

VFW National Convention Returns to Pittsburgh

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An estimated 12,000 delegates, dignitaries and notable guests will convene in Pittsburgh for the annual national convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) from July 18-22 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

Though the convention is held annually, the location of this year's convention is especially important to the VFW and its members. While the VFW traces its roots back to 1899, it convened to formally organize in the city of Pittsburgh in September 1914. It was then, at the Schenley Hotel — now the William Pitt Union — that the organization would adopt the name the Veterans of Foreign Wars and lay the groundwork for what is today, the nation's largest organization of combat veterans. It's the convention's first return to Pittsburgh since the VFW's inception. It's also where Pittsburgh native John A. Biedrzycki Jr. will be elected as the organization's new national commander.

"It is such an honor to have the Veterans of Foreign Wars return to Pittsburgh to host its annual convention just over 100 years after it convened for its first convention here," said Craig Davis, President and CEO of VisitPITTSBURGH. "We know that the attendees will discover how vibrant and progressive our city has become while still maintaining our proud, rich heritage. In fact, our area has one of the largest concentrations of veterans in the country, so the attendees will certainly receive a warm and appreciative welcome from our residents and local businesses."

"The Steel City is an excellent location for this year's VFW National Convention. It's a city with resilience, a storied past and great promise for the future. The VFW shares in each of those qualities, and the historical significance Pittsburgh lends to our founding makes us pleased to host America's veterans here," said John Stroud, leader of the 1.9 million-member VFW and its Auxiliaries.

The event will feature a lineup of appearances by several notable guests, to include Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto, Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Bob McDonald, and the new director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, retired Army Lt. Gen. Mike Linnington, among many others.

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In addition, the VFW will present a host of awards to deserving individuals on an array of issues, conduct workshops geared toward veterans' assistance, host an expansive health fair, and more. National awards to be presented will include the VFW Eisenhower Award to retired Marine Corps Gen. James T. Mattis, the VFW Armed Forces Award to all Army Medics, accepted by Army Medical Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald C. Ecker, and the VFW Citizenship Award to the Arlington Ladies, among others.

While the event is closed to the public, those interested in the business sessions of the convention can log on to the livestream at www.vfw.org/ConventionLive, visit www.vfw.org for daily updates, or follow the VFW on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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ABOUT THE VFW: The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is a nonprofit veterans service organization comprised of veterans and eligible military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. Founded in 1899 and chartered by Congress in 1936, the VFW is the nation's largest organization of war veterans and its oldest major veterans organization. With nearly 1.9 million VFW and Auxiliary members located in more than 6,800 Posts worldwide, "NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS." The VFW and its Auxiliaries are dedicated to veterans' service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs. For more information or to join, visit our website at www.vfw.org.

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