

VFW Elects First Iraq War Veteran to Lead Organization

When it comes to recruiting and retention, ‘Every Veteran Counts!’

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Timothy M. Borland, of Benson, Arizona, was elected today as the new national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), a congressionally chartered veterans service organization comprised of more than 1 million eligible veterans and military service members from all six branches of the armed forces.

“My slogan this year is ‘Every Veteran Counts,’” said Borland. “It’s our service to country, and courage to defend that country that makes us veterans. Every veteran from every war and conflict is important.”

Borland’s election as the VFW’s 114th Commander-in-Chief occurred at the conclusion of the organization’s 123rd national convention in Kansas City, Missouri. The gathering was the first full national convention since 2019. During his acceptance speech, Borland urged the members both attending in person and watching via live-streaming video, to welcome the new generation of veterans eligible for membership in the VFW, noting the significance of his election.

“There’s a new wave of veterans that have returned home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and they’re ready, willing and waiting to join our ranks. One of those veterans is standing right here behind this podium,” said Borland, referring to himself. “I am an Iraq War veteran and very proud to be the first as your Commander-in-Chief.”

VFW membership eligibility requires honorable service in a war or expedition on foreign soil or in hostile waters. Borland served in the U.S. Army from 1979 to 2007, last serving with the 101st Airborne Division. He earned his VFW eligibility with service in Operation Iraqi Freedom and in defense of the Republic of Korea. In recognition of his military service and contributions during deployment, he received numerous decorations, to include four Meritorious Service Medals, four Army Commendation Medals, eight Army Achievement

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Medals, seven Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, and four Overseas Service Ribbons. Among his many awards and achievements, he also earned the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, and a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Business Administration from Touro University in Cypress, California.

Borland's remarks struck a balance between embracing younger members taking leadership roles in the organization and honoring service and faithfulness of long-standing members of the VFW.

"It's time for a new generation, but not forgetting the old. It's time to pass the torch, but at the same time, remember and appreciate the torch being passed, and by whom," said Borland. "You see comrades, brothers and sisters, every veteran in this room counts and so do the ones we still need to seek."

He became a Life member of the VFW in 2000. He currently maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership at VFW Post 9972 in Sierra Vista, Arizona, 35 miles from his home in Benson, where he resides with his wife, Shannon. Borland has received 19 consecutive Century Awards for recruiting 100 or more comrades into the VFW. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with his election as the VFW Department of Arizona commander from 2011 to 2012, in which he earned the distinction of All-American commander status and received the distinguished Triple Crown Award. On the national level, Borland has served on several committees, including the National Council of Administration from 2012 to 2016, Vice Chairman of the National Legislative Committee from 2017 to 2018, Chairman of the National Programs Committee from 2018 to 2019, National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee, Bylaws and Resolution Committee, Time and Place Committee, and numerous other committees. Borland is also a member of AMVETS, the American Legion, and is a life member of Disabled American Veterans.

"We will continue to recruit and mentor others to recruit," said Borland. "Draw upon each other for ideas to help develop new strategies, new tactics, and unique ways of doing membership and programs."

"So, put your recruiting and retention plans to work!" exclaimed Borland.

[Watch](#) or [read](#) Borland's acceptance speech.