

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



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

January, 2023

“Florida Rocks”

Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland has issued a challenge to all VFW Posts for the month of January 2023!

As we enter a new year, we challenge all our VFW Posts to make a resolution to increase our membership numbers!

For this month's Commander's Challenge, we are focusing on increasing our total membership to reach the goal of 102% plus this year! We will be tracking all Post membership increases throughout the month. New members, renewing members, reinstated members; all increases will count for this contest!

At the end of January, the Post that leads each membership division will receive \$1,000 deposited into the Post account! Let's get out there to recruit new members, retain our existing members, and bring lapsed members back into the fold! It's time to start the new year off strong because EVERY VETERAN COUNTS!

This contest will count the Post's total membership from Jan. 1, 2023, through close of business on Jan. 31, 2023. Members processed through the Online Membership System before close of business will be processed that day; membership applications sent in via fax or mail will be processed when received.

2022-23 NEW RECRUITING AWARD

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

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

2022-23 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2022-23 Membership Program is available online at 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

Please take some time to reflect on the many accomplishments you have influenced this past year, the life-changing resources you have put others in touch with when needed and the support you have provided your

fellow VFW & VFW Auxiliary comrades. We are pushing hard to recruit new members in the VFW. Have you received your Recruiter One Pin from the Commander-in-Chief? You still have time to get it done! 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 me at coreyhunt@vfw.org and we will help you!

Congratulations to the Department of Mississippi for chartering new Post 12216, Wiggins, Mississippi, established Dec. 9, 2022!

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 toward 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 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. 9, 2023, at 2 p.m., 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?

As we begin a new year, 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.*

2023 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign Kicks Off – Your support is urgently needed for the 2023 VFW NVS Annual Campaign, which enables us to assist all generations of America's veterans – especially the thousands of heroes now home from 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 2023 Petition to Congress and an "American Hero" Memorial Day Ribbon 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 2023 "Help Our Heroes" Member Survey to fill out and return.

January 2023 Label and Certificate of Appreciation – Later this month the VFW is mailing the 2023 Label and Certificate of Appreciation. Also enclosed is a special Memorial Day "American Hero" Ribbon Card. Please sign and return it right away. We will deliver your signed Thank You card to one of America's service members or hospitalized veterans in time for Memorial Day, this Memorial Day. It means so much to them to know their fellow veterans remember and care.

Right now, thousands of veterans are living with the physical and mental trauma of war. The physical wounds can be seen, but what about those veterans who suffer in silence? There are thousands of veterans who carry the invisible wounds of war, such as Traumatic Brain Injury and Post-Traumatic Stress.

The VFW wants to be sure when veterans from all wars and conflicts turn to us for assistance, we have the programs available for them. Please send a donation in honor of your fellow veterans who now face a long road to recovery from injuries sustained in battle. Your gift will mean that these programs stay available and strong for all veterans, right in *your* Department.

Your 2022 Year-End Tax Receipt Is On Its Way! – Late January we will be mailing the 2022 Year-End Tax Receipts to VFW members who have requested to receive one at the end of the year.

Join the Prestigious VFW Heroes Circle! – You can join an elite group of our most dedicated members and supporters in the VFW Heroes Circle! Comprised of those who wish to further our mission with a gift in their wills or other estate plans, the VFW Heroes Circle was created to honor our most loyal supporters who have made this extraordinary commitment to America's veterans, service members and their families.

To learn how easy it is to make an impact on future generations of veterans, please contact the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org. More information is available online at 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 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. By visiting heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools, you will find the latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

Veterans & Military Support Programs

All-American Requirement

Encourage your Posts to donate directly to the VMS Programs by going to the VFW Dashboard and go 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 continued support!**

Stay tuned for a new VMS and Programs donation portal for instant credit to the Dashboard.

VMS Donation 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.

VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"

The Fall 2023 application will be available early January 2023 and can be found online at 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.

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 for general donation purposes only.

Thank you for what you do every day!

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. 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.

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.

“NEW” 2022-23 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 winners submitted to their Department Headquarters for their judging by Jan. 1. After Department judging, each Department can select one candidate from each category and submit their winners 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 is the “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form.” A link has been forwarded on to the Department Adjutant/Quartermaster to submit it to National Headquarters by Feb. 1. The form should be completed and any documentation included with the nomination should be downloaded to this form for each winner.

You can locate additional information by logging in to vfw.org and searching under “My VFW” in the Training & Support section.

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 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.

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.

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**.

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.

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.

“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.

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

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?”*

You can help protect your loved ones by looking into all the life plans available in the insurance market. Each product is meant to protect you and your spouse through all stages of your life. Whether you're still employed or living in your retirement, you are guaranteed acceptance until age 75.

For additional information about your Life Insurance Plan options, click [here](#) or call 1.877.850.0183.

“Buddy”[®] Poppy

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

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

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

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

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy 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 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

New Accredited Service Officer Virtual Basic Training

NVS is excited to announce that Virtual Basic Accredited Service Officer Training will be available Feb. 13 - 17, 2023, 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.

Legislative Victories

The second session of the 117th Congress concluded with five significant legislative victories for veterans. The National Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) Memorial location and Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) reform on sexual assault and harassment were included as sections in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022. The provisions establish that the GWOT Memorial shall be placed within the Reserve on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and that sexual assault and harassment are crimes punishable under the UCMJ. The *Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act* and the *Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act* both became law in June 2022. These two bills expanded VA mammography provisions, screenings for veterans who served in certain areas during specific time periods, and breast cancer treatment within VA. Finally, the *Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022*, known as the *Honoring our PACT Act*, became law in August 2022. This historic legislation will help millions of toxic-exposed veterans receive health care and services they desperately need and deserve. Read the *VFW Action Corps Weekly* for updates in 2023 as we continue our advocacy efforts on behalf of our nation's veterans from all eras.

VFW Store

You can now present dispatchers with their own certificate of recognition.

vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation

And check out the various tokens of appreciation you can award participants in the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen contests.

vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy

vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen