



# **CHAIRMAN'S MANUAL VFW COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION**

## **BECOMING YOUR COMMUNITY'S MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE**

### **The Role of the Chairman**

VFW's chairmen do more than just plan projects to improve their communities. They also recruit volunteers, build relationships with community leaders, organize partnerships with civic groups and promote the VFW.

### **You Are the Point Person**

A program chairman should understand one important fact right from the outset: You are the Post's point man in your community. As chairman you will be your Post's liaison to:

- ✓ **school teachers and administrators**
- ✓ **community leaders**
- ✓ **local military personnel**
- ✓ **city government officials**
- ✓ **members of civic groups**
- ✓ **members of the media**
- ✓ **your fellow veterans**

Seek out these new relationships. When it comes time to recruit volunteers or you need specialized expertise for Post projects, these community contacts will prove invaluable. Project an outgoing, friendly personality. Speak positively about your Post, your community and your projects. Articulate your thoughts and plans clearly, concisely and coherently. Remember, you represent not only your Post, but the entire VFW organization as well.

### **Reporting Your Activities**

You may have heard it said that "the job's not over until the paperwork is done!" That is especially true of VFW Programs. Chairman must report their Post activities in their respective areas at least twice each year. Check with your respective Department chairman to learn what should be reported and in what form. Documentation of your programmatic efforts is the thing that ensures the VFW's reputation and our not-for-profit status.

### **Master Organizational Skills**

As chairman, your talents must be varied. Consequently, your organizational skills should be fully developed.

Some of your specific duties include:

- ✓ **recruiting and maintaining a pool of active volunteers**
- ✓ **identifying and initiating programs needed in your community**
- ✓ **motivating your Post members, community volunteers and sponsors involved in your various projects**
- ✓ **recognizing your volunteers efforts**
- ✓ **organizing and maintaining records, photos and newspaper clippings the document your activities**
- ✓ **Reporting to your Department chairman the volunteer hours, dollars donated by VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, Cooties, Junior Girls and Men's Auxiliary members and other information requested.**

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

How a Post interacts with its community determines the relevancy of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Someone once said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

The VFW and its Auxiliary's ability to impact veterans, youth, political issues, patriotism, civic pride, volunteerism, almost anything you can name, is directly dependent upon the Post being recognized as a caring and involved participant in the community.

Hopefully, this guide will provide some ideas as to how a Post can create and grow the kind of reputation that will benefit their community and themselves. The impact on the community is immeasurable. The benefit to the Post is new members, more effective fundraising, greater participation in events and tremendous goodwill.

The Post is, for most Americans, the only thing they know about the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Make sure those Americans in your community have a favorable opinion of our great organization and our veterans.

### National Volunteer Programs

Many volunteer opportunities can be discovered through national volunteer programs. Following is a short list of opportunities for you to explore.

- America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth connects adult mentors with youth. Call 1-202-657-0600 or visit [www.americaspromise.org](http://www.americaspromise.org) Annually they sponsor the Feb. 2 National Groundhog Job Shadow Day.
- Every spring, March of Dimes WalkAmerica involves thousands of people across the nation. Organize a veteran's team to raise money and provide a color guard for opening ceremonies. March of Dimes seeks to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, infant mortality and low birth weight. Call **1-888-MODIMES** for the chapter nearest you.
- St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, founded by the late entertainer Danny Thomas, has treated more than 20,000 children since it opened in 1962. St. Jude's cancer research findings are shared with the global medical community. If you'd like to help, please call 1-800-877-5833, ext. 2031 or visit [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org)
- Citizen Corps, which is a part of the Department of Homeland Security, is a community-based initiative to engage all citizens in homeland security. It promotes community and family preparedness through public education and outreach. Also, they have training opportunities and volunteer programs. For more information visit their Web site at [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)

## Honor Through Service

Post and Ladies Auxiliaries are invited to honor the active duty men and women currently serving and those who died in the war on terrorism by sponsoring a community service project in his/her name. We suggest that the project(s) be conducted on one or more of the following national service days.

- Make A Difference Day  
[www.makeadifferenceday.com](http://www.makeadifferenceday.com)
- National Family Volunteer Day & National Volunteer Week  
[www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)
- March of Dimes March for Babies  
[www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com)

### Get Involved

Recognize VFW volunteers throughout the year. Follow the steps below to be sure your volunteers receive the recognition they so greatly deserve.

- Provide recognition to individual VFW members and supporters using the National Community Service Volunteer Recognition Award. Also, be sure to recognize your volunteers during National Volunteer Week held each year in April/May.
- Select a date and time during National Volunteer Week to recognize the individuals at your Post home.
- Appoint a committee of at least three, including your Ladies Auxiliary representative, to select a VFW and Auxiliary member, a local community service group, educator or youth leader, youth volunteer, military volunteer and a local family to receive a citation.
- Invite local government officials and leaders in your community. Be sure to introduce them at the beginning of the ceremony.

Citations can be obtained by using the form provided at the end of this manual.

### You are a part of America's military history.

Retaining the memories and stories of America's veterans has become a national priority in recent years. Veteran's organizations, schools and other civic groups are being encouraged to participate. It is important that future generations understand and appreciate the service and sacrifices of America's veterans

### Veterans Oral History Project

Public Law 106-380, enacted Oct. 27, 2000, calls upon the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to develop a program that collects and preserves audio and videotaped oral histories of war vets. Veteran's

organizations such as VFW are among those invited to participate. Coordinators would like to see Posts select veterans from all eras to participate. The emphasis is quality, not quantity.

Once they have decided to get involved, Post members can participate in a variety of ways:

- interview each other (if they have equipment)
- contact radio stations to tape audio
- contact TV stations to tape video
- contact high schools or colleges with audio/visual departments
- contact video rental stores, which might have equipment for rent or use
- look to local businesses for support
- go to military bases to find active-duty vets (also a good opportunity to get on bases and promote VFW and its programs).

An online kit has been prepared to assist anyone interested in participating, which includes the guidelines, a checklist, an audio and video recording log, a photograph log and several forms for the interviewer and veteran to complete. All of these materials, standard operation procedures for interviews, must be completed and sent to the Library of Congress for an entry to be included. Contributors may also send in memorabilia related to the veteran's experiences, such as photographs or maps.

#### **To learn more, contact:**

**Veterans Oral History Project**  
**Library of Congress**  
**American Folklife Center**  
**101 Independence Ave. SE**  
**Washington, DC 20540-4615**  
**1-888-371-5848**  
[www.loc.gov/folklife/vets](http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets)

#### **Veterans in the Classroom**

Schools often study the wars in which our nation has participated. Teachers regularly seek out veterans of these wars to provide personal accounts of events and personal stories to illustrate that time in America's history. Veterans who are willing to participate in the classroom can create valuable relationships that bring honor to all America's veterans and our great organization. In addition, providing VFW members to a school opens doors for our scholarship programs and teacher awards.

#### **So, how do I proceed?**

The initial contact you make with your local school is very important. Explain that you are interested in assisting the teacher by providing a "living history" presentation about your military service. Initial response is usually positive but try to be as flexible as possible regarding your availability to allow the teacher greater

latitude to work you into the curriculum. The teacher may wish to audio or videotape your presentation. Decide on which format makes you feel most comfortable.

#### **Preparation**

Prepare a short biography of yourself and your military service (send a copy to the teacher at least two weeks prior to your presentation). By beginning your presentation with biographical information, you introduce yourself to the students and provide them with information which might create further questions. Your biographical introduction should include:

- Date and place of birth
- Occupation before joining the military
- Reasons for joining (did you enlist or get drafted?)
- Site and length of basic training
- Geographical location of where you served overseas
- Length of service and what your military job was
- Occupation after leaving the service

Check to see what materials you have from your military service that you could use in your presentation (i.e. military uniform, equipment, photographs, etc.). Food and clothing hold a special fascination for audiences of all ages. Descriptions of C and K rations, what you missed most from home, the importance of certain clothing items, are a few examples about what you address. For example: An army helmet and liner are two separate items. You may want to ask the class why a helmet needs a liner (a demonstration wearing a helmet without the liner would immediately demonstrate why a liner was required). Then you might describe the different ways you used a helmet: carrying water, cooking and washing. As you prepare, allow time for questions and answers either during or at the end of your presentation. Here is a suggested breakdown of the class time:

Introduction: 5-10 minutes  
Main Presentation: 10-15 minutes  
Questions and Answers: 5-10 minutes  
Wrap up: 2-5 minutes

#### **Presentation Day**

Contact the teacher two-three days prior to the presentation to confirm the date and time of your presentation and where you should meet the teacher when you arrive at the school. Prior to your presentation, display your personal items. With the teacher's understanding, try to create an informal atmosphere by having the students sit closer to you. After your presentation, thank the teacher for allowing you to come and encourage him or her to make other teachers aware of your willingness to present.

Report to your Post and encourage others to join you. Many veterans find this to be a fun and occasionally therapeutic exercise.

## PATRIOTISM & CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Since our inception, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been known for its patriotism and love of country. Today, although U.S. Flags are selling better than ever and commitment to our troops is high, true patriotism and a real commitment to civic responsibility are rare. The VFW is among the last bastions of true patriotism and civic commitment in the land. As war veterans and their families, who understand the price that has been paid for our freedoms, the VFW and its Auxiliaries share a unique and valuable perspective. For that reason, we must do all we can to share our values with our neighbors and show them what real commitment and service means.

### Patriotic Holidays

Celebrating patriotic holidays is not just a VFW function but an American tradition. Recognition of the sacrifices of our fellow veterans is not just the act of organizing an event or participating in a parade, but an obligation to past, present and future generations of Americans that set aside their lives to ensure the freedoms of this country's way of life and its citizens' rights. The VFW has historically taken the lead in promoting patriotic celebrations across the U.S. Each Post must recognize its sacred duty to continue to lead their community in celebrations of America's values, its history and its heroes.

The following are some of the patriotic holidays we suggest that the Post become involved in promoting throughout the year. We also recommend that you check the VFW annual calendar for important dates and events in U.S. and VFW history.

### Memorial Day Independence Day Veterans Day Flag Day

There are numerous ways to celebrate these events and additional support and resources throughout the community. The following are just a few suggestions of events and basic steps for organizing your local events. The key is to be creative. Types of events:

- Parades
- Memorial Services
- Flag Events (grave placement, lining the streets, Flag groves, etc.)
- Dinners & Luncheons – invitees, honorees, presenters
- Award ceremonies (military, first responders, civic leaders, outstanding citizens, etc.)
- The Moving Wall
- Stand Down for Homeless Veterans

Here are some helpful steps to assist you in getting organized for your event:

1. Select an event.
2. Select a date & venue.

3. Have membership approve the event in a regularly scheduled Post meeting, and download materials from [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org). Log in from the VFW home page (which will take you to "MY VFW") and under the General Members Tools & Resources and How to Get Involved headings, you will see all that is available (Chairman Guides, deadline information, etc.)
4. Identify a chairman and committee members to oversee various aspects.
  - a. Contacting of other groups
  - b. Food
  - c. Fundraising
  - d. Publicity (remember to check the "MY VFW" website for PSAs or speeches available for your event)
  - e. Day of the event coordination
  - f. Recognition of contributors, participants and honorees
5. Document event; prepare and submit a Community Service Report.

Here are a few helpful hints and some resources you might consider in planning your event:

- ✓ Coordinate with the local government. Have mayor or city officials prepare a proclamation from the city to recognize the event.
- ✓ Approach local businesses for participation and support, not only for funds but contributions of in-kind products and use of their facilities.
- ✓ Get with other community organizations such as Eagles, Rotary Club, etc. (offer support for their activities.)
- ✓ Ensure that your event does not conflict with any other community or organization's event.
- ✓ Get with local Boy Scout & Girl Scout troops for support such as placing flags on graves at cemeteries or as escorts for VIPs at Post-sponsored events.
- ✓ Invite local military recruiters and recently returned veterans to participate in events and be guest speakers at events or dinners.
- ✓ Have VFW personnel attend events wearing the distinctive VFW headgear.

These are just some of the events and ways to organize your events to celebrate our patriotic holidays. It is our obligation to future veterans and Americans to ensure these traditions live on. Remember, be creative and open-minded in your approach to the event - it's a celebration of American tradition.

### Memorial Day

All citizens should observe Memorial Day and VFW Posts should take the lead. Memorial Day is about remembering. This day is, and should remain, sacred for all veterans. But what about non-veterans? Do they really understand the true meaning of Memorial Day?



## Decorating the Graves of Comrades

Memorial Day was born out of necessity. In an effort to make sense of the horrendous loss of life suffered in the Civil War — which killed more Americans than any of the nation's wars before or since — citizens across the nation grasped for ways to honor those who had made the supreme sacrifice. It was a war that touched nearly every American family.

On May 5, 1866, residents of Waterloo, N.Y., held the first complete community-wide observance of Memorial Day. Solemnly and in a patriotic manner, Waterloo citizens dedicated the entire day to remembering all Civil War dead. They flew flags at half staff, which to this day remains the tradition. (All U.S. flags should be displayed at half staff during the morning hours. At noon they should be raised back to full staff.)

In 1868, Gen. John A. Logan, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, designated May 30 as Decoration Day. He said it was “for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion.” The GAR hoped the practice would be repeated annually.

In 1873, New York was the first state to legalize May 30th as a holiday. By 1890, all northern states had followed suit. Until the National Holiday Act of 1971, Memorial Day was observed each May 30. Today it is officially recognized on the last Monday of May.

## Ponder the Sacrifices

But to many veterans, changing the day merely to create three-day weekends has undermined the meaning of this sacred day. As Memorial Day has grown to honor the sacrifices of all veterans killed in defense of the nation's freedom, all citizens should regard it as their civic obligation to remember why it is a holiday. While non-veterans may not take the time to decorate fallen soldiers graves or attend ceremonies, they should at least take a few moments to ponder how different their lives would be. Without the courage of the many patriots who have died so that the rest of us can live free, American democracy could be a footnote in history.

Perhaps the most profound tribute of all was made on the first national memorial observance in May 1868 by a man who would become the country's 20th President, Union Army Gen. James A. Garfield: “They summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For love of country they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and virtue.”

## LOYALTY DAY

Truly a VFW-inspired holiday, Loyalty Day was created by the organization in 1921. In 1955, VFW Post 3 member and U.S. Rep. Jimmy Van Zandt of Pennsylvania, introduced a bill proclaiming May 1 as Loyalty Day—a time to proclaim patriotism and love of country. To celebrate this special day, plan a worthy program. Following is a list of ideas for your program:

- 1) Hold a public ceremony such as the rededication of a local memorial or stage a community program at a park or auditorium. Remember our men and women currently serving on active duty and in the National Guard and Reserve. Present citations to all participants, which can be ordered from the VFW Store online here [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org) or call (800) 821-2606.
- 2) Conduct a Loyalty Day poster contest in local schools.
- 3) Invite recently naturalized citizens to participate in your Loyalty Day program.
- 4) Request a Loyalty Day proclamation from the mayor or selectmen.
- 5) Participate in the opening ceremony of the March of Dimes WalkAmerica walk-a-thon. Call 1-888-MODIMES to find out the location of the nearest March of Dimes chapter.
- 6) VFW Day Celebration Event — Sept. 29 Show your support by honoring all veterans and VFW members in your community. Celebrate the high moral purpose and idealism that motivated the establishment of the VFW. Here are some suggested ideas to plan your event:
  - ✓ Find an appropriate event site.
  - ✓ Host an open house at your Post.
  - ✓ Have a recognition dinner or lunch.
  - ✓ Invite the local community to participate.

## Planning Your Loyalty Day Program

The earlier you start working on your program, the better. Here's a brief timeline to help you avoid unforeseen problems.

### January

- Locate a site for your community program.
- Create a file with all necessary planning folders.
- Schedule speakers for your program. Don't forget your Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and your Post's [Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award](#) winners as possible speakers.

### February

- Order Loyalty Day products from the VFW Store.) [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org)
- Meet with merchants, civic leaders and clergy to invite their participation in your program.

## March

- Request a signed proclamation from your mayor or city council.
- Contact local elementary schools and propose a Loyalty Day poster contest for students. At the same time, coordinate a date to collect contest entries.
- Order citations for all poster contest participants. Select an appropriate award for the winner.

## April

- Send out invitations to VIPs, such as local city government officials and prominent veterans or citizens.
- Place VFW Loyalty Day promotional material in prominent community locations.
- At least one week in advance of your ceremony, send out news releases to media.

## VETERANS DAY

Often many well-meaning veterans will say, “This is our day. Why should we have an event honoring ourselves?”

While it’s true that this is the day set aside for communities and other organizations to honor those who have served, it is also a time for us to honor those with whom we have served. For that reason alone, it is important for the VFW, at all levels, to attend and participate in city-led events. If your community chooses to ignore its veterans, then it is incumbent on your Post to take the lead. Take advantage of the opportunity to show others why you served. Take advantage of the opportunity to show young people some of the memorabilia that has special significance to you. The following are some ideas you may wish to consider:

- ✓ Organize a short parade or a gathering at a local veterans’ memorial. Invite all veterans, other local civic groups, high school bands, JROTC and Scout units, civic leaders, etc, to march and participate in a short program at the end.
- ✓ Distribute Buddy Poppies and invite the Scouts, JROTC and local sports teams to help with distribution.
- ✓ Have a Post open house displaying your member’s memorabilia, Buddy Poppies, and scholarship materials. Demonstrate proper Flag etiquette, conduct a Flag retirement ceremony, formally adopt a local military unit, invite local politicians to debate each other or answer questions about their positions on veterans and military issues.
- ✓ Set up a booth at the local mall incorporating elements listed in the Post open house above.

Anything you can do that recognizes the service of your members and all veterans is appropriate for Veterans Day. Above all, if your community has a Veterans Day event that you marshal every member of the Post and its auxiliaries to show up and participate. When veterans fail to attend these events, these events usually go quietly away and that’s the last thing we want.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 4<sup>th</sup> is the one day of the year when everyone becomes a patriot. Anything that has been proposed for Memorial Day, Veterans Day or Loyalty Day should be considered for Independence Day. This is an opportunity to participate in numerous civic events and have your own as well. Opportunities that may not exist for the other patriotic holidays are often abundant on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Take advantage of the events of that day to establish relationships with civic leaders, other fraternal and civic groups, local retailers and other groups and individuals who can be encouraged to respond to your Post’s patriotic events on other days.

July 4<sup>th</sup> is a time to “Show Your Colors” and celebrates all that is good and true about our great nation. As individuals who have placed our lives on the line for this country, this is THE DAY to celebrate what we have paid for.

## ENCOURAGING PATRIOTISM

An important role of every VFW and Ladies Auxiliary member is the sharing of our patriotism and encouragement of others to express their love of country and support for our young men and women in uniform.

This need is most important for our youth. If this nation is to remain strong and continue to demonstrate the values upon which it was created and has been sustained, it will depend on future generations. We must impart our patriotism to the next generation. A separate booklet entitled, “[VFW in the Classroom,](#)” has been prepared to provide guidance and resources to help your Post and Auxiliary become a resource to your local schools and their teachers. Visit [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) – and you would log in from the VFW home page (which will take you to “MY VFW”) and under the [General Members Tools & Resources](#) heading you will find CHAIRMANS GUIDES – click there and the “VFW in the Classroom” booklet is listed below the Community Activities & Citizenship Education heading. You should also print the guide itself.

## ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

There are many citizenship education projects your Post can tackle. Whether it’s a continuing project, like monitoring the display of flags in your community, or conducting annual holiday ceremonies, your community needs you, and you have the means to help. This section offers a variety of suggested citizenship education projects.

- Show your support by honoring all veterans and VFW members in your community on September 29, by planning a VFW Day celebration event.
- Decorate veteran’s graves on Memorial Day with youth and family volunteers.

- Present “Patriotic Citizen Award” certificates (available from the VFW Store) to citizens and merchants who fly the U.S. flag daily.
- Conduct the Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Program; visit <http://www.vfw.org/Community/Teacher-of-the-Year/>
- Conduct Veterans and Memorial Day ceremonies.
- Dispose of old flags for fellow citizens who do not have a way of properly retiring them. (See guidelines below.)
- Discuss the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance or provide “living histories” at local schools. (Include Buddy Poppy program information in your talk.)
- Invite your local military recruiter to participate in your Post’s flag education, veterans in the classroom or other school-related activities. The Army Recruiting Command supports this partnership.
- ✓ Check your VFW Emblem and Supply (VFW Store) catalog or visit [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org) for flags, citations, awards, and flag/citizenship education items.

These items can be used to impact your community in numerous ways. As you can see, the possibilities are endless. If your Post is planning to conduct a ceremony, such as a Veterans Day observance, be sure to notify the local newspaper and get your event placed on the community calendar. If the newspaper doesn’t have a calendar section, speak with the editor about getting an announcement published. It’s important to work with other civic organizations and youth groups when possible. A prime example is the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Project.

## U.S. FLAG DISPOSAL

If you see a torn, soiled or badly faded U.S. flag, suggest to the owners that it be disposed of respectfully. The Post can collect the flags and conduct this practice annually.

- ✓ The flag should be folded in its customary manner.
- ✓ It’s important that the fire be sizeable and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the Flag.
- ✓ Place the flag on the fire. Individuals present should come to attention, salute the flag (or place hand over heart), recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.
- ✓ After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.
- ✓ Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes and ordinances.

**NOTE: Some Posts have procured a retired mailbox from the local Post Office to collect old flags.**

## VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

This program is designed to provide recognition and awards to VFW members who volunteer their time in service through outside organizations. Recognition is in the form of certificates and/or lapel pins which are given to volunteers who have completed the number of hours prescribed for those awards.

The individual in charge of a local community service organization such as a school, youth group, a food pantry or a shelter must sign the validation form for the VFW or non-member VFW volunteer.

**Special Note: For hospital volunteers, use the VFW National Hospital Volunteer Recognition Program. Contact your Department Hospital Chairman for more information.**

The VFW Programs Department will provide the appropriate award for presentation to the volunteer upon receipt of a completed request form properly signed by the coordinator for the community service program, Post Commander and the Department Adjutant. The completed, signed forms (see last page of this booklet) must be submitted to the following:

**VFW Programs (VFW National Headquarters)  
406 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
Fax: (816) 968-1149 E-mail: [nclifton@vfw.org](mailto:nclifton@vfw.org)**

Awards are provided as follows:

1. 100 hours certificate
2. 150 hours lapel pin
3. 300 hours lapel pin
4. 500 hours lapel pin and certificate
5. 1,000 hours lapel pin
6. 2,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
7. 3,000 hours lapel pin
8. 4,000 hours lapel pin
9. 5,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
10. 6,000 hours lapel pin
11. 8,000 hours lapel pin
12. 9,000 hours lapel pin
13. 10,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
14. 12,500 hours lapel pin
15. 15,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
16. 17,500 hours lapel pin
17. 20,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
18. 30,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
19. 35,000 hours lapel pin and certificate
20. 40,000 hours lapel pin and certificate

The award pin includes the Cross of Malta, the words “Community Service and VFW Volunteer” and the accumulated volunteer hours. The certificate will recognize the volunteer for attaining the appropriate cumulative hour level.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for this recognition, an individual must:

1. Be a VFW member in good standing performing volunteer service for a community service organization.

2. Such volunteer service must be given under the representation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Volunteer service rendered under sponsorship of any other organization is not recognized for this purpose. Some examples of volunteer work benefitting nonmembers are: coaching youth, working at a food pantry, conducting flag presentations in front of schools or youth groups and supporting funeral homes and cemeteries by providing honor guard details for non-member veterans.

#### **One-of-a-kind**

Only one award of a kind will be furnished to each volunteer. For instance, a volunteer who has served 450 hours is not eligible to receive three 150-hour pins.

#### **Non-Member Awards**

Non-members volunteering under the sponsorship of the VFW may be issued a certificate once a year for the number of hours served. The form and procedure for that award is the same.

## **OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POST**

There should be at least one Post in your Department that will be selected as a National Outstanding Community Service Post. Each Department will select at least one Post (depending on Department size –see below) to receive the National Outstanding Community Service Post Award at the VFW National Convention.

The award includes a plaque inscribed with the name of the VFW Post and its Ladies Auxiliary (if applicable), a \$599 stipend to cover part of the Post representative's expenses to the National Convention, publication of the Post's name in the Convention program booklet and a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

Your VFW Department is responsible for the selection criteria for this award and sending the name of the selected Post(s) to the National Programs Department by June 1 each year.

Contact your Department for the selection criteria and further information about this award. Nominations should be as follows:

**Departments w/less than 200 Posts – 1 entry**  
**Departments w/201 than 399 Posts - 2 entries**  
**Departments w/400 + Posts - 3 entries**

## **Post Special Project Award**

If your Post, County Council, District or Department conducted a special project that you think should be nationally recognized by VFW National Headquarters, we would like to hear from you.

To be considered your entry must include the following:

- 1) Copy of the minutes of the VFW meeting at which the project was authorized.
- 2) Signed statement from the Commander summarizing the impact of the project.
- 3) Photos (limit of twenty) of the activity.
- 4) Newspaper clippings featuring the project.
- 5) Letters of congratulation/recognition from civic and local leaders.
- 6) Copy of the project budget/expense sheet.
- 7) Narrative telling how the project was planned and executed and its impact on the community
- 8) Entry form (on following page), signed by the Department Community Service Chairman and the Department Adjutant.

Judging is conducted solely on the basis of the information indicated above. Points are awarded for each element and will be deducted for missing items. All documentation must be limited to one binder. Entries must be postmarked by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Projects must be executed and nominated within the 12 months preceding national judging.

All entries receive a Community Service Citation. Noteworthy entries receive a Merit Award Plaque. Exceptional entries receive an Award of Excellence. All recipients of the Award of Excellence are automatically entered in the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Award competition.

## **Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Award**

Every Post Special Project receiving the award of excellence in the May judging will be entered in the ***Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project*** competition.

The winning Post receives a plaque at the VFW National Convention and a \$1,000 service scholarship for community projects. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip air fare, a cash stipend and accommodations to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.



The late Fred C. Hall was an active Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars as well as many other civic and fraternal organizations. Throughout his adult life, he was a great

proponent of VFW Posts taking an active role in the community. He is credited with starting the VFW Post Insurance program.

# ***POST SPECIAL PROJECT ENTRY FORM***

All entries must be in the form of a record book (binder) and this form must be the first page of your book. Information should be neatly presented and in chronological order. All entries must be post-marked by midnight April 30<sup>th</sup> each year.

VFW Post/Auxiliary (if applicable) County Council, District and Department \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of the project from inception to conclusion \_\_\_\_\_

List of other organizations (if any) that assisted/participated \_\_\_\_\_

How many people directly benefitted from this effort? \_\_\_\_\_ Approx. local population \_\_\_\_\_

List local media and addresses (we will send them news releases) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Signatures**

Department Community Service Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of Community Service Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

(NOTE: This signature confirms that you have reviewed this entry and are verifying that the form is complete and there is evidence to support the nomination.)

Department Adjutant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of Department Adjutant \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by (Submission will be returned to this individual)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

VFW position/title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

# VOLUNTEER AWARD REQUEST FORM

This form certifies that the following is entitled to a VFW National Community Service Volunteer Award for service as a VFW representative. A pin will be issued for his/her volunteer work with a community volunteer service organization. (For Hospital volunteer recognition awards please contact your Department Hospital Chairman.)

VOLUNTEER'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

POST # \_\_\_\_\_ Hours Served: \_\_\_\_\_ VFW/Aux. Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Award Issued: (National Use Only) \_\_\_\_\_

Awards for 1,000 hours or more may be the accumulation of volunteer service hours from up to three community service organizations.

Community Service Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

For 1,000 or more hours, add two additional organizations below.

Community Service Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Community Service Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Post Commander's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department Adjutant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL AWARD TO:

Post Commander's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ (Required for delivery)

Department Adjutant, please forward or fax to:

**Programs Department  
VFW National Headquarters  
406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
Fax: (816) 968-1149**