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Honoring Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq War Vets

Maryland Post Member Sees 'Dream' Come True in Hometown

Michael Lawlor spent five-and-a-half years working to see his vision for a memorial honoring Iraq, Afghanistan and 1991 Persian Gulf war veterans come to fruition in his Maryland community. For him, it was worth the wait.

Lawlor, a member of VFW Post 9083 in Parkville, Md., led a fundraising committee for the memorial, which lists the names of 27 service members with connections to Baltimore County who died as a result of those wars.

Lawlor's nephew, Michael S. Lawlor, who served in the Marine Corps in Iraq, is the first of the names engraved on the memorial.

The Baltimore County Monument Commission raised \$100,000 from the community for the project, which is located at the Historic Courthouse in Towson, Md.

Lawlor said the committee created a brochure to distribute to American Legion and VFW Posts, along with local Elks lodges, to raise funds for the memorial. VFW Posts 1866 (Marshfield, Wis.), 2621 (Baltimore) and 7012 (New Freedom, Pa.) donated to the project.

More than 120 donors contributed in amounts ranging from \$50 to \$200.

Chris Lawlor, Michael Lawlor's wife and a committee member, said she received "wonderful correspondence" from area VFW Posts encouraging the project and stating that Post members were looking forward to the dedication, held in November.

The committee also applied for and received state grants, one for \$50,000 and the other for \$25,000. The state funds only could be used for capital expenses such as construction, according to Chris Lawlor. As a result, Chris Lawlor said, they returned the \$25,000 grant.

Michael Lawlor said the closer they came to the goal, "the more you could actually envision it in your head." By mid-2015, he said, "it was no longer a pipe dream."

"For the first couple years, it was a dream, and you just had to keep pushing yourself to make it come true," said Michael Lawlor, who served in the Army in Vietnam from April 1969 to January 1970 with 1st Logistical command, II Corps as a first lieutenant.

Michael Lawlor's idea to honor those who lost their lives in the Iraq, Afghanistan and 1991 Persian Gulf wars spawned from unintentionally finding a Civil War memorial in Chestertown, Md., in the 1980s.

"[The memorial] had the names of the Confederates on one side [and] Union people on the other side who died in that war from that area," Michael Lawlor said. "That struck me as something I would like to do in the future."

Working with Baltimore County Councilman Dave Marks and the council in 2011 to approve the monument's location at the Historic Courthouse in Towson, Lawlor's dream became reality.

He also was involved with the county's Vietnam War memorial, which was dedicated in 1996.

Email: kwilliams@vfw.org



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS LAWLOR

Michael Lawlor, a life member of VFW Post 9083 in Parkville, Md., speaks at the dedication ceremony for a memorial that honors Iraq, Afghanistan and 1991 Persian Gulf war veterans. He spearheaded the initiative for the monument.



John B. Bartkowiak Jr., Michael Lawlor, Towson American Legion member Jim Rebbert and Paul G. Curry, all members of the Baltimore County Monument Commission, present the memorial that honors Iraq, Afghanistan and 1991 Persian Gulf War troops who died in the conflicts. The committee raised \$100,000 and used \$50,000 in state grant funds to complete the project, with assistance from VFW Posts. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS LAWLOR



The Vietnam Veterans of America Honor Guard, Baltimore Chapter #451, perform a presentation of colors during the Nov. 5 dedication ceremony for a memorial that honors Iraq, Afghanistan and 1991 Persian Gulf War veterans. The 4th Combat Engineer Battalion USMC Honor Guard also was involved in the ceremony. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS LAWLOR

THANK BURGER KING ON MAY 20

VFW Post and Auxiliary members are asked to recognize Burger King by visiting their local Burger King restaurant to say “thank you” on VFW’s #ThankBK Appreciation Day on Armed Forces Day – Saturday, May 20.

Demonstrate your appreciation by purchasing a meal at your local Burger King on Armed Forces Day. Wear your VFW cap and let Burger King management know that the VFW is there to support them.

Burger King franchisees and their customers have contributed more than \$4.3 million to the *Unmet Needs* program since 2007. For additional information about *Unmet Needs*, go to the VFW website at www.vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants.

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

SCOOTERS, WHEELCHAIRS FOR RENT IN NEW ORLEANS

During VFW’s 118th National Convention July 22-26, in New Orleans, Scootaround Personal Transportation Solutions will offer wheelchairs and scooters for rent, to those requiring assistance.

Scooter pricing depends upon the model requested. For more information, including rates, contact the company at 1-888-441-7575 or visit <https://locations.scootaround.com/VFW>.

GETTING AROUND ‘THE BIG EASY’

If you plan to fly into New Orleans for VFW’s national convention, here’s what you need to know about getting from Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport to the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center area hotels.

None of the downtown hotels have private shuttle service to and from the airport.

A fixed taxi rate of \$36 for one to two people is charged from the airport to most areas of New Orleans. For parties of more than two, the fare is \$15 per person.

Airport Shuttle Inc. offers a \$20 per person one-way fare and a discounted \$40 per person round-trip fare only for those making their reservations through an online portal for VFW. Visit <http://airportshuttleneworleans.hudsonltd.net/res?USERIDENTRY=VFW0717&LOGON=GO> to book your needs at least 24 hours prior to your flight arrival time.

For more information on New Orleans, visit www.neworleanscvb.com/vfw.

ESTATE PLANNING CAN BENEFIT VFW

With your support, the VFW has been making a difference in the lives of veterans, service members and their families for more than 117 years. Learn how you can amplify your impact with a gift through your estate plan by contacting the VFW Planned Giving Office at (816) 968-1119, emailing plannedgiving@vfw.org or visiting www.vfw.org/plannedgiving.

GPS NAVIGATION TOOLS ARE ESSENTIAL

We are on the move every day. We simply don’t have time for getting lost. GPS navigation tools not only offer instant location updates, but also can provide such services as custom routing, real-time traffic updates and road warnings.

For more information, log on to your account at www.vfw.org, and from the “My VFW” page, select “Member Benefits” from under the “Member Resources” section and then click on “Technology and Electronics.”

VFW STORE OFFERS MEMORIAL DAY PRODUCTS

Every day, we recognize the sacrifices that veterans have made on behalf of this great country. This Memorial Day, look to the VFW Store for memorial displays to help others recognize those sacrifices as well. Go online to www.vfwstore.org or call 1-800-821-2606.

Bob Wallace, Adjutant General

You Can Help Form VFW Policy

One of the great truths about VFW is that the organization’s power rests in the hands of grassroots activists. Once a year, we convene members from throughout the world to set VFW policy.

These delegates gather at the national convention — VFW’s supreme governing body. Representing more than 6,500 Posts, they adopt resolutions, elect new officers and handle other important business matters. Delegates designated at Posts — not national officers or staff members — are those who ultimately issue VFW’s “marching orders.”

And it is required. According to Sec. 222 of VFW’s bylaws, “each Post shall register, in advance, at least one delegate to the national convention.”

Many resolutions — VFW’s official positions on various issues — originate at the Post level. If they are approved at their respective Department conventions, they are considered at the national convention. Delegates discuss, debate and modify them in

the appropriate committees before the proposed resolutions are voted on during the convention’s business sessions.

This broad review allows input from the organization’s most knowledgeable and concerned members. It ensures that each resolution is clear, effective and appropriate to VFW’s original charter.

Convention delegates also amend bylaws — the basic rules concerning administration and organization. Amendments approved at Department conventions should be sent to my office within five days of approval so

they can be publicized prior to the national convention. According to Sec. 1401 of our bylaws, delegates must approve amendments by at least a two-thirds majority to pass at a national convention.

All VFW members should know where their organization stands on various issues. There is no better way to explain VFW’s position than to cite an approved resolution. And there is no better way to help formulate those positions than to participate in VFW’s convention as a registered delegate. Take full advantage.



Debra Anderson, Quartermaster General

Posts Must File an E-Postcard with the IRS

Prior to 2007, small nonprofit organizations with gross receipts under \$25,000 did not have filing requirements with the IRS. That all changed when Congress passed the *Pension Protection Act of 2006*, and it became mandatory that all tax-exempt organizations provide some basic information to the IRS.

For those small nonprofits that had previously been exempt from any filing requirements, *Form 990-N* was created. *Form 990-N* (also known as the E-Postcard) is the electronic information return that small nonprofits must file with the IRS.

It’s been more than a decade since the requirement for small nonprofits to file a *Form 990-N* was added. Yet many VFW Posts still fail to complete this obligation.

If your Post, District or Department misses a single year, the IRS will send a reminder. If you fail to file for three consecutive years, the organization will lose its tax-exempt status on the due date of the third year.

This revocation from tax-exemption occurs automatically, and the organization will receive no



more notices. If a Post or District was previously covered under a group exemption by its VFW Department headquarters, it does not have the option of being added back to the group exemption.

Instead, the Post or District must individually apply for reinstatement of tax-exemption by completing all of the appropriate forms and paying the required fees to

the IRS. If a Post or District does not have tax-exempt status, it is no longer eligible for federal tax exemption, and donations it receives will not be tax deductible.

The current IRS guidelines allow organizations with gross receipts that are normally less than \$50,000 to file *Form 990-N*. Those organizations with gross receipts less than \$200,000 and total assets less than \$500,000 can complete *Form 990-EZ*. All organizations with gross receipts of at least \$200,000 or total assets of at least \$500,000 must file the *Form 990* long form.

More information on filing requirements, forms and instructions, as well as additional tax exempt resources, can be found on the IRS website at www.irs.gov.

CHECKPOINT

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Correspondence can be sent to the editor at VFW National Headquarters.

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'A Lot of Questions About the VA'

New York Service Officer Says, 'All Veterans Matter'

In his 10 years as a service officer, one of Bob Rizzardi's biggest victories has been helping a Pearl Harbor-attack veteran regain his health after years of being neglected.

"He was a derelict here in East Hampton (N.Y.), and he had a problem with drinking and he became ill," Rizzardi said. "The VFW got him the care he needed at the VA hospital, and with help from the city of East Hampton and other organizations, we got him a place to live, where he lived until he passed away. That was a big achievement for me, because I could see the good that happened to him."

Rizzardi, a VFW member who has been a member of Post 550 in East Hampton for 20 years, said it's rewarding to see his efforts as a service officer "become a benefit" for veterans who need VA assistance.

"Anything I can do that will help achieve something when they need it is rewarding to me," he said.

Rizzardi enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1954 and served until 1958 as a communication repair technician in support of Strategic Air Command in Korea.

Besides working on claims for veterans, Rizzardi said he spends a lot of his time providing information to veterans who come to the Post look for help to navigate the red tape of VA health care and benefits programs.

"I answer a lot of questions about the VA and what they, as veterans, are eligible for," Rizzardi said. "Most people I talk to are not aware of what the VA can do for them and what our Post can do for them."

The Air Force veteran said he and his assistant at the Post work on about

10 to 12 claims from veterans each year. He said part of the reason he became a service officer is because he likes the idea of helping veterans.

"A service officer has to have a passion to help other veterans, no matter if they are with the VFW or not," Rizzardi said. "Our motto is:

'All veterans matter.' We will help all veterans who need help. We have no boundaries or special requirements to help someone in need."


Email: dspiva@vfw.org



Above: Post Service Officer Bob Rizzardi (right) works with Robert McGuire, a Marine veteran from East Hampton, N.Y., on a claim at Post 550 in East Hampton. PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB RIZZARDI

Right: Bob Rizzardi enlisted in the Air Force in 1954 and served as a communication repair technician in support of Strategic Air Command in Korea. PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB RIZZARDI

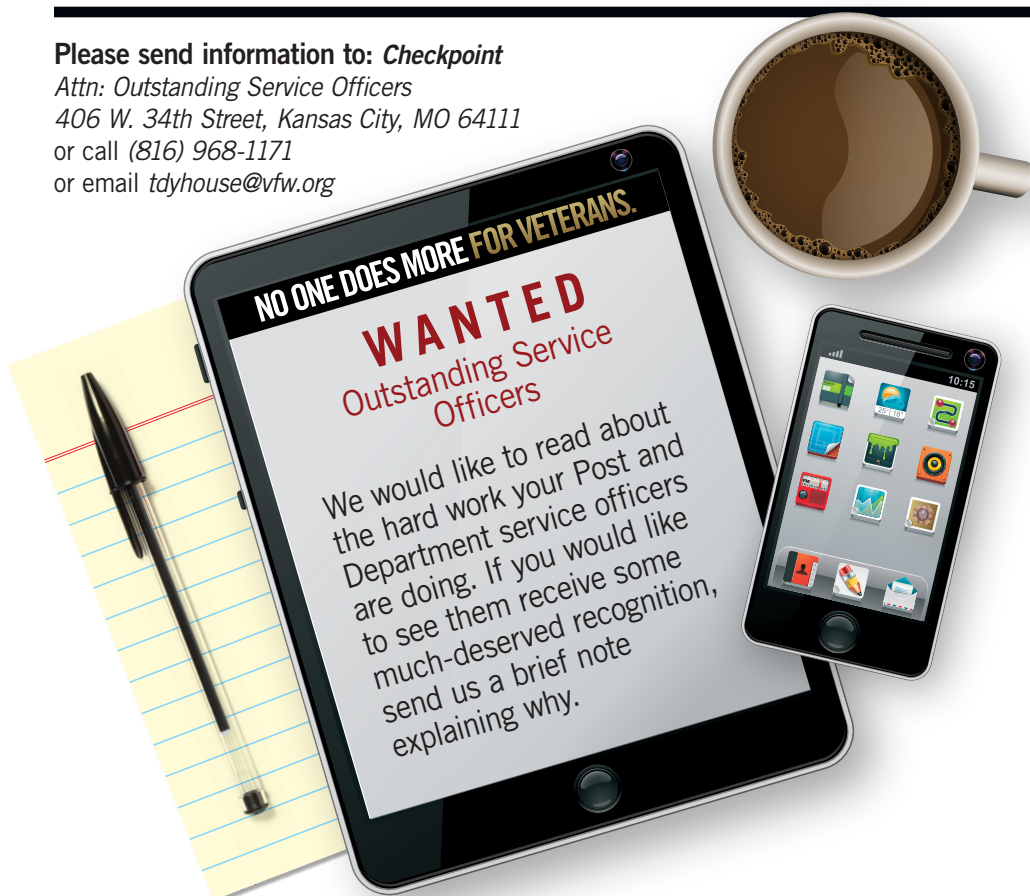




"I answer a lot of questions about the VA and what they, as veterans, are eligible for. Most people I talk to are not aware of what the VA can do for them and what our Post can do for them."
— Bob Rizzardi

Answers

Please send information to: **Checkpoint**
Attn: Outstanding Service Officers
406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111
or call (816) 968-1171
or email tdyhouse@vfw.org



NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE

Do you need help filing a claim?

VFW's National Veterans Service has a VFW Department service officer locator on its website. To find a service officer near you, just follow these easy steps:

1. Visit www.vfw.org/nvs.
2. Select "ASSISTANCE" from the menu.
3. Select "NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE" from the pull-down menu.
4. Locate the "FIND A SERVICE OFFICER" box on the right-hand side of the screen.
5. Select your state and hit "GO".

FIND A SERVICE OFFICER

State

GO >>



VFW Commander-in-Chief Brian Duffy and Auxiliary President Colette Bishop present the 2017 Voice of Democracy winner, Savannah Wittman, with the \$30,000 first-place award following the competition in Washington, D.C., in March.

VFW FILE PHOTO

Grandfather Inspired Essay

VOD Winner Aims to Develop a 'Servant's Heart'

When Savannah Wittman sat down to compose her Voice of Democracy (VOD) essay in 2016, she knew exactly what she would write about. She had just attended her grandfather's military funeral on Aug. 6.

Wittman, a senior at Bret Harte High School in Angels Camp, Calif., was moved to tears at that funeral as her brother, Nicholas, presented their grandmother with the U.S. flag. Nicholas is in the Air Force (ROTC) and attending Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Wash.

"I realized at this moment that what makes this country great is the heart of service that embodies so many men and women," Wittman wrote in her essay based on the theme *My Responsibility to America*.

"In essence ... a servant's heart. Personally, I now understand that my responsibility to America is to develop this servant's heart."

Wittman was named the 2016-17 VOD national winner in February. She was one of 54 students to receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the nation's capital Feb. 25-March 1. George Washington's former home at Mount Vernon, Va., as well as the National Mall and the Holocaust Museum in the District, were among the sites the orators visited.

Wittman was awarded a \$30,000 college scholarship, which she plans to use at William Jessup University in Rocklin, Calif., where she wants to major in biblical studies and minor in music. She was sponsored by VFW Post 12118 and its Auxiliary in Copperopolis, Calif.

The essay winner's grandfather, Raymond "Bud" Wittman, served in the Air Force for 20 years beginning in 1954.

"He was a great storyteller, and he touched a lot of people," Wittman said. "He had a big heart for other people and would help anyone in need."

Wittman's introduction to VFW's VOD contest was during the 2015-16 competition and said she had such a great experience that she wanted to do it again.

"I had no expectation that I would actually win for the state of California, let alone the national title," she said. "I am so humbled and so honored to have received this special award. I can honestly say that the Voice of Democracy program has forever changed my life."

For now, Wittman is looking forward to spending time with her fellow VOD participants June 15-18 at the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, where they will participate in the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference.

Email: jdhouse@vfw.org



VOD participant Katie Fastabend at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., during the annual winner's trip Feb. 25-March 1.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE FASTABEND



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZOE NEAL



PHOTO COURTESY OF MADISON WARD

Top: Voice of Democracy winners visiting the nation's capital in February toured the National Mall. Bottom: VOD participants Alison Rhinehart and Madison Ward under the U.S. Capitol rotunda in Washington, D.C., in February.



FUN!

HISTORY





PHOTO COURTESY OF ZOE NEAL



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZOE NEAL

SCHOLARSHIPS



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZOE NEAL

The 54 Department Voice of Democracy winners visited Washington, D.C., Feb. 25-March 1. Among the trip's excursions were Mount Vernon, Va.; the U.S. Capitol; Newseum and the Lincoln Memorial. The highlight of the visit to the nation's capital was the announcement of the \$30,000 scholarship winner. Savannah Wittman from California won the top prize. Each of the orators was awarded a scholarship.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MADISON WARD



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZOE NEAL



PHOTO COURTESY OF GRACE LEHFELDT

FRIENDS

TRAVEL





VFW FILE PHOTO

VFW Commander-in-Chief Brian Duffy and Auxiliary National President Colette Bishop present Lindi Compton with a check for \$5,000. Compton, sponsored by VFW Post 5813 and its Auxiliary in Greensburg, Ky., won the national Patriot's Pen essay contest. This year's theme was "The America I believe In."

132,000 Participants Nationwide

Patriot's Pen Winner Receives \$5,000

Comparing the United States to a jigsaw puzzle earned Lindi Compton, an eighth-grader from Kentucky, first place in VFW's Patriot's Pen essay contest.

Compton, sponsored by VFW Post 5813 and its Auxiliary in Greensburg, Ky., was one of more than 132,000 participants in the nationwide contest.

This year's theme was "The America I Believe In." Compton noted in her essay that puzzle pieces represent "each and every American and their individuality." Veterans, she writes, "are like the box our puzzle comes in."

"They are the ones who hold all the pieces together in one place and protect them from outside elements," Compton wrote. "Without the box, we would lose all the puzzle pieces. As in America, without our veterans, we would lose many things we take for granted every day."

Compton received \$5,000 and an all-expense paid trip in February to Washington, D.C. Overall, national awards total \$54,500.

For a complete list of Patriot's Pen national winners, visit www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships.

Email: kwilliams@vfw.org



Long Overdue Recognition

California Post Honors Medal of Honor Recipients with Highway Dedication

A portion of a California highway is now named after three Army Medal of Honor recipients due to efforts from VFW Post 184.

Lorenzo Maya Jr., chair of the Riverside, Calif., Post's Freeway Sign Committee, said nothing was being done to recognize WWII vets Staff Sgt. Salvador J. Lara and Staff Sgt. Ysmael R. Villegas, as well as Vietnam War vet Sgt. Jesus S. Duran. He pitched the idea of renaming a three-mile stretch of California Route 91.

"I just suggested it, and then somebody else decided to move on it, and so they went to the senator and said we want to do this," Maya said.

The Post's involvement with fundraising started three years ago.

In California, the state does not pay for naming of highways, freeways or structures. "Local or private sources" must fund the cost, according to the California Department of Transportation.

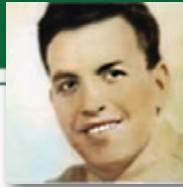


In working with state Sen. Richard Roth (D-31st District), a retired Air Force general, and Assemblyman Jose Medina (D-Riverside) a resolution approving the change passed the state legislature.


Maya said the sign, which will be dedicated on Memorial Day, allows people driving through the city to see that three Medal of Honor recipients came from "these small communities" in Riverside. Duran resided in Eastside, while Lara and Villegas lived in Casa Blanca.

Maya, who served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967 with the 3rd Bn., 5th Marines, said that throughout history, veterans of Mexican ancestry or of Hispanic descent, "have been left behind."

Mexican and Hispanic veterans, according to Maya, himself of Mexican ancestry, do not receive

Mexican and Hispanic veterans, according to Maya, himself of Mexican ancestry, do not receive "the recognition that we really deserve."



Medal of Honor Freeway Dedication Ceremony
May 26, 2017

"the recognition that we really deserve."

Maya, who was Post Quartermaster at the time, said he offered to take the lead on the project. Three Post members attended a two-day motorcycle ride on Memorial Day last year in Riverside to seek donations and collected \$700.

The Post, according to Maya, had difficulty collecting donations, even from other Posts in the District, so he started contacting outside organizations.

Staff Sgt. Salvador J. Lara, Staff Sgt. Ysmael R. Villegas and Sgt. Jesus S. Duran are being recognized as Medal of Honor recipients through efforts from VFW Post 184. Lorenzo Maya Jr., chair of the Riverside, Calif., Post's Freeway Sign Committee, suggested that the three be honored with a stretch of California highway being named after them.

The League of United Latin American Citizens donated \$1,300. Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.) contributed \$500. Other donations came from Casa Blanca Community Action Group, area businesses and individuals, ranging from a few dollars to \$250.

Post members, and the Post itself, also contributed to reach the \$5,000 needed for the sign.

EMAIL: kwilliams@vfw.org

Connecticut Post Raises \$28,000 During Buddy Poppy Drive

For 11 days last year, members of Post 3272 in Avon, Conn., distributed 12,000 poppies and collected donations from community members during the annual Buddy Poppy Drive.

To be successful during annual Buddy Poppy drives, Lee Wilson, Post 3272's drive chairman, said Posts need to put in the work and time to collect donations in communities.

"You have to get out in the community and let them know what you are doing for veterans," said Wilson, who has been a member of Post 3272 in Avon, Conn., some five miles west of Hartford, for more than nine years.

Last May, his Post raised more than \$28,000 during its 11-day effort. Post members distributed 12,000 poppies in front of local stores to raise money for the drive.

"I've been helping in the poppy drive since about the time I became a member, and we've also made \$18,000 to \$28,000 each year," Wilson said. "It's been going up each year, because people know that the money is going to veterans who need it."

Wilson, who also is Connecticut's District 3 Commander and works for the Department headquarters in Rocky Hill, said the funds help disabled veterans and support veterans organizations at Avon-area colleges.

"We also put some of the money we made last year towards the local Iwo Jima memorial," Wilson said.

Wilson, a U.S. Army veteran who served for eight-and-a-half years and during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, said his Post's fundraising goal is \$30,000 during this year's drive.

"I'd like to get there," said Wilson. "But, I'll take as much as the people in the community will donate for the cause."

Wilson said he encourages members of other Posts to contact him regarding how his Post organizes Buddy Poppy drives. He can be contacted at lee@computersbylee.com.

Wilson said, "I want to help in any way I can to raise money for the veterans who need it."

Email: dspiva@vfw.org



Above: Lee Wilson, then-commander of Post 3272, distributes poppies in Avon, Conn., during last year's Buddy Poppy drive. His Post raised \$28,000 over 11 days.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEB KEY IMAGERY



Left: Post 3272 member Dennis Parise, a Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, distributes poppies last year in Avon, Conn. His Vietnam War-era helmet on display shows bullet holes that it received while he was wearing it during the war.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEB KEY IMAGERY

Post Raises \$18,000

Texas Post Hosts Appreciation Dinner for Local Police

After the death of a police officer, Post 7109 in Pearland, Texas, cohosted a dinner to raise money benefitting local law enforcement.



Patrol Officer Endy Ekpanya was killed after a vehicle accident involving a drunk driver on June 12, 2016.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CITY OF PEARLAND, TEXAS

Considering rookie Patrol Officer Endy Ekpanya's death, Post 7109 and Pearland's Elks Lodge hosted an appreciation dinner on July 23, 2016, called "Backing the Badge," which honored Pearland police officers and their families. Supporters of the police department also attended the dinner.

Ekpanya, 30, was killed after being struck by a drunk driver on June 12, 2016. He is survived by a wife and two-year-old son.

"There were a group of VFW members and Elk members at the Pearland Elks Lodge one evening after the tragic loss of our officer," said Ron Risdon, Post 7109 House chairman. "We just knew that we had to do something for the officers of our community. Officer Ekpanya's tragic accident really brought our feelings and thoughts to the forefront, as it did our entire community."

Risdon said the Post and Elks Lodge sold table sponsorships and received individual donations to raise \$18,000 to benefit Pearland's police officers. More than 300 officers and supporters attended the dinner.

"We also held a silent auction that was outstanding," said Risdon, a former U.S. Navy brown water sailor who served on the inland waterways of Vietnam for more than two years then in the Naval Reserves for eight years. "We had a lot of great items donated by businesses of our community."

Risdon said that raising the money made him feel as if Post 7109 and the Elks Lodge truly "accomplished something that will benefit our wonderful and dedicated officers and their families. To know that we are able to help in whatever way we can to make their lives less stressful is a great feeling to have."

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Reciting the Pledge is like Offering 'a Prayer'

Two students at Dahlstrom Middle School in Buda, Texas, join VFW Post 12058 Commander Herman Fabela in August 2016 as he prepares to recite the Pledge of Allegiance over the school's PA system on the first day of school last year. Fabela said he volunteers at the school regularly.

"I'm a 'Dahlstrom Dude,' which is a group of fathers who help out," he said. "We do anything the school needs, be it for academics or athletics. I'll even run errands for school officials if it's necessary."

Fabela, an Air Force retiree who served in 1991's Persian Gulf War, Korea and participated on flights into and out of Iraq, said visiting schools near the Post in Kyle, Texas, some 15 miles southwest of Austin, is a "favorite" activity of Post members.

"It's something I preach at our Post meetings," said Fabela, who also serves as a volunteer emergency medical technician and as the CEO of three online businesses. "Our members place a high value on Americanism and patriotism. We believe we must maintain and pass on the ideals expressed in the Pledge, such as love of country, honor and integrity."

Fabela, a Legacy Life Gold VFW member, said he recites the Pledge at least once a month at Dahlstrom Middle School.

"To me, it's like a prayer," said the third-generation military veteran. "It's a way to pay homage to the veterans who served before me. It's an oath that I've believed in since I was a young boy. I want to give back to my country, and when I represent VFW in this capacity, I'm also promoting an organization that I truly love."



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAHLSTROM MIDDLE SCHOOL

MAY | JUNE 2017

CHECKPOINT

VFW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS • PUBLICATIONS
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NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID
VFW

Posts with the Most

VFW POSTS OF 1,000 MEMBERS OR MORE AS OF APRIL 10, 2017

Rank	Post No.	Location	Members	Rank No.	Location	Members	Rank No.	Location	Members
1	1503	Dale City, VA.....	2,794	11	7968 Apache Junction, AZ.....	1,522	27	9399 Apache Junction, AZ.....	1,138
2	27	Wiesbaden, Germany.....	2,602	12	6506 Rosedale, MD.....	1,430	28	549 Tucson, AZ.....	1,123
3	1114	Evansville, IN.....	2,114	13	76 San Antonio, TX.....	1,418	29	2111 Chula Vista, CA.....	1,121
4	9972	Sierra Vista, AZ.....	2,003	14	4647 North Highlands, CA.....	1,376	30	56 Leavenworth, KS.....	1,081
5	8862	Vicenza, Italy.....	1,847	15	10047 North Las Vegas, NV.....	1,363	31	2503 Omaha, NE.....	1,080
6	4709	Conroe, TX.....	1,770	16	9342 Ansbach, Germany.....	1,338	32	972 Terre Haute, IN.....	1,075
7	392	Virginia Beach, VA.....	1,769	17	63 Boise, ID.....	1,333	33	7686 Alamogordo, NM.....	1,066
8	10692	Grafenwoehr, Germany.....	1,736	18	2391 Saint Augustine, FL.....	1,298	34	1512 Lemon Grove, CA.....	1,042
9	9785	Eagle River, AK.....	1,718	19	7234 Ocean View, DE.....	1,279	35	10281 Radcliff, KY.....	1,040
10	2485	Angeles City, Philippines.....	1,667	20	628 Sioux Falls, SD.....	1,261	36	1170 Middletown, KY.....	1,012
				21	4372 Odessa, TX.....	1,243	37	1273 Rapid City, SD.....	1,011
				22	4809 Norfolk, VA.....	1,211	38	969 Tacoma, WA.....	1,010
				23	10097 Fort Myers Beach, FL.....	1,192	39	1326 Bismarck, ND.....	1,004
				24	1146 St Clair Shores, MI.....	1,186	40	10436 Kitzingen, Germany.....	1,003
				25	6873 Abilene, TX.....	1,178	41	3282 Port Orange, FL.....	1,002
				26	10216 Songtan-Si, Korea.....	1,143	42	2866 Saint Charles, MO.....	1,000

This is an Advertisement



"I never viewed my hearing loss as serious or critical. Mine is all intertwined with the other injuries from my combat experience..."

CPT Tony Seahorn, USA, Ret.
Vietnam Veteran



For more information and insight about the Heroes With Hearing Loss® program, and to see more of Tony's compelling story, visit:

HeroesWithHearingLoss.org