

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA  
HEADQUARTERS**



**BULLETIN**

**Ocala, Florida**

**September, 2022**

**“Florida Rocks”**

# Membership

**Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland has issued a challenge to all VFW Posts for the month of September 2022!**

It's that time of year; the kids are going back to school and it's time for the VFW to get back to the basics of growing our membership!

To encourage this, for the month of September 2022, the top five Posts in each membership division based on recruiting, renewing, and reinstating the most annual members will be entered into a drawing for a \$500 award. This will count new members, annual members who renew their dues and lapsed members who pay their annual dues to the Post. Whether you're out there bringing a new veteran into the organization, encouraging your existing members to continue their membership, or bringing back lapsed members to the Post, we want to see every Post out there making the effort to grow our membership because, **EVERY VETERAN COUNTS!**

Membership totals will be based on close-of-business totals on Aug. 31 to Sept. 30.

## **ALL-AMERICAN POST CAP ORDER INFORMATION**

Quartermasters and members of an All-American Post may purchase and submit their cap order through the VFW Store.

## **2022-23 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM:**

The 2022-23 Membership Program is available online at [vfw.org](https://vfw.org), under MY VFW, scroll down to Membership Quick Links, click on Membership Recruiting and Retention. You will see the 2022-23 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

## **2022-23 NEW RECRUITING AWARD**

**One New Member Pin** - As part of this year's membership incentives, Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland wants to drive home the message that EVERY VETERAN COUNTS. To support this message, every VFW member who recruits a new member will receive a special One New Member recruiting pin to show the world that they're doing their part to help our organization grow in strength and reach our membership goals.

## **MEMBERSHIP OBJECTIVES**

As the membership year has begun, keep in mind our Membership Objectives, which are also written in the 2022-23 Membership Program.

- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member
- Increase membership drives and/or events
- Develop new Posts and/or revitalize existing Posts
- Increase Life Membership and Legacy Life Membership
- Provide membership assistance using teams from your conference to assist and mentor those who request assistance.

## **NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION DEPARTMENT AWARD**

I have already heard from many Department Membership Chairs this year! Many are making plans for their recruiting events, and some are talking about revitalizing Posts in their Departments, all with the same goal, to grow the VFW by using membership drives and recruiting events early this year. Begin your planning now, inventory your materials for updating, get the reports you need, and calendar those events! The focus this year from the Commander-in-Chief is on recruiting new members while retaining every one of our continuous members. For those with plans to charter a new Post, please give me a call/email and let me know what your plans and challenges are. I can help you! Give me a call at 816.968.2788 or email me at [coreyhunt@vfw.org](mailto:coreyhunt@vfw.org).

**New Post Development and Post Revitalization Department Award:** For each new Post chartered, and/or revitalized, the Department Quartermaster will receive:

- A \$250 credit from the VFW Store to be used towards necessary materials for the new Post.

For details on this and all other All-American membership incentives, view the Commander-in-Chief's National Membership Program at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) under *Membership Recruiting & Retention*.

For any questions or further information, please contact the Membership Department via email at [membership@vfw.org](mailto:membership@vfw.org) or call us at 1.888.564.6839.

### **UPCOMING TRAINING**

The next Membership Monday training webinar will be on Sept. 12, 2022, at 2:00 PM, CDT, Topic: **HOW TO RECRUIT EFFECTIVELY.**

### **LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership; each offers their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

#### **Enrollment Cost:**

#### **Annual Payouts:**

<b><u>Levels</u></b>		<b><u>Posts</u></b>	<b><u>Departments</u></b>	<b><u>National</u></b>
Gold-	\$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver-	\$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze-	\$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

***What will your Legacy be?***

## **VFW Foundation**

After an extensive nationwide search, the VFW Foundation welcomes our new Executive Director Lisa Baronio. Lisa has nearly 30 year's nonprofit management in higher education most recently as the President of the University of Missouri Kansas City Foundation. We are confident Lisa is the right leader to work alongside staff, board, and our entire veteran service community as we enter a dynamic phase of fundraising and vision.

Leidos (QTC) has confirmed that they will donate \$40,000 to support NVS trainings.

Oracle Cerner has committed to a \$50,000 donation towards the Unmet Needs program.

Contact: VFW Foundation Manager Richard Freiburghouse at [RFreiburghouse@vfw.org](mailto:RFreiburghouse@vfw.org).

## Development

**VFW Christmas Cards and Holiday Music CD** – This month we are mailing VFW Christmas Cards and a Holiday Music CD as our way of saying “Thank You” for your generosity in helping provide much-needed services to fellow veterans and service members. With the holidays quickly approaching, your support is urgently needed! Please help our heroes by sending a special donation when you receive this package. And take the time to visit a hospitalized or homebound veteran or current service member this holiday season. Your best wishes and thanks for their service mean more than you can imagine. You can visit [heroes.vfw.org/Volunteer](https://heroes.vfw.org/Volunteer) to find out about volunteering at your local VA facility.

**Sign Your Name, Change Your Future** – VFW members like you frequently tell us, “I wish I could do more.” Learn ways you can impact future generations of veterans, just by signing your name. Even better, it’s with gifts that cost you nothing now! Call the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119, email [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org) or visit [vfw.org/PlannedGiving](https://vfw.org/PlannedGiving) for more information.

**Have You Heard About the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism?** – Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland would like you to join with him in supporting the VFW’s life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible, and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at [partners@vfw.org](mailto:partners@vfw.org) with “Partners in Patriotism Application” in the subject line.

**VFW Friends of Freedom** – If you are not already a member of the VFW’s online community, please visit [vfw.org](https://vfw.org) and look for the gold banner that says “**Find Out What’s Happening**” to sign up. As a member of the VFW’s Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation’s veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit [vfw.org/VFWatWork](https://vfw.org/VFWatWork) and click on “**Read VFW success stories**” to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans’ rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

**Department Resources** – Many great resources are available for your Department to use in promoting fundraising programs. By visiting [heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools](https://heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools), you will find the latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

# VFW Communications

[New public service announcements and videos](#) are now available for download! From the Voice of Democracy program to joining our ranks, we offer a wide range of videos to help you spread awareness of the VFW.

We encourage you to download them and share them across your social media accounts and with your local media! Visit [vfw.org/MediaRoom](https://vfw.org/MediaRoom).

## Veterans & Military Support Programs

### VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"

The Spring 2023 application is now available online at [vfw.org/scholarship](https://vfw.org/scholarship). Deadline for applications is Nov. 15, 2022.

If your Department ordered the 2022-23 VMS lapel pins and have yet to pay for them, please do so as soon as possible. Payment can be made via the Dashboard using the VMS Donation link in the upper right-hand corner of the webpage.

Contact forms, monthly reports, applications, and program reports are located at the **Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools** webpage. This is our one-stop-shop for all your Chair needs. Please click the link below to access the new webpage. You can also use the below link to access the VMS Donation Link.

[Access the Veterans & Military Support Program Chairperson Tools webpage now](#)

**Do not use the red donate link in the upper right-hand corner of this webpage.** This is the general donation link.

Donation reports are received on **most Fridays** and are uploaded to the **Dashboard** on the **same day**. The period of these reports is from the **previous Friday** to **current Thursday**.

## VFW Programs

**DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS.** Military service flags, insignias, etc. should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to [vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag](https://vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag).

**PATRIOT DAY, SEPT. 11.** Per Presidential Proclamation, Sept. 11 is designated as "Patriot Day." The president requests the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff (sunrise to sunset) and a moment of silence observed in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on that day due to terrorist attacks on the United States. For flags and other patriotic items, click here [vfwstore.org/category/patriotic/miscpatriotic](https://vfwstore.org/category/patriotic/miscpatriotic).

**NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY, SEPT. 16.** Posts should conduct an appropriate ceremony. Information on conducting a ceremony can be found in the current VFW Manual of Procedure. For POW/MIA merchandise, click [vfwstore.org/category/memorial/pow-mia](https://vfwstore.org/category/memorial/pow-mia).

**“NEW” 2022-23 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM.** This year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars wants to recognize the nation’s top elementary, junior high and high school teachers (teaching at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America’s history, traditions, and institutions effectively through this program.

Now is the time to begin locating exceptional teachers for your Post to nominate for the next competition. All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

Post Teacher Award Chairpersons must submit one candidate, in each category (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12), for these awards to their District, if applicable, by Nov. 15. The District will forward a winner, in each category, to their Department Headquarters by Jan. 1. The Department must select a single candidate, in each category, for the awards and submit the winners to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires is the “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form” which is available on the VFW website. You can locate this form by logging in to [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) and searching under “My VFW” in the Training & Support section.

All Post-level nominees should provide a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves, if available. These items will be forwarded on to the District, if applicable, then to the Department with the completed entry forms.

The VFW’s Department Citizenship Education Teacher Award includes a citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

The VFW’s National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include: three national \$1,000 awards for the top K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses; \$1,000 award to each winning teacher’s school; plaques for both the winning teacher and school; and an all-expense-paid trip to attend a VFW National Convention.

**Please verify that all websites, publications, announcements, etc. has the correct teacher award entry deadlines and rules for the 2022-23 program year.**

Simply visit [vfw.org/#login](http://vfw.org/#login), log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. Here you will find all program manuals, and on the same page are all other program materials.

**IT’S SCHOLARSHIP TIME!** It is the perfect time to be contacting schools, youth groups, parent organizations and others with information about Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen. Schools are making curriculum decisions now and parents are thinking about scholarships.

Please remember that Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen are VFW programs supported by the VFW Auxiliary. It is inappropriate for the VFW Auxiliary to conduct a separate judging at any level.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email [nlopez@vfw.org](mailto:nlopez@vfw.org) or call 816.968.1155.



**VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS.** Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen first place Department winner will receive a National scholarship or award. The amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now totals \$171,000, with the top three awards being raised to \$35,000, \$21,000 and \$15,000. The Patriot's Pen National Awards total is \$55,000.

**NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN THEMES.** The 2022-23 themes have been chosen by Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland. The Voice of Democracy theme is "Why is the Veteran Important?" and the Patriot's Pen theme is "My Pledge to our Veterans."

**NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN ENTRY FORMS.** The new 2022-23 Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen entry forms are now available on the VFW website.

**NOTE:** "NEW" Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen posters are now available!

Anyone (including students, parents, teachers, and chairpersons) can download and print the student entry forms for Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen by visiting the below links:

Voice of Democracy: [vfw.org/VOD/](https://vfw.org/VOD/)

Patriot's Pen: [vfw.org/PatriotsPen/](https://vfw.org/PatriotsPen/)

For Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen brochures, posters, awards and more, visit the VFW Store:

[vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy](https://vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy) for Voice of Democracy and

[vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen](https://vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen) for Patriot's Pen.

**VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS.** New this year, the dispatcher category has been added. Departments are asked to submit four nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office no later than Feb. 1, 2023. VFW Programs will create citations for the following awards in each Department:

- VFW National Law Enforcement Award
- VFW National Firefighter Award
- VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Award
- VFW National 911 Dispatcher Award

All Department Public Servant Citations must be requested through the "VFW Department Public Servant Award Request Form" through Formstack. VFW Programs staff will email the form link to Department Adjutants and Quartermasters. Deadline for Department submissions to National is Feb. 1, to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentations.

Each Department will receive their four awards and should contact their recipients to arrange a presentation. Department Commanders may present the awards at their Department Convention, but are encouraged to also present the award in front of the recipient's peers at a professional association event, city council meeting, etc. The purpose of the second venue is to expose these VFW awards to the general public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters, EMTs and dispatchers, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store [vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant](https://vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant).

**NOTE: VFW PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD CITATION POST ENTRY FORM.** This form was developed to assist VFW Post Safety Chairpersons with an entry form to hand out to the local Fire Department, Police Department, etc. to assist interested individuals in nominating one of their own. The entry form along with the required documentation are to be returned to the local VFW Post for their judging by Oct. 31. Once a winner, in each category has been chosen, the Post will forward the winning entries on to the next level of judging.

Simply visit [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Public Servant Program**.

NOTE: NEW First Responder Medal is available through the VFW Store. To review this item, please click on the following link: [vfwstore.org/products/32134](http://vfwstore.org/products/32134).

**NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PROGRAM.** This program is designed to provide recognition and awards to VFW members who volunteer their time to outside organizations. Recognition is in the form of certificates and/or lapel pins which are given to volunteers who have completed the number of hours prescribed for those awards. For more information, see the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide. If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email [tbeauchamp@vfw.org](mailto:tbeauchamp@vfw.org) or call 816.756.3390, ext. 6287.

**VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM MONTH IN NOVEMBER.** VFW and VFW Auxiliary members are encouraged to volunteer in their schools to talk about their military and home front experiences to students. Invite your local military recruiter to join you to talk about military service today. Additional information can be found in the 2022-23 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide.

Simply visit [vfw.org/#login](http://vfw.org/#login), log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. Here you will find all program manuals, and on the same page are all other program materials.

*Participate in this activity during the week of Veterans Day, which is part of "National Veterans Awareness week," as designated by Congress.* Find Pledge of Allegiance pencils and coloring books, plus other citizenship education tools at the VFW Store [vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation).

**"UPDATED" POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS.** Under previous Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997), it indicated there were only six days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices were required to display the POW/MIA flag. Now under new law, Public Law 116-67 (Feb. 21, 2020), it is required that the POW/MIA flag be flown on all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to [vfwstore.org/products/GP237](http://vfwstore.org/products/GP237).

**IRS AND VFW AWARD MONIES.** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that any recipient that receives more than a \$599 award should receive a Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable. This will include the VFW programs Patriot's Pen and Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

## VFW Member Benefits

[According to the National Cancer Institute](#), approximately 39.5% of men and women will be diagnosed with cancer.

With these odds, it makes sense to be prepared, and the VFW makes it easy.

The VFW Cancer Care Insurance Plan, administered by AGIA and underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company, helps relieve the financial burden of cancer care, so you can focus on your health and recovery should you be diagnosed with cancer.



Cash benefits are payable for cancer related events and are yours to use as you see fit, including hospital bills, operations, mortgage, car payments or other expenses.

Help protect your future and finances against the costs associated with a cancer diagnosis. For additional information including costs, features, limitations, and exclusions of the Cancer Care Insurance Plan, click [here](#) or call 1.877.850.0183.

## "Buddy"® Poppy

**"BUDDY"® POPPY CAMPAIGN.** Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as "They Gave, Will You?" is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of your distribution date. Be sure to specify a date by which the poppies are required, do not use "ASAP."

**BUDDY POPPY UPDATE:** National Headquarters conducted a review of the Buddy Poppy policy and procedures and implemented the following changes effective May 20, 2021:

- 1) If you do not receive your order within 8 weeks of placing it with your Department, please contact National Headquarters to report that you have not received the order.
- 2) If you do not report a missing order 3 months after the 8-week processing time, the order will NOT be replaced free of charge, and you will have to resubmit your order.

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at [vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy) or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairperson's guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that non-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

Contact information: [BuddyPoppy@vfw.org](mailto:BuddyPoppy@vfw.org) or 816.756.3390, ext. 6722 for any questions or concerns.

**VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES.** The silver, gold and diamond anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need. The anniversary poppies are approximately three times as expensive for us to produce, but because of the small quantities we deal in, we do not pass those costs on to the Posts. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out unless you are currently in your 100th year.

These are ordered through the Department and processed the same as the red poppies. Annotate on the order to National that it is for anniversary poppies and specify which one.

## National Veterans Service

### **Applications Now Being Accepted for 2023 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship**

The application process for the 2023 class of VFW-SVA legislative fellows is now open. VFW members who attend an accredited institute of higher learning with an approved Student Veterans of America chapter will be chosen for the semester-long program that focuses on real policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The capstone of the program is participation in the 2023 VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Alumni of the program have become more active at all levels of the VFW and have been instrumental in changing laws to improve care and benefits for veterans. [Learn more and apply for the fellowship.](#)

### **Honoring our PACT Act Becomes Law**

VFW National Commander Tim Borland attended the White House bill signing ceremony as President Biden signed into law S.3373, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, known as the PACT Act. Borland commented after the event, “Too many of our brothers and sisters have succumbed to illnesses connected to toxic exposure. That is why this bill has been the VFW’s number one priority for the past few years, and we weren’t going to give up until it was passed.” Also in attendance were staff members from the VFW Washington Office and fellow veteran advocates. [Read more](#) about the PACT Act or locate an accredited [VFW Service Officer](#) near you. [Watch the bill signing.](#)

### **DOD Next Gen USID Cards & TSA Usage**

Identification cards for service members, retirees, and their dependents have changed to the Next Generation Uniform Service Identification (USID) cards and are being issued now. Those whose cards do not have an expiration date will need to upgrade within the next four years. The USID cards provide enhanced security features that include compatibility with Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoints in all U.S. airports as a REAL ID, and free [TSA PreCheck availability for](#) currently serving service members and DOD civilians. If you or your dependents have not been issued the new Next Gen USID cards, [schedule your appointment](#) today!

## National Legislative Service/Action Corps

### **HUMANA SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACCREDITED SERVICE OFFICER TRAINING**

We are pleased to announce the VFW Service Officer Accreditation Training Scholarship for accredited service officers and claims representatives looking to attend the VFW’s fall training conference this month.

This year, the VFW will select up to 10 exemplary applicants from around the country to attend service officer skill level accreditation training at the DoubleTree Hotel in Annapolis from Sept. 18 – 23. Each scholarship will cover hotel, transportation, conference fees and per diem for each recipient to attend the conference.

This scholarship is available thanks to a donation from Humana during the 123rd VFW National Convention in July. During the joint opening session of the convention, Humana presented VFW National Veterans Service \$25,000 to support the program that helps veterans get their earned Veterans Affairs benefits and compensation. The VFW has chosen to dedicate these resources to help provide quality training to service officers who may not usually have the opportunity to train with the organization, allowing the VFW to reach deeper into communities to provide high-quality, free claims assistance to veterans. All applicants must be currently accredited with the VFW through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of preparation, presentation, and prosecution of benefit claims before VA on behalf of VFW claimants. This scholarship will focus heavily on cross-accredited VFW advocates and advocates who cannot regularly attend VFW training.

The VFW's accredited service officer training is one of the ways the VFW satisfies VA Office of the General Counsel's continuing education requirements for its global network of accredited representatives and is subject to periodic audit from OGC.

We thank our friends at Humana for such an incredibly generous donation to further the goals and objectives of the National Veterans Service in providing world class representation on behalf of our veterans, claimants, their families, and survivors.

## Administrative Operations

**REQUESTING CEREMONIAL RIFLES, AMMUNITION & MILITARY EQUIPMENT** – Department Adjutants and Quartermasters are asked to remind all Post officers to refer to the revised information located at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) where they will need to log in to the “My VFW” page and select the “VFW Training and Support” link, then “Member & Officer Training, Forms and Templates” where you'll have access to “Training Guides & Standard Operating Procedures” and then click on “Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment” when requesting a “conditional” donation of any government military equipment, ceremonial rifles or ammunition.

Before contacting the governmental agency, a formal written request is to be addressed and mailed to the Adjutant General at VFW National Headquarters and must be completed and signed by the current *Post Commander*, *Post Adjutant* or *Post Quartermaster*, one of whom needs to be the contact person.

Also to be included is that contact person's email and mailing addresses plus phone number, not the Post address. Address the request to the Adjutant General, VFW National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.

Include the proper information as outlined in the “Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment” pages in the website. It is requested that a Post *not* go through their Department Headquarters (but send them a courtesy copy). This only slows down the processing and creates unnecessary paperwork for the Department personnel.

**CAPS DURING CHAPLAIN PRAYERS** – In accordance with the Ritual General Rule 13(b), “members will follow the action of the Chaplain or presiding officer relative to removal of caps during prayers; if uncovering, the hat shall be placed on the extended closed fingers of the right hand in such a way that the Cross of Malta is exposed and held over the heart.”

## VFW Store

**Entry deadlines are Oct. 31** for the Teacher of the Year Award, and the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay contests. Show appreciation for entrants at your Post with commemorative items from the VFW Store:

Voice of Democracy: [vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy?page=1&size=50](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy?page=1&size=50)

Patriot's Pen: [vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen?page=1&size=50](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen?page=1&size=50)

Teachers: [vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation)

**Veterans Day** is just around the corner – order now to receive your merchandise in time. We offer parade items, patriotic apparel and more. Go to [vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday](http://vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday).

**Buddy Poppy** items are also available at the VFW Store. Go to [vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy?page=1&size=50](http://vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy?page=1&size=50).

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## Roll Call of Departed Comrades

TRADEWELL, SR., THOMAS J. "TOMMY," Past Commander-in-Chief, 2009-2010, National Inspector General, 2001-2002, National Council Member, 2003-2005, Commander, Department of Wisconsin, 1999-2000 and a Gold Legacy Life Member of Gross-Yaksh Post 6498, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 2, 2022.