

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



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

January, 2022

“Soaring To New Heights”

Membership

The Membership Team would like to wish you and your family a Happy New Year. We look forward to continuing to work with you in making the rest of your membership year successful!

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 towards airfare, accommodations and transportation for a trip of their own choice.**

The Early Bird Award winners, top three Post Commanders and Quartermasters and top Department Early Bird's Commanders will be announced after Jan. 1, 2022.

POST DEVELOPMENT

In last month's Headquarters Bulletin, I discussed six indicators that will tell you if your Post is in need of revitalization. Those six indicators can be found in our New Post & Revitalization Guide available to you on vfw.org or by ordering the guide from the National Membership Department via our *online Membership Material Order form*. And... if you dig a little deeper, you may uncover issues impacting your retention from year to year. What is your Post doing this year to ensure your members feel value in their membership? Keeping our members is critically important to the health of the VFW. If your Membership Chair is not looking at retention, your Post and Districts are missing a big part of the growth equation. 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. **Give me a call!**

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 Jan. 10, 2022, at 2 PM, CST, Topic: **VFW Mobile Phone Recruiting App**.

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

The Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) grant closed on Dec. 31, 2021. However, it will reopen sometime during the first quarter of 2022. Please keep an eye out for communications regarding the reopening of the grant and check vfw.org/utch for updates. Thank you to all the Posts that participated and helped us reach our goal of providing one million meals during 2021!

Development

2022 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign Kicks Off – Your support is urgently needed for the 2022 VFW NVS Annual Campaign, which enables us to assist all generations of America's veterans – especially the thousands of heroes who served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – receive the benefits they have earned. We can't fight for veterans alone. Your donation right now ensures the VFW's national force of highly trained service officers is at the ready to help America's veterans navigate the complicated VA system.

In this package, many will receive a 2022 Petition to Congress and a Memorial Day card. Please sign the petition and card and return them. We will be collecting the petitions and delivering them to Congress to tell them that any proposed cuts to veterans' benefits are a slap in the face to all of us who have worn the uniform. The signed cards will be distributed to hospitalized veterans and service members in time for Memorial Day. Other members will receive the 2022 Member Survey to fill out and return.

Your 2021 Year-End Tax Receipt Is On Its Way! – Late January, we will be mailing the 2021 Year-End Tax Receipts to VFW members who have requested to receive one at the end of the year.

A Simple Way to Make a Big Difference – Making a gift in your will is the easiest way to support the VFW and your fellow veterans after your lifetime. Did you know, only a few sentences in your will can make a lifetime impact? We invite you to learn more about this type of legacy gift and the lasting impact you can leave your family and the VFW. Free information is available by visiting vfw.org/PlannedGiving, contacting the VFW Planned Giving office at 816.968.1119 or emailing plannedgiving@vfw.org.

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. Thank you for your support!

Attention 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 your donation will represent your Department’s fundraiser for VMS to qualify for All-American.

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

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.

FLY THE FLAG ON MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.’S BIRTHDAY. The U.S. federal flag code has been amended by Congress and signed by the president to add Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to the list of days on which the flag should be displayed. His birthday is observed on the third Monday in January; therefore, the flag

should be flown on that day. To purchase a U.S. flag from the VFW Store, go to vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags.

Many communities are conducting community service projects that day. It is highly suggested that all members support this day of service.

SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM REMINDER. Nominations for this award and the judging at the Post and District level (if applicable) should be completed and their winner submitted to their Department Headquarters for their judging by Jan. 1. 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 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 National judging is the “Teacher of the Year Award Department 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**. The form should be completed and any documentation included with the nomination should be downloaded to this form.

PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT DEADLINE REMINDER. The deadline for submitting the Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen winner packets to National Headquarters is Jan. 15, 2022 (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 or 816.968.1155.

VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS. Departments are asked to submit a VFW Department Public Servant Award Request form for each winning nominee (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office no later than Feb. 1. 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

Each Department will receive their three 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 and EMTs, 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.

Simply visit 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** for the requested documentation.

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.

YOUTH HUNTING AND SHOOTING PROGRAMS. VFW has been involved with the National Rifle Association (NRA) since 1920. Through the NRA, hundreds of VFW Posts provide hunter safety courses and sponsor shooting competitions. Annually, VFW and NRA offer junior and adult small-bore rifle and air rifle individual and team matches conducted by mail called Postal Matches.*

NRA Postal Matches are designed for VFW rifle teams as a sport activity for youth and adults to build interest in rifle shooting and safety. A Postal Match is a match in which competitor's fire on their home ranges using targets which have been marked for identification. The team match is a series of four monthly matches for teams sponsored by VFW Posts held from December through March. The individual VFW match is fired in the fall with a December closing date. The scores are then mailed to the NRA for ranking of awards.

If your VFW Post does not already participate in the Youth/Adult Rifle Program and would like to take part in a program that has great appeal for youngsters as well as adults, please go to the NRA's Postal Match website nrahq.org/compete/dept-postal.asp.

Complete program information, rules, and entry form (in PDF format) are available:
postalmatches.nra.org/documents/pdf/compete/Postals/VFW%20Postal.pdf.

If you have any questions, please contact the NRA directly at:

National Rifle Association
Competitive Shooting Division
11250 Waples Mill Rd.
Fairfax, VA 22030
Email: postals@nrahq.org
Phone: 703.267.1482

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

*There are clubs and Posts, etc. that have local shooting programs all around the world. They teach gun safety and target shooting. Often, they wish to compete against other groups but cannot afford to travel to competitions. The NRA created “postal matches,” where a team of shooters can have their own local competition using paper targets. These are NRA-sanctioned targets and must be signed by local officials verifying the manner in which the competition was conducted and the age of the participants. Those targets are then sent to the NRA Postal Match Program and, using the targets from the various groups, the NRA judges determine who wins, places, etc. and awards prizes. That way, the shooting match can involve shooters and clubs from almost anywhere without anyone having to travel. It’s all done through the U.S. Postal System. Hence, the term, “Postal Match.”

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.

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

5 Ways to Avoid Tax Scams

Tax filing season is upon us. Each week, the IRS says 30 million or more Americans are filing their taxes, for an average refund of \$2,920. That number represents a golden shot to criminals and scam attempts are on the rise. That's why it's always smart to be on guard.

1. File your returns as early as you can.
2. Sign up for scam alerts from the FTC.
3. Never send emails with personally identifiable information attached. If you must, password lock the documents you're sending and send the password itself in a separate email.
4. Protect your financial accounts with two step authentication and complex passwords.
5. Order a copy of your free annual credit report from each of the three credit reporting bureaus.

Be sure you're fully protected when if you're the victim of identity theft. [Get protection today.](#)

"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

New Accredited Service Officer Virtual Basic Training

NVS is excited to announce that Virtual Basic Accredited Service Officer Training will be available Feb. 7-11, 2022, for newly accredited representatives who have not yet participated in an NVS training conference. This conference will be a hybrid conference, with attendees receiving video training using the VFW Online Learning Portal as well as daily live instruction using Zoom teleconferencing software.

Formal notification to students who are required to participate in this conference will be sent in the coming weeks, along with instructions on how to register and access the course.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

The first session of the 117th Congress concluded with two significant legislative victories for veterans. The *PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act* and the *Protecting Moms Who Served Act of 2021* both became public law. The first will establish a pilot program on dog training therapy for veterans diagnosed with PTSD and require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide service dogs for those veterans, including veterinary insurance. The second will structure VA's maternity care coordination program to equip community care providers with training and support for the unique pregnancy and postpartum needs of women veterans. Read the VFW Action Corps Weekly for updates as we continue our advocacy efforts on behalf of VFW members and all our nation's veterans in 2022

Roll Call of Departed Comrades

GWIZDAK, JOHN F., Past Commander-in- Chief, 2000-2001, National Council of Administration member, 1990-1992, All American Commander, Department of Georgia, 1988-1989, Department Adjutant/Quartermaster, 1992-1998 and 2004-2006, Department Quartermaster, 2010-2020 and a Gold Legacy Life Member of Delma Barbour Post 5080, Lake City, Georgia, December 26, 2021