

Membership

Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland has issued a challenge to all VFW Posts and Departments for the month of February 2023!

For this month's Commander's Challenge, we are focusing on total membership growth.

- Each Post that leads their division in total membership increase will receive a \$500 award deposited into the Post account. However, to qualify for this award, the Post must show at least a two percent membership increase in February.
- In addition, any Department that raises their membership percentage by two percent or more in February will receive a \$500 award as well!

This contest will count the Post and Department's total membership from Feb. 1, 2023, through close of business Feb. 28, 2023. Members processed through the Online Membership System before close of business will be processed that day; membership applications sent in via fax or mail will be processed when received.

2022-23 NEW RECRUITING AWARD

One New Member Pin - As part of this year's membership incentives, Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland wants to drive home the message that **EVERY VETERAN COUNTS**. To support this message, every VFW member who recruits a new member will receive a special One New Member recruiting pin to show the world that they're doing their part to help our organization grow in strength and reach our membership goals.

2023 KANSAS CITY SPREE

The top two Post Commanders and the top two District Commanders in each division who achieve 100 percent membership by April 1, 2023, along with their guest will each be awarded:

- Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, MO, from the airport nearest the awardee's home.
- A fun-filled weekend (May 18-21, 2023) that may include but is not limited to touring, shopping and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

DEPARTMENT "100 PERCENT" INCENTIVE

Any Department that attains 100% in membership by close of business on May 1, 2023, will be entered into a random drawing. The Commander (plus guest) and the Quartermaster (plus guest) for the Department that is selected will each receive:

- **\$2,500 voucher through Veterans Travel Service (VTS) applied toward airfare, accommodations, and transportation for a trip of their own choice.**

2022-23 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2022-23 Membership Program is available online at vfw.org, under MY VFW, scroll down to Membership Quick Links, click on Membership Recruiting and Retention. You will see the 2022-23 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION

As Winter kicks into full gear, so should your Membership Committees! The slow, cold days of January and February are just the right conditions to look at your Post roster, seek those members who you have not heard from in a while, conduct buddy checks, and update your membership on Congress' recent passage of the PACT Act. This is YOUR victory! Find out more information at PactActInfo.org! Remember, if you have more than 15 members ready to charter a new Post, give me a call. We have resources to help get you over the top! If you have Posts needing revitalization, call us at 816.968.2788 or email me coreyhunt@vfw.org and we will help you!

New Post Development and Post Revitalization Department Award: For each new Post chartered, and/or revitalized, the Department Quartermaster will receive:

- **A \$250 credit from the VFW Store to be used towards necessary materials for the new Post.**

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

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

UPCOMING TRAINING

The next Membership Monday training webinar will be on Feb. 6, 2023, at 2 p.m., CST, Topic: Back to Basics, Myth-Busting Membership Anecdotes & Top Calls Received by Member Service Center.

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook to view the latest membership news, Post Shout-Outs, and important resource information throughout the year - facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOP THREE RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters (as of 1.27.23):

Joseph M. Young – 261
VFW Post 7108, Dept. of TX

Timothy M. Borland – 259
VFW Post 9972, Dept. of AZ

Steven L. Woodward – 222
VFW Post 2224, Dept. of WA

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to vfw.org, click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership; each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Enrollment Cost:

Annual Payouts:

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

What will your Legacy be?

VFW Foundation

On Jan. 17, 2023, Sport Clips Haircuts presented a check to the VFW Foundation in the amount of \$1.5 million. The event held at VFW Post 8790 in Houston, Texas, also included free haircuts to local veterans. The generous gift will provide educational and training scholarships for service members and veterans through the VFW's "[Sport Clips VFW Help A Hero Scholarship](#)" program.

In just eight years, Sport Clips has donated more than \$10 million to the cause with 2,600 total scholarships awarded! Gordon Logan, Air Force veteran, VFW Life member, and founder and chairman of Sport Clips is a member of the VFW Foundation Board of Directors.

Contact: Richard Freiburghouse, Director of Donor Relations, rfreiburghouse@vfw.org

VFW National Convention

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING – 124th National Convention housing will officially open Feb. 17, 2023. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Phoenix, Arizona – July 22-27, 2023, 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 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111, ATTN: Convention Registration or you may register online by going to vfw.org.

As we continue to move forward into this new year, here is some helpful information about why the support of every VFW member is vitally important. VFW's life-changing programs are not possible through membership dues alone. In fact, **membership dues alone cover just 18% of the cost of programs**. As a nonprofit organization, the VFW relies heavily on the generosity of its members and patriotic supporters. When members donate, 100% of their net donation goes directly back to support their Department. *Please spread the word and give as generously as you are able.*

2023 VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) Annual Campaign – I hope you received the 2023 VFW NVS Annual Campaign mailing that was sent in early January. It contained a 2023 Petition to Congress and an “American Hero” Memorial Day Ribbon Card for you to sign and return. We will continue collecting the petitions and deliver them to Congress to let them know that we will not sit by and allow Congress to make sweeping fiscal changes that could threaten veterans' benefits. The cards will be distributed to hospitalized veterans and service members by Memorial Day. Some members received the 2023 “Help Our Heroes” Member Survey to fill out and return, and we are continuing to collect and tally the responses.

In late-January, we sent out a reminder letter with a Special Veterans' Petition addressed to the President and Congressional leaders. The VFW is doing everything it can to remind our President and Congressional leaders to uphold the promises made to those who have fought for this nation. Please sign and return the petitions so we can forward them to Washington, D.C. When you do, please consider sending a gift to help the VFW National Veterans Service.

Your support is still urgently needed for the 2023 VFW NVS Annual Campaign. Your donation right now ensures the VFW's national force of highly trained, professional service officers is at the ready to help America's veterans navigate the complicated VA system.

VFW Accredited Service Officers help veterans and their survivors cut through the red tape to receive VA compensation and pension benefits they have earned. The VFW recovered \$11.2 billion in compensation in pension on behalf of more than 560,000 veterans and eligible family members in fiscal year 2022. VFW Accredited Service Officers are there for all veterans to help them apply for and receive their hard-earned VA benefits. This service is available to all veterans **FREE OF CHARGE** — and made possible through your donations. Please, watch your mail for this important campaign.

Voice of Democracy State Winners Coming to the Web – It's almost time! Keep an eye on the VFW's website in late February to see the faces – and hear the performances – of the state winners of this year's Voice of Democracy audio-essay competition. Sign up at vfw.org to receive alerts in your inbox.

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 vfw.org/PlannedGiving for helpful tips, tools and other **FREE** resources! Request our Estate Planning Kit to help simplify and organize the estate planning process for you and your attorney. For assistance or more information, please contact VFW Planned Giving at 816.968.1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland would like you to join with him in supporting the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and

eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW's Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible, and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department toll-free at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at partners@vfw.org with "Partners in Patriotism Application" in the subject line.

VFW Friends of Freedom – If you are not already a member of the VFW's online community, please visit vfw.org and look for the gold banner that says "**Find Out What's Happening**" to sign up. As a member of the VFW's Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation's veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit vfw.org/VFWatWork and click on "**Read VFW success stories**" to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans' rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

Department Resources – Many great resources are available for your Department to use in promoting fundraising programs. By visiting heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools, you will find the latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

Veterans & Military Support Programs

VMS All-American Requirement

Encourage your Posts to donate directly to the VMS Programs by going to the VFW Dashboard and go to the "**VMS Donation**" link at the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Your \$100 or more donation meets the eligibility criteria for All-American in this category. **Thank you for your continued support!**

Stay tuned for a new VMS and Programs donation portal for instant credit to the Dashboard

VMS Donation Reports

Donation reports are received on most Fridays and are uploaded to the Dashboard on the same day. The period of these reports is from the previous Friday to current Thursday.

VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"

The 2023 Spring Semester was a record setting semester; 195 scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$900,000.

The 2023 Fall Semester opened Jan. 1, 2023 and is available online at vfw.org/Scholarship with a deadline date of April 30, 2023.

VMS Lapel Pin Payments

REMINDER: If your Department ordered the 2022-23 VMS Lapel Pins and have yet to pay for them, please do so as soon as possible. Payment can be made via the Dashboard using the “VMS Donation” link in the upper right-hand corner of the webpage. If you have any questions, contact Mark Herron at mherron@vfw.org.

Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools

Contact forms, monthly reports, applications, and program reports are located at the Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools webpage. This is our one-stop-shop for all your Chair needs. Please click the link below to access the webpage.

[Access the Veterans & Military Support Program Chairperson Tools webpage now](#)

Do not use the red donate link in the upper right-hand corner of this webpage. This is for general donation purposes only.

Thank you for what you do every day!

VFW Programs

DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS. Military service flags, insignias, etc. should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag.

ALL-AMERICAN DASHBOARD. Please encourage Posts to read the 2022-23 Membership Program. Military Assistance Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance that has been received from National Headquarters to supplement the Unmet Needs financial grants and VFW Sport Clips Help-A-Hero scholarship statistics. The information charts reside on the KPI tools section.

2022-23 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM REMINDER. Nominations for this award and the judging at the Post, District and Department level (if applicable) should be completed. After Department judging, each Department could have selected one candidate from each category and submitted their winners to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1. The Department Teacher winners that are received at National Headquarters will be entered in the National judging and receive a VFW National citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires is the “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form.” A link has been forwarded on to the Department Adjutant/Quartermaster to submit it to National Headquarters by Feb. 1. The form should be completed, and any documentation included with the nomination should be downloaded to this form for each winner. You can locate additional information by logging in to vfw.org and searching under “My VFW” in the Training & Support section.

PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT DEADLINE REMINDER. The suggested deadline for Departments to have reviewed and approved their District and Post entries in the All-American Dashboard is Jan. 31. This will ensure we have accurate reporting numbers across the organization and allot us the time to remedy errors. If you are unsure how to report your participation in the All-American Dashboard or if you are having login issues to the OMS system, contact Nick Lopez at nlopez@vfw.org or 816.968.1155.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS. Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen first place Department winner will receive a National scholarship or award. The amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now totals \$171,000, with the top three awards being raised to \$35,000, \$21,000 and \$15,000. The Patriot's Pen National Awards total is \$55,000.

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 Chairperson 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 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide.

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.

"UPDATED" POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Under previous Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997), it indicated there were only six days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices were required to display the POW/MIA flag. Now under new law, Public Law 116-67 (Feb. 21, 2020), it is required that the POW/MIA flag be flown on all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to vfwstore.org/products/GP237.

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

VFW Member Benefits

Who Won't Call You? The IRS!

One of the best-paying jobs for criminals is to impersonate an IRS agent or investigator. Every year, the IRS "phone scam" makes the top [Dirty Dozen list of tax scams](#). The IRS will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment.
- Demand you pay taxes without an opportunity to appeal.
- Require you to use a specific payment method, like a prepaid debit card, money orders or wire transfers.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in your sheriff or local law enforcement.

If you get a call like this, hang up. You can [report the call](#) directly to government officials online at [Treasury.gov](#).

To learn more about protecting your identity, call the VFW Member Benefits Department at 800.821.2606.

“Buddy”[®] Poppy

“BUDDY”[®] POPPY CAMPAIGN. Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as “They Gave, Will You?” is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of your distribution date. Be sure to specify a date by which the poppies are required, do not use “ASAP.”

BUDDY POPPY UPDATE: National Headquarters conducted a review of the Buddy Poppy policy and procedures and implemented the following changes effective May 20, 2021:

- 1) If you do not receive your order within 8 weeks of placing it with your Department, please contact National Headquarters to report that you have not received the order.
- 2) If you do not report a missing order 3 months after the 8-week processing time, the order will NOT be replaced free of charge, and you will have to resubmit your order.

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

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

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

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

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The silver, gold and diamond anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need. The anniversary poppies are approximately three times as expensive for us to produce, but because of the small quantities we deal in, we do not pass those costs on to the Posts. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out unless you are currently in your 100th year. These are ordered through the Department and processed the same as the red poppies. Annotate on the order to National that it is for anniversary poppies and specify which one.

National Veterans Service

NOMINATION PERIOD FOR JOHN A. BIEDRZYCKI ACCREDITED SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR FOR 2022-23 IS COMING SOON!

If there's one thing that became clear during the global COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, it is just how important accredited veterans service officers are to the continued well-being of our nation's veterans and their families. Even during periods when office accessibility was in flux, our accredited representatives continued to counsel veterans, complete paperwork, and submit VA claims for earned entitlements and benefits. In many cases they made all the difference to our veterans and their families during these uncertain times. Fortunately, today's technology allows our accredited representatives to seamlessly continue their mission of providing services to veterans, their family members, or survivors at any place, at any time.

Department Commanders will soon have the opportunity to recognize that ongoing commitment by nominating one (1) of their Department's accredited representatives for the John A. Biedrzycki Accredited Service Representative of the Year Award for 2022-23.

Official notification that the nomination period is open will be sent out during the month of February. We encourage every Department to put forth a candidate. A nomination shows that Department leadership is aware of the significant contributions your program makes in your community every day.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

VFW Priority Goals and the 118th Congress

The 117th Congress is now on the books, and we had some big successes! However, there is still much work for us to do during the 118th Congress. The [2023 VFW Priority Goals](#) provide our organization's overview of the areas of focus regarding benefits and quality of life programs. The Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provide vital services and care for our military members, veterans, and their families. It is imperative that both DOD and VA receive sufficient funding for the services they provide. We must hold VA accountable for the timeliness and quality of services it delivers to our veterans, and we must ensure that Congress passes meaningful legislation.

Know Your Members of Congress and Make Sure They Know Our Priorities

There are 84 new members in Congress—seven in the Senate and 77 in the House. Do you know who represents your state and district in the 118th Congress? Do your congressional members and their staffers know what issues are important to our military members and veterans? The VFW is committed to working with all members of Congress to ensure that laws and regulations favor our service members, veterans, and their families. We encourage you to contact your [congressional members](#) and inform them of the VFW's position on important legislative issues. Stay informed, be involved, and help us to succeed with our advocacy. There is still work to be done!

Presidents' Day is coming up. Shop the VFW Store for items to celebrate:
vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/presidentsday?page=1&size=100

Clearance items are still on sale, while quantities last:
vfwstore.org/category/more/clearance?page=1&size=100

Teacher awards such as plaques and certificates are also available:
vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation

