

VFW Commemorates D-Day in Normandy on 80th Anniversary

We honor and remember the bravery and sacrifice of Allied forces

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WASHINGTON — Today on the 80th anniversary of D-Day, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) pauses to remember the more than 156,000 brave Allied troops who landed by air and by sea targeting the 50-mile stretch of Normandy's beaches to liberate German-occupied France and bring an end to the Nazi regime.

VFW National Commander Duane Sarmiento, VFW Auxiliary President Carla Martinez, VFW members and staff paid their respects on behalf of the more than 1.4 million members of the organizations today during a somber ceremony at the Normandy American Cemetery located above the Omaha Beach landing site where U.S. troops waded ashore under withering German fire. [Watch a special message](#) from Commander Sarmiento and see photos from the commemoration [here](#).

June 6, 1944, forever changed the course of history. With over 5,000 ships, 11,000 airplanes and more than 150,000 servicemen, the Allied forces' airborne and amphibious invasion of Europe was, and remains, the largest air, land and sea operation ever undertaken.

Sand-colored beaches turned crimson, and bodies littered the beaches and water. Yet, because of their valor, sacrifice and sheer determination, by the end of the day the Allied forces had successfully breached the German's fortress. But Allied success on D-Day came at a very steep price, with nearly 10,000 casualties and 4,000 confirmed dead.

Now, 80 years after the massive operation that changed the tide of World War II, the more than 1.4 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary remain thankful for the bravery and heroism displayed that day, and we reflect on the selflessness that has transcended continents and generations.

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