

Membership

Congratulations to the Departments of Montana, Nevada, Alaska, Pacific Areas, and Oregon for achieving 100 percent in membership! National membership is just over 95 percent and we are less than 48,516 members from reaching 100 percent for the first time in over 25 years! We are making it happen! Keep your foot on the accelerator and let's make our next goal of 97 percent by April 1, 2019. Contact the National Membership Department if there is anything we can do to help you achieve our end of year goal of 1,200,000 members!

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, 2019, along with their spouse or guest, will be awarded:

- Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, Mo., from the airport nearest the awardee's home.
- A fun-filled weekend (May 16-19, 2019) that may include but is not limited to – touring, shopping, and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

“LUCKY STARS” MEMER DRAWING

Five (5) winners will be drawn and accompany the Commander-in-Chief on an all-expense-paid trip May 6-12, 2019, along with their spouse or guest.

For any new/reinstated member recruited between July 1, 2018, and April 1, 2019:

- You will receive one (1) chance for every five (5) new/reinstated members recruited.
- You will receive ten (10) additional chances for every increment of 25 new/reinstated members recruited.

Attention Post and District Commander:

- You will receive ten (10) chances in recognition of 85%+ Post and District retention.

Drawing will take place on April 2, 2019! All awards are non-transferable.

WE GOT THE GOODS!

Since the Veterans of Foreign Wars rebranded, we have all new material in the Membership Department. You can find the order form by logging into www.vfw.org and clicking on the Membership Recruiting & Retention section of the Training and Support link. All forms can be downloaded and/or printed, and you can order materials directly to your house for a small fee! The link to the form:

https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/MY_VFW/Training-and-Support/Membership/Membership-Order-Form.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20190123T185235Z.

If you need materials from Membership, call or email us at 1.888.JOIN.VFW or membership@vfw.org. If you're needing help to pay for a booth at a local event, call your Department Quartermaster as they have the funds available to help you.

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to www.vfw.org and click on JOIN, 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 offer 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?

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Top Three Recruiters (as of 2/20/19):

Mark A. Short – 298

VFW Post 9400, Dept. of AZ

Carlo S. Davis – 199

VFW Post 9191, Dept. of TX

Joseph T. Allen – 127

VFW Post 3285, Dept. of MD

DEPARTMENTS WITH NEW POSTS:

VFW Post No. 12184 in Roswell, NM

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS & CHANGES

Hip Pocket Training: Login and go online to <https://www.vfw.org/my-vfw/vfw-training-and-support/membership-recruiting-and-retention> to view the latest training videos from the Membership Department. If you have any questions or topics you would like to cover, please email them to membership@vfw.org in advance and we will cover them on the next training video. We also post these webinars on our Facebook page! If you're not on Facebook, you can still view the webinars on YouTube here: https://youtu.be/z_5MovJgD6E?list=PLS17GMBRjUlatKGz_QdpAoUHnXAvaPXi.

VFW Foundation

VFW FOUNDATION GARNERS CORPORATE SUPPORT

Three corporate supporters have agreed to renew their commitments to VFW programs and services:

Ace Hardware will repeat the Million Flag Giveaway initiated over the Memorial Day weekend in 2018. Details will be forthcoming.

In addition to National Convention Sponsorship, Comcast NBCUniversal will cover expenses for the Blevins family to attend the 2019 National Convention in Orlando. Mr. Blevins is a recipient of a VFW Unmet Needs grant and was featured in a recent VFW video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOmyZwbRp_s).

Humana is sponsoring the 2019 NVS training sessions for VFW-accredited veteran service officers.

Please encourage all VFW and Auxiliary members in your Departments to honor these corporate supporters with their patronage.

VFW National Convention

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING:

120th National Convention housing officially opened Feb. 15, 2019. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at www.vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Orlando, Fla., July 20-24, 2019, 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 www.vfw.org.

Development

Soon to Arrive – Special Edition VFW Birthday Cards – This spring the VFW is mailing the 2019 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 4. It means so much to them to know their fellow veterans remember and care.

Approximately 2.9 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 380,000 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.

2019 Voice of Democracy Grand-Prize Winner to be Announced – In late February, we sent an announcement of the 2019 Voice of Democracy State winners to VFW Friends of Freedom. We hope you had a chance to listen to the essay given by your state winner as well as the winners from other states. The grand-prize winner will be announced on Monday, March 4, at the VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Log on to www.vfw.org/VFWDC2019 for a live stream of the Parade of Winners. If you are not currently a member of the VFW Friends of Freedom, you can sign up to receive these kinds of alerts at www.vfw.org.

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 – and with gifts that cost you nothing now. Call the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119, email plannedgiving@vfw.org or visit www.vfw.org/plannedgiving.

Have You Heard About the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism? – Would you like to support 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. 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 www.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 www.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. You need only go to 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 mailing schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the Department Resources tools to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

VFW Communications

Get ready for the 2019 VFW Legislative Conference by downloading the new VFW Events app today in the [Apple App Store](#) or the [Google Play Store](#). Users who don't have a smart phone or tablet can also access the app [here](#).

Stay up to date with all of the action throughout the legislative conference by following #VFWDC2019 on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Not able to join us in D.C.? Watch the livestream of the Parade of Winners Monday, March 4 at 6 p.m. EST and the delayed livestream of the Chief's testimony on March 6, all at www.vfw.org/VFWDC2019.

Veterans & Military Support Programs

As we plan for the 2019 National Convention in Orlando, we want to remind all Veterans & Military Support Chairmen to get their money in for the 2018-19 lapel pins picked up in Kansas City.

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 2019-20! Chairmen will be able to request their pins to pick up in Orlando but if you have not turned in your donation for the 2018-19 lapel pins, you will need to pay upfront for the 2019-20 pins. Request forms will be provided sometime in March.

Reminder: All donations to Veterans & Military Support programs must be received by April 30 to qualify for the Veterans & Military Support Certificate of Appreciation. To qualify for the certificate, a minimum of \$100 must be donated to Veterans & Military Support or any of the individual programs.

VFW Programs

VFW Posts and Auxiliaries reported donating over 10.3 million volunteer hours and \$47 million toward community service work from April 1, 2017, to May 31, 2018. The total value of our volunteers' efforts is valued at over \$302 million.

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 and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/GP238>.

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 www.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 <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam>.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN THEMES. The 2019–20 themes have been chosen by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief William J. “Doc” Schmitz. The Voice of Democracy and the Patriot’s Pen theme will be “What Makes America Great.”

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN BROCHURES. The new 2019–20 Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen entry forms will be available on the VFW website on approximately April 1, 2019.

Simply visit <https://www.vfw.org/Login.aspx>, log in to My VFW, then click on **VFW Training & Support** under the **Member Resources** heading, then click on Community Service & Youth Programs and Activities, then click on **Chairman Manuals** under the **Additional Resources** heading. Here you will find all program materials.

Additionally, as of April 1, anyone (including students, parents, teachers, and chairmen) can download and print the student entry forms for Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen by visiting the below links:

Voice of Democracy: <http://www.vfw.org/VOD/>

Patriot’s Pen: <http://www.vfw.org/PatriotsPen/>

For Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen brochures, posters, awards and more, visit the VFW Store: <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy> for Voice of Democracy and <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen> for Patriot’s Pen.

SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD.

Nominations for this award and the judging at the Post, District and Department level are completed. Each Department's selections will receive a National Commendation citation. The National winners will be announced soon!

The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher awards include: three national \$1,000 awards for the top K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses; \$1,000 award to each winning teacher's school; plaques for both the winning teacher and school; and, an all-expenses- paid trip to attend the VFW National Convention in July 2019 in Orlando, Fla. In addition, the top 10 national high school teachers will be invited to attend one of the available Summer Graduate seminars at the Freedoms Foundation in Valley Forge, Pa.

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

If you have any questions, please contact the VFW Programs office at 816.756.3390, ext. 6287.

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 <http://www.nrahq.org/compete/dept-postal.asp>.

Complete program information, rules, and entry form (in PDF format) are available: <http://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
e-mail: 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 e-mail qcarroll@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 2018–19 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman’s Manual.

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.

WORLD WAR ONE COMMISSION PARTNERSHIP. Any municipal government, individual or organization may apply. Likewise, any individual, organization or company can become a sponsor of this effort, as the more we can raise toward this program, the greater the amount of the matching grant to the winning memorials.

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/about-the-program.html>

The VFW role is to help publicize the program and get local Posts (and Auxiliaries) involved.

A sample project is at: <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/resources.html#project-profiles>. (See the Ocean Springs video.)

A fun starting point is to first find memorials around the country. Information on this is at <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/memorial-hunters-club-about.html>. Scouting groups and 4-H Clubs can also get involved.

As you know, 2018 marked the centennial of World War I. There is a lot our members can do to help educate the public, commemorate the war, and honor those who served. The World War One Centennial Commission has created a landing page on their website for veterans to simplify navigation to key areas. You’ll find it at www.wwlcc.org/veterans. Here are a few suggestions:

-- **THE WORLD WAR ONE PODCAST** is an award winner! Subscribe here: ww1cc.org/cn and become the envy of your friends and colleagues with your knowledge about all matters related to the Great War! Subscribe to the **Dispatch** newsletter to keep up to date. Listen to the Centennial News **Podcasts**. Podcast #61 features VFW Post 968 in Raymond, Wash., talking about their 100 Cities/100 Memorial project.

--Take advantage of the vast store of **education materials**, and use any meeting opportunity in your community to discuss the war and kindle interest in all matters related to the “War that Changed the World.”

--**Purchase a commemorative US Mint WWI coin** (\$10 from the sale of each coin funds the memorial).

-- **POPPY SEED PACKETS & PROGRAM.**

--The poppy as a symbol of remembrance was first proposed after the war by an American woman, Moina Michael, who wrote “*We shall keep the faith.*”

--Use the WWI poppy program to raise money for your organization and help us build the National Memorial! Flanders poppies are living symbols of the great sacrifice made by the doughboys, marines and sailors. They grow everywhere! Remember the Great War by planting poppies in your community. Go here and learn more: <https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/1881>.

--Make sure your ancestors or family members who served are listed on the **World War I Roll of Honor** and donate in their names toward building the WWI National Memorial with a “digital” remembrance wreath. The Roll of Honor features individual profiles for many of the more than 4 million American service members who responded to the call of “Over There” in support of the war-weary Allies and helped achieve victory. All donations go directly toward funding the memorial.

MEMORIAL HUNTERS -- WE NEED YOUR HELP. Dust off your Indiana Jones outfit - grab your smartphone/camera and get ready to hunt for treasure!

--Beginning 100 years ago at the end of WWI, thousands of local memorials were erected in honor of those who served. The memorials were put up by towns, cities, veterans’ organizations, schools, churches, civic organizations and clubs. Today, there is no national register of these important and long forgotten American cultural and historical treasures.

--Join the Memorial Hunters Club and help us hunt down and catalog this fading national treasure.

--We have already had huge help from the state Centennial teams, especially those in Alabama, Georgia and New Jersey who have cataloged hundreds of WWI memorials for their states.

--When you find some of these gems in your state, go here to register:

<https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/memorial-hunters-club-about.html>

--Get your [anthropology](#) on...It's time to go treasure hunting!

--Raise money for the memorial by supporting the **WWI Poppy Program**.

--**Learn more** about the memorial and see all the resources available at www.ww1cc.org.

For any follow-up questions, please contact Lynn Rolf, Programs Director, at lrolf@vfw.org or 816.968.1116.

WORLD WAR ONE CENTENNIAL NEWS:

WAS YOUR POST NAMED AFTER A WORLD WAR ONE VETERAN OR VETERANS? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! The U.S. World War One Centennial Commission (WWICC) is seeking information about VFW Posts named in honor of a local or national World War I veteran, along with stories

of his or her service, photographs, newspaper clippings and/or other historical information. WWICC will endeavor to honor these Posts by showcasing this special information on its website and feature highlights in its electronic *Dispatch* newsletter. Please note: any information received will be maintained by the commission and will become part of the U.S. Government's historical (Library of Congress) records/archives upon the expiry of its mandate. The point of contact is David W. Hamon, VSO/Military Director for the commission, at david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org and/or 540.379.8584.

WWICC has also created a special landing page for veterans, history lovers, family members, friends and community members. At ww1cc.org/veterans, visitors will find "tiles," easy to access and read, in order to educate, commemorate and honor the Great War, as per the commission's congressional mandate and charter.

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 18, 2019 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 27, 2019 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Day, Sept. 20, 2019 (third Friday in September); and Veterans Day, Nov. 11. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to <http://www.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

Dental Insurance

Your health needs dental care; your wallet needs dental insurance.

A lot of people dread bi-annual visits to the dentist. Despite the anxiety you may face, going to the dentist regularly is important in maintaining good oral health and overall health.

Routine visits to the dentist can help prevent tooth decay, bad breath and gum disease. Dentists can detect a handful of other maladies, such as Crohn's disease, diabetes, anemia and more.

Dental insurance is one of the most affordable investments you can make in your overall health. Most plans cover preventive exams, cleanings and some x-rays, and offer discounted rates for additional services.

For additional information about Dental Insurance, click [here](#).

"Buddy"® Poppy

MEMORIAL DAY CAMPAIGN. You should already be planning for the Memorial Day "Buddy"® Poppy Campaign. Contact your Department Quartermaster to place your order for poppies. Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 6 to 8 weeks in advance of your distribution date. Be sure to specify a date by which the poppies are required; do not use "ASAP." Miscellaneous items (coin cans, caps, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at <https://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy> or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

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 the VFW Buddy Poppies.

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 only for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th, 75th or 100th anniversary years. 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. 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.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS JOINS "WORLD WAR ONE POPPY PROGRAM." The Veterans of Foreign Wars is joining the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission in announcing the WWI Poppy Program to raise awareness about World War I and generate funds for local VSO chapters all over the country.

The VFW is proud to share with you the WWI Poppy Program; an opportunity to generate resources for your Post while helping to honor the 4.7 million Americans who wore the uniform during WWI.

Poppies grew across the war-torn battlefields of Europe after World War I. From 2017 to 2019, the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission will tell the story of those American veterans, through events, exhibits, and memorial efforts, and the VFW is proud to be a partner in this important commemoration.

Click on the following link to learn about the WWI Poppy Program and how your purchase of a Poppy Kit helps build the new National World War One Memorial in Washington, D.C., while also helping to raise money for your Post.

Link: ww1cc.org/poppy

Here is a quick video that can help people understand why it is so important that we honor those who served during World War I: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_y4l49mZso.

The red poppy is an internationally recognized symbol of veteran remembrance. Its use began in World War I and was captured in the war poem "In Flanders Fields," by Lt. Col. John McCrae.

REMINDER: Nominations for the Accredited Representative of the Year Award are due by April 30.

NVS has recognized previous award winners from the Departments of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and New Mexico. These service officers stood out from our nationwide cadre for not only meeting the challenge daily, but exceeding it through exemplary commitment, technical knowledge, and customer service.

We encourage every Department Commander to submit a nominee for this award.

ELIGIBILITY:

Eligible nominees include:

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

Individuals **NOT** eligible for this award are:

- VFW National Staff or
- VFW Contractors
- VFW accredited representatives whose primary employer is other than the VFW or a State veterans agency

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):
 - # of individuals with VFW POAs assisted
 - Community outreach conducted
 - Excellent customer service provided (examples required)
 - Use of VetraSpec or another electronic claims processing system (specify system)
 - Submission of **TIMELY** monthly reports (if located in a VA regional office)
 - # of VFW members recruited

AWARDS:

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 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 may be sent to the Director, VFW National Veterans Service, either by mail (200 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002, ATTN: Service Officer Award), faxed to 202.547.3196 (ATTN: Service Officer Award), or scanned and emailed to taldana@vfw.org.

Questions regarding this award should be sent to NVS at vfw@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

The VFW on Capitol Hill

More than 500 VFW members will be in Washington, D.C., March 3-6, for the VFW Legislative Conference. Members from each Department will meet with their members of Congress and staff to present the VFW's [2019 Priority Goals](#) and talking points. The areas of focus are: Blue Water Navy, Veterans' Health Care, Burn Pits, Concurrent Receipt, and Transition. View the talking points on our website at www.vfw.org/legislativepriorities under **See Where We Stand on the Issues**.

VFW Store



ORDER YOUR VFW UNIFORM CAP TODAY! Department Conventions are quickly approaching and officer changes will be taking place. The peak season for ordering caps is April to July, when the VFW Store processes over 10,000 cap orders! During this period, it can take up to 10 weeks to receive your cap. To order today, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/vfw/uniformcapandnametags> or call 833.VFW.VETS.

AWARD SCOUT OF THE YEAR PARTICIPANTS with a new badge from the VFW Store. Click: <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/31415?Action=SkipLogin>. For Scouting certificates, pins and patches, click: <https://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=scouting&Action=SkipLogin>.



Roll Call of Departed Comrades

AZZINARO, ARMONDO C., All American Commander, Department of Rhode Island, 1988-1989 and a Gold Legacy Life Member of Amancio-Falcone-Gaccione Post 8955, Westerly, Rhode Island, February 3, 2019.

GOEBEL, RICHARD E. "GEORGE," Commander, Department of Iowa, 2006-2007 and a Gold Legacy Life Member of Gerald F. Winter Post 9663, Dubuque, Iowa, February 17, 2019.