

# NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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## *LOYALTY HONOR SERVICE*

### **“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 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 <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 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.

### **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>.

### SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR.

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. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, VFW Posts, supervisors or other interested individuals (not relatives). Self-nominees are not eligible.

**Important Program Update:** Beginning in the 2015-2016 program year, the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year deadline dates have changed. Here are the new deadline dates for the program:

February 15, 2016 – Teacher Nominations to the Post  
February 28, 2016 – Completion of Post Judging  
March 15, 2016 – Completion of District Judging  
March 30, 2016 – Completion of Department Judging  
April 1, 2016 – District Participation Reports due to Department Chairmen  
April 5, 2016 – Department Winners to National  
April 15, 2016 – Department Reports to National

Now is the time to begin locating exceptional teachers for your Post to nominate for next year's competition. Based on the nominees submitted by the February 15 deadline, local VFW Posts will recognize one outstanding teacher in grades, K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Posts then submit the winners' names to their District level judging who will forward their winners to the Department (or state level) by March 15. After judging, each Department forwards the names of its winners to VFW National Headquarters for consideration in the national awards contest.

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 its Auxiliaries national event.

A program brochure (designed to be duplicated for distribution) can be viewed at [http://www.vfw.org/uploadedFiles/VFWorg/MY\\_VFW/TeacheroftheYearAwardBrochure.pdf](http://www.vfw.org/uploadedFiles/VFWorg/MY_VFW/TeacheroftheYearAwardBrochure.pdf) or ordered through [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org) or by calling 1-800-821-2606 and asking for item #4450.

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

**50<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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](mailto:whs.vnwar50th_cpp@mail.mil). “For 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Vietnam War commemorative items shop the VFW Store at <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=50th>.”

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 2015–2016 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairman’s Guide. Simply visit [www.vfw.org](http://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 8-14, 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 sixth 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 must be submitted online or postmarked by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on December 13, 2015.

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.kennedy-center.org/programs/awards/sondheim/rules.cfm>.

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 2015 – 2016 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman’s Guide.

#### 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 2015–2016 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairman’s Guide. 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 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, 2016. 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

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 EMT's, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership.

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 21, 2016 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 30, 2016 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; National POW/MIA Day, September 16, 2016 (third Friday in September); 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.

### **VETERANS & MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS:**

The VFW Adopt-a-Unit's goal is to develop supportive relationships with units before, during and after deployments to help deliver the vast network of free resources the VFW has available for the military and their families. Adopt-a-Unit relationships are created and maintained by individual VFW Posts who work closely with unit commanders and senior enlisted to provide direct support.

As the conflict in Afghanistan winds down and more of our deployed service members return home, it is vital that VFW Posts and Auxiliaries use MAP's Adopt-a-Unit program to continue supporting our military!

Instead of planning deployment/welcome homes, work with your local units on: family days, FRG meetings, patriotic holidays, community outreach activities, parades and park clean-ups.

Now is a great time to develop relationships with your local National Guard and Reserve units! For more information, contact [MAP@vfw.org](mailto:MAP@vfw.org) or call 816-756-3390, ext. 211.

### **VFW COMMUNICATIONS:**

The **VFW Training and Support** section of VFW.org has been designed to streamline your quest for the valuable training tools and resources you need to help lead the VFW into the future. Here you'll find VFW-produced materials ranging from membership recruiting and Post meeting training videos to chairman guides, brochures, fact sheets, applications and promotional material.

Access to the page is gained by logging into the website and selecting the "**VFW Training and Support**" link in the left column of the My VFW page.

We encourage each of you to explore the **VFW Training and Support** section to see all of the tools and resources that are available to you!

### **2016 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 116th National Convention, effective August 21, 2015, are in stock and can be purchased through the VFW Store at <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/22690>.

### **VFW FOUNDATION:**

#### **THE HOME DEPOT COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT DEADLINE EXTENDED**

The Home Depot Foundation has extended the application deadline for their Community Impact Grant to November 1, 2015. Initially the grant was scheduled to end on September 1, 2015.

Although, of course this is a competitive process with no guarantees, the grant, if awarded, can provide a VFW Post up to \$5,000 to help fix up their building.

For a detailed step-by-step, how-to-guide, please send an email to Jason Couch, VFW Foundation Grants Coordinator, at [jcouch@vfw.org](mailto:jcouch@vfw.org).

If interested, we recommend you complete the application ASAP.

### **DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:**

**Over the last decade, approximately 80% of support received from VFW members and patriotic Americans was applied directly to veterans service, community service, legislative advocacy and veteran and military support programs worldwide.**

**VFW's Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2015** – In September, we mailed the VFW's Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2015. We hope you enjoy these special edition cards along with the other special gifts that were included in the package. In the letter that was sent with the cards and gifts, we asked you to consider making some time to visit a hospitalized service member or veteran in your community. You can visit [heroes.vfw.org/volunteer](http://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 for 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 2015 Petition to Congress. This petition calls on our Congressional leaders to DEMAND JUSTICE FOR VETERANS! This petition calls on our leaders to specifically demand immediate attention to addressing the unacceptable VA wait times for VA health care, manage the VA workload with care and precision, and to resolve sequestration and fully fund and protect the VA and DoD budgets from sweeping cuts which directly affects veterans of all generations. Please be sure to sign and return the petition so we can deliver them to our Congressional leaders by Veterans Day to help make our voices heard in Washington! We even included a first class stamp with your petition to make it very simple and quick to return. Your donations and support of this important program will also help keep the VFW National Veterans Service program strong and healthy for veterans of all ages.

**Create a Legacy with Just a Few Words** – Wills ensure your family and loved ones will be taken care of after your lifetime. Once it's completed and you feel like supporting future generations of veterans, you can do so by adding a gift to the VFW in your will. To learn more about wills and how



easy it is to make a gift to the VFW in yours, contact the VFW Planned Giving Office to request more information today. You can reach us by calling (816) 968-1119, email [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org) or visit [www.vfw.org/plannedgiving](http://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 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 Donor Services at 816-756-3390, ext. 6318 or email us at [partners@vfw.org](mailto:partners@vfw.org) with "Partners in Patriotism Application" in the subject line.

**VFW Friends of Freedom** – If you are not already a member of the VFW's online community, please visit [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) and look for "STAY IN THE KNOW" 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](http://www.vfw.org/vfwatwork) and click on "Story Archive" to read stories about 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 the fundraising programs. You need only go to [heroes.vfw.org/vfwtools](http://heroes.vfw.org/vfwtools). The latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department can be found here. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mailing schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the Department Resources tools to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

### **MEMBERSHIP WEBINAR TRAINING**

If there is a Membership topic that you would like to see and discuss, all suggestions are welcomed and encouraged. Please contact Bob Crider, Director of Membership at 816-968-1138 or [bcriders@vfw.org](mailto:bcriders@vfw.org).

### **RECRUITING NOTICE**

Why chase annual members...

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

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.

### **ADDITIONAL REMINDERS**

- Veterans Day is approaching so this is a good time to make sure you are prepared for any and all events.

- The Membership Department will be using V-Mail to communicate, check your V-mailbox regularly.
- The 2015 – 2016 Membership Program is available online at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) under VFW Training and Support.
- **Shotgun Mailing Lists:** We can obtain lists that will assist you in increasing your membership. Please call Matt Nute in the Membership Department at 1-888-JOIN-VFW (1-888-564-6839) for assistance. The list cost is \$75.00 per 1,000 names.
- **Legacy Life Membership:** This prestigious program is available to all Life Members and is **now available in memoriam for deceased 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.

<i>Enrollment Cost:</i>	<i>Annual Payouts:</i>	<i>Post:</i>	<i>Department:</i>	<i>National:</i>
<b>Levels:</b>	Gold- \$1200	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
	Silver- \$800	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
	Bronze-\$400	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

*What will your Legacy be?*

**DEPARTMENTS WITH NEW POSTS:**

**Department of Alaska**  
*1 New Post*

**MEMBER BENEFITS:**

**Enhance your Original Medicare plan with a Medicare Supplement or Medigap, plan.**

Medicare Supplement, also known as Medigap, can help pay some of the health care costs [Original Medicare](#) doesn't cover, including copayments, coinsurance and deductibles. It also offers coverage for specific medical services, like care when you travel outside the U.S.

It's important to know, however, that a Medigap policy is different from a [Medicare Advantage Plan](#) in that it only supplements your Original Medicare benefits, while the Advantage is its own plan.

Remember: Open Enrollment for Medigap, Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D starts October 15. For more information, click <http://www.vfwinsurance.com/medicare-supplement-insurance.html> or call 1-800-247-1771 and a team of specialized agents are ready to take your call.

**NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE/ACTION CORPS:**

**VFW Releases “Our Care” Report**

In the ongoing effort to ensure our nation’s veterans receive timely and quality health care, the VFW released its latest report in September entitled “Our Care,” which provides conclusions on veterans’ options, preferences, and expectations when seeking care. The results indicate that the majority of veterans prefer to receive their care through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and evaluates why there is a preference to use VA, even if other health care options are available. This report also offers ten conclusions to be considered in reforming the VA health care system.

Our initial *Hurry Up and Wait* report was an analysis of the problems that lead to the VA access crisis, and a review of reforms created through the *Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act*. We followed up on the law's most significant reform, the *Veterans Choice Program*, by commissioning surveys and analyzing input from more than 10,000 veterans.

The VFW will continue to monitor and assist with the implementation and delivery of the benefits veterans have earned and deserve. To learn more and read our reports, or to report problems with your VA health care benefits, click here: <http://www.vfw.org/VAWatch/>.

### **VFW STORE:**



Veterans Day is just around the corner – order now to receive your merchandise in time! We offer parade items, Buddy Poppy distribution products, patriotic apparel and more! To order, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday> or call 1-800-821-2606. Quantity discounts are available on selected items.



Hosting a fundraiser this year? VFW Store can help! We have hundreds of inexpensive giveaways and commemorative apparel that can be customized with your logo. To get a **FREE, NO OBLIGATION** quote, call Kim Winston at 816-968-1181 or email her at [kwinston@vfw.org](mailto:kwinston@vfw.org).

### **ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES:**

WASYLIK, JOHN "DOC," Past Commander-in-Chief, 1977-1978, All American Commander, Department of Ohio, 1964-1965 and a Life Member of Lowell C. Hein Post 2529, Sandusky, Ohio, September 2, 2015.

GROSSKURTH, JR., KUNO N., Commander, Department of Rhode Island, 1989-1990 and a Life Member of Gilbert-Burton Post 4487, Middletown, Rhode Island, September 12, 2015.

ZUBA, JOHN J., Past National Inspector General, 1999-2000, National Council of Administration member, 1993-1995, All American Commander, Department of Vermont, 1982-1983 and a Life Member of Carl M. Dessaint Post 1034, Brattleboro, Vermont, September 22, 2015.