

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



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

August, 2021

“Soaring To New Heights”

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF MATTHEW “FRITZ” MIHELICIC!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TRIPLE CROWN WINNERS:

The Triple Crown Pin is awarded to those who have made All-American Commander at the Department, District and Post level.

Donald Barnes – Dept. of Arkansas
David Bramlett – Dept. of Arkansas
Terry Callahan – Dept. of Arkansas
William Rickards – Dept. of Delaware
Jeff Leffler – Dept. of Europe
Richard Attaway – Dept. of Georgia
Elvin Bass – Dept. of Louisiana
Thomas Rollins – Dept. of Mississippi
Gilbert Hernandez – Dept. of Nevada
George Carroll – Dept. of Oregon
Kenneth Stein – Dept. of Pacific Areas
Rhett Webber – Dept. of Pacific Areas
Daniel Boyer – Dept. of Virginia
Melvin Goddard – Dept. of West Virginia
David Moske – Dept. of West Virginia

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020-21 ALL-AMERICANS!

Thank you for all your hard work and a job well done!

ALL-AMERICAN POST CAP ORDER INFORMATION

Members of an All-American Post may submit their cap order through the store after convention.

2021-22 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2021-22 Membership Program is available online at [vfw.org](https://www.vfw.org), under MY VFW, scroll down to Membership Quick Links, click on Membership Recruiting and Retention. You will see the 2021-22 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

POST DEVELOPMENT

As of this writing there is an excitement in the air here at the National Headquarters and all Departments are busy with a flurry of activity getting ready for the 122nd VFW Convention! This is exactly the kind of excitement I hope all new Department Membership Chairs have for the new membership year! Do you have a copy of the latest New Post Development & Revitalization Manual?! If not, what are you waiting for?! Jump on vfw.org and order a new guide with the Membership Material Order Form.

Developing new Posts and revitalizing existing Posts takes research and good recruiting work. It also helps to know who you need to have conversations with that will move your efforts forward. This is exactly the kind of information you will find in the New Post Development & Revitalization Manual. Do not wait until the new membership year is underway – begin planning now! If you have any questions, give me a call at 816-968-2788 or email me at coreyhunt@vfw.org.

UPCOMING TRAINING

The next Membership Monday training webinar will be in September. Look for the Membership Monday Zoom meeting invite in an OMS notification 3-5 days prior to scheduled Webinar training. All members can join. In addition, the Zoom link will be emailed as a meeting invitation to each Department's leadership and VFW Auxiliary President.

If you would like to suggest a Membership Monday training topic, please email us at membership@vfw.org.

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

As always, please remember you have many resources available to you at vfw.org, and don't forget to follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/. The Membership Facebook page is routinely updated to showcase informational videos during the pandemic. View our latest Hip-Pocket training video on Quick Renew function, answering the most frequently asked questions. For any questions or further information, contact the Membership Department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 888.564.6839.

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to 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:

<u>Levels</u>		<u>Posts</u>	<u>Departments</u>	<u>National</u>
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

The application entry date for this year's "Uniting to Combat Hunger" (UTCH) Matching Grant has been extended to Sept. 1, 2021. By visiting feedingamerica.org/UTCH and making a monetary donation to the UTCH campaign, VFW and Auxiliary members can help ensure no veteran goes hungry. In addition, your Post may also qualify to receive funding through the UTCH Matching Grant! These grant funds may be used by your Post or Auxiliary wherever the need is greatest. Grant application details are included in a PDF file that can be found [here](#).

Contact: VFW Foundation Administrator Richard Potter at RPotter@vfw.org.

Development

VFW 2022 Special Edition Calendar – The exclusive 2022 VFW Calendar package was mailed the first week of July. We hope you have received it and are pleased with the special Fly the Flag calendar along with the Songbird calendar.

Please show your pride in our country and your fellow veterans by displaying your calendar in a prominent place in your home, office or Post. Your calendars are filled with patriotic images and beautiful song birds; they also contain information on VFW programs available for veterans, service members and their families as well as patriotic holidays and observances. Please remember to display the U.S. flag. You can visit heroes.vfw.org/Flag to download and print a free flag poster to display.

If you haven't already, please send the most generous gift you can. Your support of the 2022 VFW Calendar program helps your VFW Department serve veterans in need throughout the year.

Create Your Legacy with Just a Few Words – Having a will helps ensure your family and loved ones will be taken care of after your lifetime. Should you like to support future generations of veterans once your family is covered, you can do so by adding a gift to the VFW in your will. To learn more about wills and how easy it is to make a gift to the VFW in yours, visit vfw.org/PlannedGiving. You can also contact the VFW Planned Giving Office to request information on estate planning. Call us at 816.968.1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org today.

Have You Heard about the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief Matthew "Fritz" Mihelcic 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 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 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 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. These resources are available at heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools. The latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department can be found here. 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!

Veterans & Military Support Programs

For all Veterans & Military Support program information and forms, use the links provided below.

VMS Formstack Links and Websites:

- **VFW Website Solution:** VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/websolutionapp
- **AUX Website Solution:** VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/auxwebsolutionapp
- **Chairman Report:** VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vms_chairman_report
- **MAP Grant Application:** vfw.org/MAPGrantApplication
- **MAP Grant Report:** vfw.org/MAPGrantReport
- **Adopt a Unit Application:** vfw.org/AdoptAUnitApp
- **Adopt a Unit Report:** vfw.org/AdoptAUnitReport
- **VMS Online Donation:** heroes.vfw.org/page/22950/donate1
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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/products/GP238.

NEW SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD

PROGRAM. Each year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars selects an elementary, middle or high school teacher to receive the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher awards. Teacher Award Chairman must submit one candidate for these awards to their Department Headquarters by Jan. 1. The Department must select a single candidate for the award and submit the winner 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 now available on the VFW website. You can locate this form by logging in to vfw.org and searching under “My VFW” in the Training & Support section.

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.

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 Department with the completed Entry form.

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

Please verify that all websites, publications, announcements, etc. has the correct teacher award entry deadlines and rules for the 2021-22 program year. The Teacher Entry form will be up on the VFW website in the near future.

Simply visit 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.

50TH ANNIVERSARY VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION PROGRAM. The Commemorative Partner Program is designed for federal, state and local communities, veterans' organizations and other non-governmental organizations to assist a grateful nation in thanking and honoring our Vietnam veterans and their families. As a Commemorative Partner, VFW Posts are encouraged to participate in the Commemoration of the Vietnam War by planning and conducting events and activities that will recognize the Vietnam veterans and their families' service, valor, and sacrifice.

Events and activities should be dignified, memorable occasions that show a sensitivity and appreciation for the solemnity of war and the losses suffered by many. Commemorative Partners should communicate how their events will achieve the congressionally-mandated objectives of the program. Events or activities should meet one or more of the following objectives.

1. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
2. To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.
3. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.

4. To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
5. To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

For the VFW Posts interested in becoming an official Commemorative Partner, they must submit an application and a signed Statement of Understanding.

Applications are available at VietnamWar50th.com on the Commemorative Partner Program. The approval process is usually less than 30 days. Partners will be kept informed through electronic notifications. Once approved as a Partner, the Commemoration will provide organizations with a starter kit of materials for developing and implementing their programs. If you have any questions regarding the Commemorative Partner Program application process, please direct them to: whs.vnwar50th_cpp@mail.mil. For Vietnam War commemorative items, shop the VFW Store at: vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam.

PATRIOT DAY, SEPTEMBER 11. Per Presidential Proclamation, September 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.

NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY, SEPTEMBER 17. 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.

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 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 total \$154,000 and the Patriot’s Pen National Awards total is now \$55,000.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN THEMES. The 2021-22 themes have been chosen by Commander-in-Chief Matthew “Fritz” Mihelcic. The Voice of Democracy theme will be “America: Where do we go from here?” and the Patriot’s Pen theme will be “How can I be a good American?”

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN ENTRY FORMS. The new 2021-22 Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen entry forms are now available on the VFW website.

UPDATED VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN CHAIRMAN'S MANUAL. An updated version of the Voice of Democracy Chairman's Manual is now available on the VFW Website. Changes to program include:

- Judging no longer has to be conducted in person, and can be completed remotely at the Post, District and Department level.
- The preferred format for Voice of Democracy audio essays is now Flash Drives/USBs or email submission. CDs will no longer be accepted.

Simply visit vfw.org/Login.aspx, log in to My VFW, then click on **VFW Training & Support** under the **Member Resources** heading, then click on Community Service & Youth Programs and Activities, then click on **Chairman Manuals** under the **Additional Resources** heading. Here you will find all program materials.

Additionally, anyone (including students, parents, teachers, and chairmen) 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/

Patriot's Pen: 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 for Voice of Democracy and vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen for Patriot's Pen.

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 Chairmen's Manual or contact Tammy at 816.756.3390, ext. 6287 in the VFW Programs department for a nomination form.

POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997) indicates the days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices are required to display the POW/MIA flag. The days are: Armed Forces Day, May 21, 2022 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 30, 2022 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Day, Sept. 17, 2021 (third Friday in Sept.); and Veterans Day, Nov. 11. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to 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

Whether you're in town for a weekend staycation on a solo adventure staying at a rented condo on the beach, it's important to be prepared.

With travel accident insurance, underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company, you can help secure your family's financial security in the event of your injury or death from a travel-related accident. This coverage provides \$150,000 in accidental death (death while traveling in a private motor vehicle), an additional \$150,000 for death while traveling in a common carrier vehicle and a \$500 cash benefit for every day you stay in the hospital because of a covered accident. All benefit amounts reduce to 50% of the original benefit amount at age 75 regardless of age at enrollment.

As a VFW member, you're eligible to receive this coverage, and cannot be turned down, regardless of your health, occupation, past driving records or the number of miles you travel annually.

For additional information and to protect your travels, 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 (5/20/2021): 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 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 chairmen 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 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 don't 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

National Veterans Service to Resume In-Person Skill Level Training Conferences This Fall

National Veterans Service is continuing to plan for its in-person training conferences this fall for VFW accredited representatives. Based on current CDC guidance, VFW will ensure that proper safety protocols are in place during the conference.

NVS is currently scheduled to hold three training conferences this fall, all of which will take place at the DoubleTree Hotel in Annapolis, MD. From Sept. 19-23, 2021, NVS will host Advanced Skill Level Training, which is intended for accredited representatives with five or more years of experience.

Additionally, NVS will host Basic Training from Sept. 19-24, 2021, which is intended for newly accredited representatives.

Finally, from Nov. 14-19, 2021, NVS will host Intermediate Skill Level Training, which is intended for accredited representatives who have completed Basic Training but have less than five years of experience.

Formal notification to students who are required to participate in these conferences were sent prior to VFW National Convention and students are making arrangements to attend.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

August Recess – Your Congressional Members at Home

Congress is in recess for the month of August, which means your congressional members will be back in their home states. This is a good opportunity for VFW members to contact and visit their district/state offices, or participate in town hall meetings and focus attention on the VFW's [legislative priorities](#). Familiarize yourself with the VFW's stance on topics including women veterans, toxic exposure, transition assistance, education and employment, concurrent receipt and retirement compensation. Make sure your [senators](#) and [representatives](#) know what they need to do to meet the needs of our service members, veterans, and their families. Help us hold Congress accountable to the VFW's legislative priorities!

Administrative Operations

2021-22 Commander, Quartermaster and Trustee Guides

The newly revised 2021-22 Commander, Quartermaster and Trustee guides are now available online. You can access the guides behind the member's "LOGIN" at vfw.org, and then navigate to My VFW, VFW Training & Support and Member & Officer Training. The full guides are located in their respective section under "Elected and Appointed Officer-Specific Materials." These guides are a great resource for elected and appointed officers at every level of the organization to assist you in your roles and ensure our continued success.

VFW Store

Check out VFW Store's new items: Caps, polos, accessories and more! Go to vfwstore.org/category/more/newitems to browse or look for your new catalog in the mail!