

**Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Department of North Carolina**

General Order #3

November 2, 2023

- 1. VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN ESSAY CONTEST DEADLINE REMINDER.** The deadline for the annual Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay contests was October 31st. The students must have their completed entry form with the (audio and/or written) essay submitted to a participating VFW Post by Oct. 31, 2023. Each corresponding deadline for Post, District and Department to have their entries to the next level are Nov. 15, 2023, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2023, for completion of District judging; Jan. 10, 2024, for completion of Department judging and the Department winners are due to National Headquarters by Jan. 15, 2024.
- 2. SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM DEADLINE REMINDER.** The deadline for the annual Teacher Award contest was October 31. All teacher nominations should have been completed and submitted to a participating VFW Post by Oct. 31, 2023. A completed nomination should consist of a completed entry form with a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five-pages, including the resume, as a maximum of documentation of their teacher experience, along with a head-and-shoulder photo, if available at the time. Each corresponding deadline for Post, District, if applicable, and Department to have their entries to the next level are as follows: Nov. 15, 2023, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2023, for completion of District judging, if applicable; Feb. 1, 2024, for completion of Department judging and their winners forwarded to National Headquarters.
- 3. NEW UPDATES.** VFW National Programs has updated the Fred C. Hall and Outstanding Community Service Post award programs starting this program year. Please share this with your Community Service Chairpersons. The new programs are as follows: FRED C. HALL MEMORIAL AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE. Each year on July 1, the national Programs office will determine the top community service Posts in each conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact, from July 1 to June 30 the previous year. Your community service total impact is figured by the money spent to host and organize the community service event, plus total hours all volunteers participated, plus the mileage for all volunteers (Dollars Donated + Hours + Mileage = Total Impact). These four Posts will be awarded the Fred C. Hall Memorial Award for Community Service and will be invited to attend the VFW National Convention. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations for five nights, and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.
- 4. OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POST OF THE YEAR.** Each Department will have an OCSP winner based on total impact also. National will select based on end of year reports on July 1. Winners will also be published in the Convention program booklet and receive a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.
- 5. VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS.** All nominations, consisting of a completed Post entry form and the required documentation, should be in the hands of the local Post by Oct. 31, so they may begin their judging. Once their judging has been completed, VFW Post Safety Chairperson's are to submit up to five winning nominees (one for each career area) to the Department Safety Chairperson for judging no later than **Jan. 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 9 • VFW National 911 Dispatcher Award • VFW National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician (E.O.D.T.) Award

6. **CONDUCT A VETERAN'S DAY PROGRAM ON NOV. 11.** Organize a community event on Veterans Day honoring all veterans. For a ceremonial procedure, refer to the information found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairperson's Guide. If you should need a Veterans Day speech, please go to: vfw.org/MY-VFW/Patriotic-Holiday-Speeches.
7. **HALF-STAFF U.S. FLAG ON DEC. 7.** Public Law 103-308, passed in 1994, designates Dec. 7 as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day" and requests the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff (sunrise to sunset) in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on that day. To order a flag, 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.
8. **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
9. **The Winter Council of Administration meeting** will be held at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro, NC 204 Centreport Drive, Greensboro. February 2-4, 2023. Contact the Embassy Suites hotel for reservations 336-668-4535. Council members and Past Department Commanders reservations will be reserved by the department. Hotel link and meeting information can be found on vfwnc.com. **** the hotel is now CASHLESS. Guests can use credit cards for rooms payments, restaurant, bar or gift shop. You can also charge to your room with a valid credit card.******
10. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 218(a)(11)(b), Manual of Procedure, Trustees, which states that Post Trustees shall prepare and submit quarterly, through their Post Commander, a Post Trustees' Report of Audit to the Department Quartermaster. Do not mail these reports to National Headquarters.
11. Attention of Department and Post Commanders is directed to the requirement of timely filing of Internal Revenue Form 990 and 990/T, where applicable. Forms may be secured from your local Post Office or branch office of the Internal Revenue Service.
12. **Membership dues:** Members are reminded that their annual membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been changed to a 12-month dues structure that started July 1, 2018. The changes to subscription dues to a "DMV" model now allows anyone who becomes a member or renews membership to postpone expiration until the last day of their 12th month. For example, if a new member joins or an existing member renews on July 5, 2023, their dues now expire on July 31, 2024. The annual membership card (effective July 1, 2023) reflects the month and year dues expire. Current members that are in good standing as of July 1, 2023, have been extended in OMS through the last day of the month when their dues are scheduled to expire. Regardless of the month they renewed, as long as they were in good standing as of July 1, 2023, they now have until the end of the expiration month to renew their dues. Members that are in good standing but have not renewed for the 2023-24 membership year will see the changes on their digital ID card reflecting the updated month and year when their dues expire. They will have the option to request an updated annual membership card with the change reflecting the expiration month and year. The purpose of the changes to subscription dues to a "DMV" model was to streamline the process for both the Post and Department Quartermasters to track expiring annual members. No longer will Posts and Departments have to chase annual members' dues on a daily basis; instead they can see a block of members during a specific month (one, two and three months out), allowing them to formulate a plan to collect dues at one time. This also makes it easier for the Department/District/ Post Sergeant-at-Arms to quickly see if a member is in good standing prior to a meeting.

13. For the purpose of establishing continuous membership, a member may reimburse Department and National dues for all delinquent years, provided they were a member in good standing for five (5) consecutive years prior to the delinquency.
14. The Manual of Procedure amendment passed by the 119th National Convention modified Section 1001(25) to read, "The dispensation and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages or the use of smoking/vaping products in VFW meeting rooms during VFW meetings are prohibited."
15. A thorough program of Post inspection is necessary to ensure compliance with National and Department Bylaws and directives. District Inspectors shall make every effort to inspect every Post under their cognizance on an annual basis and correct such discrepancies as may be disclosed.
16. U.S. Army ARDEC has issued guidance on the operation and maintenance of the M1 Garand. The manual can be found in the VFW Training & Support section at vfw.org or you can visit the M1 Garand Associated Website: m1garandtraining.com.
17. The distribution of VFW "Buddy"® Poppies will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in Sections 711 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure. Department, District, County Council and Post Commanders should arrange now for the distribution of "Buddy" Poppies in their respective areas. All profits accruing from the distribution of "Buddy" Poppies shall be used in accordance with Section 704 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure.
18. VMS donations will only be handled through the Dashboard moving forward. An email was sent out on June 29, 2023, annotating this change and explaining the NEW donation page. All Posts have to do is click on the VMS donation tab on the Dashboard to donate. The link will point them to OMS. No more checks to the National Headquarters. If a Post does not use a credit card, the Post will send their donation to their Department HQs and the Department HQs will fill out the donation for their Post. Credit will automatically update on the Dashboard daily. No more weekly updates.
19. Send any information corrections to the Department Adjutant at adj@vfwnc.com.

By Order of:
Helen Nelson
Commander
Department of North Carolina

Official:

Helen Nelson

Adjutant

Department of North Carolina