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# **THE VFW 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.

The Mission Statement is a concise description of our intention—derived from the purpose—that guides our activities by providing focus; it enables us to establish priorities and make decision on what we should and should not be doing. It helps us to put our purpose into action. It also creates a sense of identity for our members and for the public. The Mission Statement describes what we do.

# **THE VFW 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 Vision Statement is what we want the future to look like. It is the target on which we align our Mission Statement. The Vision describes where we want to be someday.

## **THE VFW CORE VALUES**

- Always put the interests of our members first
- Treat donors as partners in our cause
- Promote patriotism
- Honor military service
- Ensure the care of veterans and their families
- Serve our communities
- Promote a positive image of the VFW
- Respect the diversity of veteran opinions

Core Values are the principles of how we interact with each other and with our communities. They are a foundation for a healthy environment in our Posts, at our meetings, or anywhere in which we gather. They help to form the culture that we build in our Posts and Districts. Core Values are meant to shape where we work.

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES SECTION 230102 - Purposes**

## **The VFW Purpose**

Per the Congressional Charter, the purposes of the corporation are fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational, and are:

- (1) to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members;
- (2) to assist worthy comrades;
- (3) to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their surviving spouses and orphans;
- (4) to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States, and fidelity to its Constitution and laws;
- (5) to foster true patriotism;
- (6) to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom; and
- (7) to preserve and defend the United States from all enemies.

The Mission, Vision, and Core Values are all based upon the purpose of the VFW. Our purpose establishes why we exist.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts, just as individuals do, sometimes lose sight of their objectives. As individuals most of us take inventory now and then to make certain that we are staying on the track and heading toward our objectives. The good Veterans of Foreign Wars Post will follow this same practice to ascertain its current status.

## STATE COMMANDER

Congratulations to all the newly elected and appointed officers for the 2023-2024 year. As the leaders within this organization, Department will rely heavily on your efforts to guide and direct our Posts in carrying out the mission of the VFW. Our Posts are the backbone of our organization. When the average person is asked about the VFW, they don't talk about National or Department; they mention their local Post because to them, that IS the VFW.

Our motto for this year is "Making a Difference." When people are asked why they volunteered for a particular organization, the reason most often given is that they want to "make a difference." They want their efforts to matter; they want to contribute to making things a little better. Our programs and activities encompass many of the ways in which we make a difference through Veterans' Assistance, Community Activities, Youth Programs and Legislative Advocacy. This manual is the guide to all these programs and activities.

Please use this manual as a reference and keep it readily accessible. It is downloadable from the Department of Illinois website, under "Resources." And tell others about it; this is meant as a resource for all members. The more that members understand about how the VFW works, the more confident they will be about what they can do to perform our mission and to better our organization.

This manual reflects some changes that have been made for the 2023-2024 year. The Department Dashboard has been revised based on feedback from members and so this manual has been somewhat re-sequenced, to follow along with the new Dashboard. The new Dashboard also groups All-State requirements together, to make them more readily apparent. Among other changes is that Teacher of the Year is now part of Youth Activities (instead of Americanism).

Our VFW must grow in order to survive. Among the best ways to generate recruiting opportunities is to be out in public performing our mission. This manual is focused on the programs and activities which help us to do that. And the information it provides will enable users to be more successful with programs and activities. And the more successful our members feel, the more likely we are to retain them.

The more that people see their local VFW in action, making a difference, the more they will see the value of veterans and their families. Veterans' knowledge, experience, and mission-oriented approach can be a positive force in contributing to our communities. While it's nice to have people thank us for our service, we're not done yet; we're still serving. And we're making a difference every day.



**Brett Nila**  
*State Commander*

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## STATE ADJUTANT



**Joe Bartley**  
*State Adjutant*

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Thank you to all the officers and members that worked so hard during this last year. It is because of your efforts that Illinois did so well in membership and finished the year above 100%. You also worked hard on your community service, assistance to veterans, youth activities, and supporting legislative efforts. I appreciate your efforts in reporting your activities as you do them. Congratulations to all of the Posts and Districts that qualified for All-State and All-American.

I encourage you to continue that hard work in the upcoming year. Congratulations to all the newly elected and appointed incoming officers that have agreed to serve this upcoming year. I want you to know that Headquarters is here to assist you in the performance of your duties. The department service office is doing an outstanding job in supporting and assisting veterans. We are extending our ability to service veterans with claims and benefits through outreach events.

I hope you enjoy some of the changes we made for the State Convention this year. We want you go back to your Posts and have information that will make your Post better. If there is something else you would like to see, please let me know as planning for next year starts in the very near future.

Last year we made several changes to the dashboard to make it more user friendly, easy to use, and resemble the All American Dashboard. Our efforts to improve the dashboard continued again this year. The dashboard now contains all of the items required for All-State honors so you can readily know if you qualify. We have reorganized this year's Commander's Leadership Manual so that the programs are grouped in the same order as the dashboard. We want to make sure it is easily identifiable as to what you need to do in order to get credit

for each program. The purpose of this manual is to assist leaders at all levels in making a difference in their post and community. It outlines each and every program that we have. If you don't know or understand how to accomplish the program, ask and you will be helped. Your success is our success.

Every program is important but we can't lose focus on membership. Our membership goal is 102%. We must work on membership every day, week, and month of the year. We can't wait until the last 90 days of the year to focus on membership. Membership is the responsibility of every member. All of us need to find new members, ask them to join the VFW, and then retain them by keeping them engaged in our mission of helping veterans. We have a lot of potential for growth. Membership numbers have a direct correlation to our ability to help veterans and to influence legislation that is a benefit to all veterans. It also impacts the amount of money that each Post and State HQ receives in per capita membership payments.

We are all here for the same reason and must continue to work hard to meet the goals. We can do that by being team players, knowledgeable of our core values, and having a desire of "Making A Difference". I look forward to working with you during the upcoming year to support our veterans. Thank you for being a part of the 2023-2024 Team!



## CHIEF OF STAFF

First and foremost, I want to start by thanking Commander Nila for the honor of serving as the Chief of Staff for the 2023-2024 year. Also, congratulations to all the newly elected and appointed officers at the Department, Post and District level. I look forward to working with all of you.

In my opinion, a good Chief of Staff is someone with experience and knowledge in all aspects of the VFW. However, does not need to know it all and must not be afraid to say, "I don't know." They just need to know where to find the answers within our organization. With that said I view myself as an asset for all Posts and Districts to use throughout the year. We must all work together to Make a Difference and that means putting petty jealousies and trivial personalities aside.

"Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress in every society, in every family." – Kofi Annan. We as an organization need to council our peers and guide them into leadership positions to keep the VFW growing. All members should understand how the VFW programs help Vets as well as the operations side of the VFW. This year we start by holding training breakout sessions for various elected and appointed positions. In addition, there will be four Commanders Calls throughout the State which will also help with training. All members are encouraged to attend as much training as possible. These sessions are to help everyone understand the programs, the deadlines, how to utilize the dashboard, as well as where to find resources and who to direct questions too. The VFW is changing every year which means we have an obligation to keep up

Through training and mentorship, we can hold each other accountable. No more excuses of, I didn't know or That's how we always did it. As the VFW changes so must its members. There are numerous members in leadership positions who rely on their knowledge from the past then are surprised when a Post is unable to pass an inspection because of the "little things". Remember there are no little things, a good rule of thumb is to assume that everything matters. Inspections will continue to be a focus as we still have too many Posts and Districts in disarray. We should be getting inspections done early in the year to identify any deficiencies, so we have time to correct them. Waiting until the end of the year only hurts a Post more. To Make a Difference the Post must exist, and several are on the verge of collapse for various reasons. No more fighting what must be done, let's all work together as one big think tank to continue to be the powerhouse Veteran Service Organization we always have been.

Start using your Comrades, appointed and elected Officers to assist your Post to succeed. We all want nothing but the best for the VFW and would like to see Illinois lead the way. As your Chief of Staff I am always available to help however it is needed. I am excited to see what this year brings and the fun we can have while Making a Difference.



**Robert Bailey**  
*Inspector*

246 Morgan Valley Dr.  
Oswego, IL 60543

Phone: 630-401-1106  
Email:  
rjbailey72@gmail.com

Post 7452-19

## STATE INSPECTOR



**Clarke Christiansen**  
*Inspector*

321 E. 4th Ave.  
New Lenox, IL 60451  
Phone: (708) 205-4848

E-mail:  
clarke@chicagomx.com

Post 9545-18

Congratulations to all the new Commanders and Quartermasters serving at the District and Post levels.

As stated in the National Manual of Procedures, ARTICLE V - DEPARTMENTS, Section 518: "The Department Inspector shall ensure that each District, County Council (if applicable), and Post are inspected in accordance with Department and National guidelines."

Those responsibilities and requirements are as follows but not limited to:

- Books and records are inspected.
- That the National, Department, District, County Council and Post by-laws be enforced.
- That the opening and closing of meetings, the order of business and rules of order be followed and the initiation of recruits and other ceremonies are conducted as prescribed by the by-laws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual.
- A report on the decorum of meetings.
- Submission of a detailed report concerning the Post or District finances, records and property at time of inspection.
- Make sure that the District and Post has filed it's 990 Form direct with the IRS.
- Ensure the District and Post is bonded in an amount sufficient to cover it's liquid assets.

These are the guidelines and procedures in addition to those items listed on the Post Inspection Forms that will be followed with all inspections. When notified of a scheduled inspection, please be sure that all necessary records are prepared, up to date and readily available for your inspector. There should be no reason for the absence of any record on the day of your inspection. Ensure all Trustee audits are filed on time.

Commanders and Quartermasters should ensure that their Posts are incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. This removes the members and the Post Officers from the liabilities and debts of the post in unforeseen

litigation.

Adjutants at all levels should ensure that proof of eligibility for all officers, both elected and appointed is on file pursuant to Section 216. Ensure all Ceremonial Rifle Deeds of Gift, Storage Certification, Notarized Annual Utilization Certification and Tri-Annual Inventories are current and accurate in accordance with National VFW Policy and Instructions for Conditional Donation of Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment and U.S. Army AR 700-131, Chapter 6, Loan, Lease, and Donation of Army Materiel.

Trustees should pay particular attention to their duties prescribe in Section 218 of the National By-laws.

### DISTRICT COMPENSATION AND INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Each District will be compensated at the rate of \$10.00 per Post Inspection, at the time the District becomes 100 percent Inspected and approved by the Department Inspector.



## STATE SERVICE OFFICE

The State of Illinois VFW Department Service Office is headquartered at the VA Regional Office in Chicago. The Department Service Office is organized under the authority of the Department By-Laws and provides services under the supervision of the Department Veterans Service Committee. All Service Officers employed by the VFW of Illinois are members of the VFW. All Service Officers and Claims Consultants are accredited by the VA through the VFW and perform their duties in accordance with the National Policy and Procedure Manual of the VFW National Veterans Service.

The mission of the Department Service Office is to assist all veterans of Illinois, their dependents, and their survivors in the pursuit of all benefits administered by the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to which they may be entitled. This mission is pursued through the development of supportive relationships with County Veteran Assistance Commission (VAC) Offices, Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) Offices, VA Social Workers, and a state-wide network of volunteer VFW Post and District Service Officers. From these sources claims for benefits are received, prepared, and submitted to the VA.

The Department Service Office is under the direction of the Department Service Officer, Derek Giffin, an Iraq veteran. Currently, the Service Office staff includes four Assistant Department Service Officers, two working in Chicago, one stationed at the Marion VAMC, and one stationed at the Danville VAMC. We also have a part-time Assistant Department Service Officer in the Metro St Louis area. An ADSO from the Chicago office provides representative services to Hines VAMC every Thursday. Field service coverage is also provided at various locations as indicated in the schedule listed below. The Regional Office staff includes two Claims Consultants and one clerical support staff member.

Activities of the Service Office staff include case management of claims submitted to the VA from all state- wide sources to include representation for appeals pending at the Board of Veterans Appeals. Staff members provide training to Post and District Service Officers and participate in training seminars for IDVA and VAC staff and local volunteers. The staff also provides guest speakers on issues pertaining to VA benefits to VFW Posts and Districts, local civic groups, military Reserve and National Guard units, and college student organizations upon request.

The hours of operation and contact information for the Department Service Office are listed below. Members with questions about existing claims or requesting information about VA benefits are encouraged to contact the Department Service Office during hours of operation or by e-mail.



**Derek Giffin**  
*State Service Officer*

2122 West Taylor St.  
Room 105  
Chicago, IL 60612

Phone: 312-980-4284  
Fax: 312-980-4680  
E-mail: [derek.giffin@va.gov](mailto:derek.giffin@va.gov)

**Department Service Office Contact Information**

VFW Service Office  
2122 West Taylor St. Room 105  
Chicago, IL 60612  
Phone: 312-980-4284  
Fax: 312-980-4680

Email: [derek.giffin@va.gov](mailto:derek.giffin@va.gov)  
Website link: [www.vfwserviceoffice.com](http://www.vfwserviceoffice.com)

Office Telephone Hours  
Monday thru Friday  
8:00 am to 3:30 pm

Office Walk-In Hours  
Monday through Thursday  
9:00 am to 11:30 am  
12:30 pm to 3:00 pm

**VFW Service Office Staff**

Derek Giffin, State Service Officer  
U.S. Army, Iraq  
[derek.giffin@va.gov](mailto:derek.giffin@va.gov)

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Assistant Department Service Officer, Chicago  
U.S. Army, Iraq [charles.johnson5@va.gov](mailto:charles.johnson5@va.gov)

Sean Conner,  
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USMC, Iraq [sean.conner@va.gov](mailto:sean.conner@va.gov)

Russell Meredith,  
Assistant Department Service Officer, Chicago  
U.S. Navy, Iraq [russell.meredith@va.gov](mailto:russell.meredith@va.gov)

Gregory Strong,  
Assistant Department Service Officer,  
Marion VAMC  
U.S. Army, Iraq [gregory.strong3@va.gov](mailto:gregory.strong3@va.gov)

Grabiela Salgado,  
Claims Consultant, Chicago [grabiela.salgado@va.gov](mailto:grabiela.salgado@va.gov)

Edith Giles, Receptionist, Chicago  
U.S. Navy [edith.giles@va.gov](mailto:edith.giles@va.gov)

## Field Office/ Outreach Locations

### **Russell Meredith**

Hines VA Medical Center  
Bldg 1, Room D109  
Phone: 708-202-2562  
Each Thursday, 8:00 am to 3:30 pm  
(call the Chicago office to verify)

### **Derek Giffin**

- Judd Kendall Post 3873  
every first Tuesday of the month  
(10:00 am to 2:00 pm)  
908 Jackson Ave.  
Naperville, IL 60540
- Benjamin O. Davis Post 311  
every 2nd Wednesday of the month  
(9:00 am to 3:00 pm)  
22341 Governors Hwy.  
Richton Park, IL 60471
- Chicago Heights Vet Center  
every 4th Wednesday of the month  
(9:00 am to 3:00 pm)  
1010 Dixie Hwy.  
Chicago Heights, IL 60411
- Chicago Vet Center  
Every first Friday of the month (from  
09:00 am to 3:00pm)  
3348 W. 87th Street, Suite 2  
Chicago, IL 60652

### **Craig Koch**

- O'Fallon VFW Post 805  
223 West 1st St.  
O'Fallon, IL 62269  
618-624-6575  
Every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Metro East Vet Center  
228 West Pointe Drive  
Swansea, IL  
Each Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### **Gregory Strong**

Marion VA Medical Center  
Room 103  
2401 W. Main St., Marion, IL 62959  
Phone: 618-997-5311 ext. 58230  
FAX: 618-997-8219  
Monday, Wednesday to Friday, 8:00  
am - 3:00 pm

### **Sean Conner**

Illiana Health Care System,  
Danville VAMC  
Bldg 98, Room 1012  
1900 E. Main St., Danville, IL 61832  
Phone: 217-554-4502  
FAX: 217-554-4361  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

### **Mattoon VA CBOC:**

First Tuesday of every month  
501 Lake Land Blvd., Mattoon IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Dow Stepp Memorial Post 5975**

First Thursday of every month  
112 North 5th, Marshall, IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Bloomington VA CBOC:**

Second Tuesday of every month  
207 Hamilton Road, Bloomington IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Decatur VA CBOC;**

Second Thursday of every month  
792 North Sunnyside Rd., Decatur, IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Peoria VA CBOC:**

Third Tuesday of every month  
7717 N Orange Prairie Rd., Peoria IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Busey-Fletcher-Stillwell Post 630**

Third Thursday of every month  
1303 E. Main St., Urbana, IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Crawford County Post 4549**

Fourth Tuesday of every month  
712 E. Main St., Robinson, IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Springfield VA CBOC**

Fourth Thursday of every month  
5850 South 6th St., Springfield, IL  
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

# MEMBERSHIP



**John McGlynn, Sr.**  
*Chairman*

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Post 5975-17

I would like to personally thank State Commander Brett Nila for the opportunity to serve as your State Membership Director for 2023-2024. I look forward to working with everyone, always remember, "membership is a continuous job," it is the life of the organization.

We have a lot of potential members waiting for us to reach out to them. We need to be talking to and inviting eligible veterans to join the VFW. Talk to people in the community, foster a partnership, and they will help find the veterans and spread the word. We need to promote the organization and posts; help dispel the ideal that the VFW is "Just a Place to Drink". I have encountered so many eligible veterans with just that thought of us. After a conversation and education of what the actual VFWs are doing in the community and for veterans, they had a far different opinion of our great organization. I am happy to say they became active members of my post. This stigma has plagued us for years, and if we are not trying to show it is not true, it will continue to plague us.

Talking truth about the remarkable things we do is not bragging, it is educating them on the true mission and benefits of the VFW. While Canteens are a necessity for many posts, they are not the true VFW. I believe in "Veterans First" and by talking to them about our programs and actions, we can show them we are here for them and the community. I have always heard it takes 10 good things to overcome 1 bad thing. Educating them on the "true" actions of our organization, and your post, will do just that. As you conduct your membership drives or events, take along a list and photos (if you have some) of the things your post has accomplished or things you have scheduled. This is the perfect opportunity to show them what the VFW is about.

For the Posts with the goal of All-State or All-American, you need to conduct two membership drives or events and submit a report to the dashboard. What a perfect opportunity to showcase your post. The organization is facing an issue with its membership, our "average age" of the members. The younger members are working, or have children, and cannot attend meetings. Talk to them, see what they need from your Post to stay engaged, on-board them, stay in contact with them, if possible, have a mentor assigned to them as they start their experience with the organization. Retention and involvement are a struggle yearly. Reach out to your current members, let them know how much we appreciate them, and encourage them to educate and advocate for others to join. The new membership year begins the 1st of July; start your educating and recruiting that same

day. Contact and remind your annual members to renew their membership. National allows members to renew for 1 or 2 years. Encourage the 2-year membership, or to go to Life Membership, get them involved and keep them motivated to want to belong.

Use the VFW Mobile Recruiting app from Google Play Store and the Apple App Store, the App it is shows as "VFW" when searching for it, ask your members to use the online app by ensuring they are registered on the National site with their membership number. When they meet someone eligible for VFW membership, it is as easy as logging into the app and inputting the data right there. There are a lot of membership tools available, if you carry business cards have the basic eligibility information on it, I stamp the back of each card with Name, Address, Phone, Branch / Service Eligibility, they fill it out, give it back to me and I give them another card. This is just one way or tool to help with recruiting. Everyone is a recruiter. Anyone can sign up a new member, or contact an expired member, let them know we have not forgotten them, incorporate it with a comrade check-in, see how they are doing, ask them if there is a reason they have not renewed, and see what it would take to have them reinstate.

Support your post activities, encourage, and mentor the new members. This year we will have a "Triage Team" to assist Districts and Posts. The purpose of the Director is to work with the Post, District, and myself to assist with any needs or assistance we can provide for the post or membership drive or event that is scheduled.

Think about how membership directly affects the post revenue. Do you know the value of a member as revenue? How much revenue does your post need to survive? Membership provides the revenue to sustain your post and the organization at all levels. They allow us to move forward financially to continue to do the things we do for the Veterans and Community. The decline in membership resulted in a \$58,000 decline in revenue last year alone.

If you need assistance from me, do not hesitate to contact me. Let's work together to meet the Commander's Goal of 102% membership in the 2023-2024 year. Membership: New and Reinstates will ensure we keep our Posts, District, and Department growing and fulfilling our mission, and embody Commander Nila's vision of "Making a Difference".





## **Illinois Membership Program**

**2023-2024**

**Brett Nila**

State Commander  
"Making a Difference"

### **ILLINOIS MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2023-2024**

**VFW MEMBERSHIP MISSION:** Our goal is not only to sustain but to grow our organization for current and future veterans. Always remember at each level: Post, District, and State. We are a team and not Individual or lone entities. Rely on all the available resources, teams, and materials, as we work to increase our membership. As always, our goal is to retain current members, recruit new members, and reinstate members who for one reason or another have let their dues expire. Membership will be an "All Hands-on Deck" approach, ready and willing to assist at any level with their activities or events. The department is ready to assist with: technical, logistical, and financial resources to assist in retention and recruiting. National also offers incentives to help us achieve these goals. Times have changed as have the Veterans. We must think "outside the box" to have a successful Membership Program.

**VFW MEMBERSHIP VISION:** As we start the new membership year, we need to keep in mind our ending number from last year, the goal is always growing our ranks and retaining current members. Any veteran that qualifies should be welcomed into our ranks and as we do so remember they will most likely be younger veterans with different priorities and needs. Do your best to accommodate them, and make them feel welcome, mentor them, and assist them with understanding the VFW and all we do. Keep in mind they will likely have a family, be sure to include them in the process. Make this the year of Education, Innovation, and Involvement. Having a strong presentation of the VFW; educate them on what we do for our communities and veterans, as well as the families. Be creative in meetings (guest speakers, benefit/claim information, legislation affecting veterans as examples). Don't just go through the motions, give them a reason to attend. Make your community service something members can buy in to. Do the programs as required but get the input from your members and community also. To be successful in not only meeting, but rather exceeding the goal this year, we must adapt.

#### **OUR GOAL THIS YEAR IS 102%**

While other veteran organizations are making wide sweeping changes to their eligibility and overall branding of their organization, we need to stand proud of ours. Set a 3-member goal, one new, one retention (ensuring Annual Members renew before their membership expires), and one reinstate, if we can do that, we will not only maintain our numbers but increase them as well. We are all recruiters. Challenge your members

with the same goal. When we work as a team, there is nothing we cannot accomplish. We have a strong voice with the legislators, and the only way to keep that voice is to have the membership numbers. I know everyone tires of hearing about membership, but the life and mission of our great organization depends on it. As you do your Membership Events (2 Required), report them on the dashboard. Keep the VFW name in the minds of everyone, do not be afraid to tell people what we are doing for them. Use every available resource to get the word out; in today's information age it is one of the easiest things to do. We are great at letting each other know what we are doing, now it is time to let everyone know how great we are, and the important things we are accomplishing. BRAG about our programs and contributions throughout the community through the various platforms, billboards along the roads, news channels, the web, and newspapers. Think about how you want to leave the VFW for the future, a strong and viable organization, doing just what the Commander's theme is "Making a Difference".

## MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGES

During the membership year, Membership Challenges will be issued and published, along with the incentives that are being used to reward Posts or Members that meet the challenge. Membership Challenges will be issued on an ongoing basis, so as not to conflict with National challenges. The Membership Challenge will be sent out by email and included in the General Orders for the respective months.

## VETERAN OF THE MONTH

Posts are asked to nominate one of their members as Veteran of the Month. Look for those comrades from your post who stand apart from the rest by serving the community, Veterans and embodying the purposes of our congressional charter: to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead; and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies.

Nominations will be submitted by a nomination form to State Headquarters by the 25th of each month. The nomination form will contain the veteran's name, Post Number, and a description of what the veteran has done over the last 30 days that makes them worthy of being the Veteran of the Month. Nominations should be sent by email to [vfwil@vfwil.org](mailto:vfwil@vfwil.org). The Veteran that is selected each month will receive recognition from the State Commander and will become eligible for consideration as Veteran of the Quarter and each Veteran of the Quarter will be eligible for Veteran of the Year and recognition at State Convention.

\*A Nomination form can be found on the Department Website ([vfwil.org](http://vfwil.org)) under "Programs"

## RECRUITING AWARDS

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

- Each Quarter, any member that has recruited 5 new or reinstated members for the year will be placed into a drawing for a set of six VFW engraved pint glasses
- 25 new or reinstated members will receive a VFW coin
- 50 new or reinstated members will receive a Personalized Engraved Plaque
- 75 new or reinstated members will receive a VFW Logo Throw Blanket (Size 63" x 63")
- 100 new or reinstated members by June 1, 2024, will be awarded \$500 to attend the 2024 National Convention. This award is non-transferable and will be presented to the winners at the National Convention. Must attend national convention to receive check.

## **MEMBERSHIP AWARD**

- Posts membership percentage must be at 98% by Dec. 31, 2023: The Post will receive a special engraved plaque.
- Posts reaching 100% by Feb. 28, 2024: The Posts will receive a \$200 Visa Gift Card for a post membership celebration meal recognizing the posts efforts.

## **POST AWARD**

The Post having the largest increase in Legacy Life Membership, with a minimum of 5 new Legacy Life Memberships by April 30, 2024, will receive a \$100 gift certificate from the National VFW Store.

## **DISTRICT AWARD**

Districts who are 98% in membership by February 1, 2024, The District will receive a \$500 cash award. Districts who are 100% in membership by April 1, 2024, The District will receive an additional \$500 cash award.

## **CRAMER-SODEN AWARD**

The All-State District who has the highest numerical increase from their 2022-2023 year to their 2023-2024 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, 2024.

## **ALL-STATE AWARD PROGRAM**

The 2023-2024 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, 2024.
- To receive All-State awards at the State Convention, the deadline for completion of All-State criteria is April 30, 2024.

## **ALL-STATE AWARD PROGRAM CRITERIA**

- Membership greater than 102%
  - Posts must hold 2 membership drives/events and submit report to Program Reporting Dashboard
  - Posts must be 100% reported on the Department Programs Reporting Dashboard.
  - Posts must have submitted all 4 quarterly Trustees Audits and audits were approved.
  - 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 at least 3 poppies per member with a minimum of 1,000 poppies.
  - Posts must have one nomination for each of the programs of Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy, and Teacher of the Year or Employer of the Year submitted to District for judging.
- Donations to Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen as stated in this manual will be accepted if a Post does not have a nomination.

- Posts must have representation at all properly called District Conventions or meetings.
- Posts must have representation at a minimum of 1 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 102%
- Districts must have 100% of Posts inspected and the inspections must be cleared by the State Inspector by April 30, 2024
- Districts must hold a minimum of one School of Instruction and submit a report to State Headquarters.
- Districts must hold or participate in 2 membership drive/event and submit report to Programs Reporting Dashboard
- Districts must submit 1 of each of the following to Department Headquarters for judging.
  - o Patriot's Pen
  - o Voice of Democracy
  - o Teacher of the Year
  - o Employer 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.

\*NOTE: all necessary nomination forms, applications, and forms for submission, will be available on the Department website at (<https://vfwil.org>).



## **NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2023-2024**

### **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**

Today, the Veterans of Foreign Wars is 124 years old. During those years, we have had WWI, WWII, Korean, Vietnam, and other veterans joining en masse. Today, however, we have lost many of these honorable men and women. As history has proven, the Post-9/11 veterans will join our organization like others have when they are ready, however usually not until their kids grow or their retirements are in place.

We must not stereotype any of our future members regardless of sex, color, or personal beliefs. If a member qualifies, bring them in. 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. There are still many veterans eligible to join and at all ages. However, our focus needs to be on our Post-9/11 veterans, for they will be our future.

You might ask, how do we build our organization? It's simple, leadership by example. If you are a Commander of a Post, District, Department, or the National Commander, then get out there and recruit members yourself and show your team that if you can do it, so can they. A good way to do this is to improve the way we communicate with our members at all levels of the organization. Posts, Districts, Departments, and our National Officers need to use all methods available to convey information for news and training to our membership through newsletters, emails, social media, recruiting booths and outreach teams.

We need to know who our members are and how we can address their needs and concerns. It's time to step it up and recruit Post-9/11 veterans. Each of us needs to do our part and recruit at least one new member. Think about it. If we all recruit one each, we would show substantial growth in membership in just one year.



### **Membership Goals**

1. Build a strong organization through recruiting new members while retaining our current membership, creating a solid baseline for the future.
2. Work together to achieve 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**

- Achieve 102% in Membership
- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member.
- Increase membership drives and/or events.
- Develop new Posts and/or revitalize existing Posts.
- Increase Life Membership and Legacy Life Membership

### **Membership Resources**

In order to assist our Posts, Districts, and Departments in meeting the goals set out by the Commander-in-Chief in this membership program, the National Headquarters has a wealth of resources at your disposal. Many of those are available free of charge to our members.

- Membership materials ranging from applications, recruiting brochures, posters, and benefits brochures can be ordered directly from the Membership Department using the Membership Order Form (located under Membership Quick Links once you log into [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) )
- Resources for Post Development, Membership Campaigns, and Mentorship such as training guides, videos, and webinars are available in the Training & Support section on [vfw.org](http://vfw.org)
- Promotional tools such as radio spots, sample advertisements, public service announcements, and media kits are all available through the Media Room on [vfw.org](http://vfw.org)

See the trend? Just about anything you will need is at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), check it out.

The VFW National Headquarters staff is ready and trained to answer any questions you may have concerning membership, VFW programs, or other issues. You can contact our Member Service Center directly at 1.833.VFW.VETS, or the Membership Department at 1.888.JOIN.VFW.

## **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**

- 1,5, 10, 15 Corresponding numbered member pin
- 25 CIC Coin and Citation
- 50 National Aide-De-Camp cap and Citation
- 75 Commemorative Medallion Set
- 100 Century cap **or** \$50 VFW Store credit & Citation
- 150 CIC custom desk name plate

## **DEPARTMENT 100 PERCENT INCENTIVE**

Any Department that attains 102% in membership by close of business on June 30th, 2024, will be entered into a random drawing. The commander and quartermaster that is selected will each receive:

- \$2500 voucher through Veterans Travel Services (VTS) applied towards airfare, accommodations, and transportation for a trip of their choice.

## **EARLY BIRD AWARD - VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE**

The top three Post commanders and quartermasters in each division on Jan. 1, 2024, will receive:

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

## **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/or reinstated members by Jan. 1, 2024, will each be awarded:

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

## **MEETING THE CHALLENGE AWARD**

The top two Post commanders and the top two District commanders in each division who achieve 102% membership by April 1, 2024, will each be awarded:

- Five-night hotel accommodation at the National Convention.

## **102% POST, DISTRICT AND DEPARTMENT**

A distinctive streamer will be awarded to every Post, District and State/Department that achieves 102% or greater in membership before July 1, 2024.

## **102% COMMANDER DRAWING**

Each Post and District commander that exceeds 102% in membership by June 1, 2024, will receive an entry in this drawing. Twenty Post commanders and Twelve District commanders will receive:

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

## **POST COMMANDER & QUARTERMASTER DIVISION CHALLENGE**

For every 10 new/reinstated members recruited between July 1, 2023, and April 1, 2024, Posts will earn one entry for both Post commander and quartermaster entered into a drawing. One Post per division will 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, 2024, commander or Post representative will receive:

- 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.

## TOP DEPARTMENT RECRUITERS

The top Recruiter in every Department on July 1, 2024, will receive:

- Engraved Navy Cutlass

Note: Minimum of 25 new/reinstated members required to win this award.

## ELITE RECRUITER

Any VFW member who signs up 250 or more new and/or reinstated members by July 1, 2024, will receive:

- 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 members greater than 250 by July 1, 2024, will receive:

- 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 chartered, and/or revitalized, the Department Quartermaster will receive:

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

## **ALL-AMERICAN PROGRAM**

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

## **ALL-AMERICAN POST CRITERIA**

- Membership must be at least 102%
- Must conduct two Membership recruiting events, submit reports through All-American Dashboard
- Post-Election Report must be submitted to National Headquarters
- Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria:
  - o Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)
  - o Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)
  - o Hold a fundraiser with the proceeds going to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$100.
  - o National Citizenship Education Teachers Award – one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas Post donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)
  - o A Post must submit a community service report quarterly to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard. The quarters are July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March, and April-June.
  - o Buddy Poppy- Purchase Three per member in the Post

## **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 must be at least 102%
- Conduct two Membership recruiting events, submit report through the dashboard.
- District-Election Report must be submitted to National Headquarters.
- Meet all the following Program Participation criteria:
  - o Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)
  - o Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry\*see last page)
  - o National Citizenship Education Teachers Award – one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)

## ALL-AMERICAN DISTRICT AWARD

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

The Top 15 Districts in each Division will receive:

- All-American District streamer
- All-American District citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap (commander only, quartermaster may purchase cap)
- All-American lapel pin (commander only, 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 at least 102%.
- Must conduct two Membership recruiting events, report of these events must be submitted through the All-American dashboard.
- Conduct a Department Commander's "Official Visit or Round Up" prior to Jan 1, 2024, with a report submitted through the All-American dashboard.

### 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, 2023.
- Department Service Officer successfully completes NVS training requirements with a passing grade.
- Department Service Officer or appropriate designee reports hosting Post Service Officer training to NVS. Reports due by June 30, 2024.



### 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 State/Department fundraiser and proceeds donated to Veterans & Military Support Programs, Kansas City, Mo. (see last page)
- Must have at least One teacher submitted for the Teacher of the Year competition. (One entry from one of the three categories).
- Must enter one Employer of the Year Nomination (see last page)
- Must enter one JROTC Cadet of the Year Nomination (see last page)
- Must enter one VFW Member of the Year Nomination (see last Page)

## 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 Conference with the highest membership percentage of the four Conferences will receive a \$1500 award and 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 2023-2024 Conference Chairman will return the trophy to the membership booth at National Convention in Louisville, KY no later than COB on Saturday to ensure placement of the new nameplate. This trophy will be presented to the 2023-2024 Conference Chairman on stage during the Joint Opening Session\*\*.

## POST MEMBERSHIP DIVISIONS & MINIMUM QUALIFYING PERCENTAGES

Division	Total Membership		Qualifying Percentage
1	951+		102%
2	750	950	102%
3	356	749	102%
4	246	355	102%
5	185	245	102%
6	143	184	102%
7	112	142	102%
8	88	111	102%
9	68	87	102%
10	51	67	102%
11	10	50	102%

## DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP DIVISIONS & MINIMUM QUALIFYING PERCENTAGES

Division	Total Membership		Qualifying Percentage
1	5,000	14,000	102%
2	3,282	4,999	102%
3	2,172	3,281	102%
4	1,447	2,171	102%
5	906	1,446	102%
6	1	905	102%

### Important Notes

- Awards are transferable inside the Post, Districts or Department.
- Post/District/Department: Membership must be at least 102 percent.
- Post member cap, any member in a Post that achieves All-American status can purchase a "Post Member" cap. Those members must be in the Post during the membership year.
- The Department Commander's "Official Visit or Round Up" 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 "Official Visit or Round Up", please contact the Membership Department by calling 1.888.JOIN.VFW or email [membership@vfw.org](mailto:membership@vfw.org)
- Donations made to replace Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen (By eligible overseas Post). Do not donate through your Department or by any other means. Use the dashboard for your donation.
- Veterans & Military Support Programs Services Donations for Post/District/Department as listed above will only be accepted only through the following link: Use the dashboard for online donation.
- \*\*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.
- Employer of the Year nomination link: [https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfw\\_employer\\_of\\_the\\_year\\_award](https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfw_employer_of_the_year_award)
- JROTC Cadet of the Year nomination link: [https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfw\\_jrotc\\_cadet\\_of\\_the\\_year\\_award](https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfw_jrotc_cadet_of_the_year_award)
- VFW Member of the Year nomination link: [https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfw\\_member\\_of\\_the\\_year\\_award](https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfw_member_of_the_year_award)
- Department "102 Percent" Incentive, NOTE: Reimbursement for travel expenses paid by the VFW will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service on Form 1099 if the total of payments made to you during any calendar year equals \$600.00 or more. Travel expenses paid for a guest or spouse for the award will also be reported to the IRS. The reimbursement you receive from the VFW will be deemed by the IRS to be taxable income. Since the circumstances of each individual are different, it is recommended that you consult your tax advisor to determine the effect these payments may have on your personal tax situation. It is your responsibility to keep receipts and other records as you and your accountant and/or tax advisor deem necessary in order to document your expenditures.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS/ILLINOIS VFW NEWS



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Post 3455-15

One of the best kept secrets of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is the great works our Posts, Districts and the Department does in support of the communities in which we live and work and on behalf of our military service members, veterans and families.

How our Posts and Districts market themselves within their communities and with local news media outlets could set the stage for success in the years to come.

Media Advisories, Calendar Notices, Social Media posts and News Releases can serve to communicate the message of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, promoting the good work of our Posts, Districts and Departments, and engaging the communities in which we live and work.

Public Relations not only works to improve our credibility and accessibility, but also aids in marketing our organization to potential members, donors and supporters. Today, Public Relations is much more than just distributing press releases. It's about taking advantage of a number of ways to best engage, educate and influence our audience.

When developing your Public Relations program, you will need to define your objectives and decide what you want to accomplish.

- Determine your audience. Who do you want to reach with your message? Different VFW activities appeal to different segments of the community.
- Define your message. Sticking to one message is essential. However, your message may be presented in several ways through various outlets. Determine the best way to present your message for the various outlets.
- Develop a strategy. How can you best accomplish your goals? Look at the dynamics of your community. Build a relationship with the media in your area. Keep an up-to-date list of contacts for each outlet. You may have better results if you have one person at each news media outlet as your go to contact. Become the best source of information in your community on patriotic and veterans' issues.

- Make your Post, District and Department visible and active on social media.

From time to time you may need to evaluate your strategy. Listen carefully to feedback from members and officers, members of the community and the media. Take this information and fine tune your strategy, if necessary. Just remember developing a good public relations takes time and commitment.

There ways to promote your Post, District and the Department within the community. Media advisories, News Releases, and Social Media Posts are some of the most important ways you can promote what the organization is doing within your community. If you need help in developing a Media Advisory or writing a News Release, please contact me. I will be glad to answer questions or offer suggestions.

**The Illinois VFW News** – the official publication of the Illinois Veterans of Foreign Wars – is published quarterly - September, December, March and June. It is mailed to the Illinois VFW membership, select members of the VFW Auxiliary, and distributed to the Veterans Administration facilities in Illinois. The Illinois VFW News is also uploaded on our website.

Articles, news, and other items for the *Illinois VFW News* can be submitted via e-mail. If you do not have access to a computer, you can also mail the information to the editor at the above address. If sending via U.S. mail, please include name and telephone number of the person submitting the item; type or print news item legibly; and send original photographs. The deadline for submitting items will be the 1st of the Month preceding publication (August, November, February and May), but is subject to change.

### 2023-2024 State Publications Contest

Editors of District and Post newsletters are invited to enter one issue of their publication in the 2023-2024 State of Illinois Publications Contest. All entries must be provided as a paper copy and mailed to either the editor at the above address, or to State Headquarters. The entry must have been published between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.

Publications will be judged using the following categories:

- Post Publications published 1-4 times per year
- Post Publications published 5 or more times per year
- District Publications published 1-4 times per year
- District Publications published 5 or more times per year

Editors of post and district publications are responsible for submitting their own entry to the National Publications Contest.

State Publications Contest first place winners will receive a beautifully engraved plaque. Awards will be given out at the State Convention in June 2024.

An independent panel will judge all entries in the Publication Contest. Publications sent to State Headquarters for inclusion on the website will not be considered entered into the State Publications Contest. It is the responsibility of the newsletter editors to choose, and submit, one publication into the contest.

All entries **must** include the following:

- Name of Newsletter
- Editor's name and contact information
- Frequency of publication (1-4 times per year or 5 or more times per year).

All entries must be received not later than **February 28, 2024**.

### News Media Professional of the Year

Posts and Districts are invited to nominate a News Media Professional in your community for the State of Illinois News Media Professional of the Year competition. There is no entry form - please type a one-page nomination letter highlighting how your nominee has best told the VFW story or your Post's or District's work in your community. You may also include newspaper clippings and/or weblinks with your nomination. The deadline for nominations is **April 30, 2024**. The News Media Professional of the Year will be recognized at the Illinois State Convention in June. All nominations should be mailed to the Editor, Illinois VFW News.

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