

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

BULLETIN

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.



KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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SERVICE NOT SELF

VETERANS & MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS:

On October 28, 2017, the VFW and Give an Hour, the lead organization for the Campaign to Change Direction, are partnering for the second annual *A Day to Change Direction*, a national day of service and action to change the dialogue on mental health for America's veterans and American communities. VFW Posts are encouraged to host events that will educate your community about the [Five Signs of Emotional Suffering](#) and the [Healthy Habits of Emotional Well-Being](#). You can choose to host a screening of the documentary [Into the Light](#) followed by a group discussion or you can participate in or host a community service event. Collectively, we believe in gathering together veterans and their families, community members, and clinicians to connect in a positive environment. Furthermore, we want to use this as an opportunity to encourage all Americans to pay attention to their emotional well-being as well as the emotional well-being of others.

Steps to Participate

Step One: VFW Posts and Auxiliaries interested in participating will identify a central point of contact and report this to Lynn Rolf at LRolf@vfw.org.

Step Two: Identify & plan a screening of the documentary *Into the Light* or identify a community service project. Samples of possible events are below.

Step Three: Prepare for the event by using the tools below to market your event and educate yourself on the Five Signs of Emotional Suffering and the Healthy Habits of Emotional Well-Being.

Step Four: Host *A Day to Change Direction*.

MEMBERSHIP:

We are still 28,000 behind our last year's figures. The time to recruit is now! You have to leave the Post in order to recruit new members. Find local events and ask if you can have a booth. Farmers markets, gun shows, trade shows and fall festivals are all great places to recruit local veterans. Bring along recruiting materials as well as materials on VFW Programs. 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 get there.

MEMBERSHIP FACEBOOK

Make sure you 'like' and 'share' our VFW National Membership Facebook page. We post updates, links, contest reminders, events, etc. for you. Share the good news of the VFW:

<https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembership/>.

MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT OPTIONS

Members now have the option to enroll in two beneficial programs. Once enrolled in either program, automatic payments are processed using the credit card information provided on the application. These are simply added options on the membership application. The traditional methods of signing up for both annual and Life membership are still options as well.

- VFW Autopay—renews your annual membership automatically!
- Life Installment Plan—automatic monthly payments option—with this option, there is no need to complete a payment authorization form.

Recruiting Notes: Encourage annual members to take advantage of the Life member installment plan. Encourage Life installment plan and annual members to take advantage of the automatic payment option.

Legacy Life Membership: This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. 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>Post</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 9/20/17):

Larry M. Gerlt - 86
VFW Post 2704, Dept. of NE

Donald Cannon - 49
VFW Post 10692, Dept. of EU

Kenneth L. Kraft - 49
VFW Post 12140, Dept. of OR

DEPARTMENTS WITH NEW POSTS:

Post No. 12162 in Pleasanton, Texas

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS & CHANGES

V-mail: Go online to <http://www.vfw.com> to stay in communication with other Posts as well as with National Headquarters. Check in often for important VFW updates and news from national. The VFW Membership Department will be using this avenue for communication more regularly. If you need assistance logging in or your password, contact Leticia Cortez in the Membership Department at 816-756-3390, ext. 6292.

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 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.

Changes to Find a Post: When a visitor goes to www.vfw.org in their browser, one of the first links they will see at the top of the page is "Find a Post." Clicking on this link takes the visitor to a page where they can enter a zip code or city and state and then search by distance for VFW Posts in the area. Now, in addition to the Post information, they will now see the dues amount for the Posts in their area. This is useful information for veterans looking to connect with a local Post, but it is also useful information for recruiters looking to connect veterans with a Post in their area.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE/ACTION CORPS:

Making Our Voices Heard on Capitol Hill

The VFW National Legislative Committee recently traveled to Washington, D.C., for our Fall Legislative Conference. Committee members visited the offices of their Senators and Representatives to voice our concerns and offer recommendations regarding specific issues that are critically important to VFW members and veterans around the country. The issues presented were: TRICARE Fee Increases; Veterans' Health Care; Toxic Exposures; VA Caregiver Program; Veterans' Preference; Sequestration and Continuing Resolutions; and Concurrent Receipt. To learn more about these issues and the VFW's recommendations, visit: <https://www.vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service>, *See Where We Stand on the Issues*.

"BUDDY"® POPPY:

VETERANS DAY "BUDDY"® POPPY CAMPAIGN. Plans should be under way for the Veterans 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 six to eight 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.

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 nonprofit 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) 968-1155 for any questions or concerns.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS JOINS "WORLD WAR I POPPY PROGRAM." The Veterans of Foreign Wars is joining the U.S. World War I 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, and this year marks the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entering that war. From 2017 to 2019, the U.S. World War I 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 I 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.

2018 REVISED PODIUM EDITION – CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER, BY-LAWS, MANUAL OF PROCEDURE AND RITUAL:

The podium edition of the Congressional Charter, By-Laws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual, which reflect the amendments adopted by the 118th VFW National Convention, effective August 25, 2017, are in stock and can be purchased through the VFW Store at <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/22690>.

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, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/GP238>.

NEW SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD DEADLINE DATES. The VFW wants to recognize the nation's top elementary, junior high and high school teachers (teaching at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America's history, traditions and institutions effectively through the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award program. Now is the time to begin locating exceptional teachers for your Post to nominate for the next competition. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, VFW Posts, supervisors or other interested individuals (not relatives). Self-nominees are not eligible.

VFW's 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 a VFW and Auxiliary national event.

Please update all websites, publications, announcements, etc. with the addition of the Freedoms Foundation Trip offered to the top 10 National high school teachers and the new teacher award entry deadlines for the 2017-18 program year. The deadline dates are now October 31, 2017 (instead of February 15, 2018) for entries to the Post, November 15, 2017, for completion of Post judging, December 15, 2017, for completion of District judging, January 10, 2018, for completion of Department judging and the Department winners are due to National Headquarters by January 15, 2018. The updated entry forms are up on the VFW website and are available in the VFW Store.

Simply visit <https://www.vfw.org/#login>, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. Here you will find all program manuals, and on the same page are all other program materials.

Additionally, the interested individuals may download and print the teacher award entry form by visiting this link: www.vfw.org/teacheroftheyear or order a quantity of the brochures (item #4450) through the VFW Store <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/22917>.

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.

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 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>.

VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM MONTH IN NOVEMBER. VFW and VFW Auxiliary members are encouraged to volunteer in their schools to talk about their military and home front experiences to students. Invite your local military recruiter to join you to talk about military service today. Additional information can be found in the 2017–18 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairman’s Manual. Simply visit www.vfw.org and LOG IN (or create an account if you do not have one). After logging in, you’ll be redirected to the “My VFW” page where you will click on VFW Training & Support and then Community Service, Youth Scholarships & Activities where you’ll have access to the “CHAIRMAN GUIDES.” *Participate in this activity as part of “National Veterans Awareness” week, November 5-11, as designated by Congress.*

KENNEDY CENTER/STEPHEN SONDHEIM INSPIRATIONAL TEACHER AWARDS. The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is now accepting applications for the eighth annual Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards. Teachers of any subject are eligible for nomination. The \$10,000 awards (no strings attached) are presented each year on Sondheim’s birthday – March 22 – to a handful of teachers, kindergarten through college, who are nominated via the Kennedy Center website. All applications will be required to be submitted online or postmarked on a day to be determined in December 2017.

The Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards were created in honor of Stephen Sondheim's 80th birthday and were initiated and funded through the generous support of Freddie and Myrna Gershon.

For more information, please visit the Sondheim Awards website: <http://www.mtishows.com/news/the-kennedy-centerstephen-sondheim-inspirational-teacher-awards-0>.

VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS. Departments are asked to submit three nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs Office no later than February 1, 2018. 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

Each Department will receive their three awards and contact their recipients to arrange a presentation. Department Commanders may present the awards at their Department Convention, but are encouraged to also present the award in front of the recipient’s peers at a professional association event, city council meeting, etc. The purpose of the second venue is to expose these VFW awards to the general public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters and EMTs, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership.

CONDUCT A VETERANS DAY PROGRAM ON NOVEMBER 11. Organize a community event on Veterans Day honoring all veterans. For a ceremonial procedure, refer to the information found in the 2017–18 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairman’s Manual. If you should need a Veterans Day speech, please go to: <https://www.vfw.org/MY-VFW/Patriotic-Holiday-Speeches>. Click here for Veterans Day merchandise <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday>.

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 2017–18 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman’s Manual.

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 19, 2018 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 28, 2018 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; National POW/MIA Day, September 21, 2018 (third Friday in September); Independence Day, July 4; and Veterans Day, November 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.

MEMBER BENEFITS:

Finding the Right Medicare Advantage Insurance Plan

As a VFW member, you have access to preferred Medicare Advantage plans from one of the nation’s largest health care companies. By choosing this coverage, you are still enrolled in the Medicare program with complete Part A and B coverage but with more robust benefits. These private plans often include coverage for check-ups and hospital stays without the standard Medicare deductibles. Prescription drug coverage and wellness plans can even be included, so you can get a full range of benefits in one plan. And with personalized statements, you have the information you need to help you effectively budget your health care dollars.

Whether you want basic coverage or more benefits, as a member of the VFW our provider has the plan you are looking for.

You can compare plans online [here](#) or call 1-877-713-6177. The Medicare Advantage Insurance team is ready to help you!

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:

VFW’s Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2017 – In September, we mailed the VFW’s Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2017. We hope you enjoy these cards along with the other gifts that were included in the package. In the letter that was sent with the cards and gifts, we asked you to consider taking some time to visit a hospitalized service member or veteran in your community. You can visit heroes.vfw.org/volunteer to find out about volunteering at your local VA facility. And please remember that the VFW’s life-changing programs would not be available to veterans of all generations without the generosity of its members. Your donation to the VFW helps support programs for veterans and service members right in your own Department.

Veterans Day is Not Far Away – Soon you may receive a special package that includes a Christmas card for a hospitalized veteran or service member. It is our goal to get a Christmas card to as many veterans and service members in VA medical facilities as possible before December 25. Your greeting will bring some real holiday cheer to a very special hero who may be feeling lonely and forgotten through the holidays. Please return your signed card as soon as you possibly can. And when you

return your card, please remember that your donation and support of this important program will also help keep the VFW National Veterans Service program strong and healthy for veterans of all ages.

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

To learn how easy it is to make an impact on future generations of veterans, please contact the VFW Planned Giving Office at (816) 968-1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org. More information is available online at 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 816-756-3390, ext. 7108, 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:

Remember to download the VFW app today!

The official app of the VFW puts the power of the nation’s largest organization of combat veterans directly in users’ hands. The streamlined app provides instant and complete access to information on our assistance programs and services, allows users to find VFW Service Officers and Posts based on geolocation and more, all while keeping users up to date on news that impacts veterans, service members and their families.

The app also allows VFW members to manage their membership, recruit new members and gain access to exclusive content. Download the app today and put all the resources the VFW has to offer at your fingertips!

The VFW mobile app is available for Apple and Android users and can be found by searching “VFW” in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or by direct download here:

[Apple App Store](#)

[Google Play Store](#)

If you’ve already downloaded the app, we want to know what you think! Remember to take a moment and rate it.

VFW FOUNDATION:

VFW FOUNDATION REGULAR & POST/VFW AUXILIARY COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS

Applications are streaming through quickly for the VFW Foundation Regular and Post/VFW Auxiliary Community Support Grants.

VFW community service projects are extremely important and shouldn’t be hindered by budgetary limitations. In an effort to help VFW Posts and Auxiliaries succeed in serving their communities, the VFW Foundation – the official 501(c)(3) charity of the VFW – established the **VFW Foundation Post/VFW Auxiliary Community Support Grant** to help fund local community service projects. Qualifications for the grant have been updated. Please visit the website at <https://www.vfw.org/grants> for details.

Available to any VFW Post or VFW Auxiliary in good standing, a **VFW Foundation Post/VFW Auxiliary Community Support Grant** will provide up to \$1,000 for performing important and needed qualifying outreach projects in your community! With an easy and streamlined application process, Post and VFW Auxiliaries can expect to receive a decision within thirty (30) days of the application submission.

No one understands military and veteran support quite like we do. To help VFW Departments, Posts and VFW Auxiliaries, as well as qualifying nonprofits provide the vital support America’s heroes and their families deserve, the VFW Foundation established the **VFW Foundation Regular Grant**.

Grants ranging from \$1,000 - \$15,000, will be awarded the **VFW Foundation Regular Grant** for activities that directly support veterans, active duty military personnel and their families. Requests displaying innovation in service delivery, unique program design that addresses an under-served need and the likelihood of sustainability after the grant period ends will be given special consideration.

To review the qualifications of these grants and apply, go to the “Post Grants” page on the VFW website at <https://www.vfw.org/grants> and click on the link provided.

VFW Foundation grant funds must be expended within nine (9) months of the award date which coincides with the time frame expected for project completion. A final report documenting how the funds were used is required by July 1, 2018. For questions, please contact Jason Couch, Grants Coordinator, by email at jcouch@vfw.org or phone at (816) 968-1174.

VFW STORE:



Veterans Day is just around the corner – order now to receive your merchandise in time! We offer parade items, patriotic apparel and more! To order, go to <https://www.vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday?page=1&size=100> or call 1-800-821-2606.

Buddy Poppy campaign items are also available at the VFW Store! To order, go to <https://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy?page=1&size=50>.



ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES:

HARWOOD, DONALD L., All American Commander, Department of Texas, 1992-1993 and a Life member of Hand Brothers Post 6794, Brownfield, Texas, September 16, 2017.