



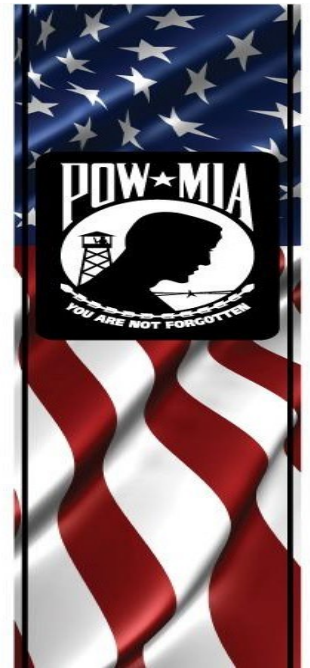
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

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## VFW Post 8555 Newsletter/Calendar

**Chuck Norris Tribute, Honoring the Month of  
the Military Child, Gold Star Family Tribute,  
and Operation Epic Fury.**



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# A Tribute to Chuck Norris: Air Force Veteran & Martial Artist—American Patriot

Fellow veterans of VFW Post 8555, it is with heavy hearts that we remember and honor the life of Carlos Ray "Chuck" Norris, a true American icon who passed away on March 19, 2026, at the age of 86. Born on March 10, 1940, in Ryan, Oklahoma, Norris embodied the strength, discipline, and unwavering commitment to duty that define the American spirit. Before he became a world-renowned martial artist, actor, and star of *Walker, Texas Ranger*, he proudly served his country in the United States Air Force during the Cold War era—a service that laid the foundation for his legendary career and lifelong dedication to veterans and American ideals.

Norris enlisted in the Air Force in 1958, shortly after graduating high school, at the age of 18. He trained as an Air Policeman—today known as Air Force Security Forces—with the goal of pursuing a career in law enforcement. After basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, he was stationed at Osan Air Base in South Korea. There, in the midst of his duties securing the base and maintaining order during a tense period in history, Norris discovered a martial arts studio and began training in Tang Soo Do. He immersed himself in the discipline, working



tirelessly to master its techniques. This experience in Korea not only honed his physical skills but also instilled in him the values of perseverance, respect, and self-reliance that would guide him for the rest of his life. Upon returning to the United States, Norris continued his service as an Air Policeman at March Air Force Base in California. He was honorably discharged in August 1962 with the rank of Airman First Class. His military service, though during peacetime in terms of major conflict for his unit, exemplified the quiet vigilance and readiness that American service members provide every day to safeguard our freedoms.



After leaving the Air Force, Norris built upon the foundation he gained in uniform. He continued training in Tang Soo Do and taekwondo, becoming a karate champion in the 1960s and eventually the first Westerner awarded an eighth-degree black belt in taekwondo. He opened martial arts schools, trained celebrities, and transitioned into acting, starring in action films that celebrated courage, justice, and patriotism. His long-running television series *Walker, Texas Ranger* portrayed a modern hero upholding the law and American values, inspiring generations with stories of integrity and resolve.

Norris never forgot his roots as a veteran. He remained a steadfast advocate for those who served, visiting troops overseas with the USO, supporting wounded service members, and speaking out on issues like veterans' health care and the challenges of transitioning to civilian life. In 2001, he received the Air Force Veteran of the Year award. In 2007, he was made an honorary United States Marine for his support of Marines in theater and at home. He often reflected on the profound bond of military service, once noting the deep camaraderie that can feel like family—and the difficulties some face when that structure changes.

At VFW Post 8555, we salute Chuck Norris not only for his larger-than-life persona but for his genuine service and enduring support of the veteran community. His life reminds us that the uniform may come off, but the commitment to duty, honor, and country never fades.

We extend our deepest condolences to his family and friends. May he rest in peace, knowing his legacy of strength and patriotism continues to inspire all who wear the uniform or have worn it before.

**Thank you for your service, Chuck Norris. You will be remembered with respect and gratitude by veterans everywhere.**

# Honoring the Month of the Military Child

## **Military Children and Youth: Strength in Every Story** April 2026 – Month of the Military Child

Every April, our nation pauses to recognize the extraordinary contributions of military children and youth. Designated as the **Month of the Military Child**, this observance honors the young patriots who stand beside their parents in service to the United States. With the 2026 theme “**Military Children and Youth: Strength in Every Story**,” we shine a light on their everyday courage, adaptability, and unwavering commitment to the American ideals of duty and resilience.

From the earliest days of our Republic, military families have shouldered the burdens of freedom. Children of service members often move frequently, attend new schools, and face deployments that test their young hearts. Yet they rise with quiet strength, embodying the very spirit that has made America exceptional. They learn early the meaning of sacrifice—not on the battlefield, but in the daily acts of supporting a parent who defends our liberties at home and abroad.



VFW Post 8555 proudly joins this national tribute. Many of our members served while raising families, and we know firsthand the pride and challenges these children carry. Their stories reflect the best of America: perseverance through uncertainty, loyalty to country and family, and an innate understanding that freedom is never free.

This April, communities across Texas and the nation will observe **Purple Up! Day** to show support. The color purple symbolizes the unity of all military branches. On **April 15, 2026**, wear purple to honor these remarkable young Americans. Local schools, churches, and organizations may host events, and Post 8555 encourages members to participate or sponsor activities that uplift military children in the Wilson County area.

To every military child whose parent is part of the Post 8555 family: Thank you. Your strength in every story helps secure the blessings of liberty for generations to come. You make us proud to stand as guardians of the greatest nation on earth.

Let us all commit this April to celebrating these young patriots with the respect and gratitude they deserve.

## **Gold Star Spouses Day – April 5**

On April 5, our nation observes **Gold Star Spouses Day**, a solemn occasion to honor the surviving spouses of service members who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of the United States. These remarkable men and women carry forward the legacy of their fallen heroes with dignity, grace, and unbreakable patriotism.



The Gold Star tradition began in World War I, when families flew service flags with a blue star for each loved one serving. A gold star replaced the blue when that service member died—symbolizing the supreme price paid for American freedom. Gold Star Spouses Day traces its formal recognition to April 5, 1945, when four young widows gathered in courage, laying the foundation for ongoing support and remembrance.

These spouses embody the highest American ideals. While grieving their hero, they raise children alone, manage households, and become pillars of their communities. Many advocate for veterans’ causes and keep their fallen spouse’s memory alive for future generations. Their resilience mirrors the steadfast spirit that called their loved ones to duty.

VFW Post 8555 pauses this April 5 to remember and honor Gold Star Spouses in our area and across Texas. Their sacrifice forms part of the sacred bond between the American people and those who wear the uniform. The Gold Star remains a living reminder that freedom demands a price, paid with unwavering love and loyalty.

To every Gold Star Spouse: Your devotion to your fallen hero and to this great nation does not go unnoticed. You continue to serve America through your endurance and example. May God bless and comfort you, knowing your loved ones’ service secured the blessings of liberty we all cherish.

# 50th Anniversary Reflections on the Fall of Saigon – April 30

## Reflections on April 30, 1975: Honoring Service, Sacrifice, and the American Spirit 50 Years Since the Fall of Saigon

As April draws to a close in 2026, VFW Post 8555 joins Vietnam veterans and all Americans in solemn reflection on the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon on **April 30, 1975**. This date marked the end of U.S. combat involvement in Vietnam and the conclusion of a long, difficult chapter in our nation's history. We remember it not with bitterness, but with deep respect for the valor, brotherhood, and patriotism displayed by those who served.



More than 2.7 million Americans served in Vietnam. They answered the call with courage, fighting in jungles, rice paddies, and skies far from home to defend the ideals of freedom and self-determination. Many gave their last full measure; thousands more carried physical and invisible wounds for the rest of their lives. Their service reflected the timeless American commitment to stand against tyranny and support those seeking liberty.

The events of April 1975 were chaotic and heartbreaking. As forces advanced, U.S. and South Vietnamese personnel conducted one of the largest helicopter evacuations in history—Operation Frequent Wind—saving thousands of lives. For many veterans, the images of those final days remain vivid. Yet even in withdrawal, American service members demonstrated professionalism, heroism, and concern for their comrades and allies.



Fifty years later, we honor the more than 58,000 Americans whose names are etched on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. We also remember the POWs who endured captivity with honor, the families who waited at home, and the veterans who returned to build lives while carrying the weight of their experiences. Many later excelled in their communities—proving the enduring strength of the American character.

At VFW Post 8555, we stand in gratitude for our Vietnam-era brothers and sisters. Their sacrifices helped shape the all-volunteer force we have today and reinforced the principle that those who bear the battle deserve our nation's unwavering support. The Post remains committed to ensuring Vietnam veterans receive the respect, benefits, and camaraderie they earned.

To our Vietnam veterans: Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your example. Your stories of courage and camaraderie inspire every generation that follows. Post 8555 is proud to call you family.

As we mark this 50th anniversary, let us reaffirm our patriotic duty: to never forget, to always support one another, and to uphold the American ideals that make our nation worth defending. May God continue to bless the United States of America and all who have worn its uniform.



# American Warriors in Operation Epic Fury: Defending Freedom Against Emerging Threats

As of late March 2026, United States Armed Forces, in close coordination with our steadfast ally Israel, continue to execute **Operation Epic Fury**—a decisive military campaign launched on February 28, 2026. This operation targets the Iranian regime’s advanced ballistic missile programs, drone production facilities, air defense systems, and naval assets that have long threatened regional stability, global energy security, and the safety of American interests.



Our service members have carried out thousands of precision airstrikes, severely degrading Iran’s ability to produce and launch missiles while maintaining air dominance over key areas. Reports confirm major damage to critical sites, including underground missile bases and defense industrial complexes, reflecting the unmatched professionalism, courage, and technological superiority of America’s fighting forces. The Pentagon continues to support these efforts with a robust troop presence in the region, including recent deployments of Marines and elements of the 82nd Airborne Division, while preparing contingencies to safeguard freedom of navigation through vital waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran has responded with retaliatory missile and drone attacks on Israeli targets and U.S. positions in the Gulf, resulting in some American casualties and underscoring the high stakes of this mission. Yet our troops remain resolute, demonstrating the same steadfast spirit that has defined American service for generations.

This campaign embodies the highest American ideals: the defense of liberty, unwavering support for allies who share our values, and the principle that peace through strength deters tyranny and aggression. By confronting a regime that has fueled terrorism and sought to destabilize the free world, our military upholds the sacred promise that those who threaten our security and the blessings of freedom will be met with resolve.

VFW Post 8555 proudly honors the men and women currently serving in this operation and across the Middle East. Many of our members served in earlier conflicts in the region and understand the demands of duty far from home. We pray for their safety, their success, and their safe return. We also stand ready to support their families on the home front, just as we have for generations of veterans.



As veterans, we know that freedom is never free. The courage and commitment displayed by today’s warriors remind us why we answered the call and why the United States remains the world’s greatest force for good. Post 8555 stands united in gratitude and patriotism for all who wear the uniform.



May God bless and protect our troops, and may He continue to bless the United States of America—the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
	<p><b>18:00 - 19:30</b> Delegates &amp; Conventions</p>	<p><b>Somalia</b></p> <p><b>18:00 - 20:00</b> Quartermaster / Adjutant Training</p>	<p><b>Start of Battle of Okinawa (World War II, 1945)</b></p> <p><b>08:00 - 10:00</b> Food Distribution</p>	<p><b>19:00 - 20:00</b> Chaplain Training - Chaplain Jim Russell</p>		<p><b>10:00 - 11:00</b> District 20 Family Appreciation Picnic</p>
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
					Strawberry Festival	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Strawberry Festival	<p><b>Battle of Fort Sumter (American Civil War, 1861)</b></p> <p><b>19:00 - 21:00</b> Monthly Post Meeting</p>					
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p><b>Battles of Lexington and Concord (Revolutionary War, 1775)</b></p> <p><b>12:00 - 18:00</b> District 20 Training</p>						<p><b>10:00 - 16:00</b> Veteran Skeet Shoot Therapy</p>
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
			<p><b>18:00 - 21:00</b> General Training (All State Credit)</p>	<p><b>ROTC Competition</b></p> <p><b>09:00 - 00:00</b> District 20 Convention</p>	Loyalty Day <small>more</small>	<p><b>00:00 - 17:00</b> District 20 Convention</p>
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			<p><b>08:00 - 10:00</b> VFW Day of Service - Food Distribution</p>	<p><b>End of Battle of the Wilderness (Civil War, 1864)</b></p>	<p><b>Battle of Palo Alto (Mexican-American War, 1846)</b></p> <p><b>VE Day</b></p>	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<p><b>19:00 - 21:00</b> Monthly Post Meeting</p>					
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<p><b>Start of Battle of Vicksburg (Civil War, 1863)</b></p>					
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	<p><b>Memorial Day</b></p> <p><b>Memorial Day</b></p>					
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b>Start of Battle of Cold Harbor (Civil War, 1864)</b></p>			<p><b>Food Distribution</b></p>			<p><b>D-Day</b></p> <p><b>Invasion of Normandy (D-Day, World War II, 1944)</b></p>