

MEMBERSHIP

I want to start off by thanking State Commander Bobby Welch for appointing me as your State Membership Director for the 2021-2022 year and it is an honor to serve on your team.

With the COVID-19 pandemic moving behind us it is time to get back to the basics and back on track. We can no longer use the excuse that we are quarantined or under restrictions. It is time to get out in our communities and hit the recruiting trail running.

So, what does that mean for Posts and Districts? Anytime you have a chance to leave your brick and mortar and be visible in your community you need to be taking advantage of this opportunity. This even goes for District Commanders. If you have a Post doing an event you need to be in attendance or have a representative there.

Remember, many potential recruits these days want to be part of something more than just a canteen. They want to be active in helping veterans and our communities. You need to be out in the public making your Posts and Districts successful. If our Posts and Districts are successful, recruiting will come easy. I promise you that. The human race is addicted to success. They will want to be a part of what you are doing.

Making personal contacts may still be difficult early in the year. However, we can still make contact either by social media, phone, or email, so I ask you to reach out to them in this way. A good starting place is with your existing members. Contact them to check on how they are doing, and maybe they can point you in the direction of some recruiting leads. Use the resources you have in front of you. A priority for all of us is to maintain our existing members. Staying in contact is vital to retaining these members, whether it is done by social media, phone, or newsletters. This lets our members know that we are thinking about them and that we are still active.

We are offering support to our Posts and Districts. You just need to let us know what type of assistance you need. We will do our best to help you accomplish your goals. Remember to keep us in the loop, because if you don't, we have no way of knowing what resources you might need.

Commander Welch reminds us that it's **"MISSION FIRST - VETERANS ALWAYS"**. Think positive, stay motivated, and remember...we are all recruiters and it's up to us to keep this great organization growing.



Ryan Higginbotham
Chairman

205 N. Walnut St.
Olney, Illinois 62450
Phone: 618-302-7592

E-mail:
vfw.higginbotham@gmail.com

Post 4226-13



Illinois Membership Program

2021-2022

Bobby Welch

State Commander

“Mission First - Veterans Always”

ILLINOIS MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2020-2021

VFW MEMBERSHIP MISSION: Our goal is to perpetuate our organization for current and future veterans into the next century. Posts, Districts, and our State must coordinate and implement a successful program to retain current members, recruit new ones, and reinstate those who have let their dues expire. Our District and State leaders should be prepared to promote a well-organized membership campaign in addition to working other VFW programs. Our State Headquarters offers technical, logistical, and financial resources to assist in retention and recruiting. In addition, our National organization offers incentives to help us achieve these goals. It is our responsibility to use these assets to implement and achieve a successful Membership Program.

VFW MEMBERSHIP VISION: The starting point for our Membership Program will be the standings at the end of the previous year. From this point, our goal is growth—or at the very least, maintaining an equivalent number of members from the previous year. We need to welcome veterans and their families from all conflicts. Our Posts should provide a place where our members feel comfortable, appreciated, and respected. We need to be open to new ideas and approaches in our local VFW Posts. Change is inevitable, and when it's time, we must be open to embracing it. We can all do better, so continue to look for ways for improvement.

OUR GOAL THIS YEAR IS 100%!

Whether we like it or not, our elected representatives look at our numbers when we lobby for the rights of veterans at the National or State level. Large numbers gain their attention. Therefore, the VFW is either perceived as a strong, viable organization, or one that is deteriorating. It is our job to keep our VFW strong!

All awards will be presented based on the membership numbers that are posted on the National Membership Report on the morning following the specified cut-off date. no exceptions!

RECRUITER AWARDS

All members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who sign up:

- 25 new or reinstated members will receive a State Commander's coin
- 50 new or reinstated members will receive a State Commander's shirt
- 75 new or reinstated members will receive a State Commander's Jacket
- 100 new or reinstated members by June 1, 2022 will be awarded \$500 to attend the 2022 National Convention. This award is non-transferable and will be presented to the winners at the National Convention.

POST COMMANDER & QUARTERMASTER AWARD

Posts recruiting 5% of their prior membership (as reported on Memstats), with a minimum of six members, by January 15, 2022: The Post Commander and Quartermaster will receive a special embroidered State Commander's jacket. (Partial numbers will be rounded up to the next whole number). Jacket size forms will be sent to qualifying Post Commanders and Quartermasters. FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED AT STATE HEADQUARTERS NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 15, 2022.

POST AWARD

The Post having the largest increase in Legacy Life Membership, with a minimum of 5 new Legacy Life Memberships by April 30, 2022, will receive a \$50 gift certificate from the National VFW Store.

DISTRICT AWARDS

District Commanders who are 96% in membership by February 9, 2022, will receive a \$500 cash award. District Commanders who are 100% in membership by April 1, 2022, will receive an additional \$500 cash award.

(Up to \$1000 can be awarded to District Commanders!)

CRAMER-SODEN AWARD

The All-State District Commander who has the highest numerical increase from their 2020-2021 year to their 2021-2022 year will be the recipient of the Cramer-Soden Award. This plaque is sponsored by our fellow Illinois Past National Commanders-in-Chief, George R. Cramer, and the late Ray R. Soden. The deadline for this award is April 30, 2022.

ALL-STATE AWARD PROGRAM

The 2021-2022 All-State Program is designed to recognize exceptional leadership and teamwork. Not only in Membership but in overall Post/District development and VFW Programs. If a Post qualifies to be "All-State," ALL Post members will be recognized for this achievement because: THEY ARE A TEAM!

- The program runs through June 15, 2022.
- To receive All-State awards at the State Convention, the deadline for completion of All-State criteria is April 30, 2022.

ALL-STATE POST CRITERIA

- Membership greater than 100%
- Posts must be 100% reported on the x-sheet.
- Posts must be in compliance with all questions on the National and Department Inspection Sheets (for example: a post that is not incorporated shall not be eligible until proof is provided that they are in compliance)
- Posts must order a minimum of 1,000 poppies.
- Posts must have representation at all properly called District Conventions or meetings.
- Posts must have representation at all of their respective Regional Commanders Calls. (Roll Call will be taken)
- Posts must make a \$50 donation to the Service Office Support Program (SOS) This is separate from the Red, White, and Blue Program donations.
- New Posts need a minimum of 50 members to achieve-All State.

ALL-STATE POST AWARDS

- There will be no limits on the number of Posts that can achieve All-State status.
- All-State Post Commanders will receive: All-State Post Commander's Cap and a Distinguished Service Lapel Pin.
- All-State Post Quartermasters may purchase an All-State Post Quartermaster's Cap and will receive a Distinguished Service Lapel Pin.
- All-State Post Members may purchase an All-State Team Post Member Cap.

ALL-STATE DISTRICT CRITERIA

- Membership greater than 100%
- Districts must have 100% of Posts inspected and the inspections must be cleared by the State Inspector.
- Districts must hold a minimum of one School of Instruction and submit a report to State Headquarters.
- Districts must submit 1 of the each of the following to Department Headquarters for judging.
 - Teacher of the Year
 - Police Officer of the Year
 - Firefighter of the Year
- Districts must forward a record of the Roll Call of Officers and Posts of each District meeting to State Headquarters

ALL-STATE DISTRICT AWARD

- There will be no limits on the number of Districts that can achieve All-State status.
- All-State District Commanders will receive: All-State Commander's Cap and a Distinguished Service Lapel Pin.



NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2020-2021

Membership Mission

To recruit, retain and mentor a stable membership base including all generations of veterans. To cultivate a membership that is well versed in institutional knowledge and actively involved at all levels of the organization and in the local community. To establish Posts with an established vision of service, leadership and community outreach.

Introduction

Over the past several years, the VFW has been successful in recruiting new members into the organization. The only way to make this success permanent is to retain those members, recover past members, and continue to recruit new veterans into our ranks. To do this, we must improve the way we communicate with our members at all levels of the organization. Posts, Districts, and Departments need to use all methods available to convey information for news and training to our membership; newsletters, emails, social media, and outreach teams are some of the most effective ways to maintain communication with our members. We need to know who our members are and how we can address their needs and concerns. We need to focus on the basic tenets of our organization: to take care of our members, their families, and the veteran community as a whole.

Membership Goals

1. Build a strong organization through recruiting new members while retaining our current membership that creates a solid baseline for the future.
2. Work together to achieve the VFW's goals. The VFW National Headquarters staff is available to assist in coordinating programs, developing membership initiatives and building awareness among our membership and the entire veteran community.

Membership Objectives

- Recruit new and recover unpaid members
- Involve members directly in VFW functions at all levels
- Retain and mentor existing membership
- Develop new Posts and revitalize existing Posts
- Increase Life Membership
- Increase Legacy Life Membership

TRIPLE CROWN AWARD

Any commander who achieves All-American at the Post, District and Department level will receive Triple Crown pin and recognition at the National Convention.

RECRUITING AWARDS

Individual Recruiting Awards:

- 5, 10, 15 Corresponding numbered member pin
- 25 Commander-in-Chief membership coin & citation
- 50 VFW Commander-in-Chief Basecamp backpack
- 75 Commemorative medallion set
- 100 Century cap and citation or \$50 VFW Store Credit
- 150 \$250 VFW Store Gift Certificate

DEPARTMENT 100 PERCENT INCENTIVE

Any department that attains 100 percent in membership by close of business March 31, 2022 will be entered into a random drawing. The Department Commander plus guest and the Quartermaster plus guest that is selected will receive:

- \$2,500 voucher for airfare, accommodations and transportation through Veterans Travel Service (VTS), awarded to Commander, Quartermaster and their guest to be used towards the trip of their choice.

EARLY BIRD AWARD - VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The top three Post commanders and quartermasters in each division on Jan. 1, 2022 will receive:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW Legislative Conference, Washington D.C.

DEPARTMENT EARLY BIRD INCENTIVE

For every Department that achieves 92% in membership by Jan. 1, 2022; the Department commander will receive:

- A Henry Golden Boy .22 Caliber Rifle (tribute edition if available) or a credit voucher of equal value for use with Veterans Travel Services (VTS).

POST COMMANDER & QUARTERMASTER NEW AND REINSTATED MEMBER AWARD

The top 10 Post commanders and quartermasters in each division who report more than 50 new and reinstated annual members by Jan. 1, 2022 will each be awarded:

- A travel charger with the official VFW Commander-in-Chief logo.

KANSAS CITY SPREE

The top two Post commanders and the top two District commanders in each division who achieve 100% membership by April 1, 2022 along with their guest will each be awarded:

- Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, Mo. from the airport nearest the awardee's home.
- A fun-filled weekend (May 19-22, 2022) that may include but is not limited to touring, shopping and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

100% POST, DISTRICT AND DEPARTMENT

A distinctive streamer will be awarded to every Post, District and State/Department that achieves 100% or greater in membership before July 1, 2022.

100% COMMANDER DRAWING

Each Post and District commander that exceeds 100% in membership by June 1, 2022 will receive an entry in this drawing. Twenty Post commanders and 12 District commanders will receive:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.

POST COMMANDER & QUARTERMASTER DIVISION CHALLENGE

For every ten (10) new/reinstated members recruited between July 1, 2021 and April 1, 2022; Posts will earn one chance for both Post Commander and Quartermaster to be entered into a drawing. One Post per Division will be drawn to receive:

- A \$1,000 stipend each for Commander and Quartermaster to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP ACQUISITION

Each Post that achieves the designated benchmarks of 25, 50 and 75 Legacy Life Members will be awarded:

- A Legacy Society Post Proclamation.

Each Post that achieves the distinctive benchmark of 100 Legacy Life Members by July 1, 2022, Commander or post representative will be awarded:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.
- Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.
- Legacy Society Post Proclamation.

ELITE RECRUITER

Any VFW member who signs up 250 or more new and/or reinstated annual members by July 1, 2022, will be awarded:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.
- Distinctive cap, citation, and name badge.

RECRUITER OF THE YEAR

The VFW member who signs up the greatest number of new and/or reinstated annual members greater than 250 by July 1, 2022, will be awarded:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.
- Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.
- Distinctive cap, citation, and name badge.
- Commander-in-Chief's Crystal Eagle.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AWARD

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

- \$1000 paid directly to Department.

ALL-AMERICAN CRITERIA

The All-American leadership program exists to recognize exceptional leadership, authentic accomplishment in membership growth and VFW core programs.

ALL-AMERICAN POST CRITERIA

- Membership greater than 100%
- Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria:
 - o Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$75 to National in lieu of entry)
 - o Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$75 to National in lieu of entry)
 - o Hold a fundraiser with the proceeds going to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$100.
 - o Partner twice with two separate organizations like Team RWB, Operation Ramp It Up, Operation Gratitude, Team Rubicon, Merging Vets & Players and other VSOs to include our friends at Sport Clips and Burger King. (Submit both online reports through dashboard).
 - o Create Post social media site or actively maintain existing site.
 - o 5 New Action Corps Sign-Ups: To sign up: Text "VFW" to "50457" to sign-up 5 previously unsubscribed members or VFW supporters.
 - o Have a 10% increase in total impact in Community Service.
(\$ Donated + Hours = Total Impact) * Baseline has been established within the KPI Tools for Community Service.

*See notes at end of Membership Program.

ALL-AMERICAN POST AWARD

All Posts that meet the Qualifying Percentage and the program participation criteria will receive an All-American Post Citation, Post Streamer and be recognized in the VFW magazine.

The Top 25 Posts in each Division will receive:

- Acknowledgment in VFW Magazine
- Acknowledgement during the All-American Awards Ceremony at the National Convention
- All-American Post citation
- All-American Post streamer
- All-American citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap (commander only, quartermaster and Post members may purchase "Post Member" cap)
- All-American lapel pin (commander only, quartermaster may purchase pin)
- All-American Team Post Member lapel pin (25 pack)

The top five commanders in each division will also receive:

- A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.
- Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.

ALL-AMERICAN DISTRICT CRITERIA

- Membership greater than 100%
- Finish in top 10 Districts in your division that meet all the following criteria
 - o Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry*see last page)
 - o Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry *see end of Membership Program)

ALL-AMERICAN DISTRICT AWARD

- All-American District streamer
- All-American District citation - Commander
- All-American name badge - Commander
- All-American cap - Commander - *Quartermaster may purchase cap
- All-American lapel pin - Commander - *Quartermaster may purchase pin
- The top two District Commanders in each division will also receive:
 - A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.
 - Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.

ALL-AMERICAN DEPARTMENT CRITERIA

- Membership must be greater than 100%
- Must conduct two Membership Recruiting events, one between July 1st – December 31st 2021 and the other between January 1 to May 1, 2022. A report of these events should be submitted to the Membership Department.
- Hold a Commander's Round-Up prior to January 1, 2022 with a report submitted to the Membership Department.

National Legislative Service

- Monthly National Legislative Service committee member reports submitted to National Legislative Service in Washington, D.C.

National Veterans Services

- Must have a State/Department service officer and submit his or her name and contact information to National Veterans Services in Washington, D.C. by July 31, 2021
- Monthly activity report from Department Service Officer or designated NVS Committee member to NVS in Washington, D.C.

Programs

- Voice of Democracy - An entry advanced to National judging
- Patriot's Pen - An entry advanced to National judging
- Veterans & Military Support Programs – Must complete a State/Department fundraiser and proceeds donated to Veterans & Military Support Programs, Kansas City, Mo. (*see last page)
- Must have at least 1 teacher submitted for the Teacher of the Year competition. (No longer three categories, entries can come from K-12).
- Have a 10% increase in total impact in Community Service.
(\$ Donated + Hours = Total Impact) * Baseline has been established within the KPI Tools for Community Service.

ALL-AMERICAN DEPARTMENT AWARD

- All-American Department streamer
- All-American Department citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap - commander - quartermaster may purchase cap
- All-American lapel pin - commander - quartermaster may purchase pin
- \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention
- Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention Joint Opening Session

CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP AWARD

The State/Department leading each conference will be entrusted with the conference membership colors for the following year. The 2020-2021 Conference winners will return the colors to the membership booth at National Convention in Kansas City, MO no later than COB on Monday after the Joint Opening Session. The 2021-2022 Conference winners will then pick up the colors from the Membership Director at National Convention in July 2022 in Kansas City, MO any time after 0800 on Tuesday at the Membership booth.

The Conference with the highest membership percentage of the four Conferences will have their name and year engraved on a traveling trophy presented by the Commander-in-Chief to the Conference Chairman at the National Convention. The 2021-2022 Conference Chairman will return the trophy to the membership booth at the 2022 National Convention no later than COB on Saturday to ensure placement of the new nameplate. This trophy will be presented to the 2021-2022 Conference Chairman on stage during the Joint Opening Session**.

POST MEMBERSHIP DIVISIONS & MINIMUM QUALIFYING PERCENTAGES

Division	Total Membership		Qualifying Percentage
1	951+		Over 100%
2	750	950	Over 100%
3	356	749	Over 100%
4	246	355	Over 100%
5	185	245	Over 100%
6	143	184	Over 100%
7	112	142	Over 100%
8	88	111	Over 100%
9	68	87	Over 100%
10	51	67	Over 100%
11	10	50	Over 100%

DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP DIVISIONS & MINIMUM QUALIFYING PERCENTAGES

Division	Total Membership		Qualifying Percentage	# Eligible
1	5,000	14,000	Over 100%	10
2	3,282	4,999	Over 100%	10
3	2,172	3,281	Over 100%	10
4	1,447	2,171	Over 100%	10
5	906	1,446	Over 100%	10
6	1	905	Over 100%	10

Important Notes

- In order to receive stipends, awardees must be in attendance at designated events
- Only one National paid stipend per event (National Convention, legislative Conference, etc.)
- All awards are non-transferable
- Post/District/Department: Membership must be greater than 100 percent, which means 100 percent plus one in overall membership.
- Post member cap, members must be in the Post during the membership year.
- 5 New Action Corps Sign-Ups: VFW's strength on Capitol Hill rests with the voices of our members and patriotic supporters. It is vitally important that VFW's National Grassroots Advocacy network remains actively engaged in the fight for veteran's benefits. As a VFW advocate you receive an e-newsletter each week keeping you up to date on current issues facing our service members, veterans, and their families. When it is urgent that Congress hear from their constituents regarding a VFW legislative priority, VFW will release an Action Alert. The Action Alert will provide the necessary information and tools our advocates need in order to ensure their voices are heard.
- The Department Commander's "Good Will Tour" is for Department commanders to visit Posts in their Department to get face-to-face time with their Post and District leadership and assist with membership and Programs. For further information about the Commander's "Good Will Tour", please contact the Membership Department by calling 1-888-JOIN-VFW or by email at membership@vfw.org
- Donations made to replace a Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen (By eligible overseas Post). Do not donate through your Department or by any other means. Use this link: <https://heroes.vfw.org/page/22948/donate/1>
- Veterans & Military Support Programs Services Donations for Post/District/Department as listed above will only be accepted only through the following link: <https://heroes.vfw.org/page/22950/donate/1>
- **For the Conference Membership Award traveling trophy, the Conference Chairman will be responsible for the return of the trophy to the Membership Department booth at the National Convention each year