

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



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

February, 2022

“Soaring To New Heights”

NEW/REINSTATED MEMBERSHIP GRANT INITIATIVE FOR VFW POSTS

As of Jan. 1, 2022, every VFW Post that signs up and submits full membership dues* for each member will receive a grant based on the type of membership submitted while funds are available.

Member Type	Rebate Amount
New to the VFW Life member and/or any **Reinstated annual to Life with full Life member payment	\$30.00
New to the VFW Life member and/or any **Reinstated annual to Life Installment Payment	\$20.00
New to the VFW Annual member	\$20.00
**Reinstated Annual member	\$10.00

- Full membership dues include the per capita for National, Department and the Post.
- Reinstated definition - Anyone that has been a member before, and their dues have been expired for two years and one day or more is classified as a Reinstated member.
- Members submitted prior to Jan. 1 are not eligible for this program.
- Current Annual members defined as any member whose dues have not been expired more than two years are not eligible for the grant.
- Members-at-Large are not part of this program.
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DEPARTMENT “100 PERCENT” INCENTIVE

Any Department that attains 100% in membership by close of business on March 31, 2022, 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 Services (VTS) applied toward airfare, accommodations and transportation for a trip of their own choice.**
-

DEPARTMENT EARLY BIRD WINNERS!

Congratulations to the following Departments for achieving above 92% in membership last month! Thank you for your hard work and dedication:

Alaska, Europe, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, Pacific Areas, Wisconsin, Wyoming!

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER CIC CHALLENGE WINNERS!

Congratulations to the following top five Posts that increased their membership percentage over the past two months while also recruiting at least 20 new members.

Post 12206, Dept. of TN; Post 12041, Dept. of TX; Post 9376, Dept. of MD; Post 2486, Dept. of IL; Post 660, Dept. of GA

POST DEVELOPMENT

If you are looking at your Membership Statistics (MEMSTATs) and have questions regarding how to use the data to help guide your recruiting & retention programs, give me a call! Don't wait until spring before you ask the questions that could help you make 100%+ in membership this year! To understand more, give me a call, Corey Hunt, 816.968.2788 to discuss ways you can energize your membership. We have many resources for you including training videos and presentations on topics which are designed to help you grow membership and retain those members.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENTS OF ARIZONA, IOWA, AND TEXAS FOR INSTITUTING A NEW POST IN JANUARY!

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION DEPARTMENT AWARD

For each new Post, the Department will receive two entries into a drawing, and one entry for increasing the membership of a Post of 50 members or less to over 50 members by July 1, 2022. The Department selected will receive:

- **\$1,000 paid directly to Department.**

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

For any questions or further information, please contact the Membership Department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 1.888.564.6839.

UPCOMING TRAINING

The next Membership Monday training webinar will be on Feb. 7, 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/.

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

On Jan. 11, 2022, Sport Clips Haircuts presented a record-breaking check to the VFW Foundation in the amount of \$1.55 million. The generous gift will provide scholarships for service members and veterans through the VFW's "Help A Hero Scholarship" program. To date, Sport Clips has donated more than \$10 million to the cause!

The Home Depot Community Impact Grant has permanently been retired. Over the past 15 years, the grant has provided millions of dollars in funding to VFW Posts (and other nonprofits) for improvement of their buildings. The company will still support veteran causes with emphasis on veteran housing grants.

The Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) Grant will reopen on Feb. 1, 2022. Through this grant program, Posts and Auxiliaries donating funds and food to their local food banks, food pantries and community kitchens may apply for up to \$5,000 in grant funding. Posts and Auxiliaries may receive additional funding for hours accumulated by members volunteering at a soup kitchen, food bank or any nonprofit organization program focused on relieving food insecurity. The grant will remain open until July 31, 2022, or whenever the budget for the program has been exhausted. The application form, complete with full guidelines, will be accessible the day the grant opens at vfw.org/UTCH.

Representatives from Humana and the VFW Foundation convened in virtual meetings on Jan. 18-19, 2022, for the annual Strategic Initiatives Planning Meeting. Discussion focused on impactful ways that both organizations could promote overall health and wellness in the veteran community. Primary consideration was given to raising awareness of the VFW's NVS outreach in alignment with Humana's Bold Goal of addressing food insecurity, social isolation and health equity.

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

VFW National Convention

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING – 123rd National Convention housing will officially open Feb. 17, 2022. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Kansas City, MO, July 16-21, 2022, including a tentative agenda.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION – Section 222 of the Manual of Procedure states each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the VFW National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee provided the Post has paid the mandated \$25 advance registration fee. All advance registrations should be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111, ATTN: Convention Registration or you may register online by going to vfw.org.

Development

2022 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign – I hope you received the 2022 VFW NVS Annual Campaign mailing that was sent in early January. It contained a 2022 Petition to Congress and an American Hero Memorial Day card for you to sign and return. We will continue collecting the petitions and deliver them to Congress to let them know that we will not sit by and allow Congress to make sweeping fiscal changes that could threaten veterans' benefits. The cards will be distributed to hospitalized veterans and service members by Memorial Day. Some members received the 2022 member survey to fill out and return, and we are continuing to collect and tally the responses.

In late-January, we sent out a reminder letter with a Special Veterans' Petition addressed to the President and Congressional leaders. The VFW is doing everything it can to remind our President and Congressional leaders to uphold the promises made to those who have fought for this nation. Please sign and return the petitions so we can forward them to Washington, D.C. When you do, please consider sending a gift to help the VFW National Veterans Service.

Your support is still urgently needed for the 2022 VFW NVS Annual Campaign. Your donation right now ensures the VFW's national force of highly trained, professional service officers is at the ready to help America's veterans navigate the complicated VA system.

VFW Service Officers help veterans and their survivors cut through the red tape to receive VA compensation and pension benefits they have earned. The VFW recovered more than \$10 billion in compensation in pension on behalf of more than 550,000 veterans and eligible family members in fiscal year 2021. VFW Service Officers are there for all veterans to help them apply for and receive their hard-earned VA benefits. This service is available to all veterans FREE OF CHARGE — and made possible through your donations. Please watch your mail for this important campaign.

Voice of Democracy State Winners Coming to the Web – It's almost time! Keep an eye on the VFW's website in late February to see the faces – and hear the performances – of the state winners of this year's Voice of Democracy audio-essay competition. Sign up at vfw.org to receive alerts in your inbox.

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 or visit vfw.org/PlannedGiving for more information.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief 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

All-American Requirement

Encourage your Posts to donate directly to the VMS Programs by going to the **All-American Eligible Dashboard**. Clicking on the link "VMS Donation" on the upper right-hand corner of the screen will take them to the online donation page. Their \$100 or more donation to the VMS Programs meets the eligibility for All-American in this category. **Post's minimum donation is \$100.00.** Thank you for your support!

ATTN VMS Chairmen – If you received your Veterans & Military Support 2021-22 lapel pins and have not reconciled payment, now would be a good time to take care of it so that your donation will represent your Department's fundraiser for VMS to qualify for All-American.

The VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" is open for the **Fall semester 2022. Deadline is April 30, 2022.**

Please use links below for all VMS programs and donations. We no longer accept email or faxed requests/reports.

VMS Online Donation: heroes.vfw.org/page/22950/donate1

VMS Formstack Links:

- **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

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.

ALL-AMERICAN DASHBOARD. Military Assistance Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance that has been received from National HQs 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.

Please encourage Posts to read the 2021-22 Membership program. Many Posts don't understand they need to sign up five new Action Corps subscribers, create a Facebook page, two separate partnering events along with a 10% increase in Community Service Impact from last year. They must submit reports through the dashboard to gain credit.

SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM REMINDER. Nominations for this award and the judging at the Post, District and Department level (if applicable) should be completed. After Department judging, each Department must select a single candidate and submit their winner to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1. The Department Teacher winners that are received at National Headquarters will be entered in the National judging and receive a VFW National citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires to be submitted for the National judging is the "VFW Department Teacher Award Request Form" which is available on the VFW website. 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** to review. The form should be completed and any documentation included with the nomination should be downloaded to this form.

Order the Citizenship Education Teacher Recognition Citation from VFW Store, product #4320, vfwstore.org/products/23980. Present to all teachers nominated at all levels for the national award.

PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT DEADLINE REMINDER. 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 or 816.968.1155.

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.

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 Chairman 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 Chairman's Manual.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact the VFW Programs Office at 816.968.1155 or email nlopez@vfw.org.

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. 16, 2022 (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

Not sure about Life and Accident Insurance?

Think about all your monthly expenses: rent or a home mortgage, utilities, car payments, groceries, loans, kids' tuitions, etc. It's hard making ends meet as it is, and it feels like some of these expenses never end. However, have you ever asked yourself *"Would my family be able to cover these costs if I were to pass away?"*

Cash benefits paid to you or your loved ones in case the unthinkable happens.

- Added protection to give you and your family an extra stream of cash benefits.
- Coverage that is not tied to your medical insurance.
- Payment regardless of any other health plan.

Plus, benefit payments are sent directly to you or your beneficiary, to be spent as you'd like. [Get coverage today.](#)

"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

NOMINATION PERIOD FOR JOHN A. BIEDRZYCKI ACCREDITED SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR FOR 2021-22 IS COMING SOON!

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to interfere with our lives, it has become increasingly evident that accredited veterans service representatives are of vital importance to the continued well-being of our nation's veterans and their families. Even during these uncertain times, our accredited representatives continue to counsel veterans, complete paperwork, and submit VA claims for earned entitlements and benefits. In many cases, these critical benefits help ease the hardships our veterans and their families may face due to the pandemic. Fortunately, today's technology allows our accredited representatives to continue their mission of veterans' service whether veterans choose to meet face-to-face with our advocates or simply receive assistance remotely.

Department Commanders will soon have the opportunity to recognize that ongoing commitment by nominating one (1) of their Department's accredited representatives for the John A. Biedrzycki Accredited Service Representative of the Year Award for 2021-22.

Official notification that the nomination period is open will be sent out in February. We encourage every Department to put forth a candidate. A nomination shows that Department leadership is aware of the significant contributions your program makes in your community every day, even during these times when many of us are working from our homes.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

VFW 2022 Priority Goals

The 117th Congress is now in its second session. Although there were some legislative victories for veterans in 2021, there is still much work to be done. The [VFW 2022 Priority Goals](#) focus on Budget; Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs; Education, Employment, and Transition Assistance; Health Care; Military Quality of Life; and National Security, Foreign Affairs, and POW/MIA. The VFW will continue to work diligently to ensure members of Congress improve care and benefits for veterans, service members, and their families.

VFW Store

Presidents' Day is coming up. Shop the VFW Store for items to celebrate the day.

vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/presidentsday?page=1&size=100

Clearance items are still on sale, while quantities last.

vfwstore.org/category/more/clearance?page=1&size=100