

Membership

COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

Although many of our VFW Posts are unable to operate in the accustomed manner during the current COVID-19 pandemic, the VFW is not about to stop our mission to assist our nation's veterans, and for that we must focus on membership, namely recruiting and retaining members!

For the month of September 2020, the Post in each membership division that recruits, renews, and reinstates the most annual members will receive a \$500 stipend deposited into the Post account!

In addition, each Department with a winning Post will receive a matching \$500 to be deposited into the Department fund to be used as needed by the Department. If a Department has more than one winning Post, they can receive this award multiple times!

We know that a strong membership base is how we will move forward as an organization, guided by **20/20 VISION FOR VETERANS!**

Membership totals will be based on close-of-business totals on Aug. 31 to Sept. 30.

2020-21 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2020-21 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 2020-21 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MATERIAL ORDER FORM

As you get started in the new membership year, we have made it easier for you to get all the recruiting brochures you will need to make this membership year successful! It is 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 the simple steps and if you have any questions, you may contact Leticia Cortez at **1.888.564.6839** or email us at membership@vfw.org.

POST DEVELOPMENT

Foreseeing what is to come in the membership year is a guess at best – that's what we have learned dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic! Getting creative and putting in place ad-hoc procedures to help overcome

recruiting challenges due to COVID-19 has been the call for the past several months. How do you plan for another crazy membership year? It starts with long-term planning; the topic for September's Membership Monday Webinar training!

Join us live on Monday, Sept. 14, at 2:00 PM, CST, for a live Zoom meeting (webinar) to present Long-Term Planning, a refresher on planning best practices. This may be just what is needed to move your program(s) up to the next level! If you can't make it to the live meeting, no worries! The recorded webinar training will be placed on vfw.org, under *Membership Recruiting & Retention*. Look for the Zoom link in an OMS notification the week prior to the scheduled date of training.

Please remember there are many resources available for you on vfw.org. View our latest training videos under Membership Recruiting & Training. For any questions or further information, contact the Membership Department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 888.564.6839.

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

If you've missed us on Facebook lately, we are back! Check out our new VFW Membership Page at facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/ and follow us to Like and Share posted stories and check in on Membership Shout-Outs to see just what some of our VFW Posts are doing around the world in these challenging times. If you would like to nominate a Post for a Membership Shout-Out, please contact the National Membership Department with details.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOP THREE RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters (as of 8/27/2020):

Stephen M. Franklin – 38
VFW Post 1433, Dept. of AZ

Steven L. Woodward – 27
VFW Post 2224, Dept. of WA

Jack A. Hawley – 25
VFW Post 1087, Dept. of MT

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?

VFW Foundation

The VFW Foundation Board meeting on Thursday, Aug. 20 was held via Zoom because of COVID-19. This was the first Board meeting with National Commander Hal Roesch II presiding as Chairman of the Board.

Nearly 850 BURGER KING® franchisee-owned restaurants raised funds for the VFW's Unmet Needs program during the 2019-20 campaign (includes the November 2019 and July 2020 fundraising periods). Despite a reduction in participating BK restaurants due to the COVID-19 virus, total donations still came in at \$412,770. This brings the BK total to nearly \$6.5 million received since 2007.

Kevin Jamison of the VFW Foundation staff has been promoted to Deputy Director, VFW Foundation, effective Sept. 1, 2020.

Development

VFW Christmas Cards and Holiday Music CD – This month we are mailing VFW Christmas Cards and a Holiday Music CD 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 heroes by sending a special donation when you receive this package. And please take time to visit or call a hospitalized veteran or service member in your community during the holidays. Your best wishes and thanks for their service means more than you can imagine. You can visit heroes.vfw.org/volunteer to find out about volunteering at your local VA facility.

Join the Prestigious VFW Heroes Circle! – You can join an elite group of our most dedicated members and supporters in the VFW Heroes Circle! Comprised of those who wish to further our mission with a gift in their wills or other estate plans, the VFW Heroes Circle was created to honor our most loyal supporters who have made this extraordinary commitment to America's veterans, service members and their families. To learn how easy it is to make an impact on future generations of veterans, please contact the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org. More information is available online at vfw.org/plannedgiving.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief Roesch would like you to join with him in supporting 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, and a Year End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department 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 visit 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. These resources are available at 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 mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

VFW 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, Coast Guard and then Space Force. For military flags, go to vfwstore.org/products/GP238.

WORLD WAR I CENTENNIAL NEWS:

Is Your Post Named for a Veteran of the Great War (World War I)? If so, we want to hear from you! The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission is collecting information on VFW Posts named after WWI veterans. If your Post is honored by the memory of a local doughboy, marine, sailor, or nurse who served and sacrificed their lives, we want to know more. Please send your information and material on the history of your Post to: David Hamon, Veterans and Military Affairs Director, U.S. World War I Centennial Commission, at david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org or you may call him at 540.379.8584. The Commission is collecting historical and archive information on the Great War to observe and commemorate those 4.7 million who served in that conflict. America never forgets its veterans. Help them build a national memorial in Washington, D.C. To learn more, go to: ww1cc.org/memorial.

Help Build America's World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C. The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission recently announced the creation of the AEF (Allied Expeditionary Forces) Memorial Corps. The program is a special designation for Posts, patriotic organizations, local chapters of civic organizations, among others, to be recognized as an official "AEF Memorial Corps Post" for making a donation to build the national WWI memorial in Washington, D.C. Your Post will be certified with a special Centennial Certificate commemorating your contribution in "going over the top" to get the memorial built. For more information, please write Mr. David Hamon: david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org or call him at 540.379.8584. To view the progress of the memorial, go to: ww1cc.org/memorial. Your VFW Post will forever be enshrined in history as having pushed to get the memorial built. America never forgets her veterans!

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 the VFW Posts interested in becoming an official Commemorative Partner, they must submit an application and a signed Statement of Understanding.

Applications are available at 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: vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam.

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, SEPT. 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.

NEW 2020-21 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM. Each year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars selects elementary, middle and high school teachers to participate in the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher program. Effective this year, VFW Post Teacher Award Chairman may submit a candidate to their Department Headquarters by Jan. 1 in each category. The Department may select a single candidate for each of the three categories and submit those to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1. VFW’s Department Teacher winners that are received at National Headquarters will receive a VFW National citation for both the winning teacher and their school in each grade category.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires is the “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form” which will be available on the VFW website. Simply visit vfw.org/#login, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. The Teacher Entry form, Instruction sheet, Citation Request form and Chairman’s manual will be up on the VFW website in the near future.

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 as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves. These items will be forwarded on to the Department with the winning Teacher Entry form.

Please verify that all websites, publications, announcements, etc. has the correct teacher award entry deadlines and information for the 2020-21 program year.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS. Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen first place Department winner will receive a National scholarship or award. The amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now total \$154,000 and the Patriot’s Pen National Awards total is now \$55,000.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN THEMES. The 2020-21 themes have been chosen by then-Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Harold “Hal” Roesch, II. The Voice of Democracy theme will be “Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?” and the Patriot’s Pen theme will be “What is Patriotism to Me?”

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN BROCHURES. The new 2020-21 Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen entry forms are now available on the VFW website.

Simply visit vfw.org/#login, 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, 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: vfw.org/VOD/

Patriot’s Pen: vfw.org/PatriotsPen/

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.

VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS. Departments are asked to submit three nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office no later than Feb. 1, 2021. VFW Programs will create citations for the following awards in each Department:

- VFW National Law Enforcement Award
- VFW National Firefighter Award
- VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Award

Each Department will receive their three awards and 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 general public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters and EMTs, 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 Chairmen 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. Once the winner in each category have been chosen, the Post will forward those 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**.

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORTING. All VFW Post and Auxiliary chairmen will report to their respective Department chairman in a timely fashion so as to allow the Department chairman to report to the VFW National Programs office by June 30. The VFW Post chairmen's report should include whether or not their Auxiliaries participated.

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 2020-21 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairman's Manual. Simply visit vfw.org and LOG IN (or create an account if you do not have one). After logging in, you'll be redirected to the "My VFW" page where you will click on VFW Training & Support and then Community Service, Youth Scholarships & Activities where you'll have access to the "CHAIRMAN MANUALS." *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.

2019-20 FRED C. HALL MEMORIAL OUTSTANDING POST SPECIAL PROJECT WINNER ANNOUNCED. SSG Jonathan Dozier Memorial Post 2894 in Chesapeake, Virginia, was selected to receive the prestigious VFW Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Award, which recognizes VFW Posts for unique and outstanding community service projects.

VFW Post 2894 was selected for its home renovation project for Brandi Jones, a U.S. Navy veteran and single mother of two. After a traumatic home invasion forced her to move in 2011, Jones relocated only to discover her home would need more work than initially expected, but she didn't have the funds to address the growing list of concerns.

After a chance encounter during a VFW "Buddy"® Poppy drive, members of Post 2894 immediately set to work planning the renovation project. With support from several local businesses and associations, more than 150 volunteers rallied together to help ensure Jones and her sons had a safe place to call home. Valued at

nearly \$25,000, the renovation project included new exterior floodlights and an alarm system, a completely remodeled kitchen, new flooring, fresh ceiling paint, a new roof, new siding and gutters, and a backyard clean up with new fencing and landscaping.

POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 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 15, 2021 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 31, 2021 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Day, Sept. 18, 2020 (third Friday in Sept.); and Veterans Day, Nov. 11. 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

Bridgestone is a world leader in developing innovative tire technologies. Their continuing investment in research and development has resulted in game-changing new products, like winter tires with more bite and better grip, fuel-efficient tires that enhance fuel economy and safety innovations like their next-generation run-flat tires.

Now, VFW members can receive an additional \$5 dollars off each tire, plus your purchase will be tax free.

Place your tire order by calling the Patriot Store Direct Automotive Tires at 1.800.664.8258. Provide the friendly customer service representative with your VFW membership number and the representative will assign you to an approved Firestone/Bridgestone service center to meet your automotive needs.

"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 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 vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairmen guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that nonprofit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

Contact information: BuddyPoppy@vfw.org or 816.756.3390, ext. 6722 for any questions or concerns.

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. 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. 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 and processed the same as the red poppies. Annotate on the order to National that it is for anniversary poppies and specify which one.

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. 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: [youtube.com/watch?v=1_y4149mZso](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_y4149mZso).

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.

National Veterans Service

National Veterans Service to Host All 2020 Skill Level Training Virtually

NVS takes the safety and well-being of our service officers' seriously and, due to the continued spread of COVID-19, the decision has been made to cancel the in-person Intermediate Skill Level Training (ISLT) scheduled for Annapolis, Maryland in November. Like the May PTC and the September Advanced and Basic, Part 1 training sessions, NVS will move forward with a Virtual Intermediate Skill Level Training (vISLT)

conference, where all instruction will be delivered through video teleconferencing and the VFW Online Learning Platform for accredited representatives.

Information regarding dates, times, and topics of instruction for November will be released as it becomes available. Projected attendees will be notified to register for this conference at the appropriate time.

Virtual training already scheduled for the remainder of 2020 includes:

September 14-23: Virtual Advanced Skill Level Training for Accredited Representatives
(2pm-4pm Eastern each business day)

October 13-26: Virtual Basic, Part 1 Training for Accredited Representatives
(class schedule TBD)

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

2021 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship Application Opening Soon: The 2021 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship will be accepting applications soon! The program, which is in its seventh year, is for VFW-eligible individuals and members who attend an accredited institute of higher learning. Ten student veterans will be selected for the semester-long program that focuses on real policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The highlight of the program is participation in the VFW Legislative Conference, which in the past has included meetings at the White House and with senior officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs and Congress. Those selected also spend time with their VFW Department members on Capitol Hill pushing the VFW’s legislative priorities. Alumni of the program have become more active in all levels of the VFW and have changed laws that improve care and benefits for veterans. [Learn more about the fellowship.](#)

Unprecedented Poll Worker Shortage: Healthy elections require poll workers, the majority of whom are over the age of 60. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, election officials are reporting an unprecedented shortage. Without sufficient numbers of poll workers, it is possible that polling locations could have long lines, lack of staff to assist voters, and possible closures of polling locations. The VFW encourages any member, advocate, or supporter, who is healthy and willing, to consider becoming a poll worker for the general election in November. The [Stanford-MIT Healthy Election Project](#) has partnered with local organizations like Power the Polls, which help to follow up with applicants, confirm their commitment, and assist them in completing the process. If you sign up through this [special VFW link](#), you will be contacted by Power the Polls, a partner organization, or your local election administrators.

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 select the “VFW Training and Support” link, then “Member & Officer Training, Forms and Templates” 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 mailing address and phone number, not the Post address. 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 in 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.

CAPS DURING CHAPLAIN PRAYERS – In accordance with the Ritual General Rule 13(b), "members will follow the action of the Chaplain or presiding officer relative to removal of caps during prayers; if uncovering, the hat shall be placed on the extended closed fingers of the right hand in such a way that the Cross of Malta is exposed and held over the heart."

VFW Store

The VFW Store's new catalog should be arriving in mailboxes soon. Go online to see what's new at vfwstore.org/category/more/newitems.



Congratulations to All-American Posts, Districts and Departments! To help you celebrate your success, VFW Store is proud to offer custom apparel. To find out more, call Kim Winston at 816.968.1181 or email her at kwinston@vfw.org. To place an order for ball caps, name tags, pins or rings call 1.833.VFW.VETS (1.833.839.8387) or go to vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=all-american.