VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

2026-2027
Leadership Training Manual



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Need Information?

Our website and Facebook page are frequently updated to keep you informed of changes, important information, and upcoming events!
You can find our new website at www.vfwak.org!

Need Forms?

We've got you covered – Check under the "Resources" tab for frequently used VFW forms.

Need Assistance?

We've got that too –
Your Department Headquarters is here to assist **YOU**!
Don't hesitate to contact our office if you need our assistance.

500 E Park Avenue, Wasilla, AK 99654 (907) 373-7600, phone departmentofakvfw@gmail.com

We will inform Posts as soon as possible if dates and/or locations are amended throughout the year…

DATE	EVENT	Location (if applicable)
July 26-29, 2026	National Convention Reno, NV	
October 31, 2026	Deadline- **Post** Voice of Democracy Contest *All entries must be to the Scholars App* Deadline- **Department** Patriot's Pen Contest *All entries must be to the Scholars App* Deadline- **Department** Teacher of the Year Contest *All entries must be to the Post*	
November 5-8, 2026	Western Conference Phoenix, Arizona	
December 10, 2026	Deadline- **Department** Voice of Democracy Contest *All entries must be to the Department level in Scholars App* Deadline- **Department** Patriot's Pen Contest *All entries must be to the Department level in Scholars App* Deadline- **Department** Teacher of the Year Contest *All entries must be to the Department level in Scholars App*	
January 1, 2027	Deadline- Early Bird Award	
January 8-9, 2027	Mid-Winter Council of Administration Eagle River, Alaska Post 9785	
April 1, 2027	DEADLINE- All State Commander & Quartermaster, Membership Jacket, Individual Recruiting Awards Contest and Community Service Post of the Year	

CHECK ALASKA'S MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM FOR DETAILS

July 31- Aug 4, 2027	National Convention Milwaukee, WI	

Stay in the loop by following us on Facebook and visiting our website for important information updates.

May 2026

Dear Comrade:

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Department of Alaska, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Leadership Training Manual for the year 2026-2027.

Now more than ever we need *<u>your</u>* assistance in making the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Alaska a success.

In this manual, you will be presented with a lot of information, which we hope will help you as you carry out the duties of your office.

Remember this training is for you; and for us to be successful, we need your participation throughout the year.

At any time during this year, feel free to ask questions that may come up. If we don't have the answer, you can rest assured we will find the answer, and get it back to you.

As a representative of your Post, we need you to share the information you receive with other officers and members. We ask that you read every section of this training manual so you may fully understand all the information.
This information can also be accessed, 24/7, on our website at www.vfwak.org under the "Resources" tab.

I hope you are as excited about the 2026- 2027 VFW year as I am. We must continue to work and <u>BE INVOLVED</u> if we want to continue to help the veterans of our community and State. I look forward to working with you.

Yours in comradeship,

Dan Garcia State Adj/QM

CROSS OF MALTA

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States adopted for its symbol, the Cross of Malta, which has a heritage of honor, duty, sacrifice and courage that dates back to the 11th century.

The Cross has its origin in the Knights of St. John, a strict order of crusaders originally founded to maintain a hospital for pilgrims journeying to the Holy Land. From this order evolved two divisions, the Knights Templar, famed for their ability to fight, and the Knights Hospitaler, humanitarians who provided for the sick and distressed.

The Knights established branches throughout Europe and moved their headquarters to Cyprus. From Cyprus the headquarters was eventually moved to Rhodes in the 14th Century and was transferred from there to the island of Malta in the 16th century. There they became known as the Knights of Malta.

The insignia of the Knights of Malta is basically the same as the one used today by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. It is an 8-pointed cross formed by four arrowheads meeting at the points. Each represents one of the beatitudes taken from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The arrowheads indicated the knights were willing to fight for the principles of justice and truth although their order was basically a peaceful one.

OUTLOOK SIMILAR

This outlook is similar to that of the VFW, devoted to peace but compromised of Comrades who have fought and are willing to fight again, for those principles which embody the individual liberties and dignities of men.

The fundamental objectives of the organization are set forth in a charter granted it by the Congress of the United States in 1936.

MEDIA FACT SHEET
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

Organized in 1899

Oldest major U.S. veterans' organization Received Congressional Charter in 1936 Over 6,160 posts, worldwide.

The VFW with its Auxiliary includes nearly 1.6 million members

National Headquarters- VFW Building
406 West 34th Street Kansas City, Missouri 64111
VFW Memorial Building 200 Maryland Avenue NE Washington, D.C. 20002

National Washington Office-

NATIONAL OFFICERS

Cory Geisler	-	Commander-in-Chief
Glen Umberger	-	Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief
Bobby Lovergne	-	Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief
Dan West	-	Adjutant General
Marc Garduno	-	Quartermaster General

DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

First Post	July 1929
- Department Status	June 1946
- Number of Posts	17
- Membership	6,993
- Headquarters	500 E. Park Avenue Wasilla, AK 99654
-	(907) 373-7600, phone departmentofakvfw@gmail.com

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Brett Spencer	-	State Commander
Lorraine Roehl	-	State Sr. Vice Commander
Frederick "Slick" Bacorn	-	State Jr. Vice Commander
Dan Garcia	-	State Adjutant

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

FACT SHEET

As the nation's oldest major war veterans' organization, the VFW has an impeccable and longstanding record of service and stewardship. More than 4.4 million patriotic Americans, both members and non-members, entrust the VFW with financial contributions and dedicate millions of volunteer hours.



THE VFW'S VITAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Educate separating service members about their well-earned VA benefits through private benefits counseling sessions with a VFW Accredited Service Officer.

Advocate for America's veterans and their families on Capitol Hill, ensuring *promises made* to veterans are *promises kept*.

Help cover rent, utilities or groceries for a military family struggling with the hardships of war.

Deliver morale-boosting "welcome home" celebrations for service members who have returned from combat.

2,300+

Number of VA-accredited VFW representatives across America and abroad, helping veterans fight for the VA benefits they have earned.

152,883

Number of service members and their family members hosted at VFW Military Assistance Program (MAP) events.

$13 billion

The total annual amount the VFW helped veterans recoup in VA disability compensation and pension benefits in fiscal year 2023.

$1.6 million+

Amount of academic scholarships awarded to 357 veterans and service members.

19

Number of times the VFW has testified to Congress in the last 12 months alone. The VFW has been instrumental in virtually every major legislative victory for veterans in the 20th and 21st centuries.

$3 million+

Amount of scholarships, monetary awards and other incentives the VFW distributes annually to middle and high school students through two major patriotic essay competitions.

$589,007

Value of financial assistance awarded to military families to help cover basic needs in times of crisis. 61% of the funds covered basic housing needs in fiscal year 2023.

JOIN THE VFW

Connect With Us

VFWFans VFWHQ
vfwhq vfwhq

Updated December 2023

Learn more about the VFW's programs and services at vfw.org.

MORE FACTS ABOUT THE VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

About the VFW

We trace our roots back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their service. Many arrived home wounded or sick. There was no medical care or veterans' pension for them, and they were left to care for themselves. In their misery, some of these veterans banded together and formed organizations that would eventually band together and become known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Our Mission: *To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans.*

Our Vision: *Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.*

The VFW by the numbers

1.4 million+
Number of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members.

5,667
Number of VFW Posts worldwide.

1899
Year the VFW started to fight for veterans, service members and their families.

Helping struggling military families

488
Number of grants provided to military families facing financial hardship through ***VFW Unmet Needs***.

$356,512
Amount of grants provided through ***VFW Unmet Needs*** covering housing for struggling military families.

253
Number of military families who received assistance with housing needs.

Cutting red tape

130,000
Approximate number of veterans the VFW assisted in submitting new VA claims in fiscal year 2023.

Nearly 14,400
Number of VA claims filed by the VFW's Pre-Discharge offices in fiscal year 2023 resulting in more than $82 million in disability compensation.

20+
Number of VFW Pre-Discharge offices across the nation, including the military district of Washington, D.C., area.

Inspiring patriotism in young people

26,250+
Number of high school students who competed in the 2022–23 VFW Voice of Democracy competition.

66,800+
Number of students who competed in the 2022–23 VFW Patriot's Pen competition.

Improving life in America

5 million
Number of volunteer hours contributed by VFW members annually.

$45 million
Amount donated annually to local community service projects by VFW members.

The VFW Relies on Donations

The VFW is a 501(c), and programs are made possible through membership dues and tax-deductible donations from good-hearted Americans.

Cost of VFW Program Services: $61.5 Million



Source: VFW 2023 Annual Report

Updated December 2023

SUPPORT THE VFW

Learn more about the VFW at vfw.org.

VFW RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

When the Veterans of Foreign Wars was first organized, it was primarily an association of individual groups all working toward common goals of veterans' legislation, veterans' benefits, veterans' rehabilitation, and patriotism. Administration was comparatively simple, since the only problems were those of getting information to the members and getting them to agree as to what was to be done.

These are still major goals, but the interests of the Veterans of Foreign Wars have broadened and activities on the local Post level have grown far beyond the original purpose.

Youth Activities, Civic Betterment, Humanitarian Projects, Community Service-these all take a tremendous amount of individual volunteer effort and a lot of money.

In the raising of that money and providing recreation and social activities for our members, our Posts have branched into activities which have multiplied administrative problems far beyond what our founders could possibly have dreamed.

These problems are compounded by the fact that a VFW Post is almost a pure democracy, and nearly all of its programs depend on volunteers. Decisions are made by the vote of people who are not completely informed on the subject and are carried out by volunteers and amateurs. As a result, if there is not a set of hard and fast rules to follow and a clear understanding of fields of responsibilities and limits of authority, there are going to be misunderstandings and irritations which create dissension and distract from the purpose of the organization.

This problem has been recognized and very sincere efforts have been made and continue to be made by the National and Department organizations to provide rules and guidance for Post officers and Committeemen in carrying out the duties of their particular field of responsibility.

The master set of rules for the guidance of all Post activities is the VFW National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure. The By-Laws are the basic rules. The Manual of Procedure goes into further detail. These govern all activities of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and are inflexible. They are worded very clearly, and they mean just what they say.

Because state laws differ and there is a wide variance between Department and their organizational make-up, most Departments have adopted Department By-Laws which apply only to Posts within that Department. These must not conflict with the National By-Laws nor permit anything which is prohibited by the National By-Laws. In most cases, Department By-Laws deal with policies to be followed at the Department or District levels and do not attempt to go into detail in the operations of the Posts. They can impose more restrictions on Posts but never less than are provided in the National By-Laws.

Naturally, a basic set of rules cannot contain much detail nor can it specifically provide for every possible contingency in every Post.

From the little 25-member Post that holds a meeting once a month and lives off its dues to the 1,000-member Post which owns its own home and conducts dozens of activities in as many fields-for that reason, specialized rules must be formulated and adopted to cover specific activities. The more complicated the activity, the more specific the rules must be.

These rules seek to prevent Posts from falling into common pitfalls of poor planning, deficit financing, loss of control, and illegal operations. Since By-Laws are designed to cover a wide range of operations, they cannot and do not attempt to specifically detail every move of the Post. They are something like a building code. They establish certain minimum requirements but permit you to build a lot of different houses.

As a Post grows in size and activities, there are certain steps it either should take or must take to protect itself and its officers and to avoid future arguments and misunderstandings which can create problems and dissension.

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY AND LIMITS OF AUTHORITY

If every Post Officer were familiar with their duties and responsibilities and their limitations-and carried out their duties to the best of their ability-there would be very few squabbles within a Post and none which would require outside intervention. The National Manual of Procedure specifically lists certain duties for each officer, and, in the normal course of events, this would be sufficient. However, the complex nature of the operations of many Posts makes it necessary that we look beyond a mere listing of duties and fully understand the reasons for the division of authority. In this way we can apply them to the unusual situations which are bound to crop up from time to time.

THE POST MEETING

The POST MEETING is the center of all Post activities. Every member has a right to attend all meetings and has a voice in their proceedings. It is at the Post meeting that the Post adopts By-Laws, its Club Regulations, decides its policies, and distributes responsibility. Within practical limitations, the Post meeting is supreme to the Post Officers, committees and employees. The membership present may over-rule decisions of the Post Commander or House Committee; they may approve expenditures, set policies, and delegate authority. The Post meeting cannot take any action contrary to the National or Department By-Laws or rules or in conflict with its own By- Laws.

It is important to understand that there are limitations on the authority of the Post. A member has the right to appeal any Post action to the State Commander, who will determine whether that action was proper. In extreme cases, a member can go to the courts if they feel that their rights have been abused by an action of the Post. The Post cannot take unreasonable actions at a meeting. For instance, it could not refuse payment of a legitimate bill for an item authorized for purchase at a previous meeting. It cannot direct an officer or member to do anything contrary to VFW regulations or public law. It cannot take away any of the authority given to individual officers through the National By-Laws.

Ideally, the Post meeting makes the rules and sets the policy for the Post; other levels of authorities carry them out.

The POST COMMANDER

The POST COMMANDER is the key officer of the Post. They, alone, represent the JUDICIAL branch of the organization and has some of the responsibilities of the Executive branch. They preside at all meetings, enforces the rules, appoints committees not otherwise provided for, and makes certain that the other officers and committeemen perform their duties.

Their authority extends to the Post Home or Club to the extent of enforcing the rules of the Post and the National and Department VFW, and public laws. They represent the authority of the Post between meetings, and their voice is that of the Post membership. They see that the Post Trustees conduct their audits, that the Post Quartermaster is bonded, and that the House Committee properly supervises the activities of the Post Home.

Their authority also is limited according to the rules of the organization and the bounds of common sense. They are in no sense dictators. They cannot order nor permit the breaking of laws, nor can they supersede the recognized authority of other officers or committees. They could not, for instance, order the Club Manager to keep the clubrooms open after hours, nor could they direct the Post Quartermaster to pay an unauthorized bill.

They should be familiar with all the activities of the Post. They should sit in with the Trustees at their audits, or at least, have sufficient knowledge of their procedure to know whether they are doing their job. They should attend the meeting of the House Committee, calling to their attention any discrepancies they may have observed or complaints they may have received. They must know that, when they sign a check, it is in payment of a legitimate expenditure.

They are the arbitrator of arguments and the judge in disputes; as a general rule, their decision is considered correct until over-ruled by the Post meeting, the State Commander or Commander-in-Chief.

THE POST QUARTERMASTER

The POST QUARTERMASTER has certain definite responsibilities and duties. They are responsible for all Post funds and property and their signature validates all checks. They keep the fiscal records for the Post and have the duty of overseeing a financial transaction. They must be bonded to the Post for all funds under their control.

The Quartermaster is the RESPONSIBLE Post officer when it comes to financial matters -- not necessarily the Post bookkeeper. In a large corporation, the treasurer does not physically handle the bookkeeping obligations, but they are responsible for seeing that they are done properly, efficiently and accurately. This may also be true of the Post Quartermaster, depending upon the Post By-Laws and Club regulations. In any case, they must be familiar with all books of record and are responsible for all required Federal and State reports and payments.

Remember that the Post cannot take away any of the authority of the Post Quartermaster although he may be relieved of some of the work.

The Quartermaster only pays bills which are authorized by Post action or under Post rules. They cannot refuse to pay a legitimate and properly authorized bill except for lack of funds. Neither can they be forced to pay one which is not properly authorized.

The POST TRUSTEES

The POST TRUSTEES duties are probably the most misunderstood of any of the Post officers. They are primarily the WATCHDOGS of the Post funds. They make certain that no one has their fingers in the till. They audit the Post funds regularly-at least once a quarter.

While the National By-Laws are silent on this point, it would seem logical that Trustees also have authority and responsibility concerning the proper handling of funds. It is only reasonable that their authority should not be limited to catching a dishonest person. Equally important should be the prevention of dishonesty. Where funds are guarded carelessly or records are kept inefficiently, the Trustee should call attention to this and make every effort to correct it.

The Trustees' duties extend to the operation of the Post. Their audits must cover all activities, including the clubrooms, the bar, bingo, or any other source of income or financial transactions.

Again, it is not always entirely necessary that the Trustees do their own investigating and conduct their own audit. In most cases, the Trustees are not qualified accountants, particularly where large amounts of cash are involved, and the operations are especially complex. Many Posts employ a private firm of accountants for the purpose of an audit. This is to be encouraged rather than discouraged. In these cases, the auditor reports to the Trustee and the Trustees make certain that the audit is conducted correctly.

A quarterly audit of all funds and accounts is an absolute necessity and is mandatory. Failure to conduct one may result in the cancellation of the Post Quartermaster bond and will take away all voting privileges at District and Department Conventions. Should the Trustees not function in a proper manner, the Commander may deem it an emergency and appoint an auditing committee on his own initiative.

Trustees have no authority over the management of the Post Home, nor is property held in their name in an incorporated Post. They cannot serve on any committee having to do with the handling of Post funds, and cannot therefore serve as members of the House Committee, bingo committee, etc. There is nothing to keep a Trustee from serving as a volunteer worker or in an appointive capacity where Posts funds are not handled.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES DUTIES OF POST OFFICERS

The duties of Post Officers of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States are listed in the National Manual of Procedure. In many cases, however, the actual responsibility of individual officers has, through custom, extended beyond those listed in the By-Laws.

COMMANDER (Elected)

Presides at meetings.
Enforces rules and laws of Veterans of Foreign Wars.
Approves payment of bills and signs checks.
Appoints committees and officers not otherwise provided for. Represents Post at District, Department and National functions. Supervises all activities of Post.
Appears and speaks for Post at civic functions.

Extra duties:

The Commander is held personally responsible for the conduct of the Post and must interest himself in every activity of the Post, including those under direct control of other officers and committees. They get the credit for what goes right and the blame for what goes wrong.

SR. VICE COMMANDER (Elected)

Presides at meetings in the absence of Commander. Represents Post when Commander is unable to do so.

Extra duties:

Generally, carries heavy load of work with Post activities to prepare him for the job of Commander, which, in many cases, they can expect to have the following year. They are usually the membership chairman.

JR. VICE COMMANDER (Elected)

Presides in absence of Commander and Sr. Vice Commander. Represents Post when they are unable to do so.

Extra duties:

Since they, too, usually expect to become Commander in a couple of years, they should work very closely with all Post activities. In some Posts, they are automatically the Community Service Chairman, in others they are the Social Activity Chairman, usually Poppy Chairman.

QUARTERMASTER (Elected)

Holds all money, securities, and other properties of the Post. Pays all bills and signs all checks.
Accepts dues and orders membership cards. Sends dues transmittals to National.
Keeps all books of record.

Extra duties:

Mails out dues' reminder envelopes.
Keeps record of and applies for membership awards. Orders and pays Poppies.
Fills out federal and state tax and report forms.

ADJUTANT (Appointed)

Keeps files of important documents. Keeps minutes and other records of Post.
Prepares reports and returns for Commander. Attests all official actions of the Post.

Extra duties:

Takes care of Post correspondence.
Aids Commander in preparing for meetings, etc. Is custodian of all history of the Post.

POST ADVOCATE Legal assistance to Post and to the Commander. (Elected)

Extra duties:

In many Posts, they are an attorney and hold the position of Advocate from year to year. In such a case, they handle the legal business of the Post, including incorporation problems, the purchasing and transfer of property, etc. In other Posts, they are not an attorney, and the position is considered more as a "third Vice Commander". Quite often also serves as Post Legislative Officer.

CHAPLAIN Delivers prayer at meetings and other Post functions. (Elected)

Extra duties: Visits sick and disabled members of Post.

In charge of Memorial Services and other such programs. Is sometimes appointed as Post Poppy Chairman and is also in charge of the relief program.

SURGEON Chairman of the Post Health Committee. (Elected)

Extra duties: Works on Community Health Programs.

Posts with a doctor as an active member quite often keep them as Surgeon from year to year. This is an advantage since it assures the Post is an active part in Community health and first aid.
programs. If they are not doctors, they can still assist in these ways. Can very well serve as Post Safety Chairman.

OFFICER OF THE DAY Custodian of Post colors, altar flag, Bible, ballot box, gavel, etc. (Appointed) Inspects membership cards at beginning of meeting.

Presents Post colors.

Extra duties: In charge of all ritualistic work of Post. Carries out disciplinary orders of Commander. Generally, in charge of Post Honor Guard or Firing Squad.

LEGISLATIVE OFFICER Keeps Post informed of legislative matters. (Appointed)

Extra duties: Keeps in contact with their State Representatives and Senators, as well as the Congressman from their district. Informs them of the stand of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on various legislative matters. Aids in carrying out the legislative work of the Department and National Organization.

PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR Initiates programs for observance of patriotic days. (Appointed)

Extra duties: For all practical purposes, the Patriotic Instructor may also be the Post Americanism Chairman. They must keep the members informed of all matters of importance in this field, pass on the programs of the District, Department and National Organizations, and assure a strong local Americanism program.

POST HISTORIAN (Appointed) Extra duties:	Maintains a history of the Post. In many Posts oversees making up the Community Service scrapbook.
TRUSTEES (Elected 3 years) Extra duties:	Audit books of Quartermaster and Adjutant each quarter. Trustees are the watchdogs of the Post funds. They must verify that all books are kept correctly, that all income is reported, and that all expenditures are legitimate. This responsibility extends to the club as well as to the Post. Because of their responsibility to audit funds, they may not serve on any committees having anything to do with the spending of funds. They are elected to three-year terms to make certain that they do not all represent one "clique" which might happen to gain control for one year.
BENEFITS ADVISOR (Appointed) Extra duties:	The Post Benefits Advisor shall advise members of the Post, their family members and survivors of benefits and services that are available in the local community such as homeless services, employment opportunities, and companies that offer discounted goods or services to veterans. The Post Benefits Advisor shall direct individuals seeking Federal benefits assistance to the Department Service Officer. The work of a Post Benefits Advisor shall be performed in accordance with the instructions contained in the VFW Guide for Post Benefits Advisor under the general supervision of the Post Commander. The Post Benefits Advisor shall perform such other duties as may be incident to the office and as may from time to time be required by the laws and usages of this organization or lawful orders from proper authority.
GUARD (Appointed) Extra duties:	Guards the door to the Post meeting and sees that no one is admitted without a current dues receipt card. Notifies the Officer of the Day of the presence of any distinguished guests who may be waiting for admittance.

In addition to the above officers, most Posts also appoint other officers and activity chairmen. A chairman should be appointed in every activity in which the Department is interested. This would include EMPLOYMENT, LOYALTY DAY, NATIONAL HOME, VOICE OF DEMOCRACY, YOUTH ACTIVITIES, etc.

All committees are appointed by the Commander unless the Post itself votes to select them in some other way. The Commander may appoint for the duration of their term only, although the Post may elect for any term it desires.

The Post may set up its own traditions in duties of officers, but it is suggested that each major officer have certain defined duties. A Jr. and Sr. Vice Commander especially should be required to prove themselves by taking care of a major activity before being elevated to a higher office.

REMEMBER that many of the "Extra Duties" listed above are merely suggestions or a report of what is

done in other Posts. There is nothing in that portion which is binding upon your Post.

HOW TO BE A GOOD POST COMMANDER

KNOW YOUR ORGANIZATION

Have up-to-date copies of By-Laws and Rituals and read them. Open your mail when you receive it and read it immediately.

Read and keep your copies of your Post Commanders Yearbook, National and Department Programs and other instructional material sent to you.

Attending Department and National functions.

Read your National Magazine and Department publications. Discuss problems and programs with leaders of neighboring Posts.

Don't hesitate to write to Department Headquarters with your problems.

CONDUCT MEETINGS PROPERLY

Start on time and keep meeting moving.

Follow the order of business as outlined in the National By-Laws. Know and follow parliamentary procedure.

Keep your meeting under control -- designate who has the floor -- do not allow interruptions. Require explicit motions.

Keep the members on the subject.

Make certain all necessary business is transacted.

Don't be afraid to use the gavel but don't allow "railroading" of actions.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BUSINESS BETWEEN MEETINGS

Make your appointments carefully and follow up the work of your committees. Keep in touch with your officers and chairmen.

Always maintain awareness of all post activities.

Require your Adjutant to furnish you with a copy of the minutes as soon as possible after each meeting.

Keep your committee and activity chairmen informed. When you receive information of value to them, pass it on.

LEAD YOUR POST

Be enthusiastic and proud of your Post. Remember that you have the best Post in the best Department of the best organization in the world...and you are the best Commander the Post has ever had.

Make your new members feel welcome and needed. Give them a job to do.

Distribute the work; don't have the same people doing everything. Call your inactive members and ask them to help on specific projects.

Talk up the VFW wherever you go; don't criticize it to outsiders.

Meet and work with the leaders of other organizations and civic groups.

HOW TO RUN A POST MEETING

A successful Post meeting meets these requirements:

It **STARTS ON TIME**
It is kept **SHORT.**
It is **INTERESTING**
It is **INFORMATIVE**
It **ACCOMPLISHES SOMETHING**

It should also follow the VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS Ritual and the general rules of parliamentary procedure.

Its success depends on the person with the gavel - the Commander. They can control the start of the meeting by the time they bang the gavel; they can keep the meeting short by keeping it moving; they can make it interesting and informative by a little advance planning; and they can make sure something is accomplished by knowing ahead of time just what they are trying to accomplish.

Following the ritual in the meeting is merely a matter of opening the book to the right pages and doing a little studying. Parliamentary procedure is covered in the National Veterans of Foreign Wars By-Laws and in Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law, the official guide for the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The Commander should meet with his adjutant and quartermaster prior to the meeting to make certain that their records are prepared for their part in the meeting. This includes the roll call of officers, the reading and referring of membership applications, reading of minutes, reading of bills, Quartermaster's report, reading of communications, etc.

The Commander should know what unfinished business is left to transact. If it is not brought up by someone on the floor, he should bring it up himself. He should have at least a reminder list of new business which should be discussed. At any time that there is a lag in the meeting, he, himself, can bring up the next subject and ask that action be taken.

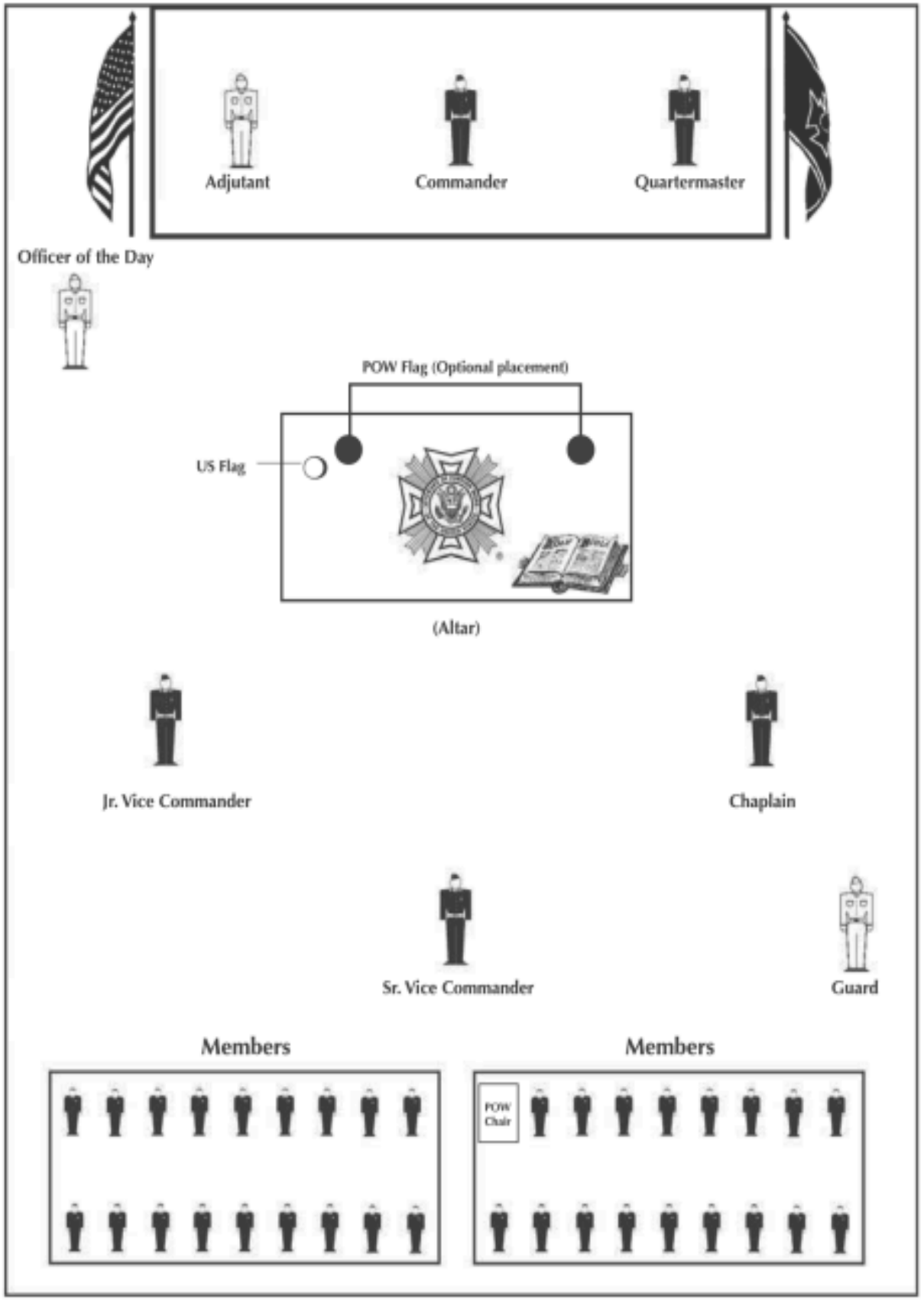
A Post meeting is a business meeting and the more business that's done the better. One of the big jobs of the Commander is keeping discussion on the track. If he sticks to parliamentary law and require that a motion be made before the subject is discussed, and that the discussion be confined to that motion, he will find that most items can be disposed of pretty fast and quite efficiently.

If the business is likely to be slack, a meeting can be pepped up by inviting an interesting speaker to

address the group. You can have good meetings, well attended and useful, if you will follow

these suggestions:

1. Start the meeting on time. (We know this is repetitive, but it is also important.)
2. Spend an hour or so in advance of the meeting planning what is to be done.
3. Go over the correspondence with the Adjutant in advance, deciding what should be read and what should be disposed of otherwise.
4. Turn over all mail and information pertaining to their activity to your committee chairmen. Do it in advance so they may read and report on it.
5. Remember that you are the boss during the meeting. You are always right until proven wrong, and you have the gavel to prove your point. Don't be arbitrary, but if you must make a decision, MAKE IT! If you are over-ruled, maybe you were wrong.
6. Allow everyone to have their say but make them stick to the subject.


Adjutant
Commander
Quartermaster
Officer of the Day
POW Flag (Optional placement)
US Flag
(Altar)
Jr. Vice Commander
Chaplain
Sr. Vice Commander
Guard
Members
Members
POW Chair

A GENTLE APPROACH TO POWER

Power: What exactly is it? One of its important components is the ability to influence others. Blaine Lee, author of The Power Principle (Simon & Schuster, 1997), says that power does not come from coercion or compromise. True leaders - such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Dwight D. Eisenhower - inspire loyalty, trust, admiration, and honor, creating what Lee calls "Principle-centered power".

Here are Lee's "10 principles of power," aimed at helping people improve their personal and professional relationships.

- Persuasion: When you're attempting to influence others, share the reasons and rationale behind your decisions and requests. Make a strong case for your position while maintaining a genuine respect for others' ideas and perspectives. Ironically, it is your willingness to listen to others first that gives you the power to persuade them to agree with you and accept your decisions.
- Patience: Be patient, both with the process and the person. You probably became who you are today because somebody had patience with you at some critical points in your life. When you are patient with someone, you make a long-term investment in him.
- Gentleness: Avoid being harsh or forceful, especially when dealing in areas that are particularly sensitive or where the other person is vulnerable. We all have such areas. People who powerfully influence us seem to sense these vulnerabilities and tread lightly.
- Teach ability: To be taught requires humility. If we operate with the assumption that we do not have all the answers or insights, we allow ourselves to value the different viewpoints, judgments, and experiences others may bring. When we approach others with open minds, and are willing to be taught, we learn that one of the keys to influence is to allow ourselves to be influenced.
- Acceptance: The power of unconditional acceptance is great. In the presence of that acceptance, a little flicker of hope is generated, giving us a positive belief about ourselves and our potential. Unconditional acceptance comes when you desire the best for the other person, withholding judgment and giving the benefit of the doubt.
- Kindness: To influence others, treat them with a genuine regard for your common needs and desires. Kindness means being caring and thoughtful, and acting with consideration, civility, and genuine concern. Do you have enough emotional reserve and control to treat others with kindness when they "deserve" it the least? That is, perhaps, when they need it most.

- Knowledge: Do you desire and acquire accurate information about the person you would like to influence? We can live in the same house or work in the same office year after year, and still not really know each other. To know people, we must make an investment in the relationship. We can begin simply by making time to be together without an agenda. Whether it's customers, family, friends, or co-workers, the more we know about who they are, the better we can serve them and help them reach their full potential.
- Discipline: Often, the effect of positive discipline hinges on the timing and method of its delivery. It should be done promptly, before patterns are ingrained. Admonish and caution gently but earnestly; and be specific, precise, and clear. Do so in a contest of genuine care and concern, so there is no misunderstanding your intention.
- Consistency: Consistency of thought and action comes from a set of beliefs and values that are at our core. Others will begin to honor us only if we are consistent in the way we treat them. Inconsistencies suggest that our actions are manipulative techniques brought into play when we don't get our way. Consistency does not mean you do the same thing to every person in every setting all the time.
- Integrity: We need to be committed to matching words, feelings, thoughts, and actions so that we live with congruence and without duplicity. Don't feign appearance or affection to deceive, take advantage of, manipulate, or control. The greater our integrity, the greater our power.



MEMBERSHIP TOOLS

RECRUITING SUPPLIES NECESSARY FOR GOOD MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT PROGRAM
AVAILABLE THROUGH DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND NATIONAL SUPPLY CATALOGUE:

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGNING ON THE POST LEVEL

Available through the Supply Catalogue:

The VFW Story Ribbon/Bar Posters
Basic Requirements for VFW Membership Shotgun Mailings
Silent Recruiters

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA
MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2026 - 2027



Commander Brett Spencer

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2026-2027
Department of Alaska Awards Program

100% +1 Early Bird Membership Award
Post Commanders that achieve 100% + 1 by **January 1, 2027,** will receive a Commemorative 100% +1 plaque.

100% +1 Membership Award
Post Commanders that achieve 100% +1 membership by **April 1, 2027** will receive a membership jacket.

All State Team

(Criteria for Commanders and Quartermasters) *Contest Deadline is* ***April 1, 2027, NO EXCEPTIONS***
Read the criteria carefully.

Membership must be Posted at National Headquarters and reflect on the VFW MEMSTATS page by 8AM, AST, April 1, 2027 "NO EXCEPTIONS"

Up to four (4) Post Commanders and four (4) Post Quartermasters will be selected to the All-State Team. **The Department Commander and Department Senior Vice Commander will select one Post Commander and Quartermaster to be the All-State Captains.**

Following are the criteria that will be used to select the All-State Teams:

175 points must be achieved to be considered for All State, with 100% +1 Membership with at least 80% retention of previous membership being a requisite and participation in at least 5 of the 8 asterisked (**) programs from the list below.

For All State purposes, Membership is defined as having obtained 100% +1 or more with at least 80% retention of previous membership by April 1, 2027.
Membership is worth **50 points** and will count towards the 175 points necessary for All State consideration.
Tiebreakers will be decided by Department Commander, with Membership being a priority.

Quarterly Trustee Reports: Quarterlies must be in on time and each Quarterly is worth 10 points (on time is defined by the end of the following month after the quarter)	**40 points**
** **Voice of Democracy:** one entry advanced to Department judging	**10 points**
** **Patriot's Pen:** one entry advanced to Department judging	**10 points**
** **National Citizenship Education Teacher's Award:** one entry advanced to Department judging	**10 points**
** **Buddy Poppy:** purchase a minimum of 500 Buddy Poppies per post	**10 points**
** **State Commander Project:** $1.00 per member donation up to a maximum of $300.00 for Post over 300 members. **Commander Spencer's Project is The 98 Fund- Supporting Gold Star Families**	**20 points**
Quartermaster Bond: Must be current and sufficient. Bond must be through the VFW in accordance with the National By-Laws.	**10 points**
Veterans & Service Programs: Hold a fundraiser and donate to Department for NVS (formerly VMSP) Paid through the www.vfw.org. Minimum donation is $125	**10 points**
National Veterans Service: Appoint a Post Benefits Advisor	**15 points**
****Mid-Winter Post Representation** (1 of Top 3 Officers) In person or via Zoom	**10 points**
****Fundraising to support Department Programs** (VOD and Patriots Pen)	**10 points**
****DPAA- POW/MIA Donation:** Paid through www.vfw.org. Minimum donation $75	**10 points**

AWARDS

ALL-STATE COMMANDERS

To Qualify for Captain of the team, a minimum of 190 Points must be achieved.

1. All State Team Cap.
2. All State Lapel Pin.
3. Captain of the Team.
    a. Up to $1,000 airfare to the National Convention. Please submit a receipt for reimbursement.
    b. Expense check in the amount of $500 to help defray cost of hotel.

NOTE: *THIS AWARD IS NOT TRANSFERABLE AND NO SUBSTITUTIONS ARE PERMITTED. IF THE RECIPIENT IS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE CONVENTION THE AWARD HAS NO CASH VALUE.*
ADDITIONALLY, IF THE RECIPIENT IS ALREADY ATTENDING THE CONVENTION UNDER A NATIONAL APPOINTMENT OR AWARD, THERE IS NO CASH VALUE.

ALL-STATE QUARTERMASTERS

To Qualify for Captain of the team, a minimum of 190 Points must be achieved.

1. All-State Team Cap.
2. All-State Lapel Pin.
3. Captain of the Team.
    a. Up to $1,000 airfare to the National Convention. Please submit a receipt for reimbursement.
    b. Expense check in the amount of $500 to help defray cost of hotel.

NOTE: *THIS AWARD IS NOT TRANSFERABLE AND NO SUBSTITUTIONS ARE PERMITTED. IF THE RECIPIENT IS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE CONVENTION THE AWARD HAS NO CASH VALUE.*
ADDITIONALLY, IF THE RECIPIENT IS ALREADY ATTENDING THE CONVENTION UNDER A NATIONAL APPOINTMENT OR AWARD, THERE IS NO CASH VALUE.

Individual Recruiting Awards
Contest Deadline is April 1, 2027

Recruit/Signup:

5	N/R Members	VFW Mug
10	"	VFW Etched Pint Glass
20	"	VFW Official Ball Cap w/ Post & Dept lettering
30	"	$50 VFW Store Gift Certificate
40	"	VFW Throw Blanket
50	"	RT Airfare to National Convention

Membership Team Assignments

Sr. Vice Commander	Judge Advocate
Bethel Post 10041 **Kodiak Post 7056** **Eagle River Post 9785** **Nome Post 9569** **Wasilla Post 9365**	**Spenard Post 1685** **Talkeetna Post 3836** **S. Anchorage Post 9978**
Jr. Vice Commander	**Surgeon**
Ketchikan Post 4352 **Juneau Post 5559** **Prince Of Wales Post 12151** **Soldotna Post 10046** **Anchor Point Post 10221**	**Fairbanks Post 3629** **North Pole Post 10029** **Delta Junction Post 10450** **Glennallen Post 10682**

Rev. 07/27/16

VFW Eligibility Information

The fundamental differences between our organization and other veterans' organizations, and one in which we take great pride, are our eligibility qualifications. There are three primary requisites for membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States: (1) U.S. Citizen or U.S. National (2) Honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States (3) Service entitling the applicant to the award of a recognized campaign medal or as set forth in the Congressional Charter and By-Laws and Manual of Procedure and Ritual.

Sec. 103 -- ELECTION:

Applications. After the applicant has filled out the application card, it should be provided to the post adjutant or quartermaster, together with the dues (and admission fee, if applicable). A receipt shall be given to the applicant.

An applicant may be recommended after eligibility has been fully determined by the post reviewing committee. With respect to a department member-at-large, the department headquarters is responsible for the eligibility determination.

The original application of every member will be retained on file with the adjutant.

Balloting on Applications. Before voting on the application during a post meeting, the commander shall allow the members present an opportunity to state their objections, if any, to the admission of the applicant. Unless one member present request a written ballot, a vote shall be taken, and a majority of the votes cast shall decide acceptance or rejection of the application.

Rejection of Applicant. Should an applicant be rejected by the post, the admission fee and dues shall be returned. After one year (12 months), he may again make application, but a person shall not be proposed for membership more than twice in one post. An applicant rejected in one post may apply to another post or become a department member-at-large.

Notification. The member shall be notified of his acceptance and that he is in good standing, subject to the by-laws governing the organization. The member shall receive a membership card and will be eligible to receive a lapel pin.

Obligation. New post members may receive the obligation according to the ritual.

CHECKING ELIGIBILITY: Proof of service to establish eligibility for membership rests with the applicant. The post is responsible for assuring the eligibility of every member accepted to membership. A careful check of eligibility at the time a person joins will save a great deal of trouble and embarrassment later. A veteran who is not accepted for membership because of ineligibility at the time of application is only disappointed. A member who is removed for ineligibility after having paid dues for several years is justifiably angry.

Assuming that a person is a United States citizen or United States national and has an honorable discharge from the U.S. armed forces, it only remains to be proven that the person has earned a recognized campaign medal or badge; served in Korea between June 30, 1949, until present; or earned Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay eligibility. Those people in the armed forces of the United States shall become eligible for membership immediately upon arrival on hostile soil, in hostile waters or the airspace above in the performance of service.

Discharges issued during and immediately after World War II have a section on the back listing the medals and decorations that have been earned. Persons discharged later received a DD-214, "Report of Separation" form, which lists the medals and decorations on the front. Lost separation documents can be replaced by completing and submitting GSA Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records."

There is always a possibility of an omission on the separation documents. If an applicant claims entitlement to a medal, which is not shown on the individual's separation papers, that person may request verification and correction of records by submitting a GSA Standard Form 180.

The GSA Standard Form 180 is available from any office of the Veterans' Affairs or state veterans' departments. The form must be completed and signed by the veteran to receive the information requested or authorize the release of the information to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Request for records can also be obtained through the National Personnel Records Center at *www.archives.gov/veterans*.

For subsequent service, refer to Sec. 101 of the Manual of Procedure.

ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS: The following is to be used as a guide in determining eligibility for membership. The following campaign medals and the periods issued have been authorized by the United States of America, and the holder of any such medal or medals is recognized as possessing the campaign medal requisite of eligibility.

VFW ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Campaign Medal	Military Service	Qualifying Dates
Expeditionary	Navy/Marine Corps	Feb. 12, 1874 – Open
Spanish Campaign	Army	May 11, 1898 - Aug. 16, 1898
	Navy	Apr. 20, 1898 - Dec. 10, 1898
Army of Cuba Occupation	Army	Jul. 18, 1898 - May 20, 1902
Army of Puerto Rico Occupation	Army	Aug. 14, 1898 - Dec. 10, 1898
Philippine Campaign	Army	Feb. 4, 1899 - Dec. 31, 1913
	Navy	Feb. 4, 1899 - Sep. 15, 1906
China Relief Expedition	Army	Jun. 20, 1900 - May 27, 1901
	Navy	Apr. 5, 1900 - May 27, 1901
Cuban Pacification	Army	Oct. 6, 1906 - Apr. 1, 1909
	Navy	Sep. 12, 1906 - Apr. 1, 1909
Mexican Service	Army	Apr. 12, 1911 - Jun. 16, 1919
	Navy	Apr. 12, 1914 - Feb. 7, 1917
First Nicaraguan Campaign	Navy	Jul. 29, 1912 - Nov. 14, 1912
Haitian Campaign	Navy	Jul. 9, 1915 - Dec. 6, 1915
		Apr. 1, 1919 - Jun. 15, 1920
Dominican Campaign	Navy	May 4, 1916 - Dec. 5, 1916
World War I Victory		
(with battle or service clasp	Army	Apr. 6, 1917 - Apr. 1, 1920
including Siberia and European Russia)	Navy	Apr. 6, 1917 - Mar. 30, 1920
Army Occupation of Germany	Army	Nov. 12, 1918 - Jul. 11, 1923
Second Nicaraguan Campaign	Navy	Aug. 27, 1926 - Jan. 2, 1933
Yangtze Service	Navy	Sep. 3, 1926 - Oct. 21, 1927
		Mar. 1, 1930 - Dec. 31, 1932
China Service	Navy	Jul. 7, 1937 - Sep. 7, 1939
		Sep. 2, 1945 - Apr. 1, 1957
American Defense Service (with foreign service clasp)	Army-Navy	Sep. 8, 1939 - Dec. 7, 1941
European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign	Army-Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Nov. 8, 1945
American Campaign (30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days of duty outside continental limits of the U.S.)	Army-Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Mar. 2, 1946
Asiatic-Pacific Campaign	Army-Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Mar. 2, 1946

Army of Occupation (30 consecutive days

Italy

Germany (except West Berlin)

Korea

Japan

Austria

Germany (West Berlin)

Navy Occupation Service Medal

Italy

Trieste

Germany (except West Berlin)

Austria

Asiatic Pacific

Korean Service Medal

Navy and Marine Corps Expeditionary Me

Cuban Military Operation

Thailand Military Operation

Iranian, Yemen and Indian Ocean Operation

Lebanon

Libyan Expedition

Persian Gulf

Panama - (pre and post invasion)

Operation Sharp Edge – Liberia

Operation Distant Runner – Rwanda
(11th Marine Expeditionary Unit USS Peleliu)

Vietnam Service Medal

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal

Lebanon

Taiwan Straits

Quemoy and Matsu Islands

Vietnam

Congo

Laos

Berlin

Cuba

Congo

Dominican Republic

Korea

Cambodia

Thailand - (only those in direct support of Ca

Operation Eagle Pull - Cambodia (includes e

Operation Frequent Wind - Vietnam (include

Mayaguez Operation

El Salvador

Lebanon

Operation Urgent Fury - Grenada

Eldorado Canyon - Libya

Operation Earnest Will - Persian Gulf
(only those participating in, or in direct suppo

Operation Just Cause – Panama
(USS Vreeland & other SVS-designated
aircrew members outside the Conus in direct

United Shield – Somalia

Operation Restore Hope - Somalia

Operation Uphold Democracy - Haiti

Operation Joint Endeavor -
Bosnia, Croatia, the Adriatic Sea & airspace.

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal

Operation Vigilant Sentinel -
Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, & Persian Gulf.

Operation Southern Watch -
Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Persian Gulf, Bah
Oman, Gulf of Oman W of 62o E Long., Ye

Operation Maritime Intercept -
Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Red Sea, Persian
W of 62o E Long., Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oma

Operation Joint Guard -
Bosnia, Croatia, Adriatic Sea & airspace.

Operation Northern Watch -
Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Persian Gulf W o
and Incirlik AB, Turkey (only pers. TDY to ON

Operation Joint Forge -
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Adriatic Sea &

Operation Desert Thunder -
Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, U
Egypt, Jordan, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, F

Operation Desert Fox -
Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, U
Egypt, Jordan, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, U

Former Republic of Yugoslavia

Southwest Asia Service Medal

Operation Desert Shield/Operation Desert St
(combat areas of operation only)

Personnel assigned to support units serving
Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Jordan.

Kosovo Campaign Medal

Operation Allied Force - Kosovo Air Campaig

Kosovo Defense Campaign - Ground Action

Combat Infantry Badge & Combat Medica

Combat Action Ribbon Navy, Ma

Air Force Combat Action Medal

Combat Action Badge

SSBN Deterrent Patrol Insignia

Korea Duty
Service on the Korean Peninsula, its airspac
waters for 30 consecutive or 60 non-consec

Korea Defense Service Medal

Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary M

Afghanistan Campaign Medal

Iraq Campaign Medal

Air Force Expeditionary Service with GO

Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal

Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay

RECRUITING TIPS

Winning Tips
that will help you be
the KEY TO
SUCCESS

---

1. Always **visit a prospective member in person.** Never call or write. Nothing works better than personal contact.

2. With every new person you meet, ask "**Did you serve overseas?"** You immediately establish a common bond and confirm their eligibility.

3. Have every member complete a **list of eligible family members and friends.** Often, they have never been asked.

4. Always **carry an application.** Insist that everyone on your team carry one, too. It is hard to recover a lost opportunity.

5. Set up **recruiting booths** at malls, department stores and other high traffic areas. Don't leave out military bases in your area. They are a hot spot of recruits - especially since Desert Storm. Use the video tape available from your National Headquarters, along with other recruitment tools to attract attention. Plan your display carefully. Be prepared to follow up.

6. Do not overlook **lapsed members.** Their circumstances may have changed, and they are ready to return to our roles.

7. Use the **Shotgun mailer.**

8. **Visit with other organizations - veteran and fraternal.** Let your concern and willingness to help be known and understood by all.

9. Include **membership in other programs** such as Community Service, Buddy Poppy, Youth Programs, etc. Do not forget to ask, **"Did you serve overseas"** and invite them to become members of our great organization.

10. Membership is more than a reflection of recruiting ability. It also reflects your **leadership ability, the quality of your programs and the overall health of your organization.**

Developing A Recruiting Action Plan

The next step in the goal-setting process is to develop a specific action plan.

Action plans are the “road map” to get you from “where you are” (current situation) to “where you want to be” (goals). They break the process down into easy-to-follow action steps to achieve the desired recruiting results.

Writing a Recruiting Action Plan for each recruiter or team will help you clearly define.

-- Who is to carry out the action?

-- What is to be done, specifically?

-- How is it to be done?

-- When is it to be done?

-- What results are expected?

-- What was accomplished?

PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN

Successful recruiting campaigns include:

- Telephone campaigns.
- Personal contact.
- Mail.
- Competition, incentive, and awards.
- Contests
- Follow-up.

NOTE:
No matter what recruiting campaign is chosen, every veteran should be visited by a recruiter at the veteran's home. For example, if the initial contact is made by telephone, there should be a follow-up visit by the recruiter at the veteran's home.

There are many ways you can set up each of these campaign techniques. Personal Contact could be a door-to-door campaign, a membership booth, or a meeting. Mail can be used to send information on membership benefits.

Competitions, incentives, and awards are for the recruiters themselves – to add fun and motivation to the recruiting effort.

Contests can be held to attract new and reinstated members.

Follow-ups are an important part of your recruitment activity plans. The follow-up is an ongoing process of re-contacting members who have not responded, adding new prospective members to the list, and creating new wars.

Review Your Action Plan for Effectiveness

Ask the following questions about your Action Plan:

1. Do the steps follow logically from your analysis of the current situation and the recruiting goal?
2. Are the steps clearly stated, so each person knows what he has to do to achieve the desired results?
3. Will the steps lead you to achieve your goal?
4. Are your goals realistic?

If you answered "no" to any of the above statements, consider going back and adjusting your Action Plan accordingly.

In the next section of the Recruitment Manual, we will take a closer look at the benefits of VFW membership and the elements of a successful recruiting campaign.

BENEFITS OF VFW

Benefits of VFW Membership

When your recruiters talk to potential VFW members, the emphasis of their recruiting effort will be benefits of being a part of the best and most elite veteran's organization. The VFW is a permanent organization of fraternal, patriotic, historical and educational value.

Benefits include health insurance, discounts on travel, retail and moving services; legislative support and updates on subjects affecting veterans. All benefits are free to members in good standing, except for insurance programs other than the $1,000/$1,500 Personal Accident protection. The $1,000/$1,500 Personal Accident protection is available at no cost, while all other insurance programs are optional and carry a small expense for members.

VFW Sponsored Insurance Programs:

- No-Cost $1,000/$1,500 Accidental Death& Dismemberment Protection Insurance
- Vehicle Insurance
- Medicare Supplement Plans
- Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans
- Long Term Care Insurance
- Senior Term Life Plans
- Life Insurance Plan
- Cancer Insurance Plan
- Major-Medical Health Ins. Plans

BENEFITS OF VFW

- **VFW Travel Service** offers special rates on airfare, tour packages, Amtrak, and cruises.

- **Purchase Power** guarantees lowest price discounts on big- ticket items such as major home appliances and home furnishings.

- **Home Depot Supply catalog** and online discounts on maintenance supplies and housekeeping needs. 1-800-431-3000 or www.hdsupply.com

- **Discount Car Rentals**. Use your VFW discount at Hertz, Avis, National or Alamo car rental companies.

- **A Subscription to the *VFW Magazine*** is published 11 times per year and keeps you up to date on information of interest and importance to veterans.

- **The National Home**, a residential children's care facility, provides free care and educational needs to orphaned or dependent veterans' children.

- **Service Officer Programs** give assistance with questions or problems about any of your benefits or rights as a veteran.

- **Legislative Services** to fight for legislation which protects and enhances veterans' rights and benefits.

- **Community Activities** provide the opportunity for you to serve your community.

- **VFW Supply Catalog** has thousands of items available. http://www.vfwstore.org/default.aspx on the web

- **Auxiliary to the VFW** is an organization for female and male relatives of veterans.

NOTE:
Along with these Benefits, tell recruiters to include the special benefits of belonging to their local Posts, such as a clubhouse or a service officer to address the problems of everyone in that Post.

HANDLING OBJECTIONS

Responding to Negative Comments

You will undoubtedly talk to a veteran who has an objection, a reason for not wanting to join. The first thing to remember is to remain positive and be polite. Talk about the benefits of VFW membership and what those benefits can mean to him; that is, how they will *personally benefit* him by improving his life or that of his family.

If there is an objection that involves a personal reference to the Post itself, try to avoid speaking on those terms. Remove any reference to personalities, or the operations of a particular Post.

These techniques can be used to deal with objections:

- Restate objections as a question, then give answers to correspond with the prospect's basic needs.
- Provide more information to clear up any misconceptions.
- Use member testimonials (if available).
- Restate benefits, both national and local.
- Re-emphasize the personal benefits of being a VFW member.
- Provide a proof statement to help erase doubts. A proof statement contains information or evidence that backs up what you have been saying. It helps the veteran believe in your statements.

PRESENTATION TECHNIQUES

The techniques in this section will help you present the benefits of VFW membership in a one-on-one interview with a prospective member. The same basic guidelines also apply for effective telephone presentations.

1. Know what you want to say.
2. Put things in logical order.
3. Catch the prospect in a frame of mind to listen.
4. Talk to prospect in his own language.
5. Be aware of the emotions, feelings, and responses of your prospect.
6. Arouse and sustain interest.
7. Keep it brief and specific.
8. Present one idea at a time.

1. Know what you want to say.

Make sure your points are clear in your own mind. Review recruiting materials before your interview.

2. Put things in logical order.

People remember more about what they hear at the beginning and at the end of a conversation. Make your most important points early and repeat them as you near the end of the interview.

3. Catch the prospect in a frame of mind to listen.

If your prospect seems too busy, worried or stressed to concentrate, ask if you can arrange another time to talk to him.

4. Talk to him in his own language.

Use simple, straightforward, and easy-to-understand language. Use familiar words.

Consider the prospect's frame of reference---his perspective.

5. Be aware of the emotions, feelings, and responses of your prospect.

What kind of person is he? Is he an introvert or an extrovert?

Watch for signals of irritation, confusion or boredom that indicate whether your prospect is listening, understanding, and believing you.

Don't have your presentation so structured that you cannot adjust to the questions or responses of your prospect.

6. Arouse and sustain interest.

Try to have an interesting beginning to your presentation.

Personalize the benefits to each veteran as much as possible. Keep his needs in focus.

Maintain interest by making frequent eye

contact. Avoid a monotone voice.

Involve the veteran in your presentation as much as possible. Hand him a Benefits Brochure that he can refer to while you are talking.

PROSPECT LISTS

Who is Eligible for VFW Membership?

As you talk with your friends, neighbors, and associates about the VFW, you and the membership team will need to be prepared to answer questions about the requirements for VFW membership. Eligibility is simple.

NOTE; ***The Department Service Officer will have a GSA Form 180***

VFW Qualifications

-- U.S. citizenship.

-- Honorable service outside the continental limits of the U.S. with the U.S. Armed Forces.

-- Service entitling the applicant to the award of a recognized campaign medal.

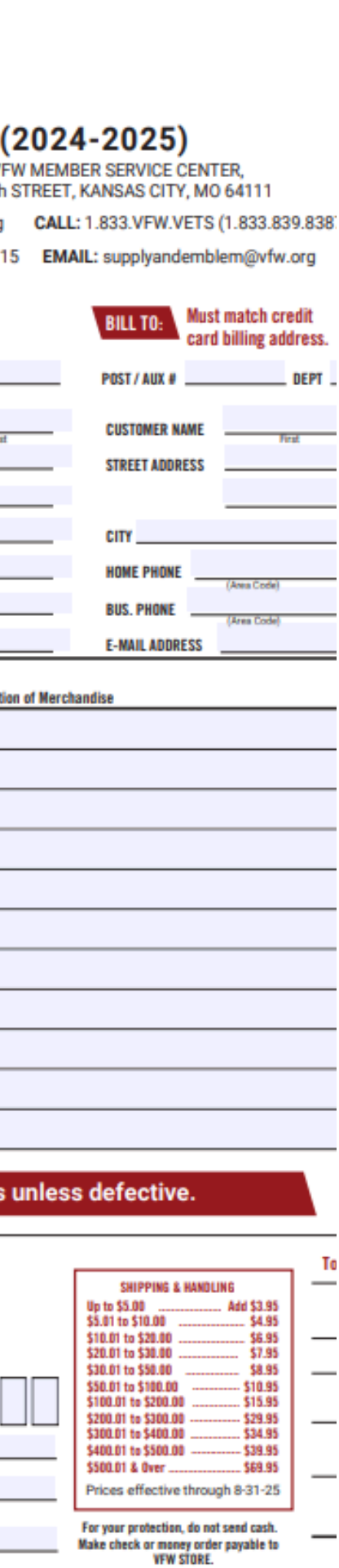
All that is required to check eligibility is proof that these conditions are When the recruiter completes the application form, he should let them know that their discharge papers will be checked to ensure eligibility before their membership becomes official. Discharges issued during and immediately after the close of World War II have a section on the
back listing the medals and decorations, which have been earned by the veteran.

Persons discharged later received a DD 214 "Report of Separation" Form, which has a space showing medals and decorations. Lost separation documents can be replaced by completing and submitting General Services Administration (GSA) Standard Form 180. "Request Pertaining to Military Records." Or by going to http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/ on the web.

GSA Form 180 is available from any office of the Department of Veterans Affairs or state Veterans Departments. The form must be completed and signed by the veteran to receive the information requested or authorize the release of the information to the VFW.

Detailed eligibility information is included in the General Information section of the Post Commander's Manual, Article I of the By-Laws, and the Manual of Procedure.

(2026-2027)


(2024-2025)
FW MEMBER SERVICE CENTER,
h STREET, KANSAS CITY, MO 64111
CALL: 1.833.VFW.VETS (1.833.839.838
15 EMAIL: supplyandemblem@vfw.org
BILL TO: Must match credit card billing address.
POST / AUX # DEPT
CUSTOMER NAME
First
STREET ADDRESS
CITY
HOME PHONE
(Area Code)
BUS. PHONE
(Area Code)
E-MAIL ADDRESS
tion of Merchandise
s unless defective.
To
SHIPPING & HANDLING
Up to $5.00 ..... Add $3.95
$5.01 to $10.00 ..... $4.95
$10.01 to $20.00 ..... $6.95
$20.01 to $30.00 ..... $7.95
$30.01 to $50.00 ..... $8.95
$50.01 to $100.00 ..... $10.95
$100.01 to $200.00 ..... $15.95
$200.01 to $300.00 ..... $29.95
$300.01 to $400.00 ..... $34.95
$400.01 to $500.00 ..... $39.95
$500.01 & Over $69.95
Prices effective through 8-31-25
For your protection, do not send cash.
Make check or money order payable to
VFW STORE.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

AND

YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAMS

PROGRAM PURPOSE:

The VFW purpose as stated in the Congressional Charter clearly indicates that our organization should offer historical and educational programs: *programs that center on developing true patriotism; help educate our young people on the history of democracy, foster true allegiance, and duty to country; and programs that strengthen the common bond of VFW membership.*

PROGRAM MISSION:

Our mission is to: Develop, administer, and promote programs that will benefit veterans, their dependents, and our fellow Americans; while serving our dedicated volunteers, fostering patriotism, encouraging membership, and prudently investing our organizations resources. Recognizing our many volunteers and the precious time they freely give to improve their communities; suggests that we provide more education/training for chairman and require less administrative reports and unnecessary paperwork. Continue to provide and seek out worthwhile VFW centered patriotic program activities for nationwide organizational involvement.

PROGRAM REPORTING:

It is essential that all posts and departments maintain a system of program reporting that will enable the department to substantiate its tax-exempt status and provide information about their community service projects.

It is suggested that all future program reporting by VFW Posts be directed to their Department for proper appropriate credit. The Department will be given full responsibility and accountability for maintaining up-to-date, accurate, and complete record of program activities within their jurisdiction.

Annually, the Department will provide the VFW National Community Service Department with a report covering each Post. The report will state the number of moneys expended to complete activities and the number of volunteer hours covering that time. If Posts and Auxiliaries do not report their activities together, the Department Auxiliary should be requested to provide this information to the VFW.

Department on an annual basis, and the Auxiliary information should be incorporated in the annual report.

National Programs Directors will provide training support covering reporting procedures.

PROGRAMS

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

For National Level Prizes you can find all the information attached to the current Entry form on the National Webpage.

The first place *State* winner receives a $1,000 award, second place winner receives a $500 award, and the third-place winner receives a $400 award.
If you do not take the Voice of Democracy Program to every school in the State of Alaska, we are not affording all the youth of this state the opportunity to participate in one of the best scholarship programs available.

The theme for 2026-2027 is *"What a Veteran taught me about America"*

Deadline for student entries to the Scholars App is now ***October 31, 2026***
Deadline for submissions to ***Department*** *level in Scholars App is* ***December 10, 2026***

PATRIOT'S PEN

For National Level Prizes you can find all the information attached to the current Entry form on the National Webpage.

The VFW's "Patriot's Pen" Essay Competition is an annual nationwide essay completion for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students, with U.S. Savings Bonds as prizes. The student must write an essay on an annual patriotic theme.

The first place *State* winner receives a $250 check, second place winner receives a $150 check, and third place winner receives a $100 check.
If you do not take the Patriot's Pen Program to every school in the State of Alaska, we are not affording all the youth of this state the opportunity to participate in one of the best scholarship programs available.

The theme for 2026-2027 is *"What a Veteran taught me about America"*

Deadline for student entries to the Scholars App is now ***October 31, 2026***
Deadline for submissions to ***Department*** *level in Scholars App is* ***December 10, 2026***

SCOUT OF THE YEAR

Annually, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States awards three individuals who are: Eagle Scouts, Girl Scout Gold Award recipients, Venture Summit Award recipients and/or Sea Scout Quartermasters who have risen above their peers in exemplifying the qualities of that rank. Awards are as follows: $5,000 1st place National scholarship, $3,000 2nd place National scholarship, $1,000 3rd place National scholarship.

Deadline for entries to the **Post** is **March 1, 2026**
Deadline for submissions to your **Department** Chairman is **April 1, 2026**

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Each year three exceptional teachers are recognized by the VFW for their outstanding commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism to their students. The VFW annually recognizes the nation's top classroom elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics - at least half of the school day in a classroom environment - and promote America's history, traditions, and institutions effectively. The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award (Teacher of the Year) national winners will receive:

- A $3,000 award to the top K-12 teachers for professional development expenses.
- $1,000 award for each winning teacher's school.
- Plaques for both the winning teacher and school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend a VFW conference and receive their award.

Deadline for submissions to your **Post** is **October 31, 2026**
Deadline for submissions to your **Department Chairman** is **December 10, 2026**

JROTC PROGRAM

The following are minimum requirements for JROTC Program:

- Must have a positive attitude towards the JROTC program.
- Must be enrolled as a 10th through 12th grade JROTC student.
- Must maintain a "B" average in JROTC curriculum and a "C" average in all remaining subjects, with no failing grades in previous semester.
- Is active in at least one other student extra-curricular activity (music, athletics, government, etc...)

Certificates and Medals are requested by the school instructors at the local Post level and must adhere to the above requirements and any additional requirements voted on by said Local post.

ROTC PROGRAM

The following are the minimum requirements for ROTC Program:

- Must have a positive attitude towards the ROTC Program
- Must be an undergraduate student enrolled in Military Science I through IV.
- Must maintain a "B" average in ROTC and a "C" average in all remaining subjects, with no failing grades in previous semester.
- Is active in at least one other student extra-curricular activity (music, athletics, government, etc...)

Certificates and Medals are requested by the school instructors at the local Post level and must adhere to the above requirements and any additional requirements voted on by said Local post.

Program Chairman

You have all been chosen by the incoming Department Commander because he/she believes that you will be an invaluable asset to said program. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know your program inside and out and follow all rules and guidelines set by National and Department. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact us.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
PROJECTS THAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

This list of suggested Community Activities projects is by no means a complete list of projects that can be accomplished. Its sole purpose is to stimulate ideas and provide guidelines in your search for projects to perform.

1. Collect aluminum cans as a fund-raising project and donate the monies to a worthy cause.

2. Collect and present toys to needy children at Christmas time. Many agencies would appreciate toys and help in collecting them, (i.e. USMC Toys for Tots, churches and in some areas, fire stations).

3. Conduct a public health education program using local medical personnel to present information and conduct health screenings.

4. Plant a tree to honor local veterans.

5. Conduct a Drug Abuse Program for young people and their parents. Local law enforcement officers are generally happy to present such a program.

6. Present a program on Flag education to schools and youth groups.

7. Assist the homeless in your community by sponsoring a clothing collection drive.

8. Volunteer in schools (i.e. Reading Partners, Adopted Grandparents Program, teacher helper, etc.).

9. Conduct a "Get Out and Vote" effort in your community.

10. Ask each member to bring a non-perishable food Item to each meeting. This will provide the Post with a stockpile of non-perishable foods from which food baskets for needy families may be filled.

11. Collect old eyeglasses and donate them to local service programs.

12. Conduct a program that will benefit the children of our National Home.

13. Pay tribute to Veterans Grave sites utilizing either Flags and/or buddy poppies on Memorial Day.

14. Participate in local parades (Independence Day, Veterans Day, Loyalty Day, Memorial Day and local holidays). Carry the U.S. Flag and Post banner.

15. Establish a hospital and nursing home schedule. Ask Post and Auxiliary members to volunteer to conduct at least one visitation a week.

16. Assist in your local adult literacy program.

AMERICANISM: Veterans in the Classroom, Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, Proper use and display of the American Flag, Presenting Flags, and Patriotic materials.

SAFETY: Fire Safety, Hunters Safety, Water Safety, Bicycling Safety and off-road vehicle safety are excellent projects.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES: Boy and Girl Scouting, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps

COMMUNITY SERVICE: You know the City, Town, or Village that you live in. Find out what the Seniors or Elders need, Adopt a Road program, can you volunteer for Meals on Wheels? Can your Post become a resource center for the Community?

OUTSTANDING NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE POST

Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Determines the requirements and Selects the post for the above award. Please visit the National web page or contact National to learn more.



Since 1922, the "Buddy" ® Poppy has been an integral part of the VFW community. As VFW's official memorial flower, the Poppy represents the bloodshed by American service members. It reiterates that we will not forget their sacrifices.

The Poppy movement was inspired by Canadian Army Col. John McCrae's famous poem, "In Flanders Fields." Poppies were originally distributed by the Franco-American Children's League to benefit children in the devastated areas of France and Belgium following WWI. In 1922, VFW conducted a campaign and got Poppies from France. Members soon discovered it took too long to get the flowers in from France and they came up with a better idea. Disabled, hospitalized and aging veterans could make the paper flowers and ship them out to the members for distribution.

And so, it was known, for veterans in VA hospitals and domiciliary and in state veterans' homes, every day would be VFW "Buddy" ® Poppy Day. These men and women assemble the Poppies, tie them in bunches of 10 and pack them in boxes of 500, 1,000 or 2,000 for shipment to the Posts and Auxiliaries. VFW pays the disabled veteran for the work. In most cases, this extra money provides additional income for the worker to pay for the little luxuries, which makes life more tolerable. Furthermore, Poppy assembly is often used as a therapy program to provide exercise for fingers and hands crippled by wounds, disease, and the effects of old age. Another reason Poppies are so important is because all proceeds from distribution are used for veteran's welfare or for the wellbeing of their needy dependents and the orphans of veterans. More than 2,300 children of veterans have been or are being cared for in the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, thanks to a portion of Poppy funds.

As your Post's "Buddy" ® Poppy Chairman, you need to build enthusiasm for this program. Reiterate to your fellow members the two-fold importance of Poppies. It's truly all about veterans helping veterans and living up to VFW's motto of "No One Does More for Veterans."

Distribution of "Buddy" ® Poppies should be included in every Post or Department activity and anything in which you participate.

WHY WEAR A POPPY

"Please wear a poppy", the lady said and held one
forth, but I shook my head.
Then I stopped and watched as she offered them
there,
And her face was old and lined with care.
But beneath the scars the years had
made
There remained a smile that refused to
fade.

A boy came whistling down the street Bouncing
along on care-free feet His smile was full of
joy and fun, "Lady", said he, May I have
one?"
When she's pinned it on he turned to say, "Why do
we wear a poppy today?"

The lady smiled in her wistful way And
answered, "This is Remembrance
Day,
And the poppy there is the symbol for The
gallant men and women who died in
war,
And because they did, you and I are free- That's
why we wear a poppy, you see.

"I had a boy about your size, With golden
hair and big blue eyes. He loved to play and
jump and shout, Free as a bird he would race
about.
As the years went by he learned and
grew
And became a man-as you will, too.

"He was fine and strong, with a boyish
smile,
But he'd seemed with us such a little
while
When war broke out and he went away.
I still remember his face that day
When he smiled at me and said "Good-
bye,
I'll soon be back, Mom, so please don't.
cry".

"But the war went on and he had to stay, And all I
could do was wait and pray.
His letters told of the awful fight,
(I can see it still in my dreams at night),
With the tanks and guns and cruel
barbed wire,
And the mines and bullets, the bombs
and fire.

"Till at last, the war was won - And
that's why we wear a poppy on".
The small boy turned as if to go,
Then said "Thanks, lady, I'm glad to
know.
That sure did sound like an awful fight, But your
son-did he come back all right?"

A tear rolled down each faded cheek; She shook
her head but didn't speak.
I slunk away in a sort of shame,
And if you were me, you'd have done the
same.
For our thanks, in giving, is of delayed,
Though our freedom was bought - And
thousands paid.

And so, when we see a poppy worn, Let us
reflect on the burden borne By those who
gave their very all, and asked to answer
their country's call That we at home in
peace might live.
Then wear a poppy. Remember...and
give!

Lest we forget.



HOW TO BE A GOOD POST ADJUTANT

The office of Adjutant is intended to be one of the most responsible and important in the Post. You are the Executive Officer of the Post and the Commander's right arm.

As Adjutant, you are responsible for correspondence, records, minutes, and the history of the Post. In most Posts, the Adjutant carries on from year to year and is the link between administrations. As such, you are expected to be the authority on what has been done in the past and what is permissible to do in the future.

It is not the purpose of this sheet to tell you how to handle the routine of your office; it is rather to give suggestions as to how you can better fulfill your duties.

I. BEFORE THE POST MEETING:

A. Get together with the Commander to look over correspondence and decide what is to be read in its entirety; what should be condensed, expanded upon or explained; what needs action and what does not apply to the Post and does not require reading. Outline the business to be taken care of.

B. Send out meeting notices at least a week in advance.

C. Look over the minutes of the last meeting to determine if any business was held over or needs further action.

II. AT THE POST MEETING:

A. Correspondence

1. Number the letters to be read so they may be referred to in your notes more easily.

2. Read each letter clearly and distinctly. If you are a poor reader, ask someone else to do it for you. There is no purpose in spending time reading letters if no one knows what you are saying.

3. If any of the correspondence asks or requires action by the Post, make certain that it is held aside to be acted upon.

B. Minutes

1. Do not attempt to take finished minutes at the meeting. Take notes and write them up later.

2. Do not try to take down everything that is said at the meeting. Concentrated on the motions and actions and just enough of the discussion to give an idea of why the motion was made or action taken.

3. Demand that concise motions be made and take them down exactly. Read the motion back before it is noted upon. Many times, a member will launch into a fifteen-minute oration and conclude it by saying, "that's my motion". Insist that he put his motion in exact words.

C. Procedure

1. As the recording officer of the Post, you have a perfect right to protest any action being taken which is contrary to the Post, Department or National By-Laws, but do it in a respectful manner.

2. Make sure that all business has been taken care of before the meeting closes.

III. AFTER THE POST MEETING:

A. Write up the minutes in the form in which they will be entered in the permanent record. Make copies for the Commander and for the Quartermaster so they will know what has to be done. Take care of this within a day or so after the meeting while your memory can assist you in interpreting your notes.

B. Write all letters and take care of all business directed by the Post meeting as soon as possible. This will allow the person to whom you write to answer before the next meeting. Keep copies of all letters.

IV. BETWEEN MEETINGS:

A. Keep your correspondence files up to date, file letters by subject matter. Keep an open file on matters which should be brought up at the next meeting.

B. Send changes of Post Officers or their addresses to Department and the Adjutant General as soon as they occur. Send changes of addresses of all members to the National Circulation Department so they will get their National and Department publications.

C. Be certain that you have up-to-date copies of Post, Department and National By-Laws on hand. Be familiar with their contents.

D. Make sure that important Post documents, such as the Charter, Articles of Incorporation, etc., are kept in a safe place and that someone else knows where they are kept in case of an emergency.

E. Keep an inventory of Post property and in whose possession it is.

These suggestions are merely a guide and do not pretend to cover the multitude of things you probably have to take care of. If you have any problems with which you need help, do not hesitate to ask someone. In many matters of record or procedure, the Department Adjutant can probably help you. Do not be afraid to write to him.

PREPARING A RESOLUTION

The policy of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is established by resolutions adopted by the delegates attending Department and National Conventions. Most such resolutions originate at the Post level and are passed through the Department before being acted upon at a National Convention. Many times, an otherwise worthy idea gets nowhere merely because it is not correctly presented.

A resolution contains two separate parts; a statement of the problem to be solved and the proposed solution to the problem. The problem is outlined in the "WHEREAS" clauses and the proposed solution is given in the "RESOLVED" section.

The "RESOLVED" section of a resolution should be complete without depending on the "WHEREAS" clauses to give it meaning. The following is an example of how NOT to prepare a resolution:

WHEREAS the rising cost of living has created an intense hardship on those disabled veterans whose only income is a meager pension check; and WHEREAS, non-service-connected pensions should be increase; accordingly, now, therefore.

BE IT RESOLVED that we petition Congress to do so immediately.

Note that the "RESOLVED" section said nothing when it is separated from the "WHEREAS" clauses. The sample resolution shown below is CORRECTLY written:

WHEREAS the rising cost of living has created an intense hardship on those disabled veterans whose only income is a meager pension check; now, therefore.

BE IT RESOLVED that we petition Congress to enact legislation which would provide a substantial increase in non-service-connected pension rates.

A resolution may deal with a local problem, in which case it needs no action on a level higher than that or the Post. All resolutions of statewide, regional, or national concern must be acted upon by the Department Convention. Those resolutions approved by a Department Convention which affect persons or matters outside the state boundaries must be forwarded to the National Convention for final disposition.

When submitting resolutions to the Department Convention, a notation on the bottom should show the previous action taken. approval by Post and, if applicable, by the District or County Council.

Since the Department and National Conventions are held only once in a year, it is of prime importance that Post resolutions be acted upon and submitted to the Department Adjutant at least a month prior to the opening of the Department Convention.

INCORPORATION

The first step any Post must take before it branches into any type of community project, social activity or financial undertaking is incorporation. Most Posts are already incorporated. The rest should be.

There are two (2) general sets of rules that cover incorporation of a VFW Post - the laws of the individual state and the National By-Laws of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. To be recognized, your incorporation must comply with both and must be submitted to the Commander-in-Chief for review.

In most every Department, incorporation of a Post is a comparatively simple matter since forms which meet the requirements of state law, and the National VFW are available upon request from Department Headquarters. These guidelines contain a very simple set of instructions on how to fill them out and what to do once they are filled out.

Incorporation is necessary for several purposes. To begin with, in many states the Post must be incorporated before it can hold property in its own name and before any type of liquor or bingo license may be issued to it. Secondly, and perhaps just as important to the officers of the Post, the active incorporation takes individual responsibility away from the Post officers and places it upon the Post itself. The individual officers of an incorporated Post cannot be sued for financial obligations of the Post.

It is the general policy of the National Veterans of Foreign Wars that approval will not be given to separate holding corporations or club corporations. Some of these have been approved in the past and conceivably could be permitted to exist under that approval, but there will be no more in the future.

There is no advantage in the pyramiding of corporations. The Post corporation is sufficient to protect all its operations if those operations are kept under the control of the Post.

The general purpose of a separate club corporation or holding corporation is to take control from the members of the Post. Usually, it has not been done for any dishonest purpose, but in the belief that more efficient operation will result from tighter control by a smaller group of people.

It is the contention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars that sufficient control may be exercised without sacrifice of democratic processes by the adoption of Post By-Laws and Rules.

Any exception to the "no separate corporation" rule may be made in the case of sponsorship of large- scale one-shot activities such as an air show, a community celebration, a Department convention, etc. It is sometimes better in these cases to incorporate the individual activity for ease in obtaining insurance, settling financial obligations, etc. These corporations have a limited existence and are dissolved after their purpose is served.

<u>Posts not incorporated are only asking for trouble</u>.

BY-LAWS

By-Laws on any level of this organization are very important to maintain the continuity of operation of the organization.

If your Post does not have By-Laws to govern the business operation, you are putting the operation of the Post almost exclusively into the hands of the Commander.

Post By-Laws should cover such things as operation of the canteen, bingo operation and any other projects not covered through the National and Department By-Laws.

Department By-Laws

The Department By-Laws cover such things as voting at the Department Convention, Post delegates, and Department committees.

National By-Laws

National By-Laws are amended each year at the National Convention. At the beginning of each year, every Post should order four (4) or five (5) podium editions from the National Supply Catalog. Once these are available, sometime around the first of October, they will be mailed to the Posts.

There are changes to the National By-Laws each year. If your Post does not have a current edition of the National By-Laws, you are operating under an old set of By-Laws.

By-Laws are guidelines for a smooth operation. They are not to be feared. They are to be used. However, to be used effectively, it takes common sense along with the By-Laws.

HOW TO BE A GOOD POST QUARTERMASTER

There is no doubt that a good Post Commander is the major factor in the success of a Post. On the other hand, there is no one who can ruin a Post better or faster than a poor Quartermaster.

The National By-Laws are probably more explicit on the duties of the Post Quartermaster than those of any other officer. He is the custodian of the money and property of the Post, the guardian of its finances, the keeper of the financial records and the collector of most of the membership dues.

He is meant to be and ***must*** be more than a bookkeeper. He generally knows more about the Post than any other individual and ***must*** be dependable, honest, and capable.

These are some of the more important requirements as set forth in Section 218 of the National By-Laws:

1. The Quartermaster shall receive and hold all monies, securities and other property of the Post as may pertain to his office.

2. He shall collect all monies due to the Post and give proper receipt.

3. He shall pay out monies upon authorization of the Post.

4. He shall use a uniform system of books as prescribed by National Headquarters.

5. He shall sign all checks for payment of expenditures.

6. He shall be treasurer of all Post Committees handling funds.

7. He shall be properly bonded.

Here are some suggestions as to how you can best perform your duties and aid the Post:

KEEP NATIONAL AND DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS INFORMED: If your address changes during the year, or if your Post votes to increase its dues during the year, notify National Headquarters and Department Headquarters immediately. Most incorrect information appearing on dues reminders or in mailing results from a lack of information rather than a direct error. Death or change of address of a member must also be reported promptly.

YOUR BOOKKEEPING: Balance your books each month, reconciling them with your bank statement. If you do not understand the system, ask another Post Quartermaster or your Department Quartermaster to help you set them up.

CLUB BOOKS: If your Post operates a club or other business, it will be necessary that you keep more detailed records. There are programs/applications such as QuickBooks that can make this process less daunting.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES: Insist that all monies are turned into you and that all money is paid out by you. Do not allow a committee chairman to pay bills from cash collected. Have them turn in the total receipts and you pay the bills. This is the only way you can have an accurate record.

BANKING OF THE MONEY: Do not allow money to lie around at home or carry it in your pocket. Bank as often as you can, take advantage of all available banking avenues. Most banks have a night depository for large amounts of cash and arrangements can be made for its use on special occasions. Bank all cash and checks on hand on the last day of the month so that your books will balance with the bank statements.

AUDITS: The By-Laws require that the Post Trustees audit your books quarterly. It is to your advantage to insist that they do so. After each audit, the Trustees are to read the report of audit at the next Post meeting. If there is a questionable item, it is easier to explain while it is still fresh in your mind.

BONDS AND SECURITIES, ETC: These should be stored in a safety deposit box in your bank and a record kept with your books. Another person should be authorized to open the box in case of emergency. Trustees should check the contents of the box at least annually.

HONESTY BOND: The By-Laws require that you be bonded with an indemnity company in an amount at least equal to the funds for which you might be accountable. This bond only reimburses the Post if you steal the money. Losses from other causes must be covered by insurance.

VETRANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

BONDING OF ACCOUNTABLE OFFICERS

The VFW National By-Laws, Article VII, Section 703 - Bonds, states:

> "Each accountable officer of this Organization shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, he may be accountable. The bond premium shall be paid from the funds of the National Organization, Department, District, County Council of Post, as the case may be, to which each officer is accountable."
> "The bonds of such accountable officers, in amount and as to surety, shall be approved by their respective units and held by their respective commanding officers. The Commander of each unit shall be responsible for the proper and adequate bonding of all accountable officers in his unit."

Although the language of the above section is quite specific, experience has shown a need for greater clarification as to its application, the degree of protection offered, and procedures in establishing a claim.

The reference to ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER is primarily to the position of Quartermaster, although it might very well in some Posts extend to an Assistant Quartermaster, Club Manager, etc. From a practical standpoint, anyone who has access to funds should be bonded; particularly club employees and others who regularly handle cash. The premium rate for a club employee is higher than for a Post officer.

Just about every Department has an arrangement with an indemnity or surety company to handle the bond requirements of its Posts under a FRATERNAL POSITION BOND. The cost of such a bond is relatively low and there is a particular advantage in having the position bonded rather than the individual in that it is not necessary to change records each time there is a change in office. The bonding company may, however, require personal information on the individual officer in cases where an exceptionally large bond is carried.

The bond only guarantees the HONESTY of the person holding the bonded position. Before any indemnity is paid it must be proven that the money has been lost through the fraudulent or dishonest acts of the bonded person. It does not cover money lost through burglary, careless handling, or mismanagement. It does not take the place of insurance in any way.

The By-Laws only give a rough guide as to how much the individual should be bonded. There may be only $2,000 in the Post treasury - but this may be because the Quartermaster has been systematically skimming off thousands of dollars before the money is banked. Usually the money is stolen before it goes into the bank, but it may also disappear because of the conversion of bonds, savings, or investments to cash. Anything which is easily converted to cash should be protected by a bond.

Only the person holding the bonded position is covered by the bond. Funds stolen by an Assistant Quartermaster are not protected by the bond on the Quartermaster. If the Assistant Quartermaster handles funds, he must be covered by a bond on that position.

The fact that an accountable officer is already bonded by his regular employer does not protect the VFW. A County Treasurer, for instance, may be bonded by his regular employer does not protect the VFW. A County Treasurer, for instance, may be bonded for $100,000 or more but this only protects the County from his dishonest acts. If he steals from the Post in his capacity as Post Quartermaster, the Post cannot collect on his County bond.

All bonding companies require reasonable care on the part of the insured Regular audits and controls on the individual are presumed to be a part of the agreement. Claims filed reveals that most defalcations occur where the Post Trustees do not conduct regular audits, do not take the precaution of obtaining monthly statements directly from the bank, or fail to verify the books against other records.

PROCEDURE IN SUBMITTING INDEMNITY CLAIMS:

The insured Post has the responsibility of reporting a loss just as soon as possible after it is discovered. The fraternal position bond form requires the Post to give all reasonable cooperation in determining details of fact to substantiate the claim and in attempt to make recovery from the defaulting person.

If the bond is held through a local agent, that agent should be informed immediately when a loss is discovered. If the bond was obtained through the Department, Department Headquarters must be notified so the information can be passed on to the proper person.

The Post or other insured unit will be required to show evidence of loss and submit a "proof of loss" form with any further information which may be required. This form will be provided by the bonding company or its agent. The final claim should not be submitted until it is substantiated, preferably through an audit by a qualified accountant.

The bonding company may itself follow up the claim or it may have an outside attorney or adjustor gather details on the claim and on the defaulting officer or employee. It will probably attempt to recover losses from the defaulting person. The Post in accepting the bonding or surety company's check passes on its right of recovery of Post funds to the bonding company.

Because of variations in circumstances and in the laws of the states, it is recommended that the Post seek the advice of an attorney in determining whether criminal charges should be pressed. Such action is not generally required to fulfill the terms of the bonding agreement.

The funds of a Post are the responsibility of its officers. If dishonest acts result in a loss to the Post, the Commander and other officers are obligated to attempt recovery. It is generally better for all concerned to present a claim to the bonding company and let them arrange recovery from the individual rather than to try to do so on the Post level.

The diversion of Post funds to personal use is a serious offense and one with which the Post should have no sympathy. A person who has stolen money from his Comrades has no place in the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Post is entirely justified in and should consider taking disciplinary action against the miscreant and removing him from membership.

HOW TO SAFEGUARD FUNDS

During recent years, bonding companies covering Veterans of Foreign Wars operations have paid out hundreds of thousands of dollars in claims resulting from the dishonesty of VFW officers and employees. Losses which could not be proven, remain undetected, or are charged off to experience, probably total several times as much.

This does not mean that a crime wave has struck the Veterans of Foreign Wars, nor that our people are more dishonest than others. In fact, our experience is probably better than that of most organizations.

IT DOES PROVE ONE THING: We can no longer afford to be complacent and trusting. Every Post must proceed as though it EXPECTS its funds to be stolen or misappropriated and must take the proper precautions.

Not all lost funds are stolen. SLOPPY MANAGEMENT AND INEFFICIENT OPERATIONS have probably accounted for more broke Posts than all other factors combined - and this is the fault of every member of the Post as well as its accountable officers.

What can your Post do to hang onto its money? FIRST, you CAN AVOID LOSS FROM THEFT. This is comparatively easy. There are just four things to do:

KEEP ACCURATE RECORDS
CONDUCT REGULARAUDITS INSURE
AGAINST THEFTAND OTHER LOSSES

A BOND only guarantees a man's honesty. It doesn't protect against any loss except by deliberate action of the bonded officer. You can INSURE against loss by theft, robbery, fire or other causes beyond your control.

Your Post may be protected by bonds and insurance, but it may do you absolutely no good if you can't prove how much money was lost. Here is where RECORDS come in. Records must be adequate and accurate enough to show exactly how much you have, where it came from, and where it is stored.

The accuracy of your records is proven by a regular AUDIT. An audit will show when there is a loss, how much the loss is, and will warn of possible losses in the future if more safeguards are not taken.

THERE IS NO CLEAR-CUT CURE FOR LOSS THROUGH INEFFICIENT OPERATION, except the interest and effort of the entire membership.

Efficiency of operation is probably not a big factor in a small Post whose funds are provided by occasional special events and drives. It is when the Post runs a business (such as the operation of a club) that the men are separated from the boys. Some Posts make a substantial profit - others find themselves putting on outside events to help support the club.

Generally, those showing a profit have these things in common:

SPECIFIC POST RULES COVERING THE OPERATION OF THE CLUB
DEFINITE LIMITS OF AUTHORITY ON EACH LEVEL EFFICIENT
AND ACCURATE ACCOUNTINGSYSTEM

ACTIVE HOUSE COMMITTEE
EFFICIENT MANAGER
CAREFUL PERIODIC AUDIT

Confusion results from a lack of rules. The Post itself, the Post Commander, the House Committee, and the Club Manager each have certain authority. Each must understand where his authority ends, or his responsibility begins. Since each Post operates under different conditions, each must compile its own rules, although a sample form is available from National Headquarters.

The Post itself is the supreme authority over the club. It is by permission of the Post that the club exists. The membership at a Post meeting must adopt the rules under which the club operates, and the membership of the Post must make the final decision in the event of a disagreement.

The Post Commander is the representative of the Post and is responsible for seeing that the rules of the Post are followed, and that the wishes of the members are obeyed. He is the person who will be in trouble if State and Federal laws or VFW rules are not followed, so he must be given authority for enforcement.

The Post Quartermaster, according to VFW By-Laws, is responsible for all funds of the Post and is automatically a member of all committees handling funds. For practical purposes, this means that he cannot be bypassed in financial matters and has as much authority in handling club funds as he has in other Post funds. It does not mean that he personally must keep the books of the club. This may be done by a bookkeeper and, in the case of large clubs, may be handled by an accounting firm. No matter how it is handled, the accounting system must be adequate for the business. It must show profit or loss, overhead, all types of expenses, all types of income and percentage of profit. Regular financial reports must be made to the House Committee and to the membership. Federal and State forms must be completed and submitted on time.

An Audit must be conducted no less than every three months. This may be conducted by the Post Trustees in person, if they know what they are doing and can understand and interpret the bookkeeping system. There is nothing in the book saying that it cannot be done by someone else, under the direction of the Trustees. An audit by a certified public accountant will usually pay for itself with the improvements which will result.

HOW TO CONDUCT A POST AUDIT

POST FUNDS: Many ingenious (and some not so ingenious) methods have been tried over the past years to get away with Post funds. A few dishonest Post Quartermasters tried these angles:

1. Deposited only a portion of the proceeds of special events.
2. Made check stubs payable to someone else and the checks to himself.
3. Secured a personal loan with a Post check.
4. Made up his own bank statements.
5. Staged a fake holdup.
6. Collected membership dues but did not turn them in
7. Cashed Post bonds and pocketed the money.

Each of the foregoing methods has been used with equal lack of success. In some cases, they have worked for a while, but the result has been exposure.

The purpose of the audit is two-fold. It will reveal a shortage before it gets too large, and it is the most successful preventative for itchy fingers.

When conducting an audit, you are nobody's friend. You view everyone with suspicion and give no one the benefit of the doubt. The Quartermaster is the enemy. You can be friends again later but right now you believe what can be proven.

Some of the items which should be at least spot-checked in the audit included:

1. Balance the monthly books for yourself to check accuracy.
2. Reconcile the books with the bank statement.
3. Count the cash on hand.
4. View and count bonds and other investments.
5. Compare the canceled checks with:
    a. Check stubs.
    b. Cash book entries.
    c. Bank Statements
    d. Vouchers and bills
6. Confirm the bank balance with the bank.
7. Check payments for unusual items against Adjutant minutes to determine authority for payment.
8. Verify bills with creditors (it's easy to get cash in change for an overpayment)
9. Compare official receipts to book entries.
10. Check stubs of membership receipts against total membership as shown by books and by Quartermaster's copy of dues transmittals
11. Where committees have handled special events determine just how much money was turned in and check it against entries.
12. Watch very closely any bills paid by cash or income not covered by receipts.

Watch for the following danger signals between audits:

1. Stalling in getting books ready for audit
2. Slowness in paying the Post's Bills.
3. Delay in making deposits.
4. Large amounts carried as "cash on hand."
5. Checks made out to others than the person to whom indebted.
6. Checks are cashed by others than payee.
7. Complaints by members of non-receipt of the VFW Magazine or Department publication
8. Checks which have not cleared the bank at the time of the audit.
9. Keep your eye on a Quartermaster who begins drinking heavily, maintains a girlfriend on the side, who has a lot of illness in the family or loses his job.

A basically honest person can slip if he needs the money badly enough. An air of prosperity is seldom an indication of dishonesty.

It is up to the Trustees and the Commander to check on the honesty of any person handling the Post funds. YOU do the checking, and YOU form your conclusions and act accordingly. Do not convey your suspicions to others until you are certain - do nothing which may hurt the reputation of an innocent person - and do not cover up for anyone.

If the books are not kept in an efficient manner; if they cannot be audited because of lack of records; or if you find definite discrepancies, report it to the Post. Don't just sit back and refuse to sign the audit.

Remember - the Trustees do not tell the Post or the Quartermaster how to run their business; they just make certain that everything is on the up-and-up.

CLUB FUNDS: Clubs are specialized businesses and require more specific safe guards than Posts which do not have clubs. Besides the mere question of honesty, problems of management, governmental regulations, state laws, etc., must be considered.

With additional opportunity, Club Managers or workers have thought up new angles of getting away with funds. Some peculiar to this field include:

1. Padded inventory of liquor on hand
2. Bad or fictitious checks carried as cash on hand.
3. Leakage of petty cash
4. Padded payrolls.
5. Bootlegging on the side
6. Kick-backs from suppliers.
7. Gambling operations on the side

A complete audit of club operations, in addition to those standard items listed under Post audits, must be accomplished with the aid of the following records and information:

1. A regular monthly inventory of stock (taken by the House Committee)
2. Dated cash register tapes for each day.
3. A "Day Sheet" on bar sales for each day
5. Receipts for all bills paid by cash.
6. Records of all stock purchases
7. Complete accounting of income from all non-bar-sources
8. Copies of completed federal and state payroll tax forms.
9. Payroll records
10. All licenses and permits required.
11. Copies of all insurance policies, bonds, etc.
12. All bills and vouchers
13. A list of unpaid bills
14. Any other records found to be necessary.

In completing the audit:

1. Compute gross profit by comparing gross sales with cost of merchandise. sold. If this varies more than a few percent from month to month, find out why.
2. Check all payments and income in the same manner as for Post audits.
3. Check the accuracy of the inventory.
4. Insist on seeing any bad checks and checking them out.
5. Check cash register tapes against recorded receipts for the day. Don't expect them to always be the same.
6. Make certain that the proper amount of state and federal withholding tax and Social Security is deducted from employees' salaries and that it is turned in on proper forms at the proper time. Don't permit any. employees to be paid without proper deductions. It's your neck that's stuck out.
7. Determine that all necessary licenses and permits are taken out.
8. Check the income from cigarette machines, jukeboxes, etc., with that reported by similar businesses. There's lots of room for leakage here.
9. Make certain that the Post is adequately insured.
10. Check with liquor and beer distributors to determine that all current bills are paid.

TRUSTEES' REPORT OF AUDIT of

The Books and Records of the Quartermaster and Adjutant of _____
(District/County Council/Post No.)

Department of _____ for the Fiscal Quarter ending _____, 20__

FISCAL QUARTERS: Jan 1 to March 31 | April 1 to June 30 | July 1 to Sept. 30 | Oct 1 to Dec. 31

FUNDS:	Net Cash Balances at Beginning of 9. Quarter	Receipts During Quarter 10.	Expenditures During Quarter 11.	Net Cash Balances at End of Quarter 12.
1. National and Department Dues (Per Capita Tax)	$	$	$	$ 0.00
2. Admission or Application Fees (Department)				0.00
3. Post General Fund				0.00
4. Post Relief Fund (Poppy Profits, Donations, etc.)				0.00
5. Post Home or Building Fund (Including Savings but Not Real Estate)				0.00
6. Post Canteen or Club Fund				0.00
7. Other				0.00
				0.00
				0.00
				0.00
				0.00
8. Bonds and Investments Not Credited to Funds				0.00
13. TOTALS:	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	14. $ 0.00

15. OPERATIONS

Have required payroll deductions been made? _____

Have payments been made to the proper State and Federal agencies this quarter? _____

Have sales taxes been collected and paid? _____

Are club employees bonded? _____

Amount of outstanding bills $ _____

Value of Real Estate $ _____

Amount of liability insurance $ _____

Owed on Mortgages and Loans $ _____

Value of Personal Property $ _____

Amount of Property Insurance $ _____

16. RECONCILIATION OF CASH & INVESTMENTS

General Fund Checking Account

Ending Balance Per Bank Statement $ _____
Less: Outstanding Checks _____
Plus: Deposits in Transit _____
Account Balance 0.00

Other Checking Accounts (if applicable)

Ending Balance Per Bank Statement $ _____
Less: Outstanding Checks _____
Plus: Deposits in Transit _____
Account Balance 0.00

Savings Account Balance _____
Cash on Hand _____
Total Cash 0.00

Bonds and Other Investments _____
Total Cash and Investments $ 0.00

17. TRUSTEES' AND COMMANDER'S CERTIFICATE OF AUDIT

Date _____, 20__

This is to certify that we (or qualified accountants) have audited the books and records of the Adjutant and Quartermaster of _____
(District/County Council/Post No.)
for the Fiscal Quarter ending _____ in accordance of the National Bylaws and that this Report is a true and correct statement thereof to the best of our knowledge and belief. All Vouchers and Checks have been examined and found to be properly approved and checks properly countersigned:

Post Quartermaster _____
(Name)

_____
(Address)

Signed: _____ Trustee

Signed: _____ Trustee

Signed: _____ Trustee

This is to certify that the Office of the Quartermaster is bonded with _____ in the amount of $_____ until _____, 20__ and that this Audit is correctly made out to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed: _____ Commander

NOTE: Forward Original (Blue) Copy to your Department Quartermaster - See instructions on reverse side of both Yellow and Blue Copies.

RECORD RETENTIONGUIDE

The following list has been compiled in response to requests from Posts that have asked how long to retain certain files and records. Please keep in mind that this list does not have the effect of law, and a judicious amount of common sense should be used when applying it to your Post.

Record Name	Retention
Accounts payable invoices	7 years
Accounts payable ledger	7 years
Accounts receivable ledger	7 years
Annual financial reports	Permanently
Annuity & deferred payment plans	Continuing record
Audit reports, annual	10 years
Audit reports, periodic	2 years
Audit work papers	5 years
Balance sheets	5 years
Bank deposit slips	5 years
Bank statements and reconciliations	5 years
Bills of lading	2 years
Bonds - Fidelity	3 years after termination
Bonds - Surety	3 years after termination
Budgets	5 years
By-Laws	Until superseded
Canceled checks (for important payments, i.e., taxes, purchases of property, special contracts, etc.) (checks should be filedwith papers manently pertaining to the underlying transactions)	Per
Canceled checks - other	7 years
Cash receipt records	7 years
Charts of Accounts	Permanently
Certified Annual Financial Statements	Permanently
Community Activity Reports	3 years
Contracts and leases	7 years following expiration
Correspondence, executive	10 years
Correspondence, general	3 years
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale	Permanently
Depreciation schedules	Permanently
Election of Officer Reports	5 years
Employee accident reports	30 years after settlement
Employee contracts	7 years after termination of employment
Employee insurance records	11 years after termination
Employee records	4 years following termination of employment
Employee withholding records	7 years
Employee application	7 years following termination of employment for employees, 1 year for applicants not employed
Entertainment, gift & gratuity records	3 years
Expense vouchers	7 years
Freight bills	3 years
Freight claims	2 years
Garnishments	7 years after termination of employment

General ledger	Permanently
Gifts, records of gifts	Permanently
Income statements, annual	Permanently
Incorporation papers	Permanently
Inspection reports	3 years
Insurance policies, reports and claims (current)	4 years after policy expiration
Inventory records	Permanently
Invoices	7 years
Journals	Permanently
Labor cost records	3 years
Lease records	3 years after termination
Membership applications	Permanently
Membership rosters	5 years
Minute books of directors and stockholders, including by-laws and charter	Per
manently Minutes of Post meetings	5
years	
Notes receivable ledger and schedules	7 years
Payroll register	Permanently
Periodic financial reports	3 years
Petty cash records	3 years
Physical inventory tags	3 years
Postal records	1 year after end of fiscal year
Property appraisals by outside appraisers	Permanently
Property records	Permanently
Purchase orders	7 years
Quartermaster reports	5 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Sales records	7 years
Savings bonds registration records of employee	3 years
Shipping & receiving documents	2 years
Stock and bond records; ledgers, transfer registers, coupons	Permanently
Subsidiary ledgers	7 years
Tax records	Permanently
Trade mark registrations	Permanently
Voucher register and schedules	7 years
Vouchers for payments to vendors, employees, etc. (including allowances and reimbursements of employees, officers, etc., for travel and	7 years entertainment expenses)

Obviously, the foregoing list is not all-encompassing, nor is it intended to be. A good rule of thumb in determining what files and records to keep is that if the file or record has no financial or historical significance, then it is probably time to dispose of it.

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM (OMS)

Encourage your members to sign up for an online membership account. There they can:

- Update contact information.
- Update/change passwords.
- Update payment profile(s)
- Request a new membership card.
- Pay continuous dues.
- Convert to Life Membership -

  bonus - a member can sign up online for Life Member INSALLMENTS whereas the Post Quartermaster cannot.
- Upgrade to Legacy Life Membership
- Access forms and training materials for various VFW programs

.... and much much more!

Are you the Post Quartermaster? Online access allows you to:

- Process membership application (annual and life memberships)
- Transfer members.
- Decease members.
- Update member contact information.
- Request new cards for membership.
- Access your post roster (filter by paid/unpaid/deceased, etc.)
- Submit and update your Post Election Report throughout the year (as needed)

.... and much much more!

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE POST INSPECTION REPORT

Make every effort to answer each question accuratelyand completely. Some questions require dollar amounts or dates to be inserted. The purpose of the Inspection Report is to provide the State Commander and the State Inspector with a factual report on the operating condition of the Post. If you don't complete the report carefully and properly, you are denying the State Commander and State Inspector information they need to do their job. Do not limit your comments when reporting deficiencies; it may be necessary to attach an additional comment sheet.

Question Specific Reminders

1. Posts that have adopted by-laws need to have a copy on file that indicates the Commander-in-Chief has reviewed for compliance. Verify date of review.
2. Posts that have adopted Articles of Incorporation need to have a copy on file that indicates the Commander-in-Chief has reviewed for compliance. Verify date of review, date filed with appropriate state agency, and the name of the incorporated unit. All Posts should be incorporated under the laws of their state to protect members' personal assets from seizure andsale.
3. Verify the following positions are properly filled: Commander, Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Chaplain, Surgeon, three (3) Trustees, Adjutant, Officer of the Day, Service Officer, and Guard.
4. Verify delegates to the District, County Council (if applicable), Department and National Conventions were elected in accordance with Section 222 of the National By-Laws/Manual of Procedure. This can be done by checking the meeting minutes.
5. Self-explanatory. Any "NO" answer in this section may be a By-Law violation. In addition, item 5f, is verifying the information is present for each officer, you are not verifying the officer's is eligible.
6. Verify, using meeting minutes, that applications for membership are being handled in accordance with Section 103 of the National By-Laws.
7. The National By-Laws state every Post must hold at least one regular meeting per month.
8. Verify, using meeting minutes, that all committee reports are read and approved. This item includes any activity, canteen, clubroom, bingo, etc.
9. Activity reports assist the Post when their non-profit status is being questioned.
10. Verify, using meeting minutes, that the Post made arrangements to properly observe Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Flag Day, and Loyalty Day.
11. Section 1101 and 1301 of the National By-Laws discusses the formation and control of Auxiliaries.
12. Distribution of the VFW Buddy Poppy helps raise monies for the Post's relief fund.
13. Self-explanatory.
14. Monthly review of Post receipts and expenditures by the Trustees is required in the National By-Laws.
15. Quarterly audits are required of all accounts. This item includes any canteen, clubroom, bingo, etc., Post trustees must complete this audit not later than the month following the last day of each quarterly period. Failure to conduct the audits, as required, will invalidate the Post Quartermaster bond.
16. Evidence of checking and savings account balances should be verified from the latest statements, copies of CD's, notes, etc. If the bank balances do not coincide with the books, after adjustments for outstanding checks, etc., this should be reported in detail. Discr epancies should immediately be brought to the attention of the Post Commander and Trustees. The Post Quartermaster must be bonded in a sum equal to the liquid assets for which he is accountable, and to which he has access.
17. Verify bonding company and expiration date by viewing a copy of the certificate.
18. Reference Section 703 of the National By-Laws.
19. Verify all questions in this section by examining quartermaster records, adjutant records and by-laws.

    Remember, Section 709 of the National By-Laws further require that the Post Quartermaster have custody of all funds of the subordinate unit and subject to the same Rules and Regulation as Post Funds.

    The Post Quartermaster is required to maintain a Dues Reserve Fund. One-half of the Post's portions of current years' dues are to be credited to the Dues Reserve Fund and not used until the next membership year, which begins July 1. The purpose of this fund is to provide the incoming Commander with additional funds to operate the Post during the new administrative year.

    The Internal Revenue Service requires all VFW Posts to file annually a form 990 "Tax Exempt Organizations Tax Form". A Post may also have to file a Form 990T and pay certain taxes if it has nonrelated business income. Failure to file the forms, when required to do so, can result in severe fines and penalties. Enter the date of the last filing; even if the report for the current year has not yet been completed or is not yet due. Each Post is mandated, by IRS rules, to have their current 990 filing available for public viewing.
20. Expenditure of funds requires a vote on the Post floor, and approval by the Post Commander before a Quartermaster can proceed with the disbursement. In some instances, Post By-Laws may allow for certain expenditures to be paid without a vote on the floor, these are usually reoccurring bills. If a Post Commander is not approving expenditures, he is violating the trust placed in him and is not controlling the expenditure of Post monies.
21. Buddy Poppy distribution net receipts are to be credited to the Relief Fund only (Section 219 of the National By-Laws) and used only as stated in Section 219 of the Manual of Procedure.
22. The National By-Laws state the Post Quartermaster will disburse funds using acceptable banking practices. The Post Quartermaster may authorize other persons, but they must be bonded in accordance with Section 703 of the National By-laws. However, if the Post by-laws require the Commander and Quartermaster signatures on checks, they must adhere to the Post By-Law.
23. Checks shall never be "pre-signed" by any officer.
24. Last appraised value or estimated value shall be entered. Monthly payment and amount owed are necessary; mark "N/A" if the amount is zero. Title holder may be a bank or lender, if the property is totally paid for, enter location and holder of the deed. If the Post does not own real property, please note if they rent.
25. It is desirable that the Post be covered by adequate liability insurance. If someone suffers an injury on Post property or at a Post sponsore d activity, a subsequent lawsuit may subject all the assets of the Post and its members to a judgment. The Post officers should be reminded of this potential problem.

    Any Post owning property and/or operating any facility must maintain general liability insurance, including, if necessary or appropriate, liquor liability insurance. Such insurance must name, as additional insured's, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and the Department in which the Post is located. Verify by viewing policy(s).
26. Each Department will adopt a document retention policy which complies with federal and state law.
27. Every Post is required to have a Federal Employee Identification number.
28. Department's may require additional forms for inspecting licensed operations.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

POST INSPECTION FORM

POST NO.	CHARTERED LOCATION (CITY & STATE)	DISTRICT NO.	DEPARTMENT	INSPECTION DATE

1) Are organizational By-Laws readily available to Post members?	YES	NO
a) Has the Post adopted by-laws in accordance with Section 202 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
b) Date reviewed by theCommander-in-Chief: _____		
2) Is the Post incorporated in accordance with Section 708 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
a) Name of incorporated unit: _____		
b) Date reviewed by theCommander-in-Chief: _____		
c) Date filed with appropriate state agency (e.g.. Secretary ofState): _____		
d) Has the name and contact information of the registered agent been updated with appropriate stateagency?	YES	NO
3) Are all officer positions filled as prescribed in Section 216 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
4) Are Post delegates elected in accordance with Section 222 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
5) Does the Post adjutant…		
a) Maintain books and records in a legible and uniform format?	YES	NO
b) Maintain a file containing a copy of the original application of every member admitted into the Post?	YES	NO
c) Maintain a file of meeting minutes after correction and approval?	YES	NO
d) Maintain a file of current orders or circulars issued from higher authority?	YES	NO
e) Maintain a correspondence file?	YES	NO
f) Maintain a file containing proof of eligibility submitted by officers?	YES	NO
g) Maintain a current copy of Department and National By-Laws?	YES	NO
6) Are applications for new, reinstated and transferring members read and voted on for approval?	YES	NO
7) Does the Post hold at least one meeting per month?	YES	NO
8) Do committee chairmen summarize their activities during meetings and allow for comments and discussion from the membership?	YES	NO
9) Are Post program accomplishments reported in accordance with Department By-Laws and/or guidelines?	YES	NO
10) Does the Post observe commemorative dates as mandated in Section 223 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
11) Does the Post have an auxiliary?	YES	NO
a) Is there proper cooperation between the Post and its auxiliary unit?	YES	NO
12) Does the Post distribute Buddy Poppies?		
a) Date of last distribution: _____		
13) Does the Post have an effective membership recruiting and retention program?	YES	NO
14) Do the elected trustees review the monthly report of receipts and expenditures?	YES	NO
15) Do the elected trustees audit quarterly all books and records of the Post quartermaster, Post adjutant and any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or on behalf of the Post?	YES	NO
a) Date of last trustees report of audit: _____		

16) Post funds:

a) Balance of all checking accounts.....$_____

b) Balance of all savings accounts.....$_____

c) Balance of all CD and bond accounts.....$_____

d) All other account types.....$_____

e) Total of all accounts.....$_____

f) Amount of quartermaster bond.....$_____

g) Do all account ledger balances match the balance of reconciled bank statements? YES NO

h) Is the quartermaster bond (f) greater than the total of all accounts (e)? YES NO

17) Name of bonding company:_____ Expiration date of bond: _____

18) Are additional officers accountable for funds, bonded in accordance with Section 703 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
19) Does the Post quartermaster…		
a) Maintain books and records in a legible and uniform format?	YES	NO
b) Receive and properly transmit membership dues as required?	YES	NO
c) Maintain a dues reserve fund in accordance with Section 717 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
d) Does the dues reserve fund reflect payment of annual and life members?	YES	NO
e) Date dues reserve fund last transferred to general fund: _____		
f) Maintain a relief fund in accordance with Section 219 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
g) Have care and custody of all committee funds?	YES	NO
h) Report on transactions concerning receipts and expenditures at Post meetings?	YES	NO
i) File appropriate forms as required by federal, state and local statues?	YES	NO
j) Date of last 990 filing:_____ k) Is the 990 filing available for public inspection?	YES	NO
20) Post Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN): _____		
21) Are all expenditures voted on by the Post membership and approved by the Post Commander?	YES	NO
22) Are expenditures from the relief fund in accordance with Section 219 of the National By-Laws?	YES	NO
23) Are signatures authorizing the disbursement of funds done in accordance with Post By-Laws?	YES	NO
24) Are checks pre-signed by any authorized officer?	YES	NO
25) Does the Post own real property?	YES	NO
a) Appraised Value: $_____ Monthly Payment: $_____ Amount Owed: $_____		
b) Title Holder: _____		
26) Does the Post carry all proper types of insurance?	YES	NO
a) Are both the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and Department named as additional insured's?	YES	NO
27) Does the Post retain documents in accordance with the Department's Document Retention Policy?	YES	NO
28) Does the Post operate a clubroom/canteen or other state licensed entity such as Bingo? (Department Inspection Form Required)……	YES	NO

INSPECTORCOMMENTS :

POST COMMANDER: _____
PRINT AND SIGN

The Inspector shall provide a copy of each inspection to the Post Commander, District Inspector, and Department Inspector and set forth therein any constructive criticism and recommendations.

INSPECTOR: _____
PRINT AND SIGN

MAINTAIN IN POST FILE AS A PERMANENT RECORD

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