

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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A L I F E T I M E C O M M I T M E N T

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS:

Post Election Reports must be submitted following Post election of officers in April and no later than June 1 to the National Headquarters. We encourage all Post Quartermasters to use the online Election Report process featured in the Online Membership System (OMS).

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE:

VFW Advocacy Helps Save Tuition Assistance

Congress in March voted to reinstate military Tuition Assistance program as part of the continuing resolution to fund the federal government through the remainder of the fiscal year. The amendment that saved Tuition Assistance, S. Amdt. 72, was introduced by Sens. James Inhofe, R-Okla., and Kay Hagan, D-N.C., and championed by the VFW leading up to the Senate vote.

VFW Commander-in-Chief John Hamilton sent an “all hands” call to VFW advocates in an effort to muster support for the Inhofe/Hagan amendment. However, Senate debate over the continuing resolution stalled before the amendment could be considered, leading many on Capitol Hill to believe that hope for restoring Tuition Assistance through the continuing resolution was lost. Inhofe and Hagan quickly scrambled to introduce stand-alone legislation as a contingency plan.

Fortunately, VFW advocacy was unrelenting. In two short days, VFW advocates generated more than 14,000 calls and emails to Senate and House offices from every state. Finally, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nevada, presented the amendment to the Senate floor without objection, where it later passed by voice vote with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Prior to the amendment, the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard and Marine Corps cut off Tuition Assistance enrollment entirely in an effort to generate greater savings through budget sequestration. The Inhofe/Hagan amendment requires each military branch to continue operating their respective Tuition Assistance programs proportionate to budget sequestration.

The Marine Corps was the first branch to announce its suspension of the program. Since their announcement, the VFW has heard from countless service members across each service wondering what to do next. The VFW has been a longtime proponent of military Tuition Assistance and has been working diligently to reinstate and preserve the benefit – efforts that culminated with the passage of the continuing resolution.

The House officially passed their version of the continuing resolution on Thursday, March 21 prior to the spring recess. President Barack Obama signed it into law on Tuesday, March 26. The services will now develop plans to reinstate their Tuition Assistance programs in accordance with the law, and your VFW will be watching closely.

In the meantime, take a moment to thank you legislators for supporting military Tuition Assistance by clicking here: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/issues/alert/?alertid=62534086>.

If you haven't already, join our advocacy team by signing up to receive the VFW Washington Weekly e-newsletter at: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.

NATIONAL MILITARY SERVICES (NMS):

NMS Recognition Program deadline is April 30th! Donations *must* be received in the office before April 30th. The NMS Recognition Certificates will be sent to the departments for presentation at the Department Conventions. Any questions, please call Linda Ferguson at 816-968-1102.

REMINDER...the deadline for All American is June 30, 2013! **However**, to receive your All American Award at Convention your deadline is **June 15, 2013**.

All American Qualifications for National Military Services:

- **Posts**-Hold a fundraiser with proceeds going to NMS (\$100 minimum)
- **Districts**-Make a donation to NMS (\$250 minimum)
- **Departments**-Department fundraising event for NMS (non-reimbursable minimum of \$500 or donate \$500 to the program)

To qualify for All American--donations to NMS must be received by one of the following:

1. Mail check to VFW National Military Services, 406 W. 34th St, Suite 216, Kansas City, MO 64111
2. Call NMS for credit card donations over the phone at (816) 968-1155
3. Go online to www.vfw.org/contribute

BUDDY POPPY:

NATIONAL BUDDY POPPY DISPLAY CONTEST CHANGE EFFECTIVE 2012-2013.

Beginning with the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky the time frame for registering and setting up the Buddy Poppy displays for the National judging at Convention has changed. Entries will

now be accepted for registration and may be set up beginning at 8 a.m., Saturday, July 20 until noon, Monday, July 22, 2013.

MEMORIAL DAY BUDDY POPPY CAMPAIGN. Plans should be under way for the Memorial Day Buddy Poppy Campaign. Contact your Department Quartermaster to place your order for Buddy Poppies. Remember that your Poppies should be ordered a minimum of 12 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 <http://www.vfwstore.org/SearchResult.aspx?CategoryID=128> 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, Youth Essay, 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.

POST ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION. Commemorate your Post's anniversary in Buddy Poppy style! As your Post celebrates 25, 50 or 75 years, order special silver, gold, or diamond-colored Poppies for distribution throughout this monumental year.

Remember: With Buddy Poppy, every day is Veterans Day.

- No extra cost for the commemorative poppies.
- Designate part of your regular poppy order as anniversary poppies.
- Different sizes of ads can be found at department resources. (Please go to www.vfw.org and log on to MyVFW and click on Department Resources and VFW Buddy Poppy.)

Contact information: nclyfton@vfw.org (816) 968-1148. For Buddy Poppy merchandise go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/SearchResults.aspx?CategoryID=128>.

MEMBERSHIP:

Dues Notices - Just a reminder, the Dues Notice tapes are created on the last Friday of every month.

To prevent dues notices from being sent to those who have already paid, all membership transmittals should be received in Dues Processing no later than noon on the following closing dates:

TRANSMITTAL DEADLINES FOR THE 2012-2013 YEAR:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>DEADLINE DATE</u>	<u>(DAY)</u>
APRIL	April 26	(Friday)
MAY	May 31	(Friday)
JUNE	June 28	<u>(FRIDAY - MUST BE RECEIVED IN DUES PROCESSING BY NOON FOR YEAR END CLOSING)</u>

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS:

- **Shotgun Mailing Lists:** We have lists that you can work to help build up your membership. Please call the National Membership Department for assistance.
- **Dues Notices:** There will be no more dues notices for the 2012-2013 membership year. The final notice was sent in February.
- **Subscription Dues:** The subscription dues resolution was approved at the 112th National Convention in San Antonio, Texas. **The program will not go into effect until January 1, 2014 for all new and reinstated members.**
- **National Membership Program:** The 2012-2013 National Membership program is listed in the Leadership Reference guide. It can also be viewed online via the OMS system.
- **All American:** The deadline for completion of all criteria is June 30, 2013. If you wish to receive your award at the National Convention, you must meet all criteria no later than June 15, 2013. Please ensure that all program participation is reported to National prior to those deadlines. To check the status, please contact your Department headquarters.
- **Legacy Life Member Contest:**

Department Commanders who increase their Legacy Life members in their Department by May 31, 2013, will receive a \$2,000 cash award. To qualify for this award, you must meet your Department goal. This will be on new and upgraded Legacy members.

Division 5 - Departments smaller than 6,000 members need min. 15

Division 4 - Departments with 10,000 to 6,001 members need min. 25

Division 3 - Departments with 20,000 to 10,001 members need min. 35

Division 2 - Departments with 45,000 to 20,001 members need min. 45

Division 1 - Departments 45,001 and up will need one Legacy Life member per one thousand members

District Commanders that increase the legacy life members in their District by May 31, 2013, will receive a \$1,000 cash award. *****A minimum of one new/upgraded legacy life member per number of Posts within your District is needed to qualify.**

Post Commanders who sign up new/upgraded legacy life members by May 31, 2013, will be placed in a drawing and six winners will be selected. *****You will receive one ballot for a new Bronze member, two ballots for new Silver members, three ballots for new Gold members and one ballot for level upgrades.** The six winning Commanders will receive round-trip airfare to the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky for the Commander and their spouse, \$500 expense stipend, and special seating at the Joint Opening ceremonies on Monday.

- **Legacy Life Membership:** Please pass the word on our Life Legacy Program available to all Life Members. This program offers 3 levels of membership, each offering its own packages of prestigious benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life Member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

<i>Enrollment Cost:</i>	<i>Annual Payouts (Natl., Dept. & Post):</i>
Gold - \$1200	\$18.00
Silver - \$800	\$12.00
Bronze - \$400	\$6.00

What Legacy will you leave?

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

TOP TEN RECRUITERS (as of 03/27/13):

Dennis F. Flynn (CNR)

VFW Post 2866, Dept. of MO

Total Recruited: 298

Stephen A. Ward

VFW Post 27, Dept. of EU

Total Recruited: 278

Ronald Reynolds

VFW Post 8862, Dept. of EU

Total Recruited: 254

Jack E. Turner

VFW Post 1512, Dept. of CA

Total Recruited: 220

Lonnie Garza

VFW Post 3413, Dept. of TX

Total Recruited: 187

Glen F. Tilley

VFW Post 2391, Dept. of FL

Total Recruited: 173

James F. Gilbert

VFW Post 4548, Dept. of AR

Total Recruited: 162

Thomas R. L. Glover (CNR)

VFW Post 2451, Dept. of TX

Total Recruited: 158

Gasper Delise

VFW Post 9985, Dept. of PAC

Total Recruited: 152

Paul Nigara

VFW Post 1689, Dept. of FL

Total Recruited: 144

DEPARTMENTS WITH NEW POSTS:

No new posts were created in the month of March

“POST NEW & REINSTATED MEMBER CONTEST” WINNERS:

Division 1

3892 – TX

7686 – NM

76 – TX

Division 2

9985 – PAC

5619 – TX

9182 – TX

Division 3

7043 – PA

1533 – TX

1487 – CA

Division 4

9078 – TX

7843 – TX

5246 – MD

1503 – VA	3278 – TX	10386 – AZ	738 – IA
4709 – TX	660 – GA	5451 – OH	11333 – TN
10810 – EU	7448 – IL	1324 – OR	4890 – OK
2391 – FL	912 – TX	311 – IL	6500 – SC
56 – KS	1193 – OK	1177 – VA	2379 – UT
924 – AL	9934 – CA	2253 – IA	7829 – CO
11160 – TN	3308 – FL	9983 – NC	6395 – UT

Division 5

9383 – IN
 545 – MA
 11079 – SC
 7208 – TX
 12101 – NV
 12055 – FL
 10227 – AZ
 6418 – WV
 303 – NJ
 6226 - AL

Division 6

9835 – VA
 132 – NJ
 12009 – CO
 6791 – IL

Division 7

4442 – WV
 4039 – OR
 9451 – MD
 8706 – OK
 8111 – TX

Division 8

5489 – MA
 12087 – UT
 9796 – WV
 8973 – LA
 8013 – NC

Division 9

12109 – PAC
 12122 – HI
 1322 – AR

Division 10

12117 – TX
 12041 – TX
 7643 – LA

“OPERATION ARROWHEAD CONTEST” WINNERS:

GEORGE FOY, JR., COMMANDER

BOLINGBROOK POST 5917 – DEPT. OF ILLINOIS
 BIG TEN CONFERENCE

GEORGE FLETCHER, COMMANDER

RICHARD L. BEERS POST 7043 – DEPT. OF PENNSYLVANIA
 EASTERN CONFERENCE

JOHN GEAR, COMMANDER

CHRISTOPHER KIERNAN MEMORIAL POST 12117 – DEPT. OF TEXAS
 SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

KENNETH SWIERZEWSKI, COMMANDER
PUSAN PERIMETER POST 12109 – DEPT. OF PACIFIC AREAS
WESTERN CONFERENCE

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 and then Coast Guard. For Military flags, click here: <http://www.vfwstore.org/detail.aspx?ID=22300>.

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 Guide or contact the VFW Programs department at 816-968-1148 for a nomination form.

IT'S SCHOLARSHIP TIME! April is the perfect month to begin contacting schools, youth groups, parent organizations and others with information about Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen. Schools are making curriculum decisions now and parents are thinking about scholarships. The new Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy student entry forms are available at - www.vfw.org/Community/Programs/ and click on the program you are interested in.

Please remember that Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen are VFW programs supported by the Ladies Auxiliary to the VFW. It is inappropriate for the Ladies Auxiliary to conduct a separate judging at any level.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please e-mail dparker@vfw.org or call 816-968-1116.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN THEMES. The 2013–2014 themes have been chosen by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief William A. Thien. The Voice of Democracy theme will be "Why I'm Optimistic About our Nation's Future" and the Patriot's Pen theme will be "What Patriotism Means to Me." This information has been posted on the VFW website.

HALF-STAFF U.S. FLAG. The U.S. Flag should be at half-staff on Memorial Day, the last Monday in May (federal holiday - half-staff until noon). Flags available at VFW Store <http://www.vfwstore.org/SearchResult.aspx?CategoryID=211>.

VFW RIFLE COMPETITIONS AND SHOOTING SPORTS

These postal rifle matches are conducted by the National Rifle Association (NRA) in cooperation with national and fraternal organizations, such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). They are designed for VFW rifle teams as a sport activity for youth and adults to build interest in rifle shooting and safety. Both individual and team matches are offered.

A Postal Match is a match in which competitor's fire on their home ranges using targets which have been marked for identification. The scores are then sent to the NRA for ranking of awards.

If your VFW Post does not already participate in the Junior/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](#). Complete program information, rules, and entry form (in PDF format) is available [here](#) for these matches and may be printed, completed, and mailed to the NRA.

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

FLAG DAY, JUNE 14. All VFW units are reminded to properly display the U.S. Flag on Flag Day, Friday, June 14 and to conduct a ceremony or program as feasible. You may contact the VFW Communications Department for a Flag Day speech. It is also suggested Posts should award the VFW Patriotic Citizen Award (product No. 4385) for those who have daily displayed our National flag. This product is available at the VFW Store <http://www.vfwstore.org/detail.aspx?ID=22874>.

POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS

Public Law 105-85 (November 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 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 27 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; National POW/MIA Day, September 20 (third Friday in September); and, Veterans Day, November 11. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, click here: <http://www.vfwstore.org/detail.aspx?ID=22305>.

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:

Please remember the VFW depends on your donations which cover 88% of the expenses for all VFW's life changing programs each year.

Celebrate the Holiday Spirit by Helping Fellow Veterans – Your support of the VFW this holiday season – and throughout the year – is extremely important in helping the VFW's efforts to serve and assist veterans of all generations in need. There are many ways to help. We have mailed the VFW 2013 Calendar, the 2012 Christmas Cards, the VFW Member Fall Labels, and the Personalized Patriotic Notepads. By supporting these programs, you help veterans and their families in need throughout the year in *your Department* and across the country.

Other ways you can help this holiday season are to deliver a warm meal to a veteran, shovel snow for the elderly or simply chat with lonely residents at VA hospitals or retirement facilities near you. These simple acts of kindness mean so much.

VFW Kicks Off 2013 Year-End Campaign with Online Community - This week marks the beginning of **VFW's 2013 Year-End Campaign!** Donations raised toward the end of the year meet a large portion of VFW's program funding needs. With widespread uncertainty in Washington and thousands of service members recently home from the Middle East, response to this year's Internet campaign is more important than ever. Visit www.vfw.org and click "Donate" to make your year-end contribution. You'll be helping veterans get their VA benefits, assisting military families so they receive emergency aid, keeping homesick troops connected to loved ones and ensuring veterans are represented on Capitol Hill. Take pride in giving to your VFW. **NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.**

Shopping Online for Holiday Gifts? – VFW now has two ways for you to shop online and help raise money for VFW. The newest opportunity is through Socialvest. With the holidays approaching, you can do your shopping online and help the VFW at the same time.

VFW recently teamed up with Socialvest to offer you a new opportunity to help veterans and their families. Shop online as you normally would and retailers will donate a percentage of your purchases to VFW programs. It's easy, quick and safe. Just follow these 3 simple steps:

Step 1 – go to <https://www.socialvest.us/get-involved/register> (it's free!)

Step 2 – Shop at hundreds of your favorite online merchants.

Step 3 – Help struggling veterans who need it most. Get started now by making purchases online!

Please, also remember you can help raise money for veterans by using www.goodsearch.com and www.goodshop.com every day of the year. To help VFW raise money through these sites, all you have to do is go to www.goodsearch.com and choose Veterans of Foreign Wars – VFW (Kansas City) as the organization you “GoodSearch” for, and search away! Every search you perform through this site raises money for VFW! GoodShop by GoodSearch works the same way. For every item purchased through GoodShop, VFW will get a portion of the purchase price as a donation.

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 without receiving all of the unwanted mail? The VFW has developed an option that lets you support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate unwanted 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. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact the VFW Development Department at 816-756-3390, ext. 6318, 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 “STAY IN THE KNOW” to sign up. Members of this special online community will receive our monthly e-newsletter with new stories about how the VFW is fighting for

veterans' rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. These stories can also be found by visiting www.vfw.org/vfwatwork and clicking on "Story Archive." Check back often to see newly posted stories! Also, as a member of VFW's Friends of Freedom you will receive special e-mails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help VFW in assisting our nation's veterans, service members and their families.

Department Resources – All the same great resources are still available for your Department to use. You need only go to www.vfw.org and log in. You will find "Department Resources" under the "How to Get Involved" heading. The latest program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department can be found here. Download ad slicks, press releases, banner ads and buttons 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!

Tax Law Changes – Many of the tax laws, specifically estate and income tax laws, will be changing in 2013 unless Congress passes legislation before the end of the year. For example, the \$5.12 million estate tax exemption will go back to \$1 million in January. This change, and others, could have a huge impact on your estate plans. A gift to the VFW through your will or trust could help ensure that your heirs receive more of their inheritance while at the same time helping veterans, military service members and their families. For more information, check out our website at www.vfw.org/plannedgiving, email us at plannedgiving@vfw.org or call 816-968-1119.

MEMBER BENEFITS:

EA+: Travel Without a Care In the World

If you get sick or hurt while traveling — in a place you don't know, with unknown medical staff— EA+ comes to your rescue with services vital in an emergency. Whether a few states away, or around the world, EA+ provides 24-hour assistance while traveling, every time you travel. Services include:

- **Medical Evacuation & Transportation Home** – EA+ will help to get you to a better medical facility quickly, and back home to recover.
- **Medical Assistance** – EA+ will provide recommendations if you are unfamiliar with the area of your emergency to make sure you get the best medical treatment.
- **Assistance for Companions** – EA+ looks after your traveling companions during your emergency, or will send a person of your choice to your side, if you're traveling alone.
- **Travel Assistance** – EA+ will help tie up all the loose ends for you such as luggage or visa recovery. Upon request, EA+ will also provide a travel advisory specific for the area you are traveling or provide interpreters if you are in an emergency and do not speak the language. Should a political situation or dangerous weather develop while on your trip, EA+ will even assist with evacuation arrangements!

This coverage is available at an incredibly affordable rate – just for VFW members and their families. Call (877) 850-0183, option 1 or go to www.vfwinsurance.com.

VFW Sponsored Funeral Program

VFW National Headquarters is a proud sponsor of the Dignity Memorial® Network of funeral homes and cemeteries. Dignity Memorial providers serve more veterans than any other funeral service provider, and their staff of professionals are knowledgeable in veterans' burial benefits provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

In addition, Dignity® providers support veterans through programs such as the Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall and the Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial Program. Special pricing and Free Veterans Planning Guides are offered to VFW members. For your FREE Veterans Planning Guide please call 1-800-300-0436 or visit www.vfwinsurance.com

VFW STORE:



Get items you need for your Memorial Day Events and Buddy Poppy Campaigns at the VFW Store! We have flags, grave markers, memorial wreaths, Buddy Poppy posters, brochures, donation collection canisters and much more! To see Memorial Day merchandise go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/SearchResult.aspx?CategoryID=275>. To see Buddy Poppy Campaign items go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/SearchResult.aspx?CategoryID=128>.



Have a special event coming up? Need apparel or other items with your logo? VFW Store can help. We have thousands of products available at competitive prices. To get a **FREE** quote, call Kim Winston at 816-968-1181 or email her at kwinston@vfw.org.



Is your Post sponsoring a sports team this year? VFW Store can do athletic apparel, including baseball & softball uniforms, football uniforms, basketball jerseys, hockey jerseys, soccer shirts, bowling shirts, cheer wear and more! Call Kim Winston at 816-968-1181 or email her at kwinston@vfw.org for more information.