

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
HEADQUARTERS**



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

January, 2019

“United as One”

MEMBERSHIP

Happy New Year from your VFW National Membership Department! We have just crossed over into the second half of the membership year and we are less than 100,000 members from reaching 100 percent. We are making it happen! Right now we are over 91 percent at halftime. Reaching 100 percent is a realistic goal, and we will make it happen. As we step forward into the New Year, let's not lose sight of our goal. Keep your foot on the accelerator, and let's be the first group to achieve 100 percent in a quarter of a century. Contact the Membership Department if there is anything we can do to help you achieve our goal line.

EARLY BIRD AWARD - VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The top three Post Commanders and Quartermasters and the top two District Commanders in each division on Jan. 1, 2019, will be awarded:

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

DEPARTMENT QUARTERMASTER EARLY BIRD INCENTIVE

For every Department that achieves 92% in membership by Jan. 1, 2019, the Department Quartermaster will receive:

- A Henry 30-30 Caliber Rifle or a credit voucher of equal value for use with Veterans Travel Services.

POST COMMANDER AND QUARTERMASTER - NEW & REINSTATED MEMBER AWARD

The top 10 Post Commanders and Quartermasters in each division who report more than 50 new and reinstated annual members by Jan. 1, 2019, will each be awarded:

- A travel charger with the official VFW Commander-in-Chief logo.

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR NEW LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to www.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 offers 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:**

Levels	Posts	Departments	National
Gold- \$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver- \$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze- \$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

What will your Legacy be?

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Top Three Recruiters (as of 12/18/18):

Mark A. Short – 184
VFW Post 9400, Dept. of AZ

Carlo S. Davis – 181
VFW Post 9191, Dept. of TX

Timothy C. Peters – 104
VFW Post 10010, Dept. of MT

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS & CHANGES

Hip Pocket Training: Login and go online to <https://www.vfw.org/my-vfw/vfw-training-and-support/membership-recruiting-and-retention> to view the latest training videos from the Membership Department. If you have any questions or topics you would like covered, please email them to membership@vfw.org in advance and we will cover them on the next training video. We also post these webinars on our Facebook page! If you're not on Facebook, you can still view the webinars on YouTube here:

https://youtu.be/z_5MovJgD6E?list=PLS17GMBRjUlatKGz_QdpAoUHnXAvaPXi.

VFW FOUNDATION

SPORT CLIPS DONATES \$1.35 MILLION TO HELP A HERO SCHOLARSHIP! Following the Dec. 10, 2018, VFW Foundation Board meeting, VFW Foundation Board Member and Sport Clips Founder & CEO Gordon Logan presented a contribution to the Foundation in the amount of \$1.35 million. The generous gift will support active-duty U.S. service members' and veterans' scholarships through the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" program. Mr. Logan is a U.S. Air Force veteran and Life member of the VFW. Sport Clips is the Official Haircutter of the VFW, and its Help A Hero campaign is just one of the many ways it supports active-duty military and veterans. We encourage VFW members to visit SportClips.com to find their closest store, stop in for a haircut, and say "Thanks!"

VFW FOUNDATION COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT AVAILABLE

Funding for VFW Post and Auxiliary community service projects is still available through the VFW Foundation Community Support Grant. Qualified Posts and/or Auxiliaries may receive grants of up to \$1,000 to support local nonprofits or important outreach projects in their communities and up to \$500 more if a Post/Auxiliary conducts an activity with a VFW Foundation sponsor such as Humana, Burger King, Sport Clips, etc. If you are thinking about applying for the grant, please do so while we still have sufficient funding available. As of Dec. 10, 2018, 212 Posts/Auxiliaries have received approximately \$212,348 to support their community outreach.

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING

120th National Convention housing will officially open February 15, 2019. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at www.vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Orlando, Fla, July 20-24, 2019, 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 online by going to www.vfw.org.

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

2019 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign Kicks Off – Your support is urgently needed for the 2019 VFW NVS Annual Campaign, which enables us to 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.

In this package, many will receive a 2019 Petition to Congress and a Memorial Day card. Please sign the petition and card and return them. We will be collecting the petitions and delivering them to Congress to let them know that we will not sit by and allow Congress to balance the budget on the backs of veterans. The cards will be distributed to hospitalized veterans and service members in time for Memorial Day. Some members will receive the 2019 member survey to fill out and return.

Your 2018 Year-End Tax Receipt Is On Its Way! – Mid-January we will be mailing the 2018 Year-End Tax Receipts to VFW members who have requested to receive one at the end of the year.

Simplify Your Will Planning While Supporting the VFW – If you are considering a gift to the VFW through your will or other estate plans, you can visit www.vfw.org/plannedgiving for helpful tips, tools and other FREE resources - to include our Estate Planning Kit which will help simplify and organize the estate planning process for you and your attorney. For assistance or more information, please contact our Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Would you like to support the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive? The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW's Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department at 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 www.vfw.org and look for the gold banner that says "Find Out What's Happening" to sign up. As a member of the VFW's Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation's veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit www.vfw.org/vfwatwork and click on "Read VFW success stories" to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans' rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

Department Resources – Many great resources are available for your Department to use in promoting fundraising programs. You need only go to heroes.vfw.org/vfwtools. The latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department can be found here. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mailing schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the Department Resources tools to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

VFW COMMUNICATIONS

Do you have the latest VFW mobile app?

The official app of the VFW puts the power of the nation's largest organization of combat veterans directly in users' hands. We are excited to release the latest version of the VFW app including the following enhancements:

- Speed improvements
- Better Find-a-Post search with bug fixes
- Bug fixes for Login with ID.me
- And fixes and suggestions thanks to your feedback!

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

VETERANS & MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Legislative Conference ~ Washington, D.C.

There will NOT be a check presentation this year at the Legislative Conference. Please send your Veterans & Military Support donation directly to the office:

Veterans & Military Support
406 West 34th Street, Suite 902
Kansas City, MO 64111

All-American Requirement:

Encourage your Posts to donate directly to the VMS office to ensure they get credit for the VMS All American criteria. Posts minimum donation is \$50.00.

ATTN: VMS Chairmen - If you picked up Veterans & Military Support 2018-19 lapel pins at National Convention, now would be a good time to mail in your donation which will represent your Department's fundraiser for VMS to qualify for All-American.

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 AWARD.

Nominations for this award and the judging at the Post and District level should be completed and the Department level should be close to completion. After Department judging, each Department forwards the entries of its selections to VFW National Headquarters for consideration in the national award contest. Deadline is Jan. 15, 2019. Each Department's selections will receive a National Commendation citation.

The Smart/Maher VFW 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 the VFW National Convention in July 2019 in Orlando, FL. In addition, the top 10 national high school teachers will be invited to attend one of the available Summer Graduate seminars at the Freedoms Foundation in Valley Forge, PA.

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

The Department report forms for the Teacher Award program are due to National Headquarters by Jan. 31, 2019. You may forward them by email to Tbeauchamp@vfw.org or fax to 816.968.1149, to the attention of Tammy Beauchamp or they can be mailed to: VFW Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, KC, MO 64111. If you have any questions, please contact the VFW Programs office at 816.756.3390, ext. 6287.

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, 2019. The 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 contact their recipients to arrange a presentation. Department Commanders may present the awards at their Department Convention, but are encouraged to also present the award in front of the recipient's peers at a professional association event, city council meeting, etc. The purpose of the second venue is to expose these VFW awards to the general public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters and EMT's, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant>.

NOTE: "NEW" VFW PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD CITATION POST ENTRY FORM. This form has been developed to assist the 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 forms along with the required documentation are to be returned to the local VFW Post for their judging. Once the winner in each category has been chosen, the Post will forward those entries on to the next level of judging.

Simply visit <https://www.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 and Safety.

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.

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 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 www.VietnamWar50th.com on the Commemorative Partner Program. The approval process is usually less than 30 days. Partners will be kept informed through electronic notifications. Once approved as a Partner, the Commemoration will provide organizations with a starter kit of materials for developing and implementing their programs. If you have any questions regarding the Commemorative Partner Program application process, please direct them to: whs.vnwar50th_cpp@mail.mil. For Vietnam War commemorative items, shop the VFW Store at <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam>.

YOUTH HUNTING AND SHOOTING PROGRAMS. The 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, the 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
email: postals@nrahq.org
phone: 703.267.1482

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact the VFW Programs Office at 816.968.1155 or email qcarroll@vfw.org.

*There are clubs and Posts, etc. that have local shooting programs all around the world. They teach gun safety and target shooting. Often, they wish to compete against other groups but cannot afford to travel to competitions. The NRA created "postal matches," where a team of shooters can have their own local competition using paper targets. These are NRA-sanctioned targets and must be signed by local officials verifying the manner in which the competition was conducted and the age of the participants. Those targets are then sent to the NRA Postal Match Program and, using the targets from the various groups, the NRA judges determine who wins places, etc. and awards prizes. That way, the shooting match can involve shooters and clubs from almost anywhere without anyone having to travel. It's all done through the U.S. Postal System. Hence, the term, "Postal Match."

PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT DEADLINE REMINDER. The deadline for National Headquarters to receive the Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Teacher Award winner packets is no later than Jan. 15, 2019 (even if they have not been personally notified they are the winner).

The deadline for your completed Department report/summary forms (for all three programs) must be received by National no later than Jan. 31, 2019. Please let us know if you need blank District or Department report forms emailed (in PDF or Word format) by contacting Quentin Carroll at Youthscholarships@vfw.org or 816.968.1155.

VFW SPECIAL PROJECT PROGRAM. This program was put in place to recognize VFW units for creating and completing unique and extraordinary community service projects.

Record book entry nominations that are found to be complete and well-substantiated should be endorsed by the Department Adjutant or VFW Department Community Activities Chairman and forwarded to National Programs Department. Deadline for entries is April 30 of each year.

Every Post Special Project receiving the Award of Excellence in the May judging will be entered in the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Competition. Complete information can be found in the 2018-19 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman's Manual.

WORLD WAR ONE COMMISSION PARTNERSHIP. Any municipal government, individual or organization may apply. Likewise, any individual, organization or company can become a sponsor of this effort, as the more we can raise toward this program, the greater the amount of the matching grant to the winning memorials.

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/about-the-program.html>

The VFW role is to help publicize the program and get local Posts (and Auxiliaries) involved.

A sample project is at:

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/resources.html#project-profiles>.

(See the Ocean Springs video.)

A fun starting point is to first find memorials around the country. Information on this is at <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/memorial-hunters-club-about.html>. Scouting groups and 4-H Clubs can also get involved.

As you know, 2018 marks the centennial of World War I. There is a lot our members can do to help educate the public, commemorate the war, and honor those who served. The World War One Centennial Commission has created a landing page on their website for veterans to simplify navigation to key areas. You'll find it at www.wv1cc.org/veterans.

Here are a few suggestions:

THE WORLD WAR ONE PODCAST is an award winner! Subscribe here: ww1cc.org/cn and become the envy of your friends and colleagues with your knowledge about all matters related to the Great War! Subscribe to the Dispatch newsletter to keep up to date. Listen to the Centennial News Podcasts. Podcast #61 features VFW Post 968 in Raymond, Wash., talking about their 100 Cities/100 Memorial project.

Take advantage of the vast store of education materials, and use any meeting opportunity in your community to discuss the war and kindle interest in all matters related to the “War that Changed the World.”

Purchase a commemorative US Mint WWI coin (\$10 from the sale of each coin funds the memorial).

POPPY SEED PACKETS & PROGRAM.

The poppy as a symbol of remembrance was first proposed after the war by an American woman, Moina Michael, who wrote “We shall keep the faith.”

Use the WWI poppy program to raise money for your organization and help us build the National Memorial! Flanders poppies are living symbols of the great sacrifice made by the doughboys, marines and sailors. They grow everywhere! Remember the Great War by planting poppies in your community. Go here and learn more:

<https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/1881>.

Make sure your ancestors or family members who served are listed on the World War I Roll of Honor and donate in their names toward building the WWI National Memorial with a “digital” remembrance wreath. The Roll of Honor features individual profiles for many of the more than 4 million American service members who responded to the call of “Over There” in support of the war-weary Allies and helped achieve victory. All donations go directly toward funding the memorial.

MEMORIAL HUNTERS – WE NEED YOUR HELP. Dust off your Indiana Jones outfit - grab your smartphone/camera and get ready to hunt for treasure!

Beginning 100 years ago at the end of WWI, thousands of local memorials were erected in honor of those who served. The memorials were put up by towns, cities, veterans’ organizations, schools, churches, civic organizations and clubs. Today, there is no national register of these important and long forgotten American cultural and historical treasures.

Join the Memorial Hunters Club and help us hunt down and catalog this fading national treasure.

We have already had huge help from the state Centennial teams, especially those in Alabama, Georgia and New Jersey who have cataloged hundreds of WWI memorials for their states.

When you find some of these gems in your state, go here to register:

<https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/memorial-hunters-club-about.html>

Get your anthropology on...It's time to go treasure hunting!

Raise money for the memorial by supporting the WWI Poppy Program.

Learn more about the memorial and see all the resources available at www.ww1cc.org.

For any follow-up questions, please contact Lynn Rolf, Programs Director, at lrolf@vfw.org or 816.968.1116

WORLD WAR ONE CENTENNIAL NEWS

WAS YOUR POST NAMED AFTER A WORLD WAR ONE VETERAN OR VETERANS? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! The U.S. World War One Centennial Commission (WWICC) is seeking information about VFW Posts named in honor of a local or national World War I veteran, along with stories of his or her service, photographs, newspaper clippings and/or other historical information. WWICC will endeavor to honor these Posts by showcasing this special information on its website and feature highlights in its electronic Dispatch newsletter. Please note: any information received will be maintained by the commission and will become part of the U.S. Government's historical (Library of Congress) records/archives upon the expiry of its mandate. The point of contact is David W. Hamon, VSO/Military Director for the commission, at david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org and/or 540.379.8584.

WWICC has also created a special landing page for veterans, history lovers, family members, friends and community members. At ww1cc.org/veterans, visitors will find "tiles," easy to access and read, in order to educate, commemorate and honor the Great War, as per the commission's congressional mandate and charter.

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 18, 2019 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 27, 2019 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Day, Sept. 20, 2019 (third Friday in September); and Veterans Day, Nov. 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.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE / ACTION CORPS

VA to Provide Telehealth at VFW Posts: During the Anywhere to Anywhere Telehealth Summit in December, VA announced Project ATLAS, which is a partnership between VA, the VFW, Philips, and the American Legion to provide VA telehealth at VFW and Legion Posts in rural areas. The first Project ATLAS location, VFW Post 6786 in Eureka, Montana, is set to begin offering VA mental health care to veterans soon. Learn more about VA's telehealth "Anywhere to Anywhere" initiative.

VA Responsibility for Making Student Veterans Whole: After delays in the implementation of Forever GI Bill changes that were supposed to have been enacted this past August, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie directed the Veterans Benefits Administration to cease attempting to implement the changes and instead reset the entire effort in order to get the job done correctly. The reset began in early December, with the full implementation date shifting to December 2019. Student veterans who need assistance receiving their GI Bill payments should first call 1.888.GIBILL - 1 (888.442.4551) and ask VA to process your education benefit claim immediately due to a financial hardship. If VA does not resolve this issue quickly, then we encourage veterans to contact the VFW at 1studentveteran@vfw.org, at which point the VFW's casework team has the authority to intervene on their behalf with VA Education Service.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Get up to 40% off on theme parks, movies, shows, events, and more!

The VFW's entertainment discount program for members provides exclusive discounts, special offers and access to preferred seating and tickets to top attractions, theme parks, shows, sporting events, concerts, movies and much more. This unique benefit is offered exclusively to VFW members and their families.

Some of the included benefits

- Universal Studios and Walt Disney World
- Orlando & Tampa attractions
- Cirque du Soleil
- California theme parks & attractions
- National theme parks & attractions
- Las Vegas shows & attractions
- New York City Broadway shows & attractions
- Sports, concerts, movies, and more!

Book your next night out today!

BUDDY™ POPPY

MEMORIAL DAY CAMPAIGN. Although Veterans Day has just passed you should already be planning for the Memorial Day "Buddy"® Poppy Campaign. Contact your Department Quartermaster to place your order for poppies. Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 6 to 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, caps, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at <https://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy> or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

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 the VFW Buddy Poppies.

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

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

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 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. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out. 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 ONE POPPY PROGRAM." The Veterans of Foreign Wars is joining the U.S. World War One 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 One 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 One Memorial in Washington, D.C., while also helping to raise money for your Post.

Link: ww1cc.org/poppy

Here is a quick video that can help people understand why it is so important that we honor those who served during World War I: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_y4l49mZso.

The red poppy is an internationally recognized symbol of veteran remembrance.