

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



**BULLETIN**

**Ocala, Florida**

**December, 2022**

**“Florida Rocks”**

# Membership

As we enter the traditional season of giving, the Commander-in-Chief has announced a new membership incentive! To give back to our Posts and Departments for all their hard work in bringing in members to the organization.

During the month of December 2022, we will be issuing a \$10 grant to the Post, or Department, for every new or reinstated member processed during the month. For Posts, this means all new and reinstated members, annual or Life, for whom dues are collected for the Post. For Departments, any members-at-large that meet those criteria and have a recruiter recorded for the new or reinstated member will be recognized.

Payments will be made in early January, so it's time to end 2022 on a high note! When you're out touching base with current and lapsed members, make sure to check on our fellow veterans and their families – remember that our primary mission is to take care of our fellow veterans, and a strong, active membership base helps us accomplish that goal.

It's time to go out and show the world what the Veterans of Foreign Wars is all about, because when it comes to membership – EVERY VETERAN COUNTS!

## **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 they're doing their part to help our organization grow in strength and reach our membership goals.

## **DEPARTMENT "100 PERCENT" INCENTIVE**

Any Department that attains 100% in membership by close of business on May 1, 2023, will be entered into a random drawing. The Commander (plus guest) and the Quartermaster (plus guest) for the Department that is selected will each receive:

- **\$2,500 voucher through Veterans Travel Service (VTS) applied towards airfare, accommodations, and transportation for a trip of their own choice.**

## **EARLY BIRD AWARD - VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE**

The top three Post Commanders and Quartermasters in each division on Jan. 1, 2023, will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.**

## **DEPARTMENT EARLY BIRD INCENTIVE**

For every Department that achieves 92% in membership by Jan. 1, 2023, the Department Commander will receive:

- **A Henry Golden Boy .30-30 Caliber Rifle (VFW Tribute Edition if available) or a credit voucher of equal value for use with Veterans Travel Service (VTS) or 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.

## **NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION**

Heading into the holidays, we have a lot to be thankful for! I am thankful for the Department of California for chartering Rancho Murieta Post No. 12215 on Nov. 16, 2022. Congratulations! Remember, if you have more than 15 members ready to charter a new Post, give me a call! We have resources to help get you over the top! If you have Posts needing revitalization, call us at 816.968.2788 or email [coreyhunt@vfw.org](mailto:coreyhunt@vfw.org) and we will help you!

**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](https://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 Dec. 12, 2022, at 2 PM, CST, Topic: TBD.

## **CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!**

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook to view the latest membership news, Post Shout-Outs, and important resource information throughout the year - [facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/](https://facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/).

## **LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to [vfw.org](https://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 offer 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?*

## Development

As we near the season of giving, here is some helpful information about why the support of every VFW member is vitally important. VFW's life-changing programs are not possible through membership dues alone. In fact, **membership dues alone cover just 19% of the cost of programs.** As a nonprofit organization, the VFW relies heavily on the generosity of its members and patriotic supporters. When members donate, 100% of their net donation goes directly back to support their Department. *Please spread the word and give as generously as you are able.*

**MATCHING GIFT OFFER!** – Watch for a special notice regarding an incredible opportunity to arrive in your mailbox this month. Friends of the VFW have offered to triple your donation for the next 30 days. They have committed \$50,000 of their own money to kick off our 2023 Annual Challenge. They believe there are many others who understand that the cost of war extends well beyond the battlefield. They're asking proud VFW members like you to support our newest veterans, especially those coming home disabled by war. Your gift to the VFW today will be matched and will triple your help to our veterans of all generations in receiving the life-changing services they need. To receive every dollar of the 2023 Annual Challenge, all gifts must be postmarked within 30 days.

**VFW Kicks Off the 2022 Year-End Campaign with the Friends of Freedom Online Community** – Nov. 26 marked the beginning of the **VFW's 2022 Year-End Campaign** which will run until Dec. 31! Donations raised toward the end of the year help meet a large portion of the program funding needs. With the demand for VFW programs rising rapidly, your response to this year's 2022 Year-End Campaign is more important than ever. Watch for your email from the VFW and give as generously as you can, or [click here](#) to make your tax-deductible year-end contribution. Please also spread the word about the campaign on your social media networks. You'll be helping veterans of all generations receive much needed assistance from VFW Service Officers in applying for and getting their hard-earned VA benefits; assisting military families in financial distress receive financial assistance for rent, utilities and other necessities; and ensuring all veterans are represented on Capitol Hill to ensure veterans' rights and benefits are protected. Your generosity provides life-changing help when our nation's heroes need it most.

**Celebrate the Holiday Season by Helping Fellow Veterans** – Your support of the VFW this holiday season – and throughout the year – is extremely important in helping the VFW's efforts to serve and assist veterans of all generations who are sick, unemployed, homeless, or suffering from combat wounds received long ago. We recently mailed a special edition of the 2023 VFW "Fly the Flag" Calendar, and we also included a bonus gift – a beautiful VFW "American Songbirds" Calendar. The 2023 VFW Veterans Service Annual Campaign will be mailing early in January. By supporting these programs, you help veterans and their families in need throughout the year in your Department and across the country. And please display the U.S. flag – especially on patriotic holidays – which are marked in your new VFW Calendars. You can visit [heroes.vfw.org/Flag](https://heroes.vfw.org/Flag) and print a free flag poster to display.

**Helping the VFW for Generations to Come** – One of the easiest ways to continue providing support for your brothers and sisters-in-arms, as well as their families, is to name the VFW in your will or trust. It only takes a few words, and you remain in control of your assets during your lifetime. Just a small percentage of your assets could go a long way in helping the VFW continue its mission into the future. Free estate planning information is always available by contacting the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119, email [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org) or visit [vfw.org/PlannedGiving](http://vfw.org/PlannedGiving).

**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 toll-free 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](http://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](http://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](http://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!

## VFW Communications

### **PACT Act Updates**

The passage of the PACT Act is monumental for veterans. Last month we launched [PACTActInfo.org](http://PACTActInfo.org) to help streamline referrals to our cadre of VFW Accredited Service Officers. After answering a short series of questions, veterans can determine whether they're likely eligible for VA benefits. The system will capture their answers and generate a referral, and the veteran will then be contacted by a VFW Accredited Service Officer within one week.

The next phase of this project will include large scale promotion and advertising of this site and our services, and securing earned media. We will also develop a toolkit for Departments, Posts and members to ease their efforts to help in ensuring we disseminate this information to as many veterans as possible. Be on the lookout for more communication to come.

## 2023 VFW Day of Service

This week we announced the 2023 VFW Day of Service. Last year — in its pilot year — the event gained participation from over 400 Posts, showcasing the best of our organization, gaining much media exposure, furthering goodwill in communities and bringing in new members. [Here's a look](#) at the number of events hosted by state last year. We expect this year's event will be even bigger! The 2023 VFW Day of Service kicks off May 6, with events taking place throughout the month of May. Please encourage the Posts in your state to start planning now – May will be here before we know it.

## Veterans & Military Support Programs

Help us let the public know the impacts the VFW has on military families and veterans by reporting your holiday events to your Veterans & Military Support Chairman. MAP grants have increased for the holiday season. Please complete the MAP after event requirements within the **14-day deadline**. If you have any questions, please call the MAP office at 816.756.3390, ext. 6211.

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

The Spring 2023 application closed Nov. 15, 2022. The Fall 2023 application will be available early January 2023 and can be found online at [vfw.org/Scholarship](http://vfw.org/Scholarship) with a deadline date of April 30, 2023.

### VMS Lapel Pin Payments

**REMINDER:** 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. If you have any questions, contact Mark Herron at [mherron@vfw.org](mailto:mherron@vfw.org).

### VMS Donation for All-American

Donating to the VMS Programs can be done on the VFW Dashboard by going to the "**VMS Donation**" link at the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Your \$100 or more donation meets the eligibility criteria for All-American in this category. **Thank you for your support!**

### VMS Donation Reports

**As a reminder, the online donation process is not instantaneous with respect to the Dashboard.** We manually update the Dashboard when we receive those reports. 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**.

### Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools

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 webpage.



[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.

**Thank you for what you do every day and for your support!**

## 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).

**ALL-AMERICAN DASHBOARD.** Please encourage Posts to read the 2022-23 Membership program. Military Assistance Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance that has been received from National Headquarters to supplement the Unmet Needs financial grants and VFW Sport Clips Help-A-Hero scholarship statistics. The information charts reside on the KPI tools section.

**“NEW” 2022-23 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM REMINDER.** 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.

All Post-level nominees should have been received at their participating VFW Post and entered into their judging. Once completed, their winners will be forwarded on to their Districts for the next level of judging, where they will have until Jan. 1 to forward their winners on to their Department Headquarters for that level of judging.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires is the “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form” with the entry documentation downloaded. A link has been forwarded on to the Department Adjutant/Quartermaster to submit it to National Headquarters by Feb. 1. You can locate additional information by logging in to [vfw.org](https://vfw.org) and searching under “My VFW” in the Training & Support section.

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.

**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).

Simply visit [vfw.org](https://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](https://vfwstore.org/products/32134).

**VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN DEPARTMENT DEADLINE REMINDER.** The deadline for submitting the Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen winner packets to National Headquarters is Jan. 15, 2023 (even if they have not been personally notified they are the winner).

The suggested deadline for Departments to have reviewed and approved their District and Post entries in the All-American Dashboard is Jan. 31. This will ensure we have accurate reporting numbers across the organization and allot us the time to remedy errors. If you are unsure how to report your participation in the All-American Dashboard or if you are having login issues to the OMS system, contact Nick Lopez at [nlopez@vfw.org](mailto:nlopez@vfw.org) or 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.”



Simply visit [vfw.org/#login](https://vfw.org/#login), 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 **Chairperson Guides** under the **Additional Resources** heading. Here you will find all program materials.

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

**VFW SPECIAL PROJECT PROGRAM.** This program was put in place to recognize VFW units for creating and completing unique and extraordinary community service projects.

Record book entry nominations that are found to be complete and well-substantiated should be endorsed by the Department Adjutant or VFW Department Community Activities Chairperson and forwarded to National Programs Department. Deadline for entries is April 30 of each year.

Every Post Special Project receiving the Award of Excellence in the May judging will be entered in the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Competition. Complete information can be found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide.

**HALF-STAFF U.S. FLAG ON DEC. 7.** Public Law 103-308, passed in 1994, designates Dec. 7 as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day" and requests the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff (sunrise to sunset) in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on that day. To order a flag, go to [vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags](https://vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags).

**"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](https://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

Goofy, lovey, lazy, clumsy, cuddly. Pets are so many things, but mostly, they're family. And like health care for your human family, the cost of care for pets is rising.

For example, an X-ray, spaying and neutering could cost hundreds of dollars, while hip and knee replacements and cancer care could cost thousands.

Pet insurance makes it easier to prepare and care for your pets, as it often covers these conditions and more:

- Accidents and injuries, like poisons and sprains
- Common illnesses, like vomiting and diarrhea

- Serious illnesses, like cancer and diabetes
- Chronic illnesses, like allergies and arthritis
- Hereditary conditions, like hip dysplasia and blood disorders
- Testing and diagnostics, like ultrasounds and blood tests
- Procedures, like surgeries and chemotherapy
- Holistic and alternative methods, like acupuncture
- Wellness procedures, like vaccinations and spay/neuter

For additional information about Pet Insurance, call Nationwide at 877.738.7874 or [click here](#).

## "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

### **VFW Launches PACT Act Referral Tool**

Last month, VFW Adjutant General Dan West announced the deployment of a new webpage designed to inform veterans about benefits for which they may qualify due to the PACT Act and to generate referrals to their local VFW accredited service officer. Starting Wednesday, Nov. 16, veterans may now navigate to [pactactinfo.org](https://pactactinfo.org) where they can enter certain military service details and medical conditions to help determine if they are eligible for compensation benefits on a presumptive basis as a result of exposure to toxins while serving in the military.

This microsite will then give veterans the option of having a referral generated to the VFW accredited representative in their state of residence. In situations where a referral is not generated due to the answers provided by the veteran, the veteran may still choose to contact their VFW representative using contact information provided on the website. In addition to helping veterans determine if they are eligible for new benefits due to the PACT Act, the site warns veterans against claim sharks and non-accredited entities which may try to exploit veterans for financial gain; instructs veterans on applying for VA Health Care open enrollment under the PACT Act; and informs them on ways they can support VFW missions such as by becoming a member or donating to support our mission.

The VFW will be marketing this microsite as a way of ensuring veterans have access to reliable, free benefits assistance services through the VFW, instead of being lured away by claim sharks, who will charge veterans for their help. The VFW is also looking to encourage veterans to join our efforts to fight for the next key veterans reforms by asking them to join the VFW or donate to support our work.

## National Legislative Service/Action Corps

### **VFW, Bergmann & Moore Collaborate to Assist with Camp Lejeune Lawsuit**

Section 804 of the VFW-championed *Honoring our PACT Act of 2022* authorizes veterans and military families who were exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune from August 1953 to December 1987 to file a federal tort claim for harm caused by such exposure. “Since the PACT Act added another recourse for veterans and their families suffering the effects of toxic exposure at Camp Lejeune, getting the right legal advice is crucial,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland. “That’s why we turned to our long-trusted relationship with Bergmann & Moore to provide counsel for those we assist.” The VFW encourages anyone who wishes to join the Camp Lejeune Justice Act lawsuit to visit [vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp](https://vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp) or call 800.898.9450.

### **New Toxic Exposure Screening for Veterans**

If you are a veteran enrolled in VA health care, you can now receive the toxic exposure screening at VA medical centers and clinics across the country. If you are not enrolled in VA health care, you will be eligible for the screening once you complete the enrollment process. These screenings will become a regular part of your medical appointments and, if you believe that you experienced toxic exposure during your military service, you will be connected to support and resources. [Read more](#).

## VFW Store

Shop the VFW Store this winter for hoodies, jackets, knit caps and more! Click [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org) to shop now!

Don't see what you're looking for? Contact Kim Winston at [kwinston@vfw.org](mailto:kwinston@vfw.org) or 816.968.1181 for custom orders!

