## VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.



**General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller** 

#### 14631 MINNIEVILLE ROAD • DALE CITY, VIRGINIA 22193 • 703.670.4124 vfw1503.org

Post 1503

CANTEEN HOURS: Mon 12 PM - 11 PM • Tues 12 PM - 12 AM • Wed 12 PM - 11 PM Thur 12 PM - 12 AM • Fri 12 PM - 12:30 AM • Sat 9 AM - 12:30 AM • Sun 9 AM - 7 PM

### **Commander's Call**

It was this time last year I was honored to be elected Post Commander of VFW Post 1503. In my speech at the installation dinner, I spoke about evolution. About how we were not going to change

things for changes' sake but to make changes to facilitate growth and evolution as a Post. We have had some successes and challenges along the way, but I believe that we have made significant progress together on that road. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you once again by electing me Post Commander for the next VFW year. I look forward to continuing our growth and evolution.

Spring is the season of renewal and new beginnings. A time to recharge and reflect on the last year and

contemplate the future. We have weathered many storms in our lives and the last year has proved to be particularly tumultuous by any standard. Severe weather and governmental policy changes aside, we have seen massive fluctuations in our economy and an increased sense of anti-Americanism around the world. I am thankful that we have a place to get away for a bit and be with our fellow veterans, family, and friends. The comradery and inclusiveness of our Post is a bulwark we have built over the years for our membership. That membership has grown exponentially; as of this writing, our membership stands at 3,638. A significant aspect of our membership is its evolving demographic nature. As the membership grows and changes, so must our Post to accommodate the membership's wants and needs. It is a work in progress, and we will continue to work together for the future of our Post.

In keeping with the renewal theme of the Spring season, our Post just had the election of our Post Officers for the 2025-2026 VFW year. Congratulations to our new slate of elected officers:

Senior Vice Commander: Star Martinez Junior Vice Commander: Check Adamczyk



#### **Post Officers**

Post Commander	Ben Guinan
Senior Vice	Star Martinez
Junior Vice	Robert Adamczyk
Quartermaster	Carl Richardson
Judge Advocate	Dan Walczyk
Surgeon	Shawn Jackson
Chaplain	Ed Bennett
3 Year Trustee	John Dodge
2 Year Trustee	
I Year Trustee	Danny Gibbs
Adjutant	Charles Marlowe
Service Officer	Raymond Bailey
Past Commander	Bernie Carter





Quartermaster: Kurt Hense Judge Advocate: Dan Walczyk Surgeon: Heidi Ortiz 3-Year Trustee: Tom Gimble

My heartfelt thanks to our current Post Officers for your service and dedication.

The Post held a couple of events in April indicative of the new beginnings theme of Spring. The new style Membership Appreciation Day went very well and most of the comments I heard were very positive. Good food, entertainment, and comradery were in abundance. We worked out a deal with the WWE and played WrestleMania at the Post. The membership that joined the viewing party each of the two nights had a wonderful time! We had a movie screening in the Hall of the excellent new movie "My Dead Friend Zoe". Not an easy watch, but a very worthwhile movie that hits close to home for any veteran. We have plans for future large scale movie screenings in the Hall as well as smaller scale movie nights in the canteen. Imagine a cinema draft house and you should have the idea.

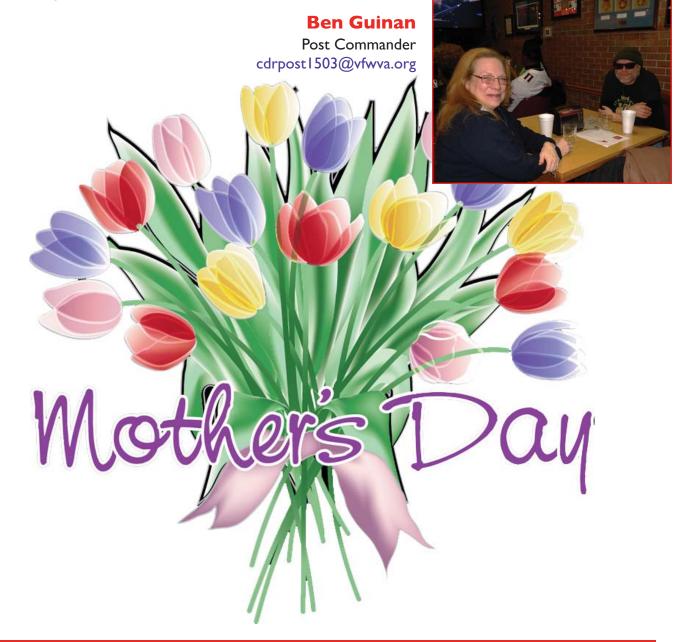
As Spring rolls on, we move into one of our busiest months of the year. May has a bit of everything: celebration, community service, Post and District business, and remembrance. Cinco de Mayo coincides with Chapter 1775 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart's 35th Anniversary. We have two VFW Day of Service (DOS) events planned as well as a blood drive scheduled. The District 10 Convention (VFW and Auxiliary) and our Post Officer installation and dinner are on the calendar. Our annual Memorial Day weekend activities and cookout promise to be good times, while we remember those who gave all for our freedom. Make sure to review the date list below and check out the activity flyers in this newsletter.

#### May 2025

I May – VFW Loyalty Day 3 May – VFW and Auxiliary Officer Installation – A Hall, 1800-2000 3 May - Cub Scout 1337 Bike Rodeo - Pavilion/Back lot, 0800-1500 5 May – MOPH Chapter 1775 Anniversary (35th) – canteen, 1800 5 May – Cinco de Mayo (Special menu and stuff) 10 May – District 10 Joint Meeting & Convention @Post 1503, 1000 II May – Mother's Day (special breakfast) 16 - 18 May – Department of Virginia's 3rd Annual VFW Rider Rally 17 May – Cleanup Activities at QNC, morning hours TBD (DOS activity) 24 May – Blood Drive 0900-1400 24 May - Flags In - QNC 0900 (The dates on this may adjust given the people now in charge of the activity) 24/25 May – Buddy Poppy Drive 0 0 26 May – Memorial Day Service – QNC, 1100 26 May – Memorial Day / BBQ / Open House, 1300-1600 24-26 May – Memorial Day weekend canned food drive at the Post (DOS activity)

31 May – OSP Fish-Fry fundraiser for St. Jude's @Pavilion, 1400

Memorial Day As always, stay informed on what is going on at the Post in whatever medium works for you: Constant Contact, Facebook, newsletter, flyers posted in the canteen on the walls and on the big TV, Town Crier, heliograph device... there are plenty of information sources. And remember: **ABR (Always Be Recruiting)!** Recruiting is the lifeblood of our Post and the VFW. Keep up the outstanding work you all do in our recruiting efforts.



## WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE VFW? The info is out there!

National level info, news, and programs: https://vfw.org

Department (State) level info, news, and programs: https://vfwva.org/

District level info, news, and programs: https://vfwvadist10.org/

If you are reading the newsletter in paper format, put the URLs above in a browser to go to the sites.



## Post Commander's Can't Park for s#!t Club May Edition











While we take time to remember this month, let's hope these people can remember how to park!







## **VFW AUXILIARY**

Hello Auxiliary 1503!

Happy May and Hello to this pollen season!

Welcome our newest members, Robin, Qwendolyn and Anthony. Please plan to attend our monthly meetings! Our April meeting was well attended, with 43 members!

Nominations and elections of officers were held at the April meeting and I'm extremely happy and proud to announce your 2025-2026 Elected & Appointed Officers:

> President – Deborah Nichols • Senior Vice President – Monika Walczyk Junior Vice President – Betty Gimble • Treasurer – Karla Coker • Secretary – Kelli Levitt Chaplain – Michael Alicea • Conductor – Jan Kiecker • Guard – Gloria Wiley Trustee #1 – Brenda Richardson • Trustee #2 – Patricia Wootten • Trustee #3 – Venee Alicea Soloist - Ellen Carleton • Historian - Venee Alicea • Patriotic Instructor - Joyce Gibbs

The Auxiliary Breakfast was done a little differently this month with a wonderful lunch at El Paso in Woodbridge. I would like to thank Jackie Burress for taking care of our plans.

District 10 Joint Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May, 10, at 10:00 am at Post 1503. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

May is always busy for the VFW/Auxiliary events - Officer Installation, Meetings, Buddy Poppy Drive, Cinco de Mayo, "Flags in" at QNC, Memorial Day Ceremony at QNC, Post 1503 Memorial Day BBQ/Open House. There are always events that provide you an opportunity to volunteer. Hope to see many of you around the Post this month!

Our annual Corn Hole Tournament Fundraiser is cancelled this year.

To sign up for Auxiliary 1503 Chaplain Alerts, please contact Chaplain Michael at auxiliarychaplain | 503@gmail.com

As always, if you have any questions, concern, comments or you are in need of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of our officers - we are here to help.

> **Debbie Nichols** – VFW Auxiliary 1503 President debbienichols2023@gmail.com - 703-975-6001



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

**UNWAVERING SUPPORT** 

#### **AUXILIARY OFFICERS**

President	
Jr. Vice President	
Secretary	Kelli Levitt
Treasurer	Karla Coker
Chaplain	Michael Alicea
Conductor	Jan Kiecker
Guard	Gloria Wiley
Trustee #1	Venee Alicea
Trustee #2	Brenda Richardson
Trustee #3	. Patricia Wootten
Historian	Venee Alicea
Patriotic Instructor	Joyce Gibbs



# **JOINUS FOR OUR VFW DAY OF SERVICE EVENS** A veteran-led community service event.



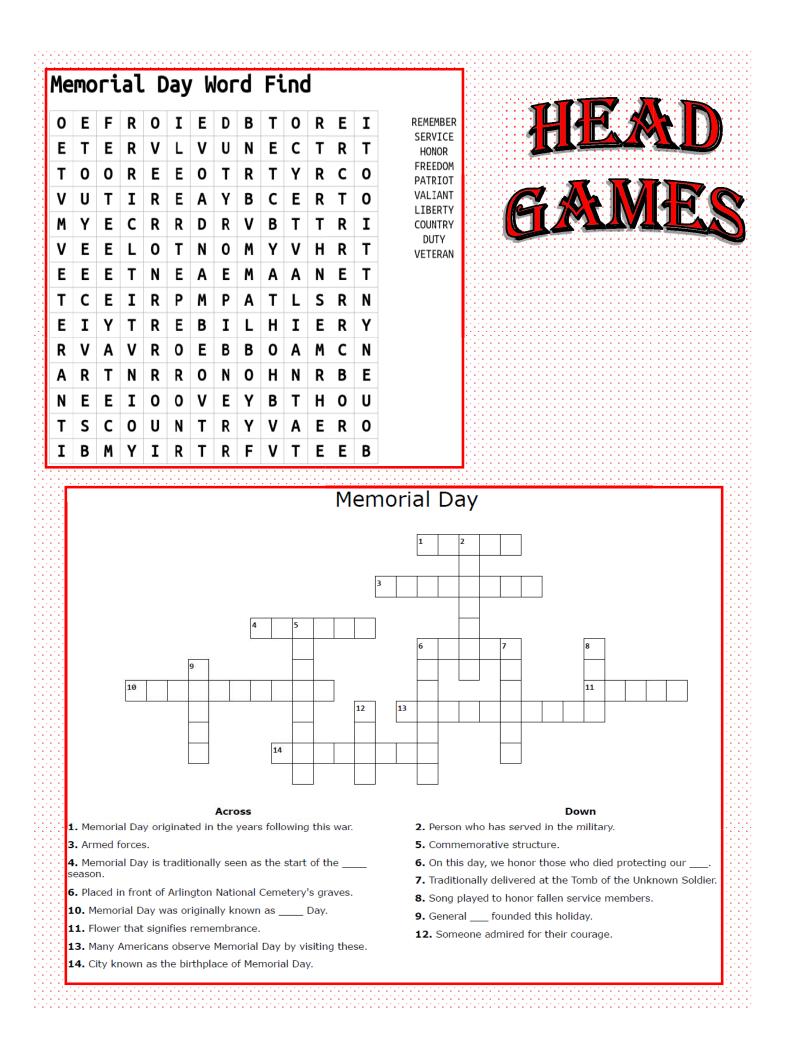
# We have two Day of Service

# events scheduled for this year:

Saturday 17 May at 1000: Graveside Cleanup at the National Memorial Cemetery at Quantico. Come join us for clean up of a few sections of the cemetery!

Memorial Day Weekend (24-26 May): Canned Food Drive at the Post. All collected food will be donated to our local ACTS Food Bank. Lets help feed those in need!

Come join us!



## **Employment Opportunities**

To help anyone who may be looking for new employment opportunities, we created this new monthly article to put out any recent job announcements from various sources. If you have any you might like to add to the next article, please feel free to send them to cdrpost1503@vfwva.org and we will get those added to the announcements.

#### VFW

The VFW's DC office has published two vacancies, one for the legislative staff and one for the service officer staff. If you are looking for a job in the DMV area, please take a look at the job openings posted by clicking on the following link:

#### VFW Job openings

You can refer any questions to Ken Wiseman at kwiseman@vfwva.org, and he will happily detail more about the positions if people are interested.

If you are reading the newsletter in paper format, go to the VFW Post 1503 webpage and look for the **Employment Opportunities** page under the **Resources** tab to look to view the job openings listed above.



## **VFW Riders Group**

The Chapter is growing and we are always looking for riders and supporters to join the crew! Look for the VFW Riders vests and talk to us about it.

For information, check out the **"VFW Riders"** section of **"Programs"** on the post's website, **VFW1503.org** 



**Chapter Motto:** So the road has us surrounded – good! Now we can ride in any direction!



### **MILITARY ORDER PURPLE HEART**

Fellow Veterans,

Fittingly, the month of May is National Military Appreciation Month in the United States of America:

We celebrate Silver Star Service Banner Day on I May in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, several territories and the Chickasaw Nation. State and local governments issue proclamations and people are asked to fly a Silver Star Banner to honor our wounded, ill military personnel.

10 May is Military Spouse Appreciation Day where we recognize all the sacrifices made by the spouses of our service members. The long training days, field training exercises, pre-deployment certifications, temporary duty assignments, deployments, unaccompanied tours, and combat deployments all leave the spouse as the sole parent to raise the children and manage the household while their loved one is doing our Nation's bidding.

Children of the Fallen Patriots Day is celebrated on 13 May. This day was created to bring attention to the young family members that are often overlooked when the parent that is serving in our military is lost in the line of duty.

19 May is Armed Forces Day. This day was set aside to honor the men and women that serve in our Armed Forces and the Coast Guard.

The most recognized is Memorial Day on 27 May. This National Holiday was set aside to commemorate the sacrifices of our military service members. Americans are asked to reflect and honor those who lost their lives while fighting our Nations wars.

Locally, On 5 May 2025, Chapter 1775 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart will celebrate our 35th Anniversary! Stop by and say hi if you see us in the VFW, we normally hold our meetings on the 3rd Saturday of the month in the canteen.

#### All Gave Some, Some Gave All!

If you are a Purple Heart recipient and are interested in learning more about our Order, contact me at cdrchapter1775@outlook.com



**Dom Dionne** Commander • Chapter 1775

## MOC / MOCA

#### Listen up Cooties and MOCA!

Did you know that some Comrades are hesitant to become a part of the Military Order of the Cootie because they don't want to be subjected to the initiations – in fact the initiation and degree work are optional, and the only requirements are the obligations,



signs and passwords of the Ritual. No portion of any Ritual, including initiation or degree work, is conducted in a public setting. Cooties operate a little differently than our parent organization the VFW. We do a lot of things backwards. For instance, when something is good, we say the opposite that it is 'lousy'. Our Officers are called shavetails and our organization at the post level is called a pup tent.

Cooties are the 'honor' degree of the VFW and being one requires you commit to serving veterans with a focus on the hospitalized or ill veterans as well as surviving spouses and children of veterans. In fact, the Military Order of the Cooties and our Auxiliary started the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan 100 years ago to support Military Families, Surviving Spouses and their Children! To learn more about the National Home and their mission please follow this link: https://vfwnationalhome.org/

We were unable to get an open date from Richmond VA for an April visit even though we have a lot of items and gift cards to donate for the patients and residents. Instead, our Hospital Chairs for the MOC/MOCA are delivering our items on 10 May which was the next available date. Since the date conflicts with our VFW and Auxiliary District 10 convention this will be a donation delivery trip only and not a full-blown visit. If you are not attending the convention and would like to assist with the delivery, please coordinate with Romeo and Elizabeth to see how you might be able to help. We are still awaiting the beds to fill at the Puller Veterans Care Center in Warrenton, VA so we can begin visits. Stay tuned!

If you are planning to attend Grand MOC Scratch and MOCA Meetings June 18-22 please be aware that the Hotel Madison is fully booked and there is an overflow hotel – the cutoff date remains 22 May! The overflow hotel is the Double Tree by Hilton. The Phone Number is 540-433-2521. They will honor the convention rate of \$129 dollars a night. The address is 1400 E Market Street, Harrisonburg VA. 22801.

#### Our next regular Scratch/Meeting is 14 May. Hope to see you there.

#### **Keep Them Smiling In Beds Of White!**

Tom Levitt

MOC Seam Squirrel levitt.tm@gmail.com 703-895-5070 Kelli Levitt MOCA President itsmekell@aol.com 703-895-8855

## VFW POST 1503 INTERVIEW PROJECT



You are invited to follow along as VFW Auxiliary 1503 member Elizabeth continues her interview series. Her writings will grow into a collection of the rich histories and experiences of our beloved combat veterans. Please click **HERE** to read her previous interviews...

If you would like to share your story, you may reach Elizabeth at mrs.elizabeth.marlowe@gmail.com

## **Post Historian's Archive**

#### "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it." Edmund Burke

In my last article, we put out some of our ideas for people to look at. I received an impressive amount of feedback via both email and personal conversations. Among the responses, we had some excellent suggestions about what people would like to see the Post do and what they would like to take part in.

The largest percentage of responses were from people that would like to go on historic tours. From conversation I have had with people around the Post, it sounds like 2 tours a year was the most popular frequency for the events. For the most part, responses have indicated that local military history was the popular topic for these tours. Other responses centered around starting up a reading club once we get the Post library set up; speakers being invited in to add historical content to our Post observance date events; and producing some profiles from a military history perspective history on Post personnel.

I will be working with Kelly Behm, Post Entertainment Chair, to come up with plans for upcoming tour opportunities to propose to our Post Commander for consideration. More details to follow.

Last month I posted a list of several historical events in April. They were limited to largely American Civil War events. A couple of members I spoke to recommended that I expand the range to include more historical eras. I will continue to research the best sources of military historical information I can provide for members. I found a website that I highly recommend, which offers a wide array of military history events and information for the DMV area. Here is the website:

#### https://www.milsurpia.com/events/all/va

Here is an excerpt from the website:

#### **MILSURPIA – Virginia Explore Military History**

Step into the past and experience history like never before with Milsurpia's comprehensive military history events directory. Whether you're drawn to the thunderous roar of an airshow, the immersive storytelling of a Civil War reenactment, or the hidden treasures of a militaria show, our platform connects you with events across the country that bring history to life.

I look forward to continuing to expand the range of educational opportunities as we grow this program. Feel free to reach out to me and keep the suggestions coming!

> Don Vandergriff Post Historian vandergriffdonald@usa.net

## YOUR PHOTOS NEEDED

Comrades this is a newsletter for all of us... Please submit your PHOTOS of our Post Events to

#### https://vfwus.org/1503pics

We are not able to use all photographs submitted to us, but we appreciate every bit of input!



## **CHAPLAIN'S CORNER**

### What, Me Worry?

Many of us who grew up in the 1950's through the 1970's recognizes this statement as the motto of Alfred E. Neuman, the fictitious mascot of Mad Magazine. In the Bible we are told several times, "Do not worry" or "Do not be anxious." However, simply telling an anxious person to stop being anxious rarely helps.

#### "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

#### Philippians 4:6

This instruction to "not be anxious" is saying much more than "don't worry" or don't sweat it." Rather, it is reminding us that there are things beyond our control that require us to trust in God's care and provision. This is a lesson l've had to learn repeatedly in life — I've never been in charge when facing adversity or one of life's many struggles.

Yet, it is human nature to need to be in control when being confronted with adversity. This promotes a vicious circle or cycle: First, we want to be in control. Second, we don't like being dependent on others. Third, we claim our dependence on God; but insecurity further drives our desire for control, and realizing that we're not in control, intensifies our insecurity — and the result is increased anxiety... and the cycle continues.

The cycle continues until we acknowledge that God cares deeply for all of us and that God will certainly provide for us. Believing in God's grace and divine provision provides the power we need to reset our focus in life and break the vicious cycle of worry. We cannot get past our anxiety without believing that God is in control, that He loves us, and knows what is best for us... always.

**PRAYER:** Heavenly Father, Almighty God, in the midst of life's uncertainties and anxieties, help me to realize that I am not in control. I surrender all my worry, fears, doubts, and concerns to your loving care. Help me release the grip of anxiety that holds me captive, knowing that you are in control of all things. *Amen* 

### Ed Bennett

Chaplain

# RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE



14631 Minneville Rd. Dale City, VA 22193

VFW Memorial Day Weekend Blood Drive at Post 1503 Sponsored by American Red Cross

Satruday May 24th, 2025 1000 (10 am) - 1400 (2 pm) In the A Hall of the post

Registration for the drive can be done online at:

https://www.redcross.org/

and enter "VFWPost1503" to schedule an appointment.

Scan QR Code to schedule an appointment:



## **VETERAN NEWS**

Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.

- Unknown

## <u>FOCUS FOR THIS MONTH:</u> VFW Virginia VSO Program to Close

While this isn't the best news for the Department of Virginia, it is a necessary change given the financial realities of today. The letter from VFW State Commander Mitch Rubenstein, printed in the April Department General Orders, explains the reasoning for this decision follows:

#### **Comrades:**

On March 18th your Council of Administration held a Special meeting to discuss vital business of the Department. As part of that meeting a discussion was held concerning the Service Officer Program.

The Service officer program for the Department of Virginia has taken a hit over the last few years. Having two Department Officers covering the entire state is not giving our veterans and their families the attention that they deserve to fully complete their claims. Therefore, the Council felt a need for a change. As of I April, our staff have been instructed not to take on any new clients or power of attorney's and begin the process of deferring all new claims to the Virginia Department of Veteran Services.

We have established a strong network and working relationship with DVS, which will give our members a larger pool to assist the veterans in every district. Our tax dollars are now funding 78 fully accredited fulltime service officers and 21 administrative positions across the commonwealth now devoted to serving our veteran community. In addition, DVS also has a fully funded and staffed appeals team to represent Virginia veterans before the Board of Veterans Appeals and the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Due to fiscal realities the Council felt this was in the best interest of our veteran community. There is going to be a period of transition over the next few months, and we urge our members to be patient during this time. Our program will officially end on September 1, 2025, but the DVS will be there for our members starting April 1st, 2025.

This was a very difficult decision to make but one your Council felt was in the best interest of Virginia's veterans and their families.

My personal thanks go out to our dedicated VFW VSOs, Laurie Clay and Raymond Bailey, for their hard work over their time with the VFW. We look forward to their continued pursuits in serving our veterans.

There will be a resource page centered on agencies and avenues to pursue claims filing and services created on the Department website soon. In the meantime, here is a link to a VA website that can help you find an accredited service representative:

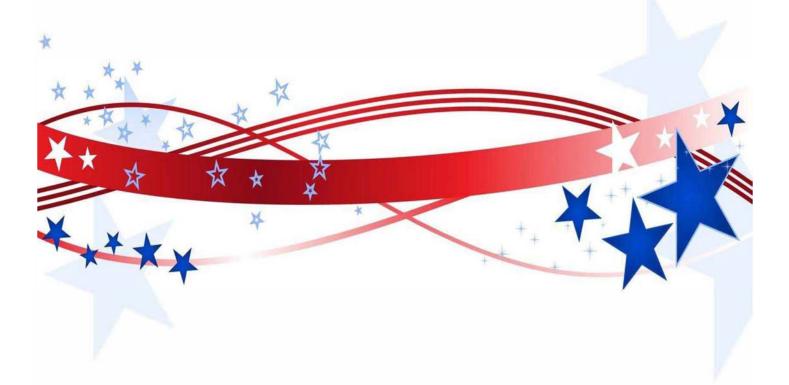
#### https://www.va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative/find-rep/

If you are reading this newsletter in paper format, use the following search words in a web browser to find the site: "find a va accredited service representative"

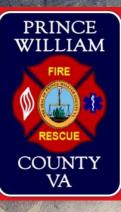
**Note:** As of I April 2025, our Post Service Officer, Raymond Bailey, cannot take in any more new claims. He is working to resolve as many cases as possible before the program closes on I September 2025.

# VFW POST 1503 ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY BBQ MONDAY MAY 26<sup>th</sup> ~ 1:00 ~ 4:00 pm

JOIN US IN THE PAVILION FOR FOOD \* MUSIC \* FUN



## FREE EVENT ~ OPEN TO THE PUBLIC Live music by 'Made in the USA'



## VFW POST 1503 FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY



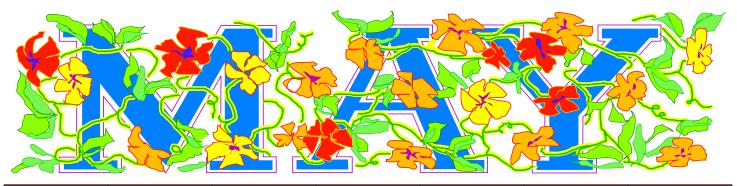
## SATURDAY 14 JUNE 2025 1100HRS

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING CENTER 13101 PUBLIC SAFETY DRIVE, NOKESVILLE VA 20181

# **May Entertainment**

All DJ's & Bands start at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday nights

Friday Nights	Saturday Nights			
May 2nd	May 3rd			
DJ Danny	<b>DJ Protege</b>			
Dance Party	Dance Party			
May 9th	May 10th			
<b>DJ Steve</b>	<b>DJ Slick</b>			
Dance Party	Dance Party			
May l6th	May I7th			
DJ Michael	<b>True Soul Band</b>			
Dance Party	Live Band			
May 23rd	May 24th			
DJ MoeVibez	DJ T-Play			
Dance Party	Dance Party			
May 30th	May 31st			
DJ Mario	DJ Pete			
Dance Party	Dance Party			



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday			
Cinco de Mayo Specials Beef or Chicken Tacos (hard or soft) Rice & Beans • Taco Salad • Nachos Mothers Day Breakfast Specials Spinach & Feta Omelette Fried Chicken & Waffles • Breakfast Frittata		<b>BINGO</b> 7:30	2 DJ Danny FRIDAY Dinners 5:00-8:00	<b>3 Officer</b> Installation <b>DJ</b> <b>Protege</b> Breakfast 9-12 <b>WINGS</b> 6:00-8:00					
<b>4</b> Breakfast 9-12:00	5 MOPH 35th Anniversary 6:00	<b>BINGO</b> 7:30	7	<b>BINGO</b> 7:30	9 DJ Steve FRIDAY	DJ Slick Breakfast 9-12			
Mothers Day Breakfast 9-12	12	<b>I 3</b> BINGO 7:30	<b>I 4</b> MOCA 7:00 pm MOC 7:30 pm	I 5 BINGO 7:30	Dinners 5:00-8:00	WINGS 6:00-8:00 I7True Soul Band AUX Brkfst			
I 8 Breakfast	19	<b>20</b> BINGO 7:30	<b>2 I</b> Auxiliary	22 BINGO	FRIDAY Dinners 5:00-8:00	Breakfast 9-12 WINGS 6:00-8:00 24			
9-12:00			7:00 pm Post Meeting 7:00 pm	7:30	MoeVibez FRIDAY Dinners 5:00-8:00	T-Play Breakfast 9-12 WINGS 6:00-8:00			
25 Breakfast 9-12:00	26 MEMORIAL Open House & BBQ 1-4	27 BINGO 7:30	28	<b>29</b> BINGO 7:30	30 DJ Mario FRIDAY Dinners 5:00-8:00	3 I DJ Pete Breakfast 9-12 WINGS 6:00-8:00			
	vfw 503.org								

## Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1503

14631 Minnieville Road Woodbridge, Virginia 22193



