

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

BULLETIN

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.



KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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SERVICE NOT SELF

VFW COMMUNICATIONS:

With a packed agenda planned next week, we make it easy for you to stay up-to-date during the 2018 Legislative Conference.

The VFW will livestream events at www.vfw.org/VFWDC2018, starting on March 5 at 6 p.m. (EST) with the Voice of Democracy Parade of Winners, followed by the delayed livestream of National Commander Harman's testimony on March 7 at 2 p.m.

Look for #VFWDC2018 on social media, and if you're attending the conference be sure to download our FREE mobile event app. Available for download at both the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store, our event app provides attendees with important notifications and reminders throughout the conference, access to the daily agenda and much more.

MEMBERSHIP:

We are now **38,871** behind our last year's figures as of February 26, 2018. The time to recruit is now! Find local events and arrange to get a booth. Farmers markets, gun shows, trade shows, spring and summer 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.

INSTALLMENT LIFE

Now Post and Department Quartermasters have the option to enroll "NEW" members as installment Life on the Online Membership System. See the Hip Pocket Training for Nov/Dec link. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixuesaN90Ps&index=16&list=PLS17GMBriUlatKGz_QdpAoUHnXAvaPXi.

Note: Once the member is enrolled, the member will receive a confirmation email. They have to click and approve the installment in order for the installment to be completed.

KANSAS CITY SPREE

The top two Post Commanders and the top two District Commanders in each division who achieve 100% membership by April 1, 2018, 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 3-6, 2018) that may include but is not limited to – touring, shopping, and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

“BUCKET OF BUCKEYES” MEMBER DRAWING

Five (5) winners will be drawn and accompany the Commander-in-Chief on an all-expenses paid trip in May 2018 along with their spouse or guest.

For any new/reinstated members recruited between July 1, 2017 and April 1, 2018:

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

Drawing will take place ***April 2, 2018***. All awards are non-transferable.

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/>.

Recruiting Notes: To be eligible for All-American, all Post, District and Department levels need to make sure that all new recruit and reinstated members equal to 5% of prior year total.

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.

Starting in March 2018, annual members who are five months prior to their membership expiration date will receive a Wrap Edition of their VFW magazine with a special offer to upgrade to Life membership.

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 2/26/2018):

Kenneth L. Kraft - 272
VFW Post 12140, Dept. of OR

Glenn E. Hohman - 176
VFW Post 9972, Dept. of AZ

Larry M. Gerlt - 152
VFW Post 2704, Dept. of NE

DEPARTMENTS WITH NEW POSTS:

VFW Post No. 12167 in Merritt Island, Florida

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS & CHANGES

Digital Membership Cards: Members now have the ability to download their digital version of their membership card. Depending on whether a member has an iPhone or Android, they will be able to download and access their digital membership card from the VFW app.

This will not replace the physical VFW membership card - we will still be sending out membership cards to all our annual and Life members. This is intended as another option for our members' convenience. When asked to show a VFW membership card, a member can either produce their physical card out of their wallet or display their digital card on their smart phone.

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 covered, 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=PLS17GMBriUlatKGz_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 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. Lastly, when you click on "Find a Post" you will see a link to "Click here for Non-U.S. Posts" which will provide you with a comprehensive list of all the VFW Posts located overseas.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE / ACTION CORPS:

The VFW on Capitol Hill

More than 500 VFW members will be in Washington, D.C., March 4-7, for the VFW Legislative Conference. Members from each Department will meet with their members of Congress and staff to present the VFW's [2018 Priority Goals](#) and talking points. The areas of focus are: Sequestration,

Community Care, Toxic Exposures, Veterans' Health Care, and Concurrent Receipt. View the talking points on our website at www.vfw.org/legislativepriorities under **See Where We Stand on the Issues**.

“BUDDY”® POPPY:

By the time you read this, VFW and Auxiliary members will have spread out across the landscape distributing the familiar red poppy. 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 VFW “Buddy”® Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 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, 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.

NATIONAL “BUDDY”® POPPY DISPLAY CONTEST. The time frame for registering and setting up the Department winning “Buddy”® Poppy displays for the national judging at convention will be the same as last year. Department winning entries will be accepted for registration and may be set up beginning at 8 a.m., Saturday, July 21, until noon, Monday, July 23, 2018. Winning displays will be identified with appropriate ribbons on Tuesday morning and announced later on the convention floor. Displays must be removed prior to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon.

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. The bigger issue is that we simply don't have the inventory on hand to fulfill the potential orders that could come in if we open these items up to be ordered by anyone at any time.

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.

PROGRAMS:

VFW Posts and Auxiliaries reported donating almost 8.9 million volunteer hours and over \$52 million toward community service work from November 1, 2016, to October 31, 2017. The total value of our volunteers' efforts is valued at over \$265 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 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>.**

VFW HONOR'S AMERICA'S TEACHERS DURING 2017-18 PROGRAM YEAR. Congratulations to the following teachers who were selected National winners for 2017-18:

Elementary School level – Emily Cowan Ezell, Cowan Elementary School, Cowan, Tennessee, selected by VFW Post 10904, Manchester, Tennessee.

Middle School level – Sara Gibson, Caroline Middle School, Milford, Virginia, selected by VFW Post 8529, Sandston, Virginia.

High School level – Michael Rauenhorst, North Pole High School, North Pole, Alaska, selected by VFW Post 10029 and Auxiliary, North Pole, Alaska.

National awards will be presented in July to each teacher during the VFW National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Each of the winners will receive an all-expenses paid trip to the National Convention and \$1,000 cash award for professional development expenses (winners will receive a 1099-MISC); \$1,000 award to each winning teacher's school; plaques for both the winning teacher and his or her school. Each Department's recipients and their schools will receive a National Commendation citation, which will be sent to the Department Headquarters for presentation.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN THEMES. The 2018-19 themes have been chosen by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Vincent "B.J." Lawrence. The Voice of Democracy theme will be "Why My Vote Matters" and the Patriot's Pen theme will be "Why I Honor the American Flag."

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN BROCHURES. The new 2018-19 Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen entry forms will be available on the VFW website on approximately April 1, 2018.

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.

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 2017–18 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 I COMMISSION PARTNERSHIP. In observance of the upcoming centennial of World War I, a total of 100 matching grants of up to \$2,000 a piece will be awarded for the restoration of 100 World War I Memorials across the United States. The first 50 of these were announced on September 27, 2017, and the second 50 will come from ROUND #2 of the matching grant challenge.

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.

There is a process for submitting a grant application, which helps to guide the local organization in assessing the project and getting all the right approvals (local governments, historical societies, etc.) before beginning any work. In their blog, they got a question from a VFW Post about the grant writing process which is meant to help guide the applicant -

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/100-cities-100-memorials-blog.html>.

To participate and submit a grant request, go directly to -

<https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/2016-07-06-00-52-42.html>.

For any follow-up questions, please contact Lynn Rolf, Programs Director, at lrolf@vfw.org or (816) 968-1116.

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; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Day, September 21, 2018 (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.

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING:

119th National Convention Housing officially opened February 21, 2018. Housing reservation information is located on the convention website at www.vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including registration form and links to other convention related information for Kansas City, MO, July 21-25, 2018.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION: Section 222 of the National By-Laws requires 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

National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee. All advance registrations should be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111, **ATTN: Convention Registration** or you may register online by going to www.vfw.org.

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:

Soon to Arrive – Special Edition VFW Birthday Cards – This spring the VFW is mailing the 2018 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 4th. 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 370,000 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.

2018 Voice of Democracy Grand-Prize Winner to be Announced – In late February, we sent an announcement of the 2018 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 5, at the VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Log on to www.vfw.org/VFWD2018 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.

Free Estate Planning Resources from the VFW – Over half of American adults do not have a will or any estate plan. Because it is important to have a plan in place, the VFW provides a free Personal Estate Planning Kit, which you can download at www.vfw.org/plannedgiving. Once you have made sure your family and loved ones are taken care of, we invite you to consider a gift to the VFW in your will. It is simple and only takes a few words to provide support for future generations of veterans. Learn more by contacting the VFW Planned Giving Office at (816) 968-1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org.

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!

VETERANS & MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS:

As we plan for the 2018 National Convention in Kansas City, we want to remind all Veterans & Military Support Chairmen to get their money in for the 2017-18 lapel pins picked up in New Orleans.

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 2018-19! Chairmen will be able to request their pins to pick up in Kansas City but if you have not turned in your donation for the 2017-18 lapel pins, you will need to pay upfront for the 2018-19 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 FOUNDATION:

THE HOME DEPOT FOUNDATION GRANTS

The application process to submit The Home Depot (HD) Foundation Community Impact Grant is currently available. Eligible VFW Posts may receive up to \$5,000 to fix up their buildings. Grants are awarded on a first-come first-serve basis until funding is exhausted. To begin the process, go to: <https://corporate.homedepot.com/grants/community-impact-grants>.

To help you complete the application, the VFW Foundation has once again prepared a step-by-step how-to-apply guide. Any deviation from this guide will most likely result in not being able to submit the application.

To receive this how-to-apply guide, send an email to: foundation@vfw.org
Type the following in the email subject heading: Home Depot Guide Request

The application must be filled out via the internet only (no telephone calls, emails or written submissions to HD will be accepted **nor** will you be able to turn this application in at your local HD store).

If your Post receives funding, it will come in the form of HD gift cards that can be used to buy materials at your local HD store. You will need to recruit Post members or other community volunteers to do the work. The project must be completed within six months. You will also be required to fill out a final project report. Failure to do so will negatively impact your Post's ability to receive any future funding from HD.

After submission of the application, you should receive a written email response from HD Foundation, usually within six weeks, letting you know if you received the grant.

Should you have any further questions or need to discuss special concerns, please contact Jason Couch, VFW Foundation Grants Coordinator, at (816) 968-1174 or jcouch@vfw.org. GOOD LUCK!

MEMBER BENEFITS:

VFW Insurance

As a veteran or active-duty VFW member, you have access to exclusive life planning products and insurance from the VFW Insurance Program. For more information about various insurance plans sponsored by VFW National, please visit www.vfwinsurance.com.

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 1-800-821-2606.



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ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES:

TAYLOR, ALAN M., Commander, Department of West Virginia, 2004-2005 and a Life Member of Fort Butler Post 826, Kingwood, West Virginia, February 4, 2018.

SCHLUETER, RAYMOND W., Past National Surgeon General, 1988-1989 and 2000-2001, 25 year State Surgeon, Department of Illinois and a Life Member of Judd Kendall Post 3873, Naperville, Illinois, February 12, 2018.