

# NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN



## VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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APR. 2017

### *CLEAR THE WAY*

#### **VFW FOUNDATION:**

#### **VFW's #ThankBK APPRECIATION DAY**

The VFW National Commander is asking all VFW Posts and Auxiliaries to recognize our great friends at Burger King (BK) by mobilizing membership to visit your local BK restaurant and say “thank you” by participating in the **VFW's #ThankBK Appreciation Day** on Armed Forces Day – Saturday, May 20, 2017.

Since 2007, Burger King franchisees and their customers have contributed over \$4.3 million to the Unmet Needs program which has provided assistance to over 4,100 veterans and military families who have experienced unexpected financial difficulties. For additional information about the Unmet Needs program, go to the VFW website at <https://www.vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants>.

You can demonstrate your appreciation by purchasing a meal at your local Burger King on **Armed Forces Day**. Proudly wear your VFW cap and let BK management know that the VFW is there to support Burger King, as they have supported the nation's oldest and largest combat veterans organization through the VFW's Unmet Needs program.

Bring your family members, friends and fellow VFW members to dine at Burger King on this VFW #ThankBK Appreciation Day. Encourage others to visit their local BK restaurant and give “appreciation” to BK team members for their patriotic support.

It's time to “Clear the Way!” and acknowledge this deserving supporter – Burger King on **Saturday, May 20**.

For questions about this event, please contact Richard Potter, VFW Foundation Administrator, at (816) 968-1158 or email at [rpotter@vfw.org](mailto:rpotter@vfw.org).

#### **VFW POST/AUXILIARY COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT CYCLE CLOSED**

The VFW Foundation “Post/VFW Auxiliary Community Support Grant” is closed for the remainder of the FY2016 grant cycle. This grant distributed nearly \$400,000 to 282 VFW Posts and 122 Auxiliaries during the grant cycle.

Grants were distributed to Posts and Auxiliaries to assist with projects supporting local nonprofits, performing important community outreach or enhancements to Post buildings for this purpose. Eligible Posts and Auxiliaries received up to \$1,000 each for their projects.

The VFW Foundation will be accepting applications for the next grant cycle beginning September 1, 2017.

If you have questions about Foundation grants, contact Jason Couch, VFW Foundation Grants Coordinator at (816) 968-1174 or email at [jcouch@vfw.org](mailto:jcouch@vfw.org).

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

A reminder to all VFW Posts that the 2017 Home Depot (HD) Foundation Community Impact Grant is available to receive applications. Eligible Posts may receive up to \$5,000 to fix up their buildings; however, of course, there is no guarantee of funding. To begin the process, go to the following internet link: <http://homedepotfoundation.org/page/applying-for-a-grant>.

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

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

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

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

### **HENRY VFW TRIBUTE EDITION RIFLES**

A reminder that Henry Repeating Arms continues to offer the Henry VFW Tribute Edition rifles directly from their factory at very special pricing to VFW Posts and members.

These rifles are a great way for your Post to boost fundraising efforts, increase profits, recognize member volunteer efforts or milestones, and for members to build a personal collection.

There are two models, both Made In The USA; the VFW Post Tribute Edition and the VFW Tribute Edition. Both models are collector's items and unique to the Posts and/or members ordering these one-of-a-kind rifles.

For information or to order your Henry VFW Tribute Edition rifle, click on the following order form link: <https://www.henryusa.com/rifles/buy-direct-new-henry-vfw-tribute-rifles/>. If you would like to request additional brochures, please email Teresa at [teresa@henryrepeating.com](mailto:teresa@henryrepeating.com) or call her toll free at 866-200-2354.

### **VETERANS & MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS:**

1. As we plan for the 2017 National Convention in New Orleans, we want to remind all Veterans & Military Support Chairmen to get their money in for the 2016-17 lapel pins picked up in Charlotte. Please contact the Veterans & Military Support office at 816-968-1102 if you have any questions on how much your Department needs to send in.
2. There will be a new design for the Veterans & Military Support lapel pin for 2017-18! Chairmen will be able to request their pins to pick up in New Orleans but if you have not turned in your donation for the 2016-17 lapel pins, you will need to pay upfront for the 2017-18 pins. Request forms will be provided sometime in April.

3. **Veterans & Military Support Recognition Program** - Donations *must* be received in the office before **April 30**. The Veterans & Military Support Recognition Certificates will be sent to the Departments for presentation at the Department Conventions.
4. **Applying for a VFW Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship for the 2017 Fall Semester** - Please get the word out to your local service members and veterans that are going to school in the fall to apply for this wonderful scholarship program. Go to [www.vfw.org/scholarship/](http://www.vfw.org/scholarship/) for details and eligibility requirements. Deadline is **April 30**.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Ferguson at 816-968-1102.

#### **“BUDDY”® POPPY:**

NATIONAL “BUDDY”® POPPY DISPLAY CONTEST. The time frame for registering and setting up the “Buddy”® Poppy displays for the national judging at convention will be the same as last year. Entries will be accepted for registration and may be set up beginning at 8 a.m., Saturday, July 22, until noon, Monday, July 24, 2017. Winning displays will be identified with appropriate ribbons on Tuesday morning and announced later on the convention floor. Displays must be removed prior to 3:30 on Tuesday afternoon.

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS JOINS "WORLD WAR I POPPY PROGRAM."** The Veterans of Foreign Wars is joining the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission in announcing the WWI Poppy Program to raise awareness about World War I and generate funds for local VSO chapters all over the country.

The VFW is proud to share with you the WWI Poppy Program; an opportunity to generate resources for your Post while helping to honor the 4.7 million Americans who wore the uniform during WWI.

Poppies grew across the war-torn battlefields of Europe after World War I, and this year marks the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entering that war. From 2017 to 2019, the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission United States 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 this 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, DC while also helping to raise money for your Post.

Link: [ww1cc.org/poppy](http://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 One: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l\\_y4l49mZso](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_y4l49mZso).

The red poppy is an internationally-recognized symbol of veteran remembrance. Its use began in World War I and was captured in the war poem "In Flanders Fields," by Lt. Col. John McCrae.

MEMORIAL DAY “BUDDY”® POPPY CAMPAIGN. Plans should be under way for the Memorial Day “Buddy”® Poppy Campaign. **Contact your Department Quartermaster to place your order** for “Buddy”® Poppies. Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 12 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 <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy> or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

“To foster true patriotism through historical and educational programs.” 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.

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The silver, gold and diamond anniversary “Buddy”® Poppies are **only** for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th, 75th or 100th anniversary years. The anniversary poppies are approximately three times as expensive for us to produce, but because of the small quantities we deal in, we don’t pass those costs on to the Posts. The bigger issue is that we simply don’t have the inventory on hand to fulfill the potential orders that could come in if we open these items up to be ordered by anyone at any time.

Remember: With “Buddy”® Poppy, every day is Veterans Day.

- No extra cost for the commemorative poppies.
- Designate part of your regular poppy order as anniversary poppies if your Post is eligible.
- Different sizes of ads can be found at VFW Training and Support. (Please go to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) and log on to My VFW and click on VFW Training and Support and select Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities, then select Buddy® Poppy and Print Advertisements.)

Contact information: [BuddyPoppy@vfw.org](mailto:BuddyPoppy@vfw.org) or (816) 968-1155. For “Buddy”® Poppy merchandise, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy>.

### **MEMBER BENEFITS:**

Have an avid golfer in your home or are you in need of some rest and relaxation? Then you would certainly be interested to hear about a company whose mission is to provide golf discounts for America's heroes! The VFW and MilitaryTeeTimes.com (managed by the Golf Channel), have joined forces to provide our members and their families access to fantastic golf deals.

Born from the idea of honoring a deserving community for their numerous sacrifices, the companies invite VFW members to take advantage of the relaxation and stress reduction golf provides on courses of their choice. Click [here](#), sign on to your VFW account and then select Member Benefits, Technology and Electronics, Military Tee Times.

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

#### **MEMBERSHIP WEBINAR TRAINING**

If there is a membership topic that you would like to see and discuss, all suggestions are welcomed and encouraged. Please contact Rick Butler, Director of Membership at 816-968-2752 or at e-mail [rbutler@vfw.org](mailto:rbutler@vfw.org).

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO:** **Top 5 Recruiters (as of 3/28/17):**

**George P. Fletcher - 264**  
VFW Post 7043, Dept. of PA

**Thomas A. Brown - 164**  
VFW Post 928, Dept. of PA

**John M. Tellier - 150**  
VFW Post 4709, Dept. of TX

**David B. Norris - 140**  
VFW Post 1051, Dept. of CA

**Jack E. Turner - 130**  
VFW Post 3787, Dept. of CA

## **DEPARTMENT WITH NEW POST:**

### **Department of Europe**

#### **KANSAS CITY SPREE**

The top two Post Commanders and the top two District Commanders in each division who achieve 100% membership by April 1, 2017, along with their spouse or guest, will be awarded:

- Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, MO, from the airport nearest the awardee's home.
- A fun-filled weekend (May 18-21, 2017) that may include but is not limited to – touring, shopping, and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

#### **“POT O’ GOLD” MEMBER DRAWING**

Three (3) winners will be drawn and accompany the Commander-in-Chief on an all-expense paid trip to Ireland (Fall 2017) along with their spouse or guest.

For any new/reinstated member recruited between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017:

- You will receive one (1) chance for every five (5) new/reinstated members recruited.
- You will receive ten (10) chances for every increment of 25 new/reinstated members recruited.

#### **➤ Attention Post and District Commanders:**

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

Drawing will take place ***July 1, 2017***. All awards are non-transferable.

#### **MEMBERSHIP FACEBOOK**

Make sure you ‘like’ and ‘share’ our VFW National Membership Facebook page. We post updates, links, contest reminders, events, etc. for you. Share the good news of the VFW:

<https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembership/>.

Commanders, Quartermasters, and Adjutants, see our new webinar on Facebook! It tells you how to get the most out of the new Post query function within the Online Membership System! If you're not on Facebook, you can still view the webinar on YouTube here:

[https://youtu.be/z\\_5MovJgD6E?list=PLS17GMBRjUlatKGz\\_QdpAoUHnXAvaPXi](https://youtu.be/z_5MovJgD6E?list=PLS17GMBRjUlatKGz_QdpAoUHnXAvaPXi).

## DUES NOTICE SCHEDULE

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

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

## MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT OPTIONS

- **Members now have the option to enroll in two beneficial programs.** Once enrolled in either program, automatic payments are processed using the credit card information provided on the application. These are simply added options on the membership application. The traditional methods of signing up for both annual and Life membership are still options as well.
  - VFW Autopay—renews your annual membership automatically!
  - Life Installment Plan—automatic monthly payments option—with this option, there is no longer the need to complete a payment authorization form.
- **Recruiting Notes:** Encourage annual members to take advantage of the Life member installment plan. Encourage Life installment plan and annual members to take advantage of the automatic payment option.
- **Legacy Life Membership:** This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. Three levels of membership each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

### Enrollment Cost:

### Annual Payouts:

<u>Levels</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Departments</u>	<u>National</u>
Gold- \$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver- \$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze- \$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

*What will your Legacy be?*

## ADDITIONAL REMINDERS

- **V-mail:** Go online to <http://www.vfw.com> to stay in communication with other Posts as well as with National Headquarters. Check in often for important VFW updates and news from national. The VFW Membership Department will be using this avenue for communication more regularly. If you need assistance logging in or your password, contact Leticia Cortez in the Membership Department at 816-756-3390.
- **Shotgun Mailing Lists:** We can obtain lists that will assist you in increasing your membership. Please call Matt Nute in the Membership Department at 1-888-JOIN-VFW (1-888-564-6839) for assistance. The list cost is \$75.00 per 1,000 names.
- Memorial Day will be here in no time; this is a good time to make sure you are prepared for any and all events.

- **Are you ready for ALL-AMERICAN?** The 2016 – 2017 Membership Program is available online at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) under VFW Training and Support.
- Spruce up your Post for spring – You only have one chance to make a first impression.

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

#### **We Need You to Help Make Our Legislative Goals Become Reality!**

The VFW has a rich tradition of working on Capitol Hill and a long history of success. However, we have several key issues, including Concurrent Receipt and Caregiver Programs, which Congress has failed to address. Your action at home is needed and we have plenty of resources to help you be successful. The VFW's National Legislative Service and Action Corps pages can be found at [www.vfw.org/advocacy](http://www.vfw.org/advocacy). Remember that your members of Congress work for you, so go to their offices with our material and talk to them and their staff about what is important to veterans. Always take Auxiliary members with you and wear your VFW caps as a show of our strength. The Action Corps Weekly will keep you informed of what we work on each week, and our staff is here to answer your questions. You can always reach us at [vfwac@vfw.org](mailto:vfwac@vfw.org) or call us at 202-608-8363.

### **DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:**

**Did Your Special Edition Birthday Cards Arrive?** – In March, the VFW mailed a packet of Special Edition Birthday Cards and other gifts in recognition of your commitment to the VFW and veterans of *all generations*. Enclosed with your gifts was a special Independence Day Thank You Card for a veteran or service member. If you haven't had a chance, please sign and return it right away. We will deliver your signed Independence Day Thank You Card to one of America's current service members or hospitalized veterans in time for Independence Day, this July 4th. It means so much to them to know their fellow veterans remember and care.

The VFW wants to be sure when the newest veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – and veterans from all past wars and conflicts – turn to us for assistance, we have the programs available for them. Please send a donation in honor of your fellow veterans who now face a long road to recovery from injuries sustained in battle. Your gift will mean these programs stay available and strong right in your Department.

**Memorial Day “Buddy”® Poppy** – You will soon receive a package with a Thank You Card and a VFW “Buddy”® Poppy. Please return your poppy to the VFW and they will be used to create a special wreath to be displayed in a very special tribute at VFW National Headquarters' Centennial Plaza in honor of Memorial Day. Also, please sign and return the Thank You Card and your message of support will be delivered to a service member or veteran who could use a kind word. It will mean a lot to them coming from a fellow veteran like you. Along with the “Buddy”® Poppy and your signed card, please return the most generous gift you can manage in honor of Memorial Day.

**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](http://www.vfw.org/plannedgiving) for helpful tips and free tools. Our Estate Planning Kit is available to download, which simplifies and organizes 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](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org).

**Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism?** – Would you like to support the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families without receiving all of the unwanted mail? The VFW has developed an option that lets you support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate unwanted mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your

donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact the VFW Development Department Donor Services at 816-756-3390, ext. 7108 or email us at [partners@vfw.org](mailto:partners@vfw.org) with “Partners in Patriotism Application” in the subject line.

**VFW Friends of Freedom** – If you are not already a member of the VFW’s online community, please visit [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) and look for the banner that says “Find Out What’s Happening” to sign up. As a member of the VFW’s Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation’s veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit [www.vfw.org/vfwatwork](http://www.vfw.org/vfwatwork) and click on “**Read VFW success stories**” to 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](http://heroes.vfw.org/vfwtools). The latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department can be found here. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mailing schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the Department Resources tools to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

### **VFW COMMUNICATIONS:**

VFW support is often best illustrated at the local level, in communities and cities all over the world. And as the VFW’s summer calendar quickly fills up, now is the perfect opportunity to show everyone the vital work VFW Posts provide and why our mission is so important.

If you’re seeking new ideas on how to best connect with your community to share the VFW’s story with them, or perhaps you’re thinking about enacting a new local program entirely, our VFW Post pride initiative was created to showcase our community efforts in an environment which perpetuates sharing.

Don’t be afraid to utilize every available tool to communicate with the military and veterans community. Capture a photo or video during your Post’s next community service project, activity or troop support event, and share it to social media using the hashtag **#VFWPostPride**. Your Post’s event or project will then be shared with thousands on VFW.org. Visit [www.vfw.org/VFWPostPride](http://www.vfw.org/VFWPostPride) for ideas today.

### **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>.

**50TH ANNIVERSARY VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION PROGRAM.** The Commemorative Partner Program is designed for federal, state and local communities, veterans' organizations and other non-governmental organizations to assist a grateful nation in thanking and honoring our Vietnam Veterans and their families. As a Commemorative Partner, VFW Posts are encouraged to participate in the Commemoration of the Vietnam War by planning and conducting events and activities that will recognize the Vietnam Veterans and their families' service, valor, and sacrifice.

Events and activities should be dignified, memorable occasions that show a sensitivity and appreciation for the solemnity of war and the losses suffered by many. Commemorative Partners should communicate how their events will achieve the Congressionally-mandated objectives of the program. Events or activities should meet one or more of the following objectives.



1. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
2. To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.
3. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
4. To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
5. To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

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

**Applications are available at [www.VietnamWar50th.com](http://www.VietnamWar50th.com) on the Commemorative Partner Program.** The approval process is usually less than 30 days. Partners will be kept informed through electronic notifications. Once approved as a Partner, the Commemoration will provide organizations with a starter kit of materials for developing and implementing their programs. If you have any questions regarding the Commemorative Partner Program application process, please direct them to: [whs.vnwar50th\\_cpp@mail.mil](mailto:whs.vnwar50th_cpp@mail.mil). For Vietnam War commemorative items, shop the VFW Store at <http://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam>.

**VFW HONORS AMERICA'S TEACHERS DURING 2016 – 2017 PROGRAM YEAR.** 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 April 5, 2017. 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 2017 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

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

The Department report forms for the Teacher Award program are due to National Headquarters by April 15, 2017. You may forward them by email to [Tbeauchamp@vfw.org](mailto:Tbeauchamp@vfw.org) or fax to (816) 968-1149 to the attention of Tammy Beauchamp or they can be mailed to: VFW National 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.

**NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PROGRAM.** This program is designed to provide recognition and awards to VFW members who volunteer their time to outside organizations. Recognition is in the form of certificates and/or lapel pins which are given to volunteers who have completed the number of hours prescribed for those awards. For more information, see the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairmen's Manual or contact Tammy at 816-756-3390, ext. 6287 in the VFW Programs Department for a nomination form.

**IT'S SCHOLARSHIP TIME!** April is the perfect month to begin contacting 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 the VFW Auxiliary to conduct a separate judging at any level.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email at [lrolf@vfw.org](mailto:lrolf@vfw.org) or call (816) 968-1116.

**NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN THEMES.** The 2017–2018 themes have been chosen by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Keith E. Harman. The Voice of Democracy theme will be “American History: Our Hope for the Future” and the Patriot's Pen theme will be “America's Gift to My Generation.”

**NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN DEADLINE DATE.** Please update all websites, publications, announcements, etc. with the new student entry deadline for the 2017-2018 program year. It will now be October 31, 2017 (instead of November 1, 2017) for both the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen contests. The updated entry forms are up on the VFW website and will be available in the VFW Store soon.

Simply visit <https://www.vfw.org/Login.aspx>, 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.

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 link: <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>.

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

**HALF-STAFF U.S. FLAG.** The U.S. Flag should be at half-staff on Memorial Day, the last Monday in May (federal holiday - half-staff until noon). Flags available at VFW Store <http://www.vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags>.

**NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS.** Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen first place Department winner will now receive a National scholarship or award. The new amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now total \$154,000 and the Patriot's Pen National Awards total is now \$54,500.

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

Record book entry nominations that are found to be complete and well-substantiated should be endorsed by the Department Adjutant or VFW Department Community Activities Chairman and forwarded to the National Programs Department. Deadline for entries is April 30 of each year. All entries receive a Community Service Citation. Noteworthy entries receive a Merit Award Plaque. Exceptional entries receive an *Award of Excellence*.

**NEW** - \*A maximum of eight (8) Posts per conference who receive the *Award of Excellence* in the May Special Project judging will receive a \$5,000 Community Service Grant. \*A maximum of \$40,000 per conference will be awarded. This may be less if fewer than eight (8) Posts receive the *Award of*

*Excellence.* \*Those qualified Posts that have earned the *Award of Excellence* will then compete for the Fred C. Hall Award and could earn an additional \$5,000 and attendance at National Convention.

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

**WORLD WAR I COMMISSION PARTNERSHIP.** In observance of the upcoming centennial of World War I, 100 matching grants of up to \$2,000 apiece will be awarded for the restoration of 100 World War I memorials across the United States. Any municipal government, individual, or organization may apply. The purpose of the program is to get local communities involved in recognizing and commemorating the WWI centennial and assisting them in restoring their local memorials. Pritzker and WWICC have jointly allocated \$200,000 for matching grants. Very little has been dispersed so far, as they expect most applications to come in closer to the deadline which is June 15, 2017. Applicants have until November 11, 2018, to complete their projects.

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

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

A sample project is at: <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/resources.html#project-profiles>. (See the Ocean Springs video.)

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

There is a process for submitting a grant application, which helps to guide the local organization in assessing the project and getting all the right approvals (local governments, historical societies, etc.) before beginning any work. In their blog, they address a question from a VFW Post about the grant writing process which is meant to help guide the applicant - <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/100-cities-100-memorials-blog.html>.

To participate and submit a grant request, go directly to <https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/2016-07-06-00-52-42.html>.

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

**FLAG DAY, JUNE 14.** All VFW units are reminded to properly display the U.S. Flag on Flag Day, Wednesday, June 14 and to conduct a ceremony or program as feasible. You may contact the VFW Communications Department for a Flag Day speech. It is also suggested Posts should award the VFW Patriotic Citizen Award (Product No. 4385) for those who have daily displayed our National flag.

**POW/MIA FLAG – OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS.** Public Law 105-85 (November 16, 1997) indicates the days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices are required to display the POW/MIA flag. The days are: Armed Forces Day, May 20, 2017 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 29, 2017 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; National POW/MIA Day, September 15, 2017 (third Friday in September); Independence Day, July 4; and Veterans Day, November 11. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/GP237>.

**IRS AND VFW AWARD MONIES.** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that any recipient that receives more than a \$599 award should receive a Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable. This will include the VFW programs Patriot's Pen and Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

**VFW STORE:**

Make some MONEY at your Department Convention! Simply order T-shirts in quantity with your Department logo or Convention logo and sell them at your Department Convention to make a profit. Prices for T-shirts start as low as \$4.95 per shirt and include screen printing. To find out more or to get a no-obligation quote, call Kim Winston at 816-968-1181 or email her at [kwinston@vfw.org](mailto:kwinston@vfw.org).



The VFW Store has new Branch of Service merchandise, including black-and-tan ball caps and hologram drinking cups. Shop online at <https://www.vfwstore.org/category/more/newitems> for all the Store's new items.

And remember, your purchase supports veterans, military service members and their families.



**ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES:**

LYONS, ROBERT J., All American Commander, Department of Texas, 1984-1985 and a Life Member of E. Harvey Horn Post 8246, Vidor, Texas, March 23, 2017.

JACKSON, CARL T., All American Commander, Department of Tennessee, 2003-2004 and a Life Member of Armstrong-Rousseau Post 684, Memphis, Tennessee, March 13, 2017.