



Convention

Highlights

Saturday, July 22, 2017
National Council of Administration Meeting

VA Secretary to Headline Monday's Opening Session

VA Secretary David Shulkin will be the featured speaker during Monday's Joint Opening Session. He is scheduled to speak at 10:50 a.m. Buses will begin running from hotels to the convention center at 6:30 a.m. and the session begins at 7:30 a.m. Monday's line-up of speakers also includes Bob Winzenried with USAA and Jennifer Yuengling of D.G. Yuengling & Son, Inc. Delta Airlines Honor Guard will accept VFW's *Americanism Award* while retired Army general Richard Cody will receive the *Armed Forces Award*.

During Tuesday's Business Session, VFW will present its *News Media Award* to the *Billings (Mont.) Gazette*. Also that day: comedian Bobby Henline will receive the *Hall of Fame Award*; Navy Capt. Christopher Cassidy will accept the *Aeronautics & Aerospace Award*; and Bonnie Carroll, president of TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors), will receive the *Citizenship Award*. Speakers also include Edwin Fountain with the WWI Centennial Commission and Jared Lyon with the Student Veterans of America. The recipients of the *Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award* will accept their awards and speak, too.

The National Council of Administration voted to replenish the \$100,000 Disaster Relief Fund contingent upon a budget surplus at the end of VFW's fiscal year on Aug. 31. VFW had expended \$36,000 to reimburse the Department of North Carolina, which made donations to victims of flooding last year.

Members marching in the parade at Tuesday night's Patriotic Rally, should line up at 5:30 p.m. for the 6:30 p.m. start time. The musical group Vince Vance and the Valiants, will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. VFW leadership encourages members to don Mardi Gras-inspired costumes. Members wanting to attend the Commander-in-Chief's Reception Wednesday night must be present at the installation of national officers that morning to receive a ticket.

During closing remarks, Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief B.J. Lawrence thanked the National Council of Administration and VFW's staff. "Hats off, I salute you and a job well done," Lawrence said.

Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Keith Harman thanked the staff at National Headquarters in Kansas City and at the Washington Office. He also thanked the Department of Louisiana for its hard work in preparing for the 118th National Convention. "This convention city is special to me," he said. "The last time VFW met here for its convention in 1991 was the year I received my first All-American cap."

Commander-in-Chief Brian Duffy urged members to fill the opening session on Monday and act professionally for VFW's guests. "I want nothing but standing room only crowds," he said. "I want to hear complaints from convention center staff that there aren't enough chairs for those who want to attend." Duffy also recalled VFW's founding in Ohio in 1899 by a group of 14 Spanish-American War veterans. "We are their heirs," he said. "We are here to speak for vets, especially for those who can't do it themselves."

-The End-

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