Congratulations, to all newly elected or appointed officers and chairpersons at all levels in our great organization! I look forward to the great accomplishments that we will make this year to continue the, long standing service that we provide to veterans, their families, and to the communities in which we live.

Good communication between the various levels of VFW operations is essential to our performance in the many programs we conduct. It is for that reason, that it is imperative that all Post Commanders appoint program chairpersons promptly and convey their names and contact information to their District Commander. Likewise, District Commanders are to do the same and provide the Department with contact information so as to facilitate effective communication with Department Program Directors. Please develop these list ASAP so we can hit the ground running in 2020-2021. Thanks for all you do for VFW!

When you think of the Americanism Program think about our flag, - flying it, presenting it to others and teaching our fellow citizens about it.
When you think of the Americanism Program think about your participation in all of our patriotic holidays and memorial services.
When you think of the Americanism Program think about honoring and recognizing the teachers in our communities who share their love of America by mentoring our young citizens.
Be sure to report all activities to include total hours, money spent and number of members participating.
Further detailed information and award entry forms can be found on our VFW websites and in our Department Commander's Leadership Manual.

Thank you.
** CONGRATULATIONS COMMANDER **

Congratulations and Best Wishes to our newly elected Commander, Laurie Emmer and all of our new officers!!

** And Thank You All **

We begin our new program year with hope and enthusiasm as we’ve all gone through very challenging times. As your Illinois National Home Program Director, I’m grateful to all our members and officers for your support. “Thank You”!!

** FUNDING NEEDS GOING FORWARD **

We would ask that you consider earmarking donations to the National Home “General Operations Fund”, as this will help pay our ongoing and everyday bills.

Thank You.

** ILLINOIS DAY **

Illinois Day 2020 is scheduled for Saturday, September 26th. Details will be forthcoming and we look forward to our annual visit.

** THE HELP LINE ... 800 313 4200 **

The Help Line is available and is a great resource. Maybe this could help someone you know!!

And if you have questions, please do reach out by phone or email and I’m glad to help you!

** COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES PROGRAM **

Charles Ingle, Director
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E-mail: chuck@roscoevfw.com

Like the rest of the Planet, we too are crying the “Corona Blues”. It can hardly be helped that our programs will also be somewhat affected. But if we preserver, we can minimize the impact. In the first 60 days of X-Sheet reporting, only 2-in-10 Illinois Posts have reported anything. Of those, 6-in-100 have reported for Community Activities. YES, the Term is young. But soon we’ll start seeing those June Quarterly Audits pouring in.
Next month we’ll refocus on those important Grants from the VFW Foundation, and the Home Depot.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2020-2021
J.D. “Butch” Spindler, Director
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Congratulations to our new State Commander, Lori Emmer, and our new District Commanders and Council of Administration! It’s time to start a new Membership year, and our goals remain constant: Recruit, Reinstate, and Renew. As it stands now, we face some challenging times when it comes to...
membership. This past year we have lost hundreds of members...and our first order of business is to stop the bleeding! We must become more creative when it comes to recruiting. In any selling or recruiting activity, persistence is the key. Recruiting should be a regular activity for any Post, District, or Department. You not only need this type of activity when you are trying to meet your membership goals each year, but also you need to maintain consistent activity—even when you don’t need new members. This creates a flow of people you are approaching, so you always have a prospect to talk to about the VFW.

Membership has never been easy, and it will continue to be one of most difficult jobs as leaders in the VFW. That being said, it’s our effort that will produce the results we need to accomplish our mission. Our State Commander is asking us to contact our Post Commanders and Quartermasters and ask them to start reaching out to our existing members with a health and wellness call, just to see how they are doing. We need to put a real effort into maintaining our annual paying members, and they should be the first ones contacted. As previously stated, stop the bleeding! We need to let our members know that we are concerned about them, and that our actions show it. Many of our members never attend Post functions and know little or nothing about what is happening in their Post. Let’s change this! So, get on the phone and give them a call; and while you’re talking to them, remember to ask them if they have a name of an eligible veteran that we might be able to contact about the VFW.

I look forward to meeting with all of you this year and am available to talk to you at any time. In addition, we have appointed five assistant membership directors to help when needed. If you have an upcoming event that you need to help with, please keep us informed so we know what you are doing. Commander Lori reminds us that our Department celebrates “100 Years of Veterans’ Service” this year, so let’s get busy and make big things happen in Illinois!

HOMELESS VETERANS DIRECTOR
Paul J. Bezazian
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From the desk of Homeless Veterans. If you are planning a homeless veteran event sometime this summer, please take the necessary precautions due to COVID-19. Illinois still has a 50 person or less gathering issue. I have been feeding veterans since this started, but I take every precaution I can to be safe. The Chicago Summer Standdown is cancelled. We will be doing one at a later date. I’ve been using half gallon zip lock bags to put street food, granola bars, candy, cookies, socks, jerky, stuff of that nature, especially socks!!! Work with the local V.A. Homeless program, maybe the Vet Center, food pantry in your area. I keep a few of these bags with me most times I’m out and about. I’ve als been using back packs the size kids use for school. You can hang a water bottle on it, a towel, things like that. Don’t try to put too much in it. Underwear, socks, t-shirt, comfort items, etc. Maybe your post could cook up some hot dogs & wrap them in foil to hand out. Put them in a cooler & they will stay warm. Keep it simple. Small items that won’t weigh them down. Keeping these items in bags makes it safe for everyone to distribute & hand off to people. Remember, PPE, personal protective equipment. If you have a health condition that prevents you from being close to strangers, pass your items to someone who can do it. Safety is the MOST important thing right now. But, these are our people!!! If you have any questions, flee free to call me. I do need the names of the district homeless chair person from the district commanders. Please send those to dept. headquarters as soon as possible. And yes, it still takes $50.00 to get an X on the sheet. I know times are hard right now, but if you are reading this, you have a roof over your head, electricity & running water. Our VETERANS on the street DON’T!! any questions, please call me.
Summer is here and everybody is outside enjoying the sun and being out of the house. It is a great time to meet and talk with students and their parents. Yes, talk to them. Let them know about the program and what it can and has done for some of the students of this state.

I know that students are not back in school yet, but it does not mean that they are not looking for something to do and to ready for the next chapter in their lives. Believe me they are looking. We have already had a student ask about the program. So, with that please get out there and meet the people let them get to know us and what we are about. Enjoy the summer and talk to you next month.