

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

POST 9934 AND AUXILIARY 9934

DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 2024



ALL STATE POST 2004-05, 2005-06, 2007-08,
2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13,
2013-14, 2014-2015, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-2018-
2019-2020, 2021-2022, 2023-2024

ALL AMERICAN POST 2007-08
2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-2014,
2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2019-2020, 2021-2022,
2023-2024

2018 NATIONAL OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
2022 NATIONAL OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Comrades,

First order of business, I would like to thank all of you who donated your time and energy over the Memorial Day weekend.

For me personally it isn't just about giving out Buddy Poppies and raising money for the post. It is so much more than that.

It's also for every story. That family member who stops by and says, "Thank you," usually followed by "My father... grandfather... brother... mother... sister... served in"

That always starts the conversation and the memories. There are sometimes shared tears for a loved one long gone. At times we even recognize a forgotten appreciation for veterans that is re-ignited once more.

That is what we should be all about: bringing together past family, friends and community members to remember once more and appreciate the price paid for their freedom.

On that same subject, in a few days we will observe June 6th. That will be the 80th anniversary of D-Day. On that day in 1944 approximately 73,000 American Soldiers landed at Normandy. Their casualties were devastating. They endured what was once written "The Day of Days".

I have had the privilege of personally knowing two combat personnel that took part in the invasion.

"Sam" was one of the men who climbed the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc as an Army Ranger. He begged me not to enlist in the military in 1968. He was very aware of what happens to young men who go to war.

The other man was my high school friend Ray's father. He demonstrated to me and other members of my high school senior class what can happen in war time. He reluctantly pulled up his pant legs and gave us a look at his artificial legs, compliments of a German shell burst when he attempted to parachute as in an Airborne Troop the night before the Normandy invasion.

These men were the warriors I came to know as a young man. It was these men who really knew the price of freedom.

God Bless them and their memory.

Please be safe and be kind to each other.

Next Post Meeting: June 11th, 2024 1800 Hrs

South Shores Church

Rick Jauregui, Commander, Post 9934.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS JUNE 2024

- Wednesday, June 5th, 2:00 to 4:00 pm - Disability Clinic, Dana Point Community Center, 34052 Del Obispo Street
- Thursday, June 6th, D-DAY, ALLIED INVASION OF EUROPE, (1944)
- Tuesday, June 11th, 6:00 pm - VFW Post Meeting, South Shores Church, 32712 Crown Valley Pkwy. Feel free to invite a Veteran guest so they can see what our Post does!
- Friday, June 14th, 6:00 PM, Flag Day Event, Baby Beach, 34451 Ensenada Place, Dana Point. Comrade Dolores Padgett has been chosen by Supervisor Katrina Foley to be the Keynote Speaker. We should all be there to support her.
- Friday, June 14th, U. S. Army Founded (1775)
- Sunday, June 16th, FATHERS DAY
- Tuesday, June 18th, 6:00 PM Dana Point City Council Meeting
- Wednesday, June 19th, 2:00 to 4:00 pm - Disability Clinic, Dana Point Community Center, 34052 Del Obispo Street
- Wednesday, June 19th, Department of California State Convention Training, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Hotel Fera Anaheim, Doubletree by Hilton, 100 The City Drive North, Orange, CA
- Thursday, June 20th through Saturday, June 22nd, Department of California State Convention, Hotel Fera Anaheim, Doubletree by Hilton, 100 The City Drive North, Orange, CA.
- Tuesday, June 25th, KOREAN WAR BEGAN (1950)



Thursday, June 20, 8:00 am-5:00 pm Registration

Friday, June 21, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm Registration
7:30 am – 9:45 am Joint Opening/Memorial Service
10:30 am – 12:00 pm First Business Session
1:00 – 5:00 pm Business Session continued

Saturday, June 22 8:00 am – 9:00 am Registration
8:00 am – 12:00 pm Second Business Session. Nomination and election of officers
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm VFW and Auxiliary Joint Installation
6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Commander's/President's Reception
Note: Post representatives must be registered for votes to be counted during Business Session on Saturday. Registration is available only for one hour on this day. It is important that Representatives be present during the nominations and elections at the Business Session.

TO CONTACT YOUR POST

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Website: <https://www.vfwpost9934.org>
Facebook: www.facebook.com/vfwpost9934

TO CONTACT U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
1-800-MyVA411

JUNE 2024 MEETING

The next meeting of the Post and Auxiliary 9934 will be Tuesday, June 11, 2024. **The Post meeting will be at South Shores Church, 32712 Crown Valley Parkway, starting at 6:00 p.m.**
The Auxiliary will meet at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 33501 Stonehill. Auxiliary meeting time is 6:30 pm.



BUDDY POPPY DISTRIBUTION



POST 9934 MEMORIAL SERVICE PROGRAM



POST 9934 VFW DAY OF SERVICE PROJECT



VETERAN SPEAKERS AT PORTOLA H.S.

VFW CELEBRATES ARMED FORCES DAY

May 18 is Armed Forces Day, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) joins a grateful nation in paying tribute to the soldiers, Marines, sailors, airmen, guardians, and Coast Guardsmen who are defending freedom both here at home, and around the globe.

According to the Department of Defense website, on Aug. 31, 1949, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced the creation of an Armed Forces Day to replace separate Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force Days. The single day celebration stemmed from the unification of the Armed Forces under the Department of Defense. Armed Forces Day is celebrated annually on the third Saturday in May, which occurs during Armed Forces Week and Military Appreciation Month.

Despite those who look to upend our great nation and threaten peace around the world, U.S. service members continue to selflessly stand watch for those who would do



us harm. Even now, a new generation of people are raising their right hand to serve in defense of our country. They will undergo the rite of passage for their chosen branch and join the more than 2 million men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces doing what is asked of them – no matter the mission, no matter the location, no matter the cost.

HOW TO IDENTIFY PREDATORY PRACTICES

Have you been charged a fee to file a VA disability claim? As the number of fraudulent predatory companies and their boldness increases, VA remains vigilant against scams targeting Veterans' entitlements. Particularly scams where unscrupulous entities may try to charge Veterans fees for accessing their benefits or helping Veterans file initial claims.

"Claim Predators" is the term VA uses to describe these aggressive companies or individuals that prey on Veterans and their loved ones and steal their disability entitlements. Predators will promise a 100% disability rating, unrealistic claim processing times, and charge thousands of dollars for services that trusted Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) provide Veterans for free. Remember, only VA has the authority to determine disability ratings. VA is committed to informing Veterans about these exploitative practices, and emphasizing that Veterans and their families should not have to pay anything when they seek help in filing their initial benefit claims.

HOW TO IDENTIFY A CLAIM PREDATOR

Claim predators target Veterans' benefits via mail, telephone or online channels. Here are a few unlawful red flags to watch out for from entities that are not accredited by VA:

- ◆ Charging high fees: Predatory companies charge absurd fees or require you to pay them a portion of your VA benefits. You should never pay a fee to file an initial claim for benefits.
- ◆ Making deceitful promises: No one can promise or guarantee a VA disability rating or an accelerated claims processing time.
- ◆ Require binding contracts: Never sign a contract to pay an unauthorized individual or company a percentage of your benefit payment in exchange for help with your VA claim.

The best way to prevent being preyed on is to educate yourself about these shady tactics and to be aware of these red flags.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST CLAIM PREDATORS

VA and accredited representatives provide free assistance to help you obtain the benefits you have earned. Veterans can shield themselves from fraudulent activities by being vigilant and adhering to a set of guidelines:

- ◆ Do not pay anyone to help you file an initial claim for benefits.
- ◆ Work with an accredited representative, Veteran Service Officer (VSO), or trusted attorney before filing a claim, appeal or providing personal information.
- ◆ Do not sign a contract agreeing to pay an unauthorized individual or company a percentage of your benefit payment in exchange for their assistance with your VA claim.
- ◆ Verify accreditation by utilizing the Office of General Counsel accreditation tool before filing a claim or providing personal information.

- ◆ Always review all forms and documents. Do not sign a fee agreement with someone or a company who refuses to sign a VA representation from (VA Form 21-22A).
- ◆ Understand accredited individuals may charge a reasonable fee for service regarding a denied claim; generally, no one should charge you a fee greater than 33%.
- ◆ Know you never have to make fee payments yourself. You can rely on VA's direct payment process, where VA will directly pay your representative for securing your past-due benefits. If someone is unwilling to be paid that way, you should question why.
- ◆ Protect your personally identifiable information and never provide any systems login credentials, such as user IDs or passwords to VA.gov and eBenefits, to anyone to access your personal information.
- ◆ Be aware of companies that advertise they have special relationships with medical professionals and can guarantee your VA benefits award percentage.

How to report fraud

If you miss a VA benefits payment, identify a discrepancy in payments or find suspicious activity with your direct deposit account, contact VA immediately at 1-800-827-1000. If a Veteran or loved one has been the victim of fraudulent activity, they should immediately file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

- ◆ If you believe the attorney or claims agent that represented you did not earn the fee in your fee agreement or the fee was too high or unreasonable or both, you should immediately file a motion challenging the reasonableness of the fee.
- ◆ If you believe an accredited representative has acted in an illegal or unethical manner in assisting you in filing a VA benefit claim, you should immediately file a complaint regarding their conduct.
- ◆ Verify accreditation credentials to avoid unnecessary fees, dishonest promises, and keep your benefits safe! VA Office of General Counsel – Accreditation Search.
- ◆ VA has safeguards in place for Veterans' benefits. Find out more information at the VSAFE website.

VA is dedicated to protecting Veterans from predatory practices. This commitment involves equipping Veterans with the necessary resources to recognize such practices, connecting them with accredited representatives to assist with their benefits claims, and providing support to both contest excessive fees and report unaccredited representatives. Remain vigilant and educate yourself about the proactive steps you can take to protect both yourself and your VA entitlements.

[Benefits Delivery Protection & Remediation,
VBA Office of Financial Management, May 7, 2024]

400,000+ VETERANS ENROLLED IN VA HEALTH CARE OVER PAST 365 DAYS, 30% INCREASE OVER LAST YEAR

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it has enrolled 401,006 Veterans in VA health care over the past 365 days — 30% more than the 307,831 it enrolled the previous year. This is the most yearly enrollees in at least the past five years at VA, and nearly a 50% increase over pandemic-level enrollment in 2020.

The number of new enrollees increased in all 50 states year-over-year. The states with the most new enrollees over the past year include Texas (41,287 Veterans), California (33,468), Florida (32,712), Virginia (20,537), North Carolina (17,562), Pennsylvania (16,167), Georgia (15,747), Ohio (12,717), Washington (11,873), Illinois (10,167), Colorado (10,028), Arizona (9,789), Tennessee (9,584), and Michigan (9,294).

This historic enrollment has been made possible by the bipartisan PACT Act — signed into law by President Biden as a part of his Unity Agenda for the nation — which allowed VA to expand VA health care and benefits to millions of Veterans. VA is also conducting the most aggressive outreach campaign in its history, including hosting over 2,600 events since the passage of the PACT Act, launching a \$16+ million advertising campaign, using public service announcements, and — for the first time ever — sending text messages to Veterans encouraging them to enroll in VA health care. VA is continuing these aggressive outreach efforts throughout 2024, with more than 550 in-person events already scheduled for this year.

Enrolling Veterans in health care is a top priority because VA has proven to be the best care in America for Veterans. Veterans who receive VA health care have better health outcomes than non-enrolled Veterans, and VA hospitals have dramatically outperformed non-VA hospitals in overall quality ratings and patient satisfaction ratings. Additionally, VA health care is often more affordable than non-VA health care for Veterans. Today, VA is delivering more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before in our nation's history, setting an all-time record for health care appointments provided in 2023.

“We want *every* eligible Veteran to enroll in VA health care for one simple reason: Veterans who come to VA are proven to have better health outcomes — and pay less — than Veterans who don't,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “That's why we've spent the past year meeting Veterans where they are — hosting thousands of events, sending millions of texts, advertising on every corner, and much more — to get them to come to VA. This aggressive outreach campaign has led more Veterans to enroll in VA care than during any year in at least a decade, and we're not slowing down now.”

“VA is the best, most affordable care in America for Veterans, so we want all eligible Veterans to enroll today,” said VA Under Secretary for Health Shereef Elnahal, M.D. “Our clinicians know Veterans—they often are Veterans — and they know exactly how to help. Even if you don't need this care today, you might need it tomorrow, or the next day, or 30 years from now. It's quick and easy to apply, and once you're in, you have access for life.”

Under the PACT Act, VA has also upgraded the health care priority groups for 693,962 Veterans over the past year — meaning that many of those Veterans are now paying lower copays. Since the PACT Act was passed into law, VA has upgraded the priority groups of more than 746,500 Veterans.

VA recently expanded health care eligibility for millions of Veterans nationwide, years earlier than called for by the PACT Act. As of March 5, all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving in the military and meet certain requirements became eligible to enroll directly in VA health care. This means that all Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Global War on Terror, or any other combat zone after 9/11 will be eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without first applying for VA benefits. Additionally, Veterans who never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty in the United States will also be eligible to enroll. VA also recently expanded health care to all World War II Veterans.

VA is able to serve these new enrollees, in part, due to last year's record hiring in VA's Veterans Health Administration. Last year, VA exceeded hiring goals in the Veterans Health Administration — growing at the fastest rate in 15 years and bringing in more than 61,000 new hires — to prepare for an increase in VA health care enrollment among Veterans under the PACT Act. In total, VHA now has more employees than ever before in our history, and VA's retention efforts also led to a 20% decrease in turnover rate among VHA employees from 2022 to 2023.

Moving forward, VA will continue to aggressively reach out to Veterans to encourage them to come to VA. VA encourages all Veterans, family members, caregivers, and survivors to learn more about VA and apply for their world-class health care and earned benefits today.

For more information about VA care, visit VA's health care website <https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility/>

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COVERAGE

What to know if you get care outside of VA

If you're experiencing a medical emergency, you shouldn't hesitate to get emergency care. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room quickly. A medical emergency is an injury, illness, or symptom so severe that without immediate treatment, you believe your life or health is in danger.

Some Veterans live far away from a VA emergency room and need to get care quickly. If you go to a non-VA emergency department for care, VA may still offer coverage.

Notifying VA is necessary for getting coverage and sharing important medical updates. We have the information you need to make it happen.

Notify VA as soon as possible

During a medical or mental health emergency, we encourage you to seek immediate medical attention right away. You don't need to check with VA before calling 911 or going to an emergency department. But it's important that the facility treating you notifies VA within 72 hours.

Promptly **notifying VA** allows them to coordinate care or transfer to a VA medical facility, if necessary. It helps VA check if the requirements for them to pay for the care are met and may impact a Veteran's eligibility for coverage.

Payment by VA is limited to the time of stabilization except when both of these are true:

- ✦ VA is contacted upon stabilization but can't accept the transfer of the Veteran, **and**

The community care facility made and documented reasonable attempts to transfer the Veteran to a VA or other facility

How to notify VA

It's best to ask your emergency care provider to report the treatment to **VA's Centralized Emergency Care Reporting Center** as soon as possible. If you're able, tell your care provider that you're a Veteran. It's a good idea to remind caregivers and other family who might be with you in an emergency that they should tell a care provider your Veteran status.

Your emergency care provider should report the treatment using the **VA Emergency Care Reporting portal** or by calling 844-724-7842.

My HealtheVet Emergency Information

Be sure to keep your **emergency contact information** up to date in My HealtheVet. Log a name, contact method, and phone number for people who should be contacted in case of emergency. This tool is for your records only—your VA health care team won't see it unless you share it with them.

Eligibility for emergency mental health care

In most cases, we will provide or cover the cost of your emergency mental health care and up to 90 days of related services—even if you're not enrolled in VA health care.

If a health care provider or a trained crisis responder determines you're at risk of immediate self-harm, we can provide or cover the cost of your care if you meet at least one

of these requirements:

- ✦ You were sexually assaulted, battered, or harassed while serving in the Armed Forces, **or**

- ✦ You served on active duty for more than 24 months and didn't get a dishonorable discharge, **or**

You served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation (including as a member of the Reserve) and didn't get a dishonorable discharge. You meet this requirement if you served directly or if you operated an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location.

If you go to a non-VA emergency department for help, tell the staff you're a Veteran. Ask them to contact us right away.

Eligibility for all other emergency care

By law, we can only cover the cost of your care at a non-VA emergency department if you meet all of these requirements:

- ✦ You're enrolled in VA health care or you have a qualifying exemption from enrollment, **and**

- ✦ A VA health care facility or other federal facility that could provide the needed care wasn't "feasibly available" (meaning it was too far away for you to get there fast enough to get the emergency care you needed), **and**

- ✦ A person with an average knowledge of health and medicine (called a "prudent layperson") would reasonably believe that a delay in seeking care would have put your life or health in danger, **and**

You meet our other requirements based on your specific situation—including the time limit for us to receive your claim. Keep reading to learn more about requirements for different situations.

Note: We only cover non-VA emergency care until we can safely transfer you to a VA or other federal facility. The only time this rule doesn't apply is if the community provider contacts us and we can't accept your transfer.

More emergency care coverage requirements

In addition to the general eligibility requirements, you must also meet these other requirements based on your specific situation.

- ✦ Your emergency care was for a service-connected condition or a condition that made your service-connected condition worse, **or**

- ✦ You have a VA disability rating of permanently and totally disabled, **or**

You needed the care to help you return to the VA Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program

Note: We define a service-connected condition as a condition you have a VA disability rating for.

If you already paid for the care yourself, we may be able to pay you back (or reimburse you).

(cont'd page 7)

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COVERAGE

(cont'd from page 6)

If you got emergency care for a non-service-connected condition, we may still cover the cost of care if you meet all of the requirements listed here.

You must meet all of these requirements:

- ✦ You got the care in a hospital emergency department or other facility that provides emergency care to the public, **and**
 - ✦ You got care at a VA or in-network community facility during the 24 months (2 years) before you got the emergency care, **and**
 - ✦ You needed the care because of an injury or accident
- And you and the emergency provider must have already

tried all other ways that you could to get a third party (like another insurance company) to pay for the treatment. If you must pay for the care yourself, we may be able to pay you back (or reimburse you).

What to do if you're charged for emergency care

If you get a bill for emergency care at a non-VA facility and you think we should cover the cost, we can help. Call us at [877-881-7618](tel:877-881-7618) (TTY: 711). We're here Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET.

We'll go over the charges with you and help figure out who should cover the cost of your care. We can also help resolve billing issues with community providers.

NCA ADDS OPTIONS FOR COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES AND URNS

Beginning June 10, families of deceased and cremated Veterans can apply to receive commemorative plaques or urns from VA if they do not want to inter their loved ones in a VA National Cemetery or receive a government-furnished headstone, marker or medallion for placement in any cemetery.

Commemorative urns are used to hold the remains of a deceased, cremated Veteran, and commemorative plaques are designed to hang on a wall. Both the urns and the plaques honor a Veteran's service and serves as a lasting tribute to the individual's status as a Veteran. Eligible family members can request one or the other, but not both.

It's important to note that, if a family chooses a plaque or an urn to commemorate a Veteran, VA is prohibited by law from interring that Veteran's remains in a VA national cemetery or from providing a



headstone, marker or medallion for placement in any cemetery. Families should be certain of their choice. If the family chooses to receive a plaque or an urn to commemorate their Veteran, their decision cannot be undone. To be eligible, the Veteran (or service member who died on active duty) must have served in the Armed Forces on or after April 6, 1917; the Veteran must be eligible for a headstone or marker under 38 U.S.C. § 2306(d), and the Veteran's remains must have been cremated—with no portion of the remains interred at any location.

More information about NCA memorial options can be found on the VA website. More details, including an application for commemorative plaques and urns, will be available on June 10. Information about VA burial and memorial benefits is available online, at VA national cemeteries, or by calling toll-free at 1-800-827-1000. To make burial arrangements at any VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1-800-535-1117. [National Cemetery Administration May 9, 2024]

VFW EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR FREE SPEECH, NOT VIOLENCE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

The following is a message from VFW National Commander Duane Sarmiento

“The first amendment of the Constitution grants the rights of freedom of speech and of the people peacefully to assemble, the same rights members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) swore an oath to support and defend. We also support the rule of law in our country and those working to uphold it. Without them, segments of our population would have their rights infringed upon. While those staging protests on college campuses across the country have the right to free speech and to peaceful assembly, they do not have the right to violently act out against others. We are confident law enforcement will restore safety and security for all those impacted by the abject lawlessness over this past week.”

POST OFFICERS FOR 2023-2024

Post Commander:	Ricardo Jauregui	Service Officer:	Aaron Pluff
Senior Vice Commander:	Richard Alonzo	Service Officers Team:	Jim Socks
Junior Vice Commander	Carlos Garcia		Don Ellis
Post Quartermaster	Bill Manes		Ben Valencia
Assistant Quartermaster	Wayne Yost		John Coon
Post Chaplain:	Ronald Egigian	Service Officer Advisor	Marty Hoffman
Post Surgeon	Gil Castro	Service Officer Support	Debbie Yost
Judge Advocate	Dolores Padgett		
Adjutant	David Vera	Trustee (3-year term)	Robert Pruitt
Women Veterans Coordinator	Marcia Kuehl	Trustee (2-year term)	Scott Roberts
Post Color Guard Captain	Carlos Garcia	Trustee (1-year term)	Richard Carr

AUXILIARY OFFICERS FOR 2023-2024

President	Lisa Mers	Trustee 3	Judy Brandmeier
Junior Vice President	Sharon Miller	Trustee 2	Sharon Miller
Secretary	Terry Marr	Trustee 1	Mary Koebler
Treasurer	Cindy Somerville	Chaplain	Yvonne English
Guard	Tory Boegeman	Conductor	Ralph Mariano



JUNE 14



JUNE 16

**DANA POINT VFW POST AND AUXILIARY 9934
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