the "Repeal of Authority for Optional Annuity for Dependent Children" and "Restoration of Eligibility for Previously Eligible Spouses" will happen.

This means that the **eligible surviving spouses of service members who died on active duty or inactive duty who previously elected to transfer the SBP annuity to a child or children (known as the “optional child annuity”)** will begin receiving the SBP annuity instead of the child or children. To be eligible to receive the annuity, the surviving spouse must be unmarried.

The repeal of the “optional child annuity” is mandated by law. It is not voluntary. The **eligible surviving spouse will begin receiving the SBP annuity payment on February 1, 2023, even if the child or children who had previously received the SBP payment are/were no longer eligible due to age or marriage.** The eligible surviving spouse will receive their **full DIC** payment from the VA and the **full SBP** payment issued by DFAS.

This change **only affects those spouses and children of service members who died on active duty or inactive duty when the surviving spouse elected to transfer the SBP annuity to a child or children.** The change DOES NOT affect previous or future SBP elections by retirees or SBP annuities for a retiree's beneficiaries.

There is **nothing that these surviving spouses need to do at this time.** In 2022, DoD and DFAS will begin contacting the surviving spouses and children who are affected by this change to explain the changeover and to gather the information needed to make the necessary changes in payments.

[Phased Elimination SBP-DIC Offset Begins January 2021 Survivor SBP Newsletter \(dfas.mil\)](https://www.dfas.mil/survivor-sbp-newsletter)





Need help with filing VA Claims

PLEASE CONTACT OUR POST SERVICE OFFICER FOR ASSISTANCE.

Mike Sutterfield

334-400-6133

michael.sutterfield@gmail.com



VFW Celebrates as Landmark PACT Act is Signed into Law

August 10, 2022

WASHINGTON —After years of persistent advocacy, National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Tim Borland, families of loved ones affected by toxic exposures and other veteran service organizations, stood together behind President Joseph Biden at the White House as the *SFC Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022*, the landmark bill focused on assisting toxic-exposed veterans, was signed into law, Wednesday morning.

“What an honorable moment in history for veterans!” exclaimed Borland after the event. “The PACT Act becoming law is the largest expansion of veteran benefits since the creation of the VA. My sincerest thanks to the members of Congress, I am so proud of all the hard work VFW staff, our Action Corps and VFW members everywhere did to push Congress to pass this bill and was honored to represent our organization at the White House on this historic day.”



VFW's National Commander stood alongside other veteran advocate partners as the president signed the bill.

President Joe Biden holds the Honoring Our PACT Act after signing it during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House, Wednesday, Aug. 10, 2022, in Washington. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci) The PACT Act, as it's commonly known, is named after Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson who passed away in 2020 from conditions related to toxic exposure during his service in the military. The comprehensive bill expands health care for generations of veterans who up until now had the arduous task of proving their conditions or illness a result of service-connected exposure to toxic substances or environments, such as the burn pits many Post-9/11 veterans were exposed to during deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill enacts VA provisions for 23 presumptive conditions for rare respiratory diseases and cancers, and creates a framework for the establishment of future presumptions of service connection related to toxic exposure.

The PACT Act will:

- To ensure veterans can receive high-quality health care screenings and services related to potential toxic exposures, the PACT Act expands access to VA health care services for veterans exposed during their military service. For post-9/11 combat veterans, the bill extends the period of time they have to enroll in VA health care from five to ten years post-discharge. For those combat veterans who do not fall within that window, the bill also creates a one-year open enrollment period. These expansions mean that more veterans can enroll in VA health care without having to demonstrate a service connected disability.
- The PACT Act codifies VA's new process for evaluating and determining presumption of exposure and service connection for various chronic conditions when the evidence of a military environmental exposure and the associated health risks are strong in the aggregate but hard to prove on an individual basis. PACT requires VA to seek independent evaluation of this process as well as external input on the conditions it will review using this framework. The new process is evidence-based, transparent, and allows VA to make faster policy decisions on crucial exposure issues. This new process has already fundamentally changed how VA makes decisions on environmental exposures and ensures more veterans have access to the care they need.
- The legislation removes the need for certain veterans and their survivors to prove service connection if they are diagnosed with one of 23 specific conditions. This greatly reduces the amount of paperwork and need for exams that veterans diagnosed with one of these conditions must complete before being granted access to health care and disability compensation, thereby speeding up their receipt of the benefits they have earned. This list includes 11 respiratory related conditions, along with several forms of cancer, including reproductive cancers, melanoma, pancreatic cancer, kidney cancer, and brain cancers such as glioblastoma. Survivors of veterans who died due to one of these conditions may now also be eligible for benefits.
- To better understand the impact of toxic exposures, the PACT Act requires VA to conduct new studies of veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War and analyses of post-9/11 veterans' health trends. The new law also directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convene a new interagency working group to develop a five-year strategic plan on toxic exposure research.
- Ensuring veterans get the care they need includes ensuring that they are screened for toxic exposure and that VA personnel have the appropriate education and training. The PACT Act requires that veterans enrolled in VA health care be screened regularly for toxic exposure related concerns. This new law also requires VA to establish an outreach program for veterans regarding toxic exposure related benefits and supports, and to require additional toxic exposure related education and training for VA personnel.
- This bill also delivers critical resources to VA to ensure it can deliver timely access to services and benefits for all veterans eligible – including those already enrolled. The PACT Act provides VA with mechanisms to enhance claims processing and to increase the workforce. The bill also invests in VA health care facilities by authorizing 31 major medical health clinics and research facilities in 19 states.

Biden-Harris Administration Record of Action on Military Toxic Exposures

This historic legislation builds on the Biden-Harris Administration's existing efforts to address the harmful effects of environmental exposures affecting service men and women:

- Established Presumption for Rare Respiratory Cancers: In April 2022, VA defined presumptive service connection for several rare respiratory cancers for certain veterans – a step that marked progress toward President Biden's commitment to end cancer as we know it. Since this change, VA has been able to complete more claims for veterans and survivors involving a possible presumption of rare respiratory

cancer. With VA taking steps to raise awareness of these benefits, we expect the number of claims to rise in the months ahead.

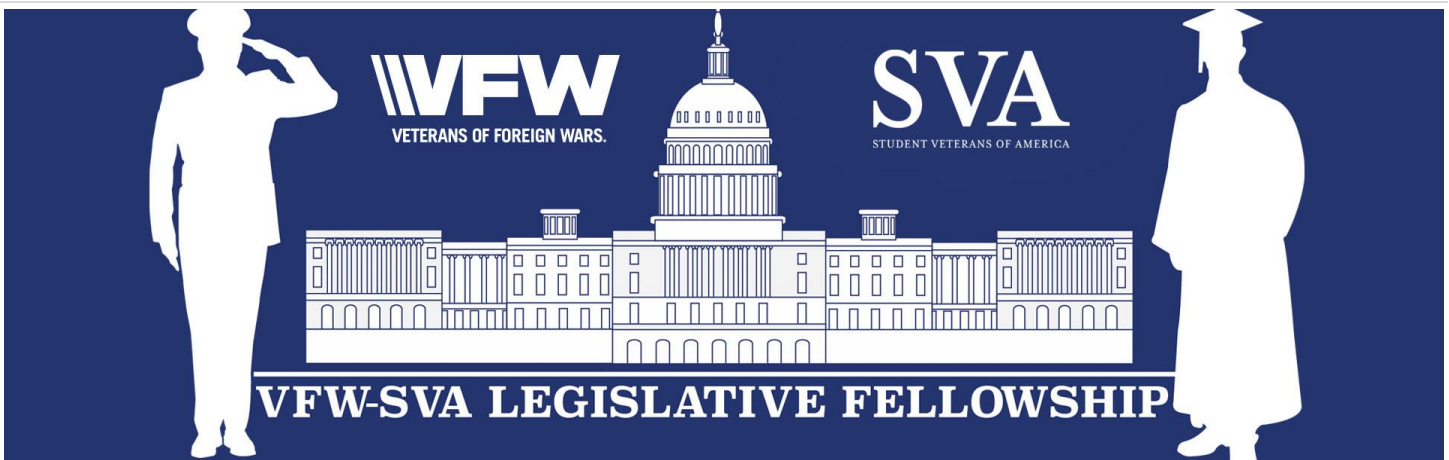
- **Processing Claims for New Presumptive Respiratory Conditions:** In August 2021, VA began processing disability claims for asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis based on presumed exposure to particulate matter. Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations and other areas and who developed these conditions within ten years of military service are now eligible to apply for disability benefits and access to VA health care. Since August, VA has completed 33,276 claims, granting over 25,000 veterans and their survivors benefits for one or more conditions, leading to over \$93 million in retroactive benefit payments.
- **Raising Awareness of VA Benefits Related to Military Exposures:** Many veterans remain unaware of their eligibility for benefits and services related to potential military exposures. Beginning in November 2021, VA launched a proactive campaign to inform and encourage veterans to file claims related to military environmental exposures.
- **Requiring Training for VA and Non-VA Providers:** Health care providers and compensation and pension examiners sometimes do not have the training to understand or treat veterans' exposure concerns. To address this challenge, VA directed compensation and pension providers and Veterans Health Administration clinicians to complete a training module on assessing deployment related to environmental exposures. VA is also encouraging all providers who care for veterans outside of VA through the Community Care Network contract to complete training on the [TRAIN Learning Network](#), VA's publicly available training site. Furthermore, VA employees and community care providers have been directed to utilize the Exposure Ed App to help providers provide information to veterans on health effects associated with certain exposures during military service. More information on the app is available [here](#).
- **Implementing a Network of Specialized Providers and Call Center:** Veterans with concerns about the health outcomes of military exposures experience inconsistent care to address these specific issues, especially outside of VA. Earlier this year, VA launched VET-HOME, The Veterans Exposure Team-Health Outcomes of Military Exposures. VA plans to hire health professionals, including physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants who will specialize in conducting patient assessments regarding the health effects of military exposures. By January 2023, VA expects to have a fully operational call center and network of experts to help veterans concerned about environmental exposure and provide consultative services to veterans in primary care clinics.

There were 11 NAYs in the Senate and 88 NAYS in the House:

These are the NAY votes for Alabama:

This is the YEA votes for Alabama

Senate Vote: Shelby (R-AL) Tuberville (R-AL)	
House Vote: Aderholt (R-AL) Brooks (R-AL) Carl (R-AL) Moore (R-AL) Palmer (R-AL) Rogers (R-AL)	Sewell (D-AL)



Student Fellowship

In keeping with the VFW's commitment to student veterans' success, every year the VFW teams up with Student Veterans of America (SVA) to host the **VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship** program, providing exemplary VFW members who are student veterans the opportunity to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill and in their community.

Candidates will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Submission of an essay and short video proposal based on one of four priority issues for the veterans' community
- VFW membership eligibility
- Current enrollment at an accredited college or university
- Any major is eligible to apply and some majors are eligible for academic credit

Student veterans interested in applying must complete an application package that includes an essay and video proposal on one of four specific legislative issues. The proposal should include a discussion of why the issue is important to the veteran community, and how the fellowship candidate plans to address the issue through federal policy solutions and community-based advocacy.

Selected fellows will attend SVA National Conference in Orlando, Florida in January; and will be flown to Washington, D.C., to ensure the veterans' voice is delivered to Capitol Hill alongside 500 fellow veteran advocates as part of the annual [VFW Legislative Conference](#) held in March.

VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship opportunities are open to VFW members in good standing who are currently enrolled as students at accredited colleges and universities approved for GI Bill benefits. Visit vfw.org/Eligibility for more information on membership. Student veterans enrolled at colleges and universities with active SVA chapters are also encouraged to apply.

Visit studentveterans.org/chapters/find-a-chapter/ to find a chapter near you.

For the application essay and video proposal, applicants must select one of the following veterans' issues to write about:

- Student veteran success on campus and beyond
- Improving veteran's health care and benefits
- Transition from military to civilian life
- Challenges for service members and military families

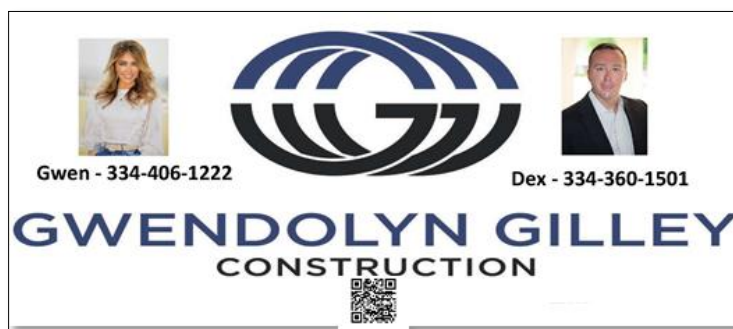
Expenses covered for the fellowship include airfare, hotel accommodations, local transportation to/from

Certain components of the 2023 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship, including but not limited to in-person interactions and events, are subject to change. Please check back regularly for updates.

Applications are currently being accepted for the 2023 Fellowship class. Applications will be accepted Aug. 15, 2022, through Oct. 15, 2022.



Forge and Farm
Brewing Company



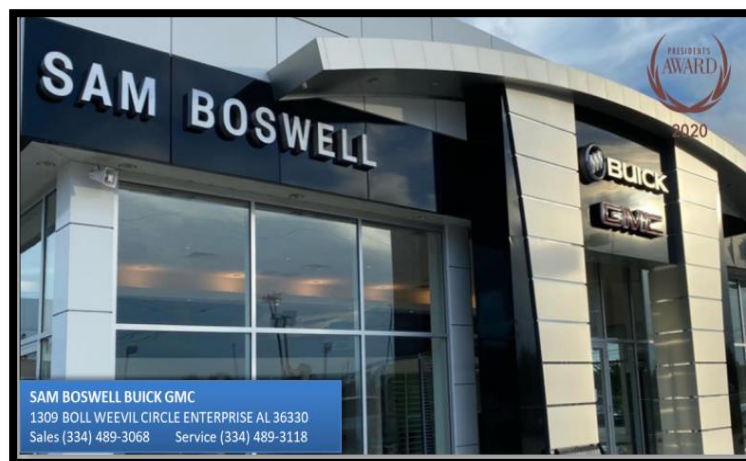
Ozark

158 E Broad St

334-443-0222



Homemade Ice Cream



Poppy Committee Report - Pete Hill, Chair

Greetings! I am your newly appointed Chairperson for the Buddy Poppy Committee. I am Kenneth B.N. Hill, but I use my nickname of Pete. It's a long story and I am limited in my space for this article! Smile.



Left to right: UNK, Pete Hill, Patrick Riordan, Dawn Schmidbauer, Jeff Olser, Bob Schmidbauer

My wife Trish and I relocated to Enterprise from Oxford PA. It took us a "little" while, but we finally got used to the weather. Being raised in Texas and stationed in North Carolina for many years, my transition was much easier than my wife's since she had spent her entire life in the Northeast.

Since 1922, the Buddy Poppy has been an integral part of the VFW community. As VFW's official memorial flower, the Poppy represents the blood shed by American service members. It reiterates that VFW will not forget their sacrifices.

The Poppy movement was inspired by Canadian Army Col. John McCrae's famous poem, "In Flanders Fields". Poppies were originally distributed by the Franco-American Children's League to benefit children in the devastated areas of France and Belgium following WWI.

In 1922, VFW conducted a campaign and got Poppies from France. Members soon

discovered it took too long to get the flowers in from France and they came up with a better idea. Disabled, hospitalized, and aging veterans could make the paper flowers and ship them out to the members for distribution.

And so it was known, for veterans in VA hospitals and domiciliaries and in state veteran's homes, every day would be VFW Buddy Poppy Day. These men and women assemble the Poppies, tie them in bunches of 10 and pack them in boxes of 500, 1,000, or 2,000 for shipment to Posts and Ladies Auxiliaries. VFW pays the disabled veteran for the work. In most cases, this extra money provides additional income for the worker to pay for the little luxuries, which makes hospital life more tolerable. Furthermore, Poppy assembly is often used as a therapy program to provide exercise for fingers and hands crippled by wounds, disease, and the effects of old age.

Another reason Poppies are so important is because all proceeds from distribution are used for veterans' welfare or for the well-being of their needy dependents and the orphans of veterans. More than 2,100 children of veterans have been or are being cared for in the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, thanks to the portion of Poppy funds.

As your Post's Buddy Poppy Chairman, I look forward to administering our program and interacting with the surrounding community. It's the least we can do for our veterans who have sacrificed so much.

I plan on using our meetings and social media to announce our events throughout the year.

Thanks!

Pete Hill

Youth Activities Committee - Sam Baker, Chair

National Youth Scholarship for Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy

Comrades, for those of you who are not tracking, Post 6683 received an anonymous donation earmarked specifically for the Patriot Pen and the Voice of Democracy. The donation is split up evenly over the next three years at \$100 per competition. If you are good at math, then you obviously know that the donation in total was \$600. This is a great incentive for the youth in the wiregrass, specifically the middle schools and high school of Enterprise. I need your help in sharing this information with the students in the community to let them know that not only do they have the ability to attain the grand prizes in each category, but starting here at post, they claim scholarship monies at every echelon starting with \$100 here at John Wiley Brock and then \$125 at regional with the ultimate prize of \$5000 for the Patriot Pen and \$30,000 for the Voice of Democracy. In total last year, 2.1 million dollars was awarded for Voice and 1.4 million for the Pen. I challenge each and every one of you to let the youth know. Please reach out to me for more information.

National recognition as Teacher of the Year Stephanie Underwood

Commander Schmidbauer and Comrade Jim Steddum present Stephanie Underwood with National recognition as Teacher of the Year. With her was Enterprise High School Principal; Stan Sauls.





FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Myroan Brown



Allowing the Scriptures To Bring Joy To My Life

The beginning of Luke's Gospel has always been one of my favorite readings. It makes me feel confident that I can believe what I have been taught. It also gives me peace because I know that God's promise has been fulfilled. We have been set free from fear. Of course, we will know fear of the unknown in this unpredictable world, but not fear of death because we can be sure that death is not the end, only the beginning of a new life. Otherwise, how could we continue to experience happiness and joy in the face of suffering? This freedom of fear, this belief in the good news – this Gospel message – is what made the early Christians so willing to face suffering in the name of Jesus. It is what motivated them to spread the good news to anyone who would listen. Is our world any less in need of the Gospel than theirs? I doubt it. Considering how we work so hard to be happy! How hard we work to avoid pain or suffering! So why are we not motivated to do as they did? Maybe we need to spend more time listening to the words of Jesus. The more time we spend with the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, the more joy we will experience in our lives and the more prepared we will be to help others understand our commitment to our faith. Who doesn't need a little more joy?

Prayer

Lord, let your Scriptures take root in our hearts and minds. Take us away from the video games, the addiction to phones and the falseness that comes from the noise of our world and let us find the peace and joy of your message that can only be found in your Word. Amen.

Looking for Warrant Officers, past and present



United States Army
Warrant Officer Association



Above The Best Silver Chapter
Fort Rucker, Alabama 36362

PLEASE JOIN US

Monthly meetings second Tuesday of every month.

**Follow us on facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/AboveTheBestSilverChapterUSAWOA/>



FROM THE QUARTERMASTER/ADJUTANT

Jim Steddum



We are off to a great start this VFW Fiscal Year! Recruiting is, our events are drawing attention, and Post rentals are at an all-time high! We are ready to set a date for our annual Post inspection well ahead of schedule!

You may have noticed we added more security to the post in the form of cameras and a digital gate lock. You can contact Commander Schmidbauer or myself to give you a temporary access code if you need access when if not already open. Soon the Post Board of Management will have this capability as well. An updated rental agreement is linked to the official Post website and Post store.

New members of the Post since July 1st are **Eric Broxson, Angela Castro, and Gary Kilker**. We have reinstated **Nate Dowling and Robert Skinner**. Many thanks to **Sonny Reagan, Martin Kasper, Candice Caudill, Jay Castro, and Randall Black** renewing their membership early! We have 25 memberships expiring this year. Please let me know how I can help keep your annual membership current! If your membership expires in March, April, or May – please renew in February at the latest to help our Post be competitive for All-State or All-American honors.

The Post leadership has a great new membership perk—Membership Upgrade tickets. For every 100 tickets sold, one lucky Post member will get an upgrade to Life or Legacy Life, a value of up to \$400. Each ticket is just \$5. This is a great way to incentivize membership and sustain the post in the

long run! New annual members will get a free ticket when they join.

Unfortunately, one of our past members has joined the TAPS page. Comrade Kenneth Wallace passed this July. Read his obituary at: <https://vfw6683.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=85656>

Make sure to stay up to date by review the website

John Wiley Brock
Post 6683, Veterans of Foreign Wars
VFW6683.ORG
**MEMBER UP
OPPORTUNITY**
**1 out of every 100 tickets wins a
Membership Upgrade**
Up to a \$400 value for just \$5 / ticket!
New Annual Members get a free ticket!
email: post.6683.vfw@gmail.com
for more details

frequently! <https://VFW6683.org> or the Facebook page, <https://facebook.com/VFW6683>.



A Quick Guide for Members in Our Organization

VFW 101

Parliamentary Procedure, at a Glance

- A main motion must be moved, seconded, and stated by the chair before it can be discussed.
- If you want to move, second, or speak to a motion, stand and address the chair.
- If you approve the motion as is, vote for it.
- If you disapprove the motion, vote against it.
- If you approve the idea of the motion but want to change it, amend it or submit a substitute for it.
- If you want advice or information to help you make your decision, move to refer the motion to an appropriate quorum or committee with instructions to report back.
- If you feel they can handle it better than the assembly, move to refer the motion to a quorum or committee with power to act.
- If you feel that there the pending question(s) should be delayed so more urgent business can be considered, move to lay the motion on the table.
- If you want time to think the motion over, move that consideration be deferred to a certain time.
- If you think that further discussion is unnecessary, move the previous question.
- If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a motion referred to a quorum or committee, move the motion be recalled.
- If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a matter already voted upon, move that it be reconsidered.
- If you do not agree with a decision rendered by the chair, appeal the decision to the assembly.
- If you think that a matter introduced is not germane to the matter at hand, a point of order may be raised.
- If you think that too much time is being consumed by speakers, you can move a time limit on such speeches.
- If a motion has several parts, and you wish to vote differently on these parts, move to divide the motion.

EVENT RENTAL SPACE

VFW Post 6683

2615 County Road 537

Enterprise, AL

334-475-2010



VFW6683.org





Pricing:

There is a flat per day rate fee of \$100.00 for VFW members; \$150 non-members Veterans; and \$200 for the general public.

Amenities:

- Indoor seating for 50
- Full kitchen to include large counter space, stove and oven, refrigerator and freezer, sink and utensils
- ADA accessible restrooms
- 2 large web enabled TV's
- Free WiFi
- Decorative freedom
- Large outdoor pavilion (seats 50)
- Firepit
- Hiking trail
- Plenty of parking on site
- Fenced in property on 14 acres of land

Please call 334-475-2010



Official John Wiley Brock VFW Post 6683 and VFW Auxiliary 6683 Public and Private Web and Facebook sites.

Comrades, in an effort to keep members aware of the upcoming events of our organization, we have recently established new Web and Facebook sites for our organization. The original Facebook site has been linked to <https://www.facebook.com/VFW6683/> and titled **Enterprise VFW – Post 6683**.

The **VFW Auxiliary** still has its own Facebook site titled **VFW Auxiliary 6683**, but is encouraged to use our events tab on the Facebook page for our post home. The Facebook site is open to the public, once on the page if you like the page it will send you updates when events or posts are made.

All post events for John Wiley Brock Post 6683 will be posted on the events tab of the Facebook site mentioned above as well as the Post Google Calendar, the Google calendar will also post other veterans' organization and community organization events of interest to veterans. If you would like access to the google calendar, please send an email to: post.6683.vfw@gmail.com

SCAN QR Code to access site.



Official John Wiley Brock VFW Post 6683 Public Website
<https://vfw6683.org>



Official John Wiley Brock VFW Post 6683 Public Facebook Site
<https://www.facebook.com/VFW6683>



Official John Wiley Brock VFW Auxiliary 6683 Public Facebook Site
<https://www.facebook.com/VFWauxiliary6683/>



Official John Wiley Brock VFW 6683 Private Group Facebook Site
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VFW6683/>

VFW POST 6683 POLO SHIRTS

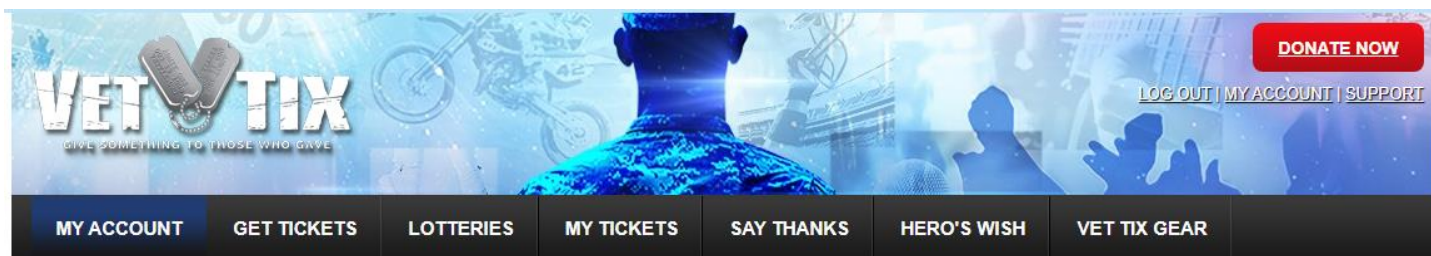
If you would like to order a VFW Post 6683 Polo shirt or more shirts, the cost is \$36.50 - Go to the Post Store at [VFW6683.ORG](https://vfw6683.org) and place your order! Call me if you need assistance:

Jim Steddum

O: 334-475-2010 or M: 907-854-1320



SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW FOR FREE TICKETS



Give Something to Those Who Gave.

Vet Tix * provides tickets to events which reduce stress, strengthen family bonds, build life-long memories and encourage service members and veterans to stay engaged with local communities and American life. We support our troops by honoring their service and providing positive family and life experiences, during and after their years of service to our country.

Vet Tix provides tickets to all branches of currently-serving Military and Veterans, including immediate family of troops KIA.

Vet Tix secures tickets to sporting events, concerts, performing arts, educational and family activities across the nation. VetTixers sign up online. We verify their service. VetTixers request tickets to events that interest them, then pay a small delivery fee to receive their free tickets.

*** Vet Tix is a 95% Charity**

