

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



**BULLETIN**

**Ocala, Florida**

**March, 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.

## 2022 KANSAS CITY SPREE

The top two Post Commanders and the top two District Commanders in each division who achieve 100 percent membership by April 1, 2022, along with their guest will each be awarded:

- Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, MO, from the airport nearest the awardee's home.
- A fun-filled weekend (May 19-22, 2022) that may include but is not limited to touring, shopping and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

## 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.**

## **POST DEVELOPMENT**

Thank you for the many on-going efforts across all Departments to establish new Posts out there this year! I have had calls with many of you to help determine your next steps. Engaging with your Department leadership, community leaders in public safety and municipal services are also very good places to start! For more tips on how to institute a new Post, check out our New Post Development & Revitalization Manual, which can be viewed/downloaded from [VFW.org](http://VFW.org), under Membership Retention & Training. 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.

## **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](http://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 March 7, 2022, at 2 PM, CST, Topic: All-American Dashboard.

## **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](http://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:**

<b><u>Levels</u></b>		<b><u>Posts</u></b>	<b><u>Departments</u></b>	<b><u>National</u></b>
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 is now open! Through this grant program, Posts and Auxiliaries that donate 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 also qualify for grant funds based on 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, is accessible at [vfw.org/UTCH](http://vfw.org/UTCH).

Contact: VFW Foundation Administrator Richard Potter at [RPotter@vfw.org](mailto:RPotter@vfw.org).

## VFW National Convention

**VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING** – 123rd National Convention housing opened Feb. 17, 2022. Housing reservation information is located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at [vfw.org/convention](http://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](http://vfw.org).

## Development

**Soon to Arrive – Special Edition VFW Birthday Cards** – This spring the VFW is mailing the 2022 Birthday Card Collection and other gifts in recognition of your commitment to the VFW – and to struggling veterans of all generations. Also enclosed is a special Thank You card for a veteran or service member. 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 Independence Day, this July 4th. It means so much to them to know their fellow veterans remember and care.

Approximately 3 million men and women have served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thousands of them have come home with injuries that will require a lifetime of care. Some injuries you can plainly see. Other wounds are invisible, but often just as devastating. Since 2000, more than 449,000 service members have suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury – and the numbers are rising every day. More than half of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans treated by the VA have received care for mental health issues such as Post-Traumatic Stress.

The VFW wants to be sure when these newest veterans – and 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 right in your Department.

**2022 Voice of Democracy State Winners** – It’s almost time! Watch your email for an announcement of the 2022 Voice of Democracy State winners to VFW Friends of Freedom. We hope you will take the opportunity to listen to the essay given by your state winner as well as the winners from other states. If you are not currently a member of the VFW Friends of Freedom, you can sign up to receive these important alerts at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org).

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

## Join the Inaugural VFW Day of Service.

The VFW is proud to announce the inaugural VFW Day of Service — a dedicated day of service led by VFW members throughout the country and the world. The inaugural VFW Day of Service kicks off the first Saturday in May, May 7, and marks the start of veteran-led community service projects to take place throughout the month.

The VFW Day of Service is an outgrowth of the organization's [#StillServing campaign](#) launched in 2020 to recognize the ongoing dedication of veterans and service members who continue to serve their communities. VFW Day of Service, led by veterans and in concert with other organizations and civic groups, is open for anyone to participate.

We're urging all members and Posts to visit [VFWDayofService.org](https://VFWDayofService.org) to register their event on the interactive Day of Service map and receive a special participation decal, or find a local event to join and see what other veterans around the country are doing to make a difference.

# Veterans & Military Support Programs

As we plan for the **2022 National Convention in Kansas City**, we want to remind all Veterans & Military Support Chairmen to get their money in for the 2021-22 lapel pins that were received at convention last year.

Please contact the Veterans & Military Support office at 816.968.1102 if you have any questions on how much your Department needs to send in.

There will be a new design for the **Veterans & Military Support** lapel pin for **2022-23**! Chairmen will be able to pre-order their pins to be picked up at convention again this year. If you have not turned in your donation for the 2021-22 lapel pins, you will need to do this before you can order pins for the upcoming year. Request forms will be provided sometime in April.

To qualify for All-American, **a minimum of \$100** must be donated to **Veterans & Military Support** by **June 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](https://heroes.vfw.org/page/22950/donate1)

### VMS Formstack Links:

- **VFW Website Solution:** [VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/websolutionapp](https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/websolutionapp)
- **AUX Website Solution:** [VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/auxwebsolutionapp](https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/auxwebsolutionapp)
- **Chairman Report:** [VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vms\\_chairman\\_report](https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vms_chairman_report)



- **MAP Grant Application:** [vfw.org/MAPGrantApplication](http://vfw.org/MAPGrantApplication)
- **MAP Grant Report:** [vfw.org/MAPGrantReport](http://vfw.org/MAPGrantReport)
- **Adopt a Unit Application:** [vfw.org/AdoptAUnitApp](http://vfw.org/AdoptAUnitApp)
- **Adopt a Unit Report:** [vfw.org/AdoptAUnitReport](http://vfw.org/AdoptAUnitReport)
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## VFW Programs

**DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS.** Military service flags, insignias, etc., should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to [vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag](http://vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag).

**2022 VIRTUAL VOICE OF DEMOCRACY – PARADE OF WINNERS.** The Parade of Winners awards ceremony will be on Thursday, April 7, at 7 PM. The ceremony will be streamed live on the VFW Facebook page.

**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.

**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](mailto: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.

**“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](http://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

### Save Money While Making Memories.

Life experiences can often change our view of the world and how we perceive others. Trips to new places often offer the chance to experience new perspectives and help us grow as human beings. While money can come, and money can go, making memories helps create a narrative that can be shared and passed along to children, grandchildren, and our friends and family.

Now, with access to exclusive discounts on everything from home goods and the latest gadgets, to entertainment, travel and big-ticket buys, being a VFW member means you get to save time AND money! Visit [vfw.perkspot.com/login](http://vfw.perkspot.com/login) to create an account and save on your next adventure.

## “Buddy”<sup>®</sup> Poppy

**“BUDDY”<sup>®</sup> 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](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 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](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 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 NOW OPEN.

Official notification of the John A. Biedrzycki Accredited Service Representative of the Year Award for 2021-22 was sent out to all Departments on Feb. 8.

We encourage every Department to put forth a candidate. A nomination shows that Department leadership is aware of the significant contributions your service representatives make in your community every day, even during these times when many of us are working from our homes.

### ELIGIBILITY:

Eligible nominees include:

- Department Service Officers
- Assistant Department Service Officers
- Claims Consultants/Representative/Analysts/Reviewers
- Veterans Service Officers/Representatives

Individuals NOT eligible for this award are:

- VFW National Staff
- VFW Contractors
- VFW accredited representatives whose primary employer is other than the VFW or a State Veterans Agency
- Previous Winners of the Accredited Representative of the Year Award

**SELECTION CRITERIA:**

1. Nominees for the annual award must have demonstrated exceptional efforts in assisting veterans and their families during the 12 months preceding the April 30 deadline.
2. A brief summary (no more than 2 pages) is to be submitted which explains the who, what, when, where, and how the nominee’s efforts are considered exemplary. Suggested items for consideration (but not limited to)
  - Number of individuals with VFW POAs assisted
  - Community outreach conducted
  - Examples of excellent customer service provided
  - Meticulous use of VetraSpec or another electronic claims processing system (specify system)
  - Submission of **TIMELY** monthly reports (if located in a VA regional office)
  - Number of VFW members recruited
  - Innovative methods of assistance provided during the COVID-19 pandemic

Each Department Commander may nominate one eligible individual for this award. The individual who is ultimately chosen as the recipient of the award will be furnished round-trip travel (for the winner and one guest) and two night’s hotel accommodations to attend the VFW National Convention (if an in-person event is held) where the award will be presented. In addition, the award recipient will receive \$599 in recognition of their accomplishments and to offset travel expenses.

Nominations can be submitted to [taldana@vfw.org](mailto:taldana@vfw.org) by no later than April 30.

## National Legislative Service/Action Corps

### **VFW Virtual March Legislative Conference**

The VFW March Legislative Conference will take place Feb. 28 – Mar. 2. Although the format will be virtual again this year, rest assured we will make sure that veterans’ voices are heard on Capitol Hill. Our National Legislative Committee members will lead their department delegations along with the VFW-SVA Fellows to present the VFW’s legislative priorities to members of Congress and their staffers. VFW Commander-in-Chief Matthew “Fritz” Mihelcic will testify before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs on Wednesday, March 2 at 2:00 p.m. EST. [Watch the hearing.](#)

## Independent Budget Released

Leading veterans service organizations (VSOs) — the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), DAV (Disabled American Veterans), and Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) — have released [The Independent Budget \(IB\) Recommendations for the Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\) for FY 2023 and FY 2024](#). This report serves as a roadmap to ensure VA is fully funded and capable of carrying out its mission to serve veterans and their families, both now and in the future. “For over 30 years, the IBVSOs have co-authored the IB, offering substantive solutions and policy recommendations to ensure the timely delivery of specialized health care, as well as appropriate earned benefits for the men and women who served,” said Bob Wallace, executive director of VFW Washington Office. “While this year’s report is now complete, it is now imperative Congress and VA work together, along with veterans service organizations and other veterans stakeholders to put veterans interests on the top of their list.”

## VFW Store



**ORDER YOUR VFW UNIFORM CAP TODAY!** Officer changes will be taking place soon. The peak season for ordering caps is April to August, when the VFW Store processes more than 7,000 cap orders. During this period, it can take up to 10 weeks to receive your cap. To order today, go to [vfwstore.org/category/vfw/uniformcapandnametag](https://vfwstore.org/category/vfw/uniformcapandnametag) or call 833.VFW.VETS (833.839.8387).

**CELEBRATE THE**  
The VFW’s audio  
has a



**75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOICE OF DEMOCRACY!** essay contest marks its 75th year this year, and the VFW Store commemorative T-shirt; available for a limited time only. [vfwstore.org/products/GP392](https://vfwstore.org/products/GP392)