

Membership

As of April 25, 2022, our membership for the current year stands at 988,088, which means we are 47,653 members away from 100% in membership. We have ten weeks remaining in the current membership year that ends on June 30. So how do we close the gap and achieve this goal? It’s as simple as asking the question “How do you eat an elephant?” Answer, one bite at a time. If we break it down by the ten weeks remaining, our need per week is 4,765 or a better way to look at it is what we need each day until we cross the finish line. As of April 25, there are 66 days left in the membership year. Our daily need of new and renew members is 722. If we break that down by 52 Departments, that equals to an average of 14 new and renewals per day per Department, which is very doable if we all work together to achieve this goal.

Department leadership, please get with your District leadership; District leadership, please get with each of your Post leadership and find out what they need help with. The National Membership Department can assist your Posts with OMS functionality to ensure they know where to find their expiring and lapsed members as well as lapsed membership going back nine years. Department leadership, many of you have vast numbers of unpaid members-at-large that you can break down zip code and mileage radius to send to your Posts to make phone calls and knock on doors to get some of our former members to come back to our organization.

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact the Membership Department at 888.564.8639 or email us at membership@vfw.org.

NEW/REINSTATED MEMBERSHIP GRANT INITIATIVE FOR VFW POSTS

As of Jan. 1, 2022, every VFW Post that signs up and submits full membership dues* for each member will receive a grant based on the type of membership submitted while funds are available.

Member Type	Rebate Amount
New to the VFW Life member and/or any **Reinstated annual to Life with full Life member payment	\$30.00
New to the VFW Life member and/or any **Reinstated annual to Life Installment Payment	\$20.00
New to the VFW Annual member	\$20.00
**Reinstated Annual member	\$10.00

- Full membership dues include the per capita for National, Department and the Post.
- Reinstated definition - Anyone that has been a member before, and their dues have been expired for two years and one day or more is classified as a reinstated member.
- Members submitted prior to Jan. 1 are not eligible for this program.
- Current annual members defined as any member whose dues have not been expired more than two years are not eligible for the grant.

- Members-at-Large are not part of this program.

ALL-AMERICAN CAP ORDER INFORMATION

All District and Post Commanders who achieve 100% in membership will receive an email from National Headquarters requesting their VFW hat size and preference type of cap (female/male).

A District and Post will not be considered All-American until they achieve greater than 100% in membership and have met all program requirements.

Only the top ten District Commanders in each division and only the top 25 Post Commanders in each division who achieve All-American status will receive an All-American cap from National Headquarters.

Once the email from National Headquarters has been received, click on the link and provide the data requested for hat sizes. Having the data will make it easier to place the All-American cap orders to ensure they arrive on time for the National Convention.

POST DEVELOPMENT

Congratulations to Department of New Mexico instituting VFW Post 12212, Silver City Post! With just two months left in this year's membership program, there are several Departments that have worked hard to institute new Posts. Don't let your efforts to institute a Post or revitalize an existing Post go unnoticed. Let us know what your hard work in this area resulted in this year. For those that may be close to getting your charter, make the most of these next two months! For tips on how to institute a new Post, check out our New Post Development & Revitalization Manual, which can be viewed/downloaded from vfw.org, under Membership Retention & Training. To understand more, give me a call, Corey Hunt, 816.968.2788 to discuss ways you can energize your membership. We have many resources for you including training videos and presentations on topics which are designed to help you grow membership and retain those members.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION DEPARTMENT AWARD

For each new Post, the Department will receive two entries into a drawing, and one entry for increasing the membership of a Post of 50 members or less to over 50 members by July 1, 2022, the Department selected will receive:

- **\$1,000 paid directly to Department.**

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 May 9, 2022, at 2 PM, CDT, Topic: **TBD**.

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/](https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/).

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOP THREE RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters (as of 4.26.22):

Joseph T. Allen – 372
VFW Post 3285, Dept. of MD

Larry M. Gerlt – 277
VFW Post 2704, Dept. of NE

Michael J. Eason – 137
VFW Post 9376, Dept. of MD

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to [vfw.org](https://www.vfw.org), click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership; each 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 National Convention

CONVENTION HOUSING: 123rd National Convention housing opened Feb. 17, 2022.

We encourage attendees to make their reservations now for the National Convention. We **cannot** guarantee there will be availability through housing **deadline of June 13** as the rooms are booking quickly and are **first come, first served**.

To make a reservation, go online to [vfw.org](https://www.vfw.org) or call 844.464.6840 (980.337.3372 internationally).

Development

Memorial Day Campaign – You should be receiving a package within the next few days with 2 dimes, \$1.50 check and a set of patriotic coasters. These items are simple reminders of how much your generosity means to the VFW and all the veterans we serve. When you return the dimes and check with the most generous gift you can manage, it will mean the VFW will continue to be there to help veterans and military

families receive financial grants when times are tough, assist veterans in obtaining the benefits they have earned and ensure the rights of veterans of every generation are respected and protected. The coasters are a thank you for your continuing support. I also hope that you will join other veterans and military families in displaying the U.S. flag on all patriotic holidays, particularly this upcoming Memorial Day. You can visit heroes.vfw.org/Flag to print a free flag poster to display.

Matching Gift Opportunity to Support the VFW's Programs – The VFW has been presented with a great opportunity by generous friends of the VFW. They have made an offer to triple your gift until June 18, 2022, up to \$50,000! They believe there are many others who understand that the cost of war extends well beyond the battlefield. They are asking proud VFW members like you to support fellow veterans of all generations who have been disabled by war. Thanks to dedicated members like you, we have been able to provide the life-changing assistance our veterans need. The pandemic is still causing major hardship for so many of our service members and veterans. The VFW is on the front line in the fight for education, jobs, health care and an overall better quality of life FOR VETERANS! This is a great opportunity to help support veterans of all ages, right in your Department. Be as generous as you can and send your gift in by June 18, 2022, to make sure it is tripled!

Show Your Support for Grieving Gold Star Families and “Sign The Card” – This month we will be deploying the May Sign-A-Card Email Campaign. Help us support grieving Gold Star Families. **It will mean a lot to them if you'll take a moment to show you care.** Once you receive the email you can follow the link to sign a card that will be printed and delivered to a military family who is grieving the loss of their hero. **It may seem like such a small thing, but it really does mean the world to families who have experienced such painful loss.**

May is National Military Appreciation Month – Is your Post planning to commemorate a special event for Military Spouses Day on May 6, Peace Officers Memorial Day on May 15, Armed Forces Day on May 21, National Maritime Day on May 22, or Memorial Day on May 30?

If your Post is planning a special event this month to commemorate any of the above-mentioned special days, please share your success story with us. We will be looking for special stories from Posts like yours to feature in upcoming monthly e-newsletters and on vfw.org/VFWatWork in the Story Archive. You may email your story to success@vfw.org.

Helping the VFW for Generations to Come – One of the easiest ways to continue providing support for your brothers and sisters-in-arms, as well as their families, is to name the VFW in your will or trust. It only takes a few words, and you remain in control of your assets during your lifetime. Just a small percentage of your assets could go a long way in helping the VFW continue its mission into the future. Free estate planning information is always available by contacting the VFW Planned Giving Office at 816.968.1119, email plannedgiving@vfw.org or visit vfw.org/PlannedGiving.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief Fritz Mihelcic would like you to join with him in supporting the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW's Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible, and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW

Development Department at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at partners@vfw.org with “Partners in Patriotism Application” in the subject line.

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

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

VFW Communications

VFW Day of Service

- May 7, the inaugural VFW Day of Service, is only a few days away. From food drives and park clean-up projects, every day more and more veterans and VFW Posts are stepping forward to volunteer and coordinate community service events throughout the month of May. We need you on our team. [Tell us about your planned project.](#)

“Salute to the Heroes” with John Rich

- Keep your schedule open on Friday, May 6 from 6 – 7 p.m. CDT for “Salute to the Heroes” with VFW National Commander Fritz Mihelcic and country music star John Rich – streaming LIVE from the [Redneck Riviera YouTube channel!](#)

It’s Not Too Late to Donate Your myWalgreens Cash Rewards to the VFW

- We’re participating in the myWalgreens donation program! You can donate your myWalgreens cash rewards to Veterans of Foreign Wars thru May 31, 2022.
- To learn more about the myWalgreens program, visit walgreens.com/mywalgreens.

Veterans & Military Support Programs

For Posts and Departments to qualify for All-American, a **minimum of \$100** must be donated to **Veterans & Military Support** by **June 30, 2022**. Please go to the **All-American Dashboard** and use the **VMS Donation link** at the **upper right hand corner** of the screen.

You can also use the link located on the **Veterans & Military Support Program Chairman Tools webpage**. Link to this is provided below.

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

Do not use the red donate link in the upper right hand corner. This is the general donation link.

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

Email notification/Order Form for the **2022-23 VMS Lapel Pins** were sent out last month. If you haven't placed your order yet, please do so as soon as possible. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Mark Herron via email at mherron@vfw.org or call 816-968-1102.

As a reminder, the **MAP Event Report** is **due within 14 days of the events conclusion.** If you have any questions, please contact us at map@vfw.org.

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.

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.

VFW HONORS AMERICA'S TEACHERS DURING 2021-22 PROGRAM YEAR. As announced during the virtual Voice of Democracy-Parade of Winners awards ceremony on April 7, congratulations to the following teacher who was selected as the National winner for 2021-22:

Lisa Russell, teacher at East Elementary School, Mountain Home, ID, was selected by VFW Mountain Home Air Force Base Post 5423, Mountain Home, ID.

Lisa will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, to accept her National award, a \$3,000 cash award for professional development expenses and plaques for both her and her school. (The cash award will be forwarded to her school, in her name, for those expenses.)

Please note, each Department's recipients and their schools will receive a National Commendation citation, which will be sent to the Department Headquarters for presentation.

ALL-AMERICAN DASHBOARD. Military Assistance Program grants have been launched to show Departments and Posts how much in grant assistance that has been received from National HQs 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.

Please encourage Posts to read the 2021-22 Membership program. Many Posts don't understand they need to sign up five new Action Corps subscribers, create a Facebook page, two separate partnering events along with

a 10% increase in Community Service Impact from last year. They must submit reports through the dashboard to gain credit.

IT'S SCHOLARSHIP TIME! It is the perfect time to be 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 nlopez@vfw.org or call 816.968.1155.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN THEMES. The 2022-23 themes have been chosen by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland. The Voice of Democracy theme will be "Why is the Veteran Important?" and the Patriot's Pen theme will be "My Pledge to our Veterans."

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN ENTRY FORMS. The new 2022-23 Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen entry forms are now available on the VFW website.

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

NOTE: "NEW" Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen posters are now available!

U.S. FLAG HALF-STAFF REMINDER. The U.S. Flag should be at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day on Sunday, May 15.

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 vfwstore.org/category/flags/usflags.

FLAG DAY, JUNE 14. All VFW units are reminded to properly display the U.S. Flag on Flag Day, Tuesday, 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.

"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

Member Benefit Notification: Travel Confidently with Emergency Assistance Plus® (EA+®)

If you get sick or hurt while traveling – in a place you don't know, with unknown medical staff – the *Emergency Assistance Plus* program comes to your rescue with services that are vital in an emergency. Whether a few cities away, across the states, or around the world, *EA+* provides 24-hour assistance while traveling, every time you travel. Services include:

- Medical Evacuation & Transportation Home
- Medical Assistance
- Assistance for Companions
- Travel Assistance

Emergency Assistance Plus® (EA+®) steps in to help you with more than 20 emergency and medical assistance services if an emergency arises while you are traveling. Get additional information at vfwmemberplans.com/emergency-assistance-plus.

"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 chairmen guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

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

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

NATIONAL “BUDDY”[®] POPPY DISPLAY CONTEST. The time frame for registering and setting up the Department winning Buddy Poppy displays for the national judging at convention will be the same as usual. Department winning entries will be accepted for registration and may be set up beginning at 8 a.m., Saturday, July 16, until noon, Monday, July 18, 2022. Winning displays will be identified with appropriate ribbons on Tuesday morning and announced later on the convention floor. Displays must be removed prior to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday afternoon. Any displays left after this time, will be removed for disposal by convention center personnel during the disassembly of the hall.

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

National Veterans Service

ACCREDITED SERVICE OFFICER TRAINING, SAN ANTONIO, TX, MAY 10-13, 2022

The upcoming VFW National Veterans Service Proficiency Training Conference (PTC) for accredited representatives is being held May 10-13, 2022, live and in-person at the Westin Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas, with *for the first time*, a virtual workgroup option to our live conference.

While registration has already ended, this is a reminder that your Department Service Office may be closed while your accredited representatives attend this training which is absolutely essential to maintaining expert knowledge of the veterans' benefits system.

Questions regarding this or any VFW National Veterans Service sponsored training, should be addressed to Ryan Gallucci, Director, VFW National Veterans Service, at rgallucci@vfw.org.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

Take Action Now on Toxic Exposure

Thanks to your action in March, the *Honoring our PACT Act* passed the House with a broad bipartisan vote. Now it is time for the Senate to do its job. This historic legislation would ensure toxic-exposed veterans receive the VA health care and benefits they need. It would provide a list of presumptive conditions associated with burn pits and establish a permanent presumptive framework to address any toxic exposure,

foreign or domestic, past, present, and future. It would help Post-9/11 veterans, Persian Gulf War veterans, K2 veterans, Atomic veterans, and Vietnam veterans, including those who served in Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Contact your Senators and tell them to vote YES when the *Honoring our PACT* Act is brought to the Senate floor. [Click to take action!](#)

Administrative Operations

Post Election Reports must be submitted no later than June 1 to the National Headquarters. We encourage all Post Quartermasters to use the online Election Report process featured in the Online Membership System (OMS), which is located behind the member's "LOGIN" at vfw.org.

The 2022-23 Department Roster is now an Online Membership System (OMS) submitted report. The interactive report will cover reporting of all Department elected and appointed officers and committee chairman. In addition, the District Election Report is also contained within the Online Membership System (OMS). Portions of the District report will feed into the Department report (i.e. the District Commander position).

Adjutants and Quartermasters can access the roster by logging into their OMS account under the "Election Report" drop down in the left hand navigation pane. Membership numbers of each elected/appointed officer and/or chairman is needed to complete the report. Your cooperation in completing the roster immediately following your convention is appreciated. Any additions, corrections or changes will be submitted through OMS as they occur throughout the year. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kissha Hood via email at khood@vfw.org.

VFW Store

Get items for your Memorial Day commemorations at the VFW Store, including grave markers, floral wreaths and stick flags. Order by May 13. Go to vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/memorialday?page=1&size=100.

