

Membership

STARTING THE YEAR STRONG WITH THE COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE!

As laid out in the 2026-27 Membership Program, we will continue issuing quarterly challenges to our Posts and rewarding those who lead their divisions in recruiting as well as Life Member upgrades. Every quarter (July 1-September 30), we will award points to the Posts as follows:

- Recruit a new annual Member into the Post: 1 point
- An annual or lapsed Member converts to life: 5 points
- Recruit a new Life Member into the Post: 10 points

At the end of the quarter, the Post that leads their membership division in points will receive a special award designated by the Commander-in-Chief. All Posts who meet these quarterly challenges will also be featured on a video display at the National Convention to recognize their achievements.

MEMBERSHIP GOALS

As is set out in the 2026-27 National Membership Program, we are aiming for membership growth as well as a minimum of 80% retention of our Annual members. Focusing our efforts on growth through recruiting and stability via retention will be essential in our efforts to increase our membership strength. The 2026-27 National Membership Program can be downloaded through the Training & Support page on vfw.org.

MEMBERSHIP RESOURCES

Do you want to help your Post meet your membership goals? Log into vfw.org and go to <https://vfw.org/my-vfw/vfw-training-and-support/membership-recruiting-and-retention> where you can view training videos, download recruiting materials and posters, and gain access to all the tools you need to help recruit, retain, and mentor your members!

The 2026-27 VFW National Membership Program is available online at vfw.org, under MY VFW, scroll down to Membership Quick Links, click on Membership Recruiting and Retention. You will see the 2026-27 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MATERIAL ORDER FORM

We have made it easier for you to get all the recruiting brochures you will need to make this membership year successful! It's as easy as one two three!

1. Go to vfw.org and click the login link in the upper right corner. Sign in when prompted.
2. Under "Membership Quick Links," select Membership Online Order Form.
3. Use the dropdown list to indicate items you need. The form will automatically calculate the cost of items and shipping. When finished, click SUBMIT and it will take you to a billing page if there are any charges.

Follow these simple steps and if you have any questions, you may contact the Membership department at 1.888.564.6839 or email us at membership@vfw.org.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GRANT

For each new Post chartered the Quartermaster will receive a \$250 credit from the VFW Store to be used towards necessary materials for the new Post.

For details on this and all other All-American membership incentives view the Commander-in-Chief's National Membership Program at vfw.org under *Membership Recruiting & Retention*.

For any questions or further information, please contact the Membership Department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 1.888.564.6839.

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to vfw.org, click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life Members and is now available in memoriam for past Life Members. There are 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>Posts</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 OUR TOP RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters as of 24 August 2026

Michael D. Boll – 69 members
VFW Post 2433, Dept of NJ

Jack A. Hawley – 44 members
VFW Post 1087, Dept of MT

Steven L. Woodward – 42 members
VFW Post 2224, Dept of WA

Development

Here is some helpful information about why the support of every VFW member is vitally important. VFW's life-changing programs are not possible through membership dues alone. In fact, **membership dues alone cover just 16% of the cost of programs.**

As a nonprofit organization, the VFW relies heavily on the generosity of its members and patriotic supporters. When members donate, 100% of their net donation goes directly back to support their Department. *Please spread the word and give as generously as you are able.*

VFW Christmas Cards – This month we are mailing festive VFW Christmas Cards as our way of saying “Thank You” for your generosity in helping provide much-needed services to fellow veterans and service members. With the holidays quickly approaching, your support is urgently needed! Please help our fellow veterans and service members by sending a special donation when you receive this package. Your donations support the VFW programs right in *your* Department. And take the time to visit a hospitalized or homebound veteran or current service member this holiday season. Your best wishes and thanks for their service mean more than you can imagine. You can visit heroes.vfw.org/Volunteer to find out about volunteering at your local VA facility.

Smart Giving From Your IRA – Make a difference by making a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA today! You can give any amount, up to \$111,000, to a qualified charity, such as the VFW, without having to pay income tax.

You are jump-starting the legacy you would like to leave and giving yourself the joy of watching your philanthropy take shape. For more information, visit: <https://vfw.planmylegacy.org/give-from-your-ira>. For questions, contact the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119 or plannedgiving@vfw.org.

Have You Heard About the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism? – Adjutant General Dan West would like you to join him in supporting the VFW’s life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis, which helps reduce expenses and eliminates the amount of fundraising mail you receive. 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 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 and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed at the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department toll-free at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) 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 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 read [VFW Success Stories](#) to learn how the VFW is at work 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!

VFW Department Resource Page – We encourage all VFW Departments to actively support the VFW Department Fundraising Programs. The success of these initiatives relies on the participation and backing of your Department’s members. Promotional materials can be accessed by visiting heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools.

Marketing Communications

What began as an awareness campaign in 2020, today the VFW’s Still Serving campaign continues to reach millions of veterans. Have you shared your story yet?

Your Still Serving story could help inspire other veterans around the country to give back in the same ways that you are. Whether it was a time that you checked in on another veteran, participated in a local charity run/walk or how you volunteer in your community, we want to hear about how you're Still Serving.

[Tell us your story today!](#)

Veterans & Military Support Programs

All-American Eligibility

Donating to NVS (no longer referred to as VMS) and DPAA (new for 2026-27) can only be done via the **Dashboard** by going to the link “**NVS Donation**” at the upper right-hand corner of the screen. For the **2026-27 Program Year**, your **\$125** or more donation to NVS **meets the eligibility criteria** for **All-American** in this category. Your **\$75** donation or more to DPAA **meets the eligibility criteria** for **All-American** in this category. **Donations must be received by June 30, 2027, to make All-American.**

When you make your donation for either category, all that needs to be entered into the box is 125 for NVS or 75 for DPAA. No \$ and no .00 are required in the donation amount box.

PLEASE DO NOT USE ANY OF THE RED/WHITE DONATE LINKS IN THE UPPER RIGHTHAND CORNER OF ANY WEBPAGE. THIS LINK GOES TO THE GENERAL DONATION PAGE AND WILL NOT BE CREDITED AS A NVS/DPAA DONATION.

Military Appreciation Program (MAP) Grant Funds

MAP Grant funds for the 2026-27 program year opens Oct. 1, 2026.

The eligibility criteria have changed. There is a cap on how much funds can be received per adopted unit annually, and the grant is now a reimbursement grant. We no longer provide funds before an event. Once you complete an event you will then request a reimbursement. More information is provided on the All-American Eligible Dashboard under the Military Assistance Program Grant Guidelines application.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us at M.A.P@vfw.org – 816.756.3390 ext. 6287.

VFW Financial Assistance for Service Members

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us at mherron@vfw.org or 816.968.1102.
VFW's “Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship”

The **Spring 2027 Semester** application is now open and runs through Nov. 15, 2026. The application is only available online at [vfw.org/Scholarship](https://www.vfw.org/Scholarship).

VMS Program Tools

The Veterans & Military Support (VMS) Program Tools webpage is updated every month. Link to the webpage is <https://www.vfw.org/VMSPTools>

Continue to do what you are doing and thank you for your support!

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, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag.

PROGRAMS DASHBOARD TOOL. (NOTE: Previously ALL-AMERICAN DASHBOARD) Please encourage Posts to read the 2026-27 Membership program. Military Appreciation Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance has been received from National HQs to supplement the Financial Assistance for Service Members financial grants & VFW Sport Clips Help a Hero scholarship statistic. The information charts reside in the KPI tools section.

2026-27 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM. The Veterans of Foreign Wars 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 this program.

Now is the time to begin locating exceptional teachers for your Post to nominate for the next competition. All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous National winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

All Post-level nominees should provide a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages, including the resume, as a maximum documentation of their teaching experience (for example: resume, references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves, if available.

VFW Post Teacher Award chairpersons may submit one candidate, in each grade level (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), to their District by Nov. 15. If a Department does not have a District judging, then the Post entries would be submitted to the Department Headquarters and/or Department Chairperson by Jan. 1. The Department may select a single candidate in each grade level and submit them to VFW National Headquarters through the Dashboard by Feb. 1 for National judging. To submit their winners, the "VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form" should be completed, and the winning entry documentation uploaded.

VFW's Department Citizenship Education Teacher award includes a citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

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 their school; and an all-expense-paid trip to attend a VFW National Convention.

Please verify that all websites, publications, announcements, etc. have the correct teacher award entry deadlines and rules for the 2026-27 program year. The teacher entry form, information page, and Chairpersons Guide are available on the VFW website.

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

PATRIOT DAY, SEPT. 11. Per Presidential Proclamation, Sept. 11, is designated as “Patriot Day.” The President requests the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff (sunrise to sunset) and a moment of silence observed in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on that day due to terrorist attacks on the United States. For flags and other patriotic items, click here vfwstore.org/category/patriotic/miscpatriotic

NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY, SEPTEMBER 18. Posts should conduct an appropriate ceremony. Information on conducting a ceremony can be found in the current VFW Manual of Procedure. For POW/MIA merchandise, click vfwstore.org/category/memorial/pow-mia.

IT’S SCHOLARSHIP TIME! It is the perfect time to contact schools, youth groups, parent organizations and others with information about Voice of Democracy® and Patriot’s Pen. Schools are making curriculum decisions now and parents are thinking about scholarships. Please remember that Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen are VFW programs supported by the VFW Auxiliary. It is inappropriate for a VFW Auxiliary to conduct separate judging at any level. If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email jlinstra@vfw.org or call 816.968.1155.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN THEMES. The 2026–27 themes were chosen by Commander-in-Chief Cory Geisler. The Voice of Democracy theme will be “**What a Veteran has taught me about America**” and the Patriot’s Pen theme will also be “**What a Veteran has taught me about America**”.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN ENTRY FORMS. The new 2026-27 Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen entry forms are now available on the VFW website.

For Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen brochures, posters, awards and more, visit the VFW Store: vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy for Voice of Democracy and vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen for Patriot’s Pen.

NOTE: Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen posters are available!

OUTSTANDING NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD. Each year on July 1, the National Programs office will determine the top community service Posts in each conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact, from July 1 to June 30 the previous year. Your total impact of community service is figured by the money spent to host and organize the community service event, plus total hours all volunteers participated, plus the mileage for all volunteers (Dollars Donated + Hours + Mileage = Total Impact).

These four Posts will be awarded the Award for Community Service and will be invited to attend the VFW National Convention. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations for five nights, and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE POST OF THE YEAR. Each Department will have an NCSP winner based on total impact also. National will select based on end of year reports on July 1. Winners will also be published in the Convention program booklet and receive a street sign identifying this National award for the Post to put up in their community.

VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS. Departments may submit up to five nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office no later than Feb. 1, 2027. All Department Public Servant Citations must be requested through the “VFW Department Public Servant Award Request Form” through the Dashboard.

VFW Programs will create citations for the following awards in each Department:

- VFW National Law Enforcement Award
- VFW Firefighter Award
- VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Award
- VFW National 911 Dispatcher Award
- VFW National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician (E.O.D.T.) Award

Each Department will receive their requested awards and should 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 public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters, EMTs, dispatchers and EODTs personnel, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant.

NOTE: VFW PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD CITATION POST ENTRY FORM. This form was developed to assist VFW Post Safety Chairpersons with an entry form to hand out to the local Fire Department, Police Department, etc. to assist interested individuals in nominating one of their own. The entry form along with the required documentation are to be returned to the local VFW Post for their judging, by Oct. 31. Once a winner in each category has been chosen, the Post will forward the winning entries on to the next level of judging.

Simply visit vfw.org, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Public Servant Program**.

NOTE: Remember, the First Responder Medal is available through the VFW Store. To review this item, please click on the following link: vfwstore.org/products/32134.

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 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide.

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

Participate in this activity during the week of Veterans Day, which is part of "National Veterans Awareness week," as designated by Congress. Find Pledge of Allegiance pencils and coloring books, plus other citizenship education tools at the VFW Store vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation.

CONDUCT A VETERAN'S DAY PROGRAM ON NOV. 11. Organize a community event on Veterans Day honoring all veterans. For a ceremonial procedure, refer to the information found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairperson's Guide. If you should need a Veterans Day speech, please go to: <http://www.vfw.org/MY-VFW/Patriotic-Holiday-Speeches>.

The 2026 Veterans Day speech will be available no later than two weeks prior to Nov. 11. Click here for Veterans Day merchandise vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday.

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 Chairperson's Guide or contact Mary at 816.968.1187 in the VFW Programs department for a nomination form.

“UPDATED” POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Under previous Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997), it indicated there were only six days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices were required to display the POW/MIA flag. Now under new law, Public Law 116-67 (Feb. 21, 2020), it is required that the POW/MIA flag be flown on all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to 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 Member Benefits

Life can change in an instant, and accidents often happen when you least expect them. While no one can predict the unexpected, you can have added peace of mind knowing your loved ones have an extra layer of financial protection.

As a VFW member in good standing, you can receive up to \$1,000 in Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company, at no cost to you. If a covered accident occurs while you're a fare-paying passenger on a commercial vehicle, you're also eligible for an additional \$1,500 Travel Accident Benefit, bringing your total coverage to up to \$2,500. This coverage complements any existing insurance you may have. Benefits are reduced by 50% at age 75.

To learn more, [visit our website](#) or contact the VFW Member Benefits Department at 833.VFW.VETS (833.839.8387), option 2.

“Buddy”® Poppy

“BUDDY”® POPPY CAMPAIGN. 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 three (3) weeks in advance of your distribution date.

BUDDY POPPY POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

- 1) Departments must order poppies through OMS.
- 2) All claims of non-receipt of a Buddy Poppy order must be made within 60 days of the date of the order or will NOT be replaced free of charge.
- 3) All orders for the traditional Buddy Poppy, Anniversary Poppies or tin tab poppies must be placed through your Department Headquarters. Auxiliaries must go through their Post to order all poppies.
- 4) The tin tabs do count towards the Buddy Poppy requirement for the All-American program.
- 5) If you do not receive your order within four weeks of placing it with your Department, please contact your Department Headquarters to report you have not received your order.
- 6) All poppies are shipped within 10 days of ordering except orders placed in June and July, due to preparation for National Convention, please allow an additional five business days.

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or by calling Member Service Center at 1.833.839.8387.

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 chairperson's 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.

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The Silver, Gold and Diamond Anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need.

Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out unless you are currently in your 100th year. These are ordered through the Department in OMS and processed the same as the red poppies. Currently we have no plans to replenish inventory of Anniversary Poppies due to increased cost and the small quantities we sell of Anniversary Poppies. Based on the past four years' sales, we have sufficient inventory for the next 2 years of Gold, 3 years of Diamond and 50 years of Silver.

Adjutant General

General Counsel/Legal

Claim Shark Files for Bankruptcy

Trajector and its affiliates filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on July 23, 2026, in the wake of VFW's campaign against claim sharks. According to a declaration by the Chief Restructuring Officer, Trajector is filing bankruptcy as a result of several different factors, including internal governance issues, class action litigation, changes to regulatory and state legislation prohibiting or curtailing unaccredited representation and fees, and financing issues. VFW's General Counsel, John Muckelbauer, is co-chairing the Committee of Unsecured Creditors and seeks to represent the veteran population during this reorganization. Please stay tuned for more information.

National Veterans Service

VFW MEMBER WINS NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTARY SERVICE AWARD

Congratulations to VFW Post 9785 Life member Robert Sherrill on being named the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee Volunteer of the Year!

Selected from a pool of nearly 29,000 VA volunteers, Comrade Sherrill was recognized for his volunteer service at the Alaska VA Healthcare facility, his suicide awareness work and his unwavering commitment to supporting fellow veterans in his community. His selfless service continues to make a lasting impact.

Comrade Sherrill will be receiving his award at the 80th Annual Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC) Meeting and Conference being held in Orlando, FL, Sept. 2-3, 2026.

A well-deserved honor for an extraordinary volunteer.

HUMANA SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE TRAINING

For the fifth consecutive year, VFW was able to offer scholarships to cross-accredited state and county service officers/claims representatives to attend VFW accredited representative skill training being held Oct. 4-8, in Annapolis, MD. Each scholarship covers hotel, transportation, conference fees and per diem for the recipient.

These scholarships are made possible thanks to a donation from Humana Inc. and the VFW has chosen to dedicate these resources to help provide quality training to VFW-accredited representatives who do not usually have an opportunity to train with the organization, thus allowing the VFW to reach deeper into communities to provide high-quality, free claims assistance to veterans. All scholarship recipients are currently accredited with the VFW through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of preparation, presentation, and prosecution of benefit claims before VA on behalf of VFW claimants.

VFW's accredited representative training is one of the ways the VFW satisfies VA Office of the General Counsel's continuing education requirements for its global network of accredited representatives and is subject to periodic audit from OGC.

We thank our Humana Partners for such an incredibly generous donation to further the goals and objectives of the National Veterans Service in providing world class representation on behalf of our veterans, claimants, their families, and survivors.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

VFW Fall Legislative Conference

The VFW National Legislative Committee will gather in Washington, D.C., Sept. 13-17, to meet with senators, representatives, and congressional staffers regarding key [VFW legislative priorities](#).

This year's discussions will focus on the *Take Care of America's Veterans Act*, *Major Richard Star Act*, *Written Informed Consent Act*, and *TAP Promotion Act*. Committee members will bring the voices and experiences of veterans from every corner of the country directly to the halls of Congress, ensuring lawmakers cannot ignore the needs of those who have served.

Administrative Operations

REQUESTING CEREMONIAL RIFLES, AMMUNITION & MILITARY EQUIPMENT

Department Adjutants and Quartermasters are asked to remind all Post officers to refer to the revised information located at vfw.org where they will need to log in to the "My VFW" page and under Member/Post Resources, select "VFW Training and Support" link, then Bylaws: Training, Forms & Templates, then select Training where you'll have access to "Training Guides & Standard Operating Procedures" and then click on "Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment" when requesting a "conditional" donation of any government military equipment, ceremonial rifles or ammunition.

Before contacting the governmental agency, a formal written request is to be addressed and mailed to the Adjutant General at VFW National Headquarters and must be completed and signed by the current *Post Commander*, *Post Adjutant* or *Post Quartermaster*, one of whom needs to be the contact person.

Also to be included is that contact person's email, mailing addresses and phone number. Address the request to the Adjutant General, VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.

Include the proper information as outlined in the "Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment" pages on the website. It is requested that a Post not go through their Department Headquarters (but send them a courtesy copy). This only slows down the processing and creates unnecessary paperwork for the Department personnel.

VFW Store

VFW STORE:

Check out VFW Store's new items: Apparel, accessories and more! Go to vfwstore.org/category/more/newitems to browse or look for your new catalog in the mail!



Roll Call of Departed Comrades

SMITH, R.D. "BULLDOG", JR., Commander-in-Chief, 1976-1977, National Council of Administration Member for Departments of Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, 1970-1972, Commander, Department of Georgia, 1962-1963, and a Bronze Legacy Life Member of Leon Williams Post No. 4346, Toccoa, Georgia, July 31, 2026.

HAGEN, HERMAN C., JR., Commander, Department of Nevada, 2009-2010, and a Gold Legacy Life Member of Elwood Perkins Post No. 8336, Moapa Valley, Nevada, July 24, 2026.

General Orders No. 2

2026-2027 Series

1. The following National appointments are hereby announced:

NATIONAL DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF:

David Dunn, Post 6837, Boaz, AL
Travis Nelson, Post 9460, Stratford, CT
Charles R. Fillyaw, Post 660, Savannah, GA
Ronald L. Gilchrist, Post 6445, Harlem, GA
Gerald A. Nauert, Post 1170, Middletown, KY
Donald A. Reber, Post 9822, Lafayette, LA
Gary L. Niedbalski, Post 2280, Bellevue, NE
Sean C. Baltrusitis, Post 551, Middle Village, NY
Leroy A. Barnes, Post 5298, Springfield Gardens, NY
Norbert A. Neiderer, Post 125, Plattsburgh, NY
Terrence M. Vaughn, Post 1619, Olean, NY
Robert Weingaertner, Post 7552, Hillsdale, NY
Brandon Carson, Post 7383, Cary, NC
Gabriel Eszterhas, Post 8969, Lumberton, NC
Charle D. McKean Jr., Post 3298, Parkston, SD
Joshua D. Adkins, Post 3219, Phoebus, VA
Tommy W. Hines, Post 12200, Emporia, VA
Conrado B. Morgan, Post 1503, Dale City, VA
Melissa E. Patrick, Post 7814, Staunton, VA
Mary L. Crofoot, Post 3386, Airway Heights, WA
Terry D. Stinson, Post 7511, Monroe, WA

ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL:

David D. Medley, Post 3073, Dothan, AL
Richard A. Bates, Post 2083, East Hartford, CT
Eric S. McAllister, Post 8076, Hartwell, GA
David A. Shemwell, Post 12110, Columbus, GA
Jared M. Bonvell, Post 3205, Alexandria, KY
Ronald E. Barnard, Post 5951, Bossier City, LA
Robert A. Jordan, Post 7970, Harrison, NE
Ronald J. Jubis, Post 6001, Yorkville, NY
Tracy M. Luton, Post 3120, Tupper Lake, NY
Larry J. Snyder, Post 5260, Springville, NY
Raymond F. Thies, Post 8692, Town of Colonie, NY
Sharon T. Waddell, Post 973, Newburgh, NY
Abe Zino, Post 2535, Lockport, NY

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ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL (CONT):

Kathryn L. Batt, Post 8969, Lumberton, NC
Mary E. Knadler, Post 8969, Lumberton, NC
Kenneth P. Payne, Post 6554, Plankinton, SD
William G. Cusson, Post 4809, Norfolk, VA
Jeffrey I. Dombroff, Post 9835, Warrenton, VA
Kurt Hense, Post 1503, Dale City, VA
Steven H. Wilkins, Post 392, Virginia Beach, VA
Brad T. Pieratt, Post 3617, East Wenatchee, WA
Theodore E. Streete, Post 2669, Port Orchard, WA

2. National Legislative Committee: Section 619(c) of the National Bylaws prescribes that the Commander-in-Chief may promulgate General Orders necessary to the Committee for the effective discharge of its business. This General Order shall service as notification that National Legislative Committee chairs, vice chairs, and members shall abide by the position description and responsibilities furnished by National Legislative Service staff, attend all required meetings and trainings, and continually advocate for the VFW legislative priority goals in accordance with the veterans' welfare programming approved by the VFW National Convention and facilitated by the National Legislative Service staff, in consultation with the Commander-in-Chief.

The Assistant Adjutant General, VFW Washington Office, or Director, National Legislative Service may call additional required meetings of the Committee throughout the year to provide required training or coordination of business of the Committee in advancing the VFW legislative priority goals.

In consultation with the Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief, Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief, and immediate Past Commander-in-Chief, I make the following Chair and Vice Chair appointments:

- Jason Johns, Wisconsin, Chair
 - Staci Boyer, Illinois, Vice Chair
 - Joshua Starks, Oklahoma, Vice Chair
 - Tim Bryant, California, Vice Chair
 - Rich Cassey, Pennsylvania, Vice Chair
3. The National Bylaws provide for only one type of membership: active membership. There are no provisions in the National Bylaws, nor is there any authority or justification for issuance of Club Membership cards, Associate Member cards, Honorary Membership cards, Courtesy Membership cards or any other special type of cards. Any Post issuing such unauthorized cards, or conducting club operations open to the general public, endangers its standing with the Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit organization. Officers signing outlaw cards admitting non-members to VFW premises are subject to disciplinary action. National and Department officers cannot defend practices that conflict with VFW Bylaws or procedures.
 4. VFW Posts should take the necessary steps to incorporate under the laws of the state in which the Post is located. Financial responsibility laws, as interpreted by the courts, may cause members of unincorporated Posts to be at risk.

Incorporating under the provisions of Sections 708 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure and the laws of the state will provide protection for Post members. Posts are urged to contact their Department Adjutant to obtain the proper forms for incorporating. The Articles of Incorporation must be reviewed by the Commander-in-Chief prior to forwarding them to the proper state authorities. It shall be the responsibility of the Post Commander to ensure full compliance with both sections and to ensure that all state requirements for annual filing, fees, etc., are met in a timely manner.

5. The attention of Post Commanders, County Council and District Commanders and inspecting officers is directed to Section 703 of the National Bylaws - Bonds. Each accountable officer of this organization shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which he may be accountable. Liquid assets are defined as cash on hand or in the bank and other negotiable instruments readily convertible into cash.
6. All officers should obtain current 2027 copies of the podium edition of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual. Copies of the revised edition of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual are available through the VFW Store at National Headquarters. The 2027 revised edition reflects the amendments adopted by the 127th National Convention, which became effective on Aug. 28, 2026.
7. All Commanders are reminded that Section 709, Manual of Procedure - Control of Units, requires that any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or in behalf of a Post, County Council, District or Department shall be at all times under the direct control of such Post, County Council, District or Department and that all money, property or assets of any kind or nature, must be placed in the care and custody of the respective Quartermaster. All Commanders should ensure that all provisions of Section 709 are enforced.
8. No Post, County Council, District, Department or National officer, or any other member, has authority to reject the application of a person who is eligible for membership. The attention of Department, District, County Council and Post Commanders is directed to Section 103, Manual of Procedure, which prescribes the manner in which applications for membership will be handled. Applications for membership of new, reinstating or transfer members must be voted on by the members present and voting at a regular Post meeting.
9. The attention of all units is called to Section 1101 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, which provides for the formation and jurisdiction of the Auxiliary. This section provides that each unit of the Auxiliary shall be under the jurisdiction of the corresponding unit of the Veterans of Foreign Wars but shall be permitted to function in accordance with the National Ritual, Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Auxiliary. In addition to provisions of Auxiliary Bylaws, solicitation of funds or donations by Auxiliary units, including contracts with fund-raising organizations for greeting cards, calendars and/or label programs shall be subject to approval and ratification by the governing body of the corresponding unit of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.
10. Sections 219 and 704 of the Manual of Procedure outline the various things for which the Post Relief Fund can be used. Several years ago, the phrase, "To foster true patriotism through historical and educational programs," was added to this section. This allows the Post to use the relief funds for the Voice of Democracy program or other Americanism programs that are educational. This does not include Post building projects, hall remodeling, color guard uniforms or any other expenditure that does not follow these guidelines.

11. On August 24, 2019, the National Council of Administration passed a motion extending the authorization of the wear of the VFW logo to those who are not members of the VFW for the limited purpose of demonstrating public support of the VFW. This authorization is only applicable to the VFW logo reflected below:



This authorization does not include the Cross of Malta or any other trademark and service mark of the VFW, including its name, emblems, or insignia. The use of other trademarks and service marks, including the Cross of Malta, is still limited to VFW members in good standing unless such written consent has been obtained pursuant to Section 803 of the National Bylaws.

Only the VFW Store, its Licensed Vendors and those properly authorized pursuant to the National Bylaws may manufacture or sell merchandise bearing the VFW logo. Additionally, no person shall wear the VFW logo while engaged in any commercial or political activity in such a manner as likely to falsely convey that such activity is approved or endorsed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Non-members desiring to wear the VFW logo should not knowingly harm, misuse or bring into disrepute the name or logos of the VFW. Authorization for non-members to wear the VFW logo is subject to revocation by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

12. Organizations exempt from income tax under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code are generally required to file Form 990 by the 15th day of the fifth month following the close of their accounting fiscal year. For the current IRS requirements, if the organization's annual gross receipts are normally more than \$50,000, the organization must file Form 990 or 990-EZ. Small tax-exempt organizations whose annual gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less are required to submit Form 990-N, also known as the e-Postcard. There is no penalty assessment for late filling the e-Postcard, but an organization that fails to file required information returns for three consecutive years will automatically lose its tax-exempt status. The revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status will not take place until the filing due date of the third year.

Gross receipts are considered to be normally less than \$50,000 if the organization:

1. Has been in existence for 1 year or less and received, or donors have pledged to give, \$75,000 or less during its first taxable year.
2. Has been in existence between 1 and 3 years and averaged \$60,000 or less in gross receipts during each of its first two tax years; and
3. Is at least 3 years old and averaged \$50,000 or less in gross receipts for the immediately preceding 3 consecutive tax filing years (including the year for which the calculations are being made).

If annual gross receipts are normally more than \$50,000, the organization must file Form 990 or 990-EZ. For the current IRS requirements, if an organization has gross receipts less than \$200,000 and total assets less than \$500,000, it may file form 990-EZ. However, if either gross receipts or total assets are above those limits, Form 990 must be filed.

For purposes of filing requirements, gross receipts include: total contributions; gifts and grants; program service revenue; membership dues and assessments; gross investment income (including interest, dividends, gross rents, and other investment income); gross income from the sale of assets other than inventory; gross income from special fundraising events; gross sales net of return allowances; and any other revenue.

IRS regulations require that all tax-exempt organizations make both their Application for Exemption and 990's for the last three years available for public inspection at their principal office and provide copies in response to written requests, subject to the payment of reasonable fees. There are substantial penalties for violation of these regulations.

13. Certificates of charter evidencing consolidation have been issued to the following Posts:

Post No. 2738 and 6232 consolidated as Post No. 2738, Fruitland, Idaho

Post No. 3071 and 8813 consolidated as Post No. 3071, Oconto, Wisconsin

Post No. 4845 and 7949 consolidated as Post No. 4845, Essington, Pennsylvania

Post No. 2924 and 5551 consolidated as Post No. 2924, Hesperia, California

BY COMMAND OF
CORY L. GEISLER
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

OFFICIAL:



Dan West
Adjutant General

PLANNING CALENDAR



SCHEDULE OF VFW MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Rev. September 2026

2026

September 10 – 13	Department Adjutant/Quartermasters Training Kansas City, MO
September 14 – 17	Fall Legislative Conference Washington, DC
September 24 – 27	Commander-in-Chief's Homecoming Milwaukee, WI
October 1 – 4	Junior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO
October 4 – 8	NVS Accredited Representative Skill Training Annapolis, MD
October 4 – 9	NVS Basic Training for New Accredited Representatives Annapolis, MD
October 15 – 18	Big Ten Conference Kalamazoo, MI
October 22 – 25	Southern Conference Mobile, AL
November 1 – 9	Eastern Conference Garmisch, Germany
November 5 – 8	Western Conference Phoenix, AZ

2027

February 27 – March 4	Washington Conference Washington, DC
April 15 – 18	Senior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
July 31 – August 4	National Convention Milwaukee, WI
August 19	National Budget & Finance Committee Meeting Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
August 20 – 21	National Council of Administration Meeting Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
September 23 - 26	Department Adjutant/Quartermasters Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

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September 30 – October 3	Commander-in-Chief's Homecoming Gettysburg, PA
October 21 – 24	Junior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

2028

March 4 – 9	Washington Conference Washington, DC
April 27 – 30	Senior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
August 5 – 10	National Convention San Antonio, TX
August 24	National Budget & Finance Committee Meeting Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
August 25 – 26	National Council of Administration Meeting Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
September 14 - 17	Department Adjutant/Quartermasters Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
October 5 – 8	Junior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

2029

March 29 – April 2	Commander-in-Chief's Homecoming New Orleans, LA
April 12 – 15	Senior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
July 21 – 26	National Convention Reno, NV
August 16	National Budget & Finance Committee Meeting Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
August 17 – 18	National Council of Administration Meeting Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
September 13 - 16	Department Adjutant/Quartermasters Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)
October 4 – 7	Junior Vice Commanders Training Kansas City, MO (Tentative)

2030

July 20 – 25	National Convention New Orleans, LA
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