

# NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.

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KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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## *CLEAR THE WAY*

### **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 POST & AUXILIARY COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT**

A reminder that the VFW Foundation wants to help your Post and/or Auxiliary get more involved in your community with the "VFW Foundation Post & Auxiliary Community Support Grant" open to all VFW Posts and their Auxiliaries.

The Foundation will provide up to \$1,000 to a Post and/or Auxiliary supporting local nonprofits or performing important outreach in their community or needing to make much needed repairs or updates to their Post buildings.

Funded activities do not have to be geared exclusively toward the needs of veterans, military service personnel or their families. In most instances, grant funds will be used to help "general" non-military

or mixed general/military populations so as to demonstrate how a VFW Post and its Auxiliaries can make an additional positive impact on its community.

VFW Posts and/or their Auxiliary can conduct grant activities on their own or leverage grant funds in partnership with other non-VFW charities that have existing programs or services such as a local Boy Scout chapter. Your Post and/or Auxiliary may only make a donation to another organization that is within 25-mile radius of your Post.

To apply online for the “VFW Foundation Post & Auxiliary Community Support Grant,” go to the “Grants” page on the VFW Foundation website ([www.vfwfoundation.org](http://www.vfwfoundation.org)) 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, 2017.

Don't miss out on this opportunity! As of January 1, over 50% of the available funding for the “VFW Foundation Post & Auxiliary Community Support Grant,” has been distributed to over 225 Posts and/or Auxiliaries, so submit your applications as soon as you are able.

For questions, please contact Jason Couch, grants coordinator, by email at [jcouch@vfw.org](mailto:jcouch@vfw.org).

### **THE HOME DEPOT FOUNDATION COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT**

The Foundation anticipates the Home Depot (HD) Foundation Community Impact Grant will begin accepting applications for 2017 on February 1. Eligible VFW Posts may receive up to \$5,000 to fix up their buildings; however, of course, there is no guarantee of funding. To begin the process, go to: <http://homedepotfoundation.org/page/applying-for-a-grant>.

To help you complete the 2017 application, the VFW Foundation will have an updated step-by-step how-to-apply guide prepared for your usage. 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](mailto:foundation@vfw.org)  
Type the following in the email subject heading: Home Depot Guide Request

After submission of the application, you should receive an 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 email at [jcouch@vfw.org](mailto:jcouch@vfw.org).

GOOD LUCK!

### **SHOP AMAZONSMILE AND DONATE TO VFW FOUNDATION**

Even though the holidays have passed, VFW members and supporters can continue to support VFW programs and services by shopping through AmazonSmile and Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Foundation. Purchase items that are eligible for donations are indicated on the products pages.

Copy and share the link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/43-1758998> with your fellow VFW members and supporters and begin shopping to help support the programs and services of the VFW through the VFW Foundation. Bookmark the AmazonSmile link and support the VFW Foundation every time you shop on Amazon.com.

If you have any questions about AmazonSmile, please contact the VFW Foundation at (816) 968-2720. Happy shopping!!!

### **VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING:**

118th National Convention Housing will officially open February 21, 2017. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org). The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for New Orleans – July 22-26, 2017, including a tentative agenda.

**CONVENTION REGISTRATION:** Section 222 of the Manual of Procedure states each Post will pay, in advance, a national convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the VFW National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the national convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee provided the Post has paid the mandated \$25 advance registration fee. All advance registrations should be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111, ATTN: Convention Registration or you may register on-line by going to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org).

### **DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:**

**2017 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign Kicks Off** – Your support is urgently needed for the 2017 VFW NVS Annual Campaign, so we can assist all generations of America's veterans – especially those now home from Iraq and Afghanistan – receive the benefits they have earned. We can't fight for veterans alone. Your donation right now ensures the VFW's national force of highly-trained service officers is at the ready to help America's veterans navigate the complicated VA system.

Annually, every VFW Service Officer helps an average of 317 veterans and their survivors cut through red tape to receive the VA benefits they have earned. From 2013 through 2015, the VFW's nationwide cadre of 1,850 VA-accredited service officers and representatives helped more than 255,000 veterans obtain nearly \$4.5 billion in earned disability compensation and pension from the VA. The final numbers are not in for 2016 at this time, but rest assured, VFW Service Officers are there for all veterans to help them apply for and receive their hard earned VA benefits.

This service is available to all veterans – **FREE OF CHARGE** — and made possible through donations. Please watch your mail for this important campaign.

Also, when you receive this mailing, there will be a 2017 Petition to Congress included. Please sign the petition and return it. We will be collecting the petitions and mailing them to Congress to let them know that veterans will not sit by and allow Congress to balance the budget on the backs of veterans.

**VFW's 2017 Priority Goals Announcement to Friends of Freedom** – The VFW 2017 Priority Goals have been released and you will soon receive an email outlining these goals. To learn more about the VFW's goals for 2017, please visit [www.vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service](http://www.vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service).

**Free Estate Planning Resources from the VFW** – Over half of adult Americans 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](http://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](mailto: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 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. 7108 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 the 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](http://www.vfw.org/vfwatwork) and click on "**Read VFW success stories**" to read 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!

## **NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE/ACTION CORPS:**

### **Stay Informed and Be Involved in the 115th Congress.**

The 114th Congress is on the books, and while we had some successes — passage of toxic exposure research, modest improvements to the Choice Program and suicide prevention legislation — a lot of our priorities did not become law. Congress failed to pass meaningful VA accountability legislation, more than 20 community outpatient clinics that need to be reauthorized continue to wait, caregiver benefits were not expanded to all generations, appeals modernization still is not reality and sequestration remains in place.

This means we have a lot of work ahead of us in the 115th Congress. We will need you to stay informed, and when necessary, contact your members of Congress to tell them what the VFW expects. To stay informed, read the *Action Corps Weekly* that is sent to you through email every Friday afternoon. If you don't currently receive the weekly, sign up for it here:

<http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>. When we send an Action Alert, take action! This is the easiest way to let Congress know where the VFW stands on an issue. If you receive the weekly, you will automatically receive Action Alerts. So please, stay informed and be involved!

## **MEMBER BENEFITS:**

The Importance of Protecting Your Post.

Now is an ideal time to take a look at your Post - see what's changed and what you expect from 2017; including a review of your insurance coverage.

Insuring a Post takes a special understanding of what a Post is, and not all insurance programs are equal when it comes to providing the right coverage and service that your Post deserves. Some carriers who have offered insurance for Posts have decided to pull out of the market as a whole, and now some Posts may be at risk for losing this necessary coverage.

Options such as liquor liability, special events coverage and even workers' comp should all be considered when selecting an insurance package – a Post serves a unique need in its community, and every caution should be taken to ensure your Post is able to be a pillar to your members, volunteers and those that depend on you.

For additional information on these options, click [here](#) or call 1-800-829-8390 to speak to a licensed representative.

## **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 Rick Butler, acting director of membership at 816-968-2752 or by e-mail: [rbutler@vfw.org](mailto:rbutler@vfw.org).

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO:**

**Top 5 Recruiters (as of 12/16/16):**

**John M. Tellier - 134**

VFW Post 4709, Dept. of TX

**David B. Norris - 101**

VFW Post 1051, Dept. of CA

**Dennis M. Sullivan - 78**

VFW Post 4927, Dept. of NY

**Donald Cannon - 77**

VFW Post 10692, Dept. of Europe

**Jack E. Turner - 77**

VFW Post 3787, Dept. of CA

### **DEPARTMENTS WITH NEW POSTS:**

**Department of Massachusetts**

VFW Post 12158 in Boston

Est. October 24, 2016

**Department of Kansas**

VFW Post 12157 in South Hutchinson

Est. August 18, 2016

### **EARLY BIRD AWARD - VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE**

The top three Post commanders and quartermasters and the top two District commanders in each division on January 1, 2017, will be awarded:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

**POST COMMANDER AND QUARTERMASTER - NEW AND RECOVERED MEMBER AWARD**

The top 10 Post commanders and quartermasters in each division who report more than 50 new and recovered annual members by January 1, 2017, will each be awarded:

- A distinctive leather zippered padfolio.

**DUES NOTICE SCHEDULE**

Annual members will receive a *mailed renewal* notice 5 months, 3 months, and 1 month prior to their subscription end date. Annual members with a valid email address will also receive an *e-mailed renewal notice* 6 months, 4 months, and 2 months prior to their subscription end date.

Annual members will receive a *mailed lapsed notice* 1, 3, and 5 months following their subscription end date.

**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 longer the 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:**

<b><u>Levels</u></b>	<b><u>Post</u></b>	<b><u>Department</u></b>	<b><u>National</u></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?*

**ADDITIONAL REMINDERS**

- **V-mail:** There is a new face to VFW 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. Stay tuned!

- **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.

### **“BUDDY”® 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 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.

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 manuals are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that not-for-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of “Buddy” Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

Contact information: [BuddyPoppy@vfw.org](mailto:BuddyPoppy@vfw.org) or (816) 968-1155 for any questions or concerns.

### **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>.

**FLY THE FLAG ON MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR’S BIRTHDAY.** The U.S. federal flag code has been amended by Congress and signed by the president to add Martin Luther King Jr. Day to the list of days on which the flag should be displayed. His birthday is observed on the third Monday in January; therefore, the flag should be flown on that day. To purchase a U.S. flag from the VFW Store, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags>.

Many communities are conducting community service projects that day. It is highly suggested that all members support this day of service.

### **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 Deadlines:** Here are the deadline dates for the program:

February 15, 2017 – Teacher Nominations to the Post  
February 28, 2017 – Completion of Post Judging  
March 15, 2017 – Completion of District Judging  
March 30, 2017 – Completion of Department Judging  
April 1, 2017 – District Participation Reports due to Department Chairmen  
April 5, 2017 – Department Winners to National  
April 15, 2017 – 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 Auxiliary national event.

A program brochure (designed to be duplicated for distribution) can be viewed at <https://www.vfw.org/-/media/VFWSite/Files/Community/TeacheroftheYearAwardBrochure.pdf?la=en>, ordered through <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/22917> or by calling the VFW Store at 1-800-821-2606 and asking for item #4450.

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.

**SCOUT OF THE YEAR PROGRAM.** Annually, the VFW awards three individuals who are: Eagle Scouts, Girl Scout Gold Award recipients, Venture Summit Award recipients and/or Sea Scout Quartermasters who have risen above their peers in exemplifying the qualities of that rank. An applicant has to have reached his or her 15th birthday and be enrolled in high school at the time of selection. Awards are as follows: \$5,000 – 1st place scholarship, \$3,000 – 2nd place scholarship and \$1,000 – 3rd place scholarship. The deadline for entry to a VFW Post is March 1. A program brochure (designed to be duplicated for distribution) can be viewed at [http://www.vfw.org/uploadedFiles/VFWorg/MY\\_VFW/ScoutoftheYearBrochureandEntryForm.pdf](http://www.vfw.org/uploadedFiles/VFWorg/MY_VFW/ScoutoftheYearBrochureandEntryForm.pdf). For Scouting certificates go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=scout%20of%20the%20year>.

**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](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 Vietnam War commemorative items, shop the VFW Store at <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam>.**

**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](mailto:postals@nrahq.org)  
phone: (703) 267-1482

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact the VFW Programs Office at 816-968-1117 or e-mail [kharmer@vfw.org](mailto:kharmer@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."

**PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT DEADLINE REMINDER.** The deadline for mailing the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen winner packets to National Headquarters is January 15, 2017, (even if they have not been personally notified they are the winner).

The deadline for your completed Department report/summary forms (for both programs) to be sent to National is not until January 31, 2017. Please let us know if you need blank District or Department report forms e-mailed (in PDF or Word format) by contacting Kris Harmer at [kharmer@vfw.org](mailto:kharmer@vfw.org) or 816-968-1117.

**VFW SPECIAL PROJECT PROGRAM UPDATES.** 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. All entries receive a Community Service Citation. Noteworthy entries receive a Merit Award Plaque. Exceptional entries receive an *Award of Excellence*.

**NEW** - \*A maximum of eight (8) Posts per conference who receive the *Award of Excellence* in the May Special Project judging will receive a \$5,000 Community Service Grant. \*A maximum of \$40,000 per conference will be awarded. This may be less if fewer than eight (8) Posts receive the *Award of Excellence*. \*Those qualified Posts that have earned the *Award of Excellence* will then compete for the Fred C. Hall Award and could earn an additional \$5,000 and attendance at national convention.

Complete information can be found in the 2016 – 2017 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman's Manual. You may visit <http://www.vfw.org> and log in as a VFW member (then click on **MY VFW** in the top banner on the home page). Under the **Member Resources** heading, you would click on **VFW Training and Support**. Go to the **Community Service & Youth Programs** area. You will find the chairman's manuals on this page. If you have any questions, please contact John Linstra in VFW Programs at [jlinstra@vfw.org](mailto:jlinstra@vfw.org) or 816-756-3390, ext. 6211.

**WORLD WAR I COMMISSION PARTNERSHIP.** In observance of the upcoming centennial of World War I, 100 matching grants of up to \$2,000 apiece will be awarded for the restoration of 100 World War I Memorials across the United States. Any municipal government, individual, or

organization may apply. The purpose of the program is to get local communities involved in recognizing and commemorating the WWI centennial and assisting them in restoring their local memorials. Pritzker and WWICC have jointly allocated \$200,000 for matching grants. Very little has been dispersed so far, as they expect most applications to come in closer to the deadline which is June 15, 2017. Applicants have until November 11, 2018, to complete their projects.

More than 100 projects will be supported. The top 100 will be highlighted in a coffee table book. All projects will be listed on their website.

The VFW's 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](mailto: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 20, 2017 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 29, 2017 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; National POW/MIA Day, September 15, 2017 (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 STORE:**

One of the most effective and visible ways to show your pride in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary, and raise awareness of their programs in your community, is to purchase branded merchandise from the VFW Store. When you purchase items through the VFW Store, you know that your money stays in the VFW family and is used to assist veterans, military service members and their families.



How can VFW Store items attract new members?

**They Spark Curiosity** – When the VFW or VFW Auxiliary logo is displayed on a shirt, pin, table drape or flag, it will cause potential members to find out what it stands for. Their curiosity may help drive them to your recruitment booth or your Department’s website or Facebook page to learn more.

**They Start Conversations** – VFW Store items can lead potential members from initial curiosity to meaningful conversations. Items are great “icebreakers” for asking potential members if they are familiar with the VFW or the VFW Auxiliary and if they have a veteran in their family.

**They Last** – The longevity of branded, high-quality merchandise makes it messaging that lasts. The totes, magnets, stickers or other items that you purchase will be promoting the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary and starting conversations for many years to come.

**They’re Worn/Used by Supporters** – Generally, members who have had a great experience with the VFW or VFW Auxiliary are the ones who will proudly wear or use VFW Store items. This means that every time they are asked about that shirt or pin, they will be gushing about how amazing their organization is!

To request a current copy of the VFW Store Catalog, call 1-800-821-2606. If you would like to view and purchase items online, you can visit the VFW Store at [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org).

**ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES:**

FORD, JOE F., All American Commander, Department of New Mexico, 1998-1999 and a Life member of George O. Breece Post 401, Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 29, 2016.

DEIBLER, NEALE H., National Council of Administration member, 2001-2003, Commander, Department of Pennsylvania, 1994-1995 and a Life member of Douglas A. Post-Harry C. Wilson II Memorial Post 6493, Warminster, Pennsylvania, December 2, 2016.