

ONE FORCE ONE MISSION

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I Hope everyone had a joyful Christmas Holiday. With Spring just around the corner, all our programs should be complete and we should be placing our focus on Membership. Right now, the Department of Maryland is 4th in the Nation!! Thanks to all the Post Commanders for making this happen. I want to thank everyone for their support this year. The Department is staying strong because of your teamwork and making Membership a priority.

March is coming soon and we need a lot of members to “storm the Hill”. Change will only happen with the force of our voices echoing what we believe in. **ONE FORCE**

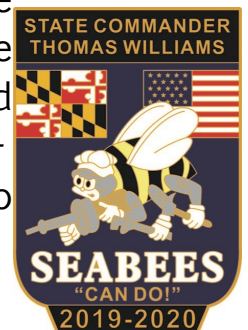
ONE MISSION with the VFW and it's Auxiliary working together to influence our government. Working together our goal should also be to keep the VFW strong.

If a post is having an event that you want me or my staff to attend, send me an email and I'll be there. I've been attending a lot of events, all around the state. People are waking up about the VFW. I talk to them about our programs for youth and veteran's services. The more we all go out in the public, the more we can spread the word about our great organization. I also had the honor of at-

Commander, Page 3



Thomas Williams, Commander
Dept. of MD Veterans of Foreign Wars





James F. Wade, Sr.
Jr. Vice Commander
Dept. of MD VFW

Comrades,

New Year's Eve is close and this time it's known as Happy New Year's Eve 2020. Veterans enjoy themselves and happily enjoy the last day of the year, preparing for the year ahead.

Veterans pray that next year will bring much happiness and joy into their lives. People celebrate and enjoy at home or in many hotels. However, when we compare a New Year with Christmas, both events are very exciting, but when it comes to Christmas, most people, including Veterans, love spending it with their families. Here are some New Year's resolutions for the year 2020:

- Each VFW Post to reach 100%!
- Continue to support youth and local programs in your communities.
- Team up with Student Veterans of America (SVA) to be there for Veterans pursuing

See *Jr. Vice*, Page 4



Tiffany Daniel
Chaplain
Dept. of MD VFW

Greetings,

As we embark upon this holiday season anticipating the new year, I ask that we all take some time to be still and ponder on the things that we are grateful for.

As we go about our busy days laying wreaths, making hospital visits or just simply comforting a loved one that may be dealing with something and just needed a listening hear or someone to be there, just be grateful.

So many times we take things we are able to do for granted, let's just stop, inhale and treasure the moment. This month should be filled with love, peace and joy. So remember the small things that you can do to bring a smile to someone's face.

Please remember to reach out to those that have lost a loved one along the way. Send a card or make a phone call just to tell them that you were thinking about them.

While you are serving on behalf of the

See *Chaplain*, Page 4

STATE COMMANDER
Thomas C. Williams

ADJUTANT
Arthur Westbrook

EDITOR
Jacquelyn Kimball

The Maryland VFW Combat Veteran is published six times per year — July–August, September–October, November–December, January–February, March–April and May–June by the Department of Maryland, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, 101 North Gay Street, Room J, Baltimore, MD 21202, 410-752-6474
MDVFWCombatVet@comcast.net

Send all communications for publication to MDVFWCombatVet@comcast.net. Deadline for submissions is on the 20th, during the months of June, August, September, December, February and April.

WEBSITE
www.vfwmd.org



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

Commander, from page 1

tending the Auxiliary's Christmas Conference. We had a great time. Thanks to our Auxiliary for all their support.

Community meetings and events are things the Post Commander should be attending. On December 11th, I attended, along with nine other Comrades, the Veterans' Legislative Summit in Annapolis. The VFW had a strong presence at the meetings. We set up focus groups to discuss: Disability and Mental Health, Veteran Owned Businesses, and Veteran's Education. I want to thank all the members and officers who came out on that snowy morning. This is what makes the VFW strong.

Helping veterans is our Mission. Most counties have a Veterans' Service Office. They are set up to help with claims and other needs. Speaking of helping veterans...only eight out of seventy-two Posts have donated to the Veterans & Military Support Programs. I am asking each Post to try and give at least \$100. PSC Thomas Kimball, Chairman for the Department's Veterans & Military Support Programs has helped, on the Department's behalf, twelve veterans with a total of \$7868 in support so far this year.

This year marks the 100th Anniversary of our Department Convention. The Committee Chairmen are planning a big event and I hope to see everyone attend.

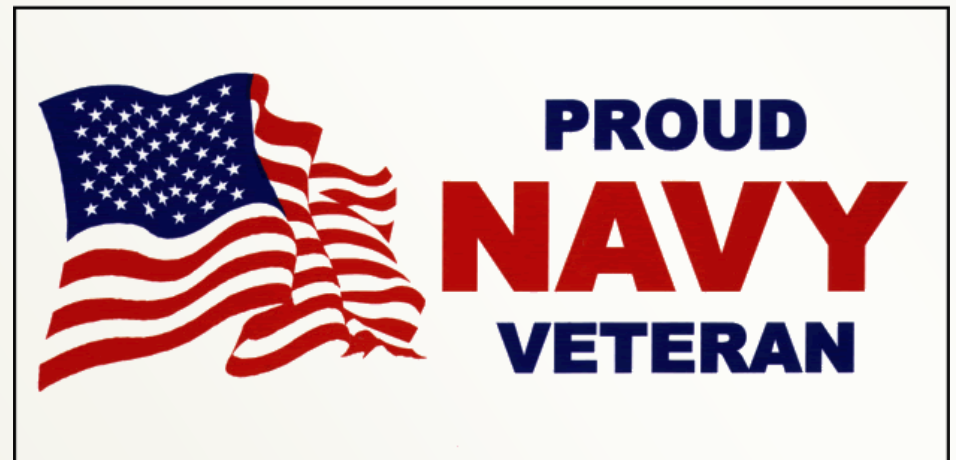
Remember to keep working your Membership. Keep the new members coming in. Don't just sign them up. **Show them around and teach them the "ins and outs" of our organization and its programs.** I'm proud of the work we do and you should be too!

Stay warm and safe this winter.

Yours in Comradeship,

Thomas C. Williams

Thomas C. Williams, USNR
State Commander



Jr. Vice, from page 2

their education. Communicate with your local Colleges in your areas.

- Ensuring Women Veterans are receiving their benefits and services.
- Educate the Veterans and their Spouses regarding Survivors Benefits Plans (SBP).
- VFW & Auxiliary are losing many of our Fallen Hero's. Let's show them the Respect they deserve by attending their Passing-on Ceremonies or Repast.
- VFW Mental Wellness Campaign. (How to look for 5 Signs that may indicate someone is suffering emotionally and needs help.)

This is a great time to reach out to Reserve Centers, National Guard units, Community Colleges and Universities to explain the VFW's mission, vision, and core values. Please think about sending care packages to deployed units.

Continue to educate the public about the VFW by providing facts on our programs. Let's also continue honoring younger veterans and their families by inviting them to the VFW activities and promoting the VFW as a family group and unit.

It's imperative that we remember the thousands deployed in defense of our great nation.

From the Department Junior Vice-Commander James and Gaylene Wade, we wish every VFW Family and their loved ones a safe and festive Holiday season and look forward to seeing you all next year 2020!!

Continue Supporting our Department Commander!

In Comradeship,
Family First; Veteran Always

James F. Wade, Sr.
Jr. Vice Commander

Chaplain, from Page 2

Veterans of Foreign Wars, remember this as your why;

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."

~John 15:12 KJV

Beloved, be love and may your holiday season be a blessing.

Tiffany Daniel
Chaplain Daniel





Brian Lankford
Surgeon
Dept. of MD VFW

From The Desk of the Surgeon

If you have a Combat Veteran in your family and you don't like their moods or behavior around the holidays; please consider these six things:

1.) Your combat veteran has served in countries where people are blessed to receive a tattered pair of shoes or have clean water to drink; he/she no longer lives the "first world illusion" and no longer cares that if you buy one play station you can get a second one for fifty percent off. In fact, they find it hard to appreciate any of the gluttonous commercialism and overindulgence that permeates American holidays. Standing watch, boring as it was, had so much more purpose than going to the mall.

2.) Your Combat Veteran is thankful for the most basic things; not thankful for mega-sales and million dollar parades. They are thankful to be alive; thankful to have survived both the wars far away and the wars they struggle with

inside.

3.) Your Combat Veteran is thankful that it wasn't them that got killed, or wishes that it was them that got killed instead, or is torn painfully between the two. Either way, their celebrations are forever complicated by guilt and loss over those that died. Some of the most thankful times in their life (lucky to be alive) were some of the scariest. Their feelings of thanks and celebration often conjure up memories that are equally painful.

4.) Your Combat Veteran is not like you anymore. At some point, for some period of time, their entire life boiled down to just three simple things: when will I eat today, when will I sleep today, and who will I have to kill or will try to kill me today?

5.) Your Combat Veteran does not need a guilt-trip or a lecture; they already feel detached in their grief while others so easily embrace the joy of the season. They need understanding and space; empathy not sympathy.

6.) Your Combat Veteran does love his/her family and is thankful for the many blessings in their life...and they are thankful for you.

Coming home doesn't mean their war is over;
for some veterans, it means a new battle begins.



I will add the we are grateful for the simple things...for being able to spend time with our loved ones...even if it is in silence. Loud noises and crowds makes us uncomfortable due to the places and things we've experienced. Some of us moved to a different country to provide for our family...we miss the ones we left behind...but above all we are grateful for being safely back.

Here's to a great year in 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian M. Lankford

Bryan M. Lankford
V.F.W. Dept. of Maryland Surgeon
410-924-9899
lankfordtrkinc@gmail.com
Bryan Lankford on FaceBook and Messenger

MICAH JONES, MEMBER OF VFW POST 10076 AND K-9 VETERAN SUMMER AWARDED 2019 ACE AWARD



Sgt. Micah Jones and Summer

It didn't take Sergeant Micah Jones long to warm up to E-6 Marine Staff Sergeant Summer in 2014. In fact, it was love at first sight for both of these military veterans when they set eyes on each other for the first time at Dulles International Airport on a cold December night.

The rapport and public respect they've garnered since then has been nothing short of astounding. For the last few years, Sgt. Jones and K-9 Summer, a Labrador Retriever and Explosives Detection Dog, have helped maintain safety at Washington Union Station in D.C. and on Amtrak trains traveling to Baltimore and Alexandria, Virginia.

In recognition of their service, Summer and Jones have been named winners of the 2019 AKC Humane Fund Award For Canine Excellence (ACE) in the "Uniformed Service K-9" category. The pair was recognized at the AKC National Championship presented by Royal Canin in Orlando, Florida, this past December.

"It seemed like a natural fit from the start," says Jones, an Air Force veteran who was on active duty from 1994-2000. Deployed in South America, Japan, Europe, and Afghanistan, working with military dogs at each stop.

Jones was first hired by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department in 2003. He became involved in K-9 work for a short time before being activated by the Air Force Reserve and deployed abroad. In 2004, prior to deployment, he was paired with Blecky, a German Shepherd Dog, at Lackland Air Force Base, where all military dogs are trained. Following that assignment, the two were reunited in late 2008 and worked together with the Amtrak Police Department until 2013.

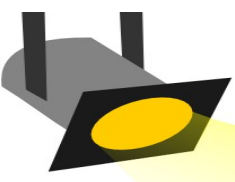
The 9-year-old yellow Lab has put her life on the line, too. Summer served in Afghanistan in 2012, searching for and identifying explosive devices and weapons caches. She also swept and cleared routes for the troops and was involved in firefights with insurgents. This war-zone exposure ultimately led to a diagnosis of canine PTSD and eventual reassignment. Around the same time, Blecky was nearing retirement, and Jones began to file paperwork for a replacement. Looking at Summer, there's no mistaking the loyal Lab as anything other than a working dog. Her harness consists of a full array of military decor, including an Afghanistan Campaign Ribbon, Global War on Terrorism Service Ribbon and GWOT Expeditionary Ribbon. She also bears patches signifying "retired military working dog", "Amtrak K-9 Police", and "Do Not Pet". The latter is due to policy to prevent people from approaching her while she works.

Congratulations to Comrade Jones and Staff Sergeant Summer.

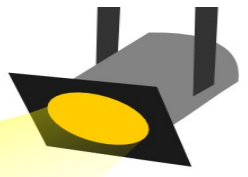
Excerpts taken from the AKC Website. Original article written by Ranny Green.



Jones and Summer participate in the Smithsonian Postal Museum's "Dog Days of Summer" in July 2018.

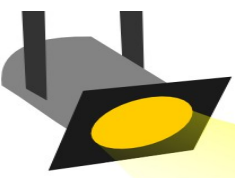


MD VFW & AUXILIARY

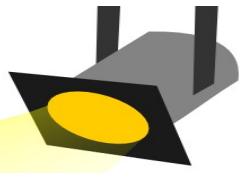


In the Spotlight



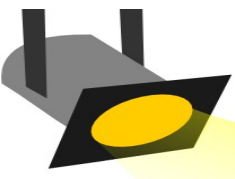


MD VFW & AUXILIARY

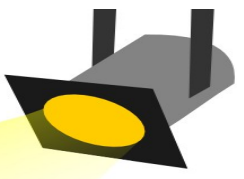


In the Spotlight





MD VFW & AUXILIARY



In the Spotlight





Auxiliary News



Brothers, Sisters & Comrades,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday. As we welcome this New Year...We have another opportunity to renew our focus; to care for our veterans, military and their families.

CONGRATULATIONS MARYLAND!!!!, for pushing to reach 95% in Membership. To each and every Auxiliary...Thank you! **Thank You!! THANK YOU!!!**, from the bottom of my heart for all your help, to propel the Department to 95%+ in membership. For all your effort, the Department received \$500, as well as, each Auxiliary who individually reached the 95% goal received \$50.

As of December 31st, we need 164 members to achieve 100%. I have faith in us that we can achieve 100%+ by January 31, 2020. Remember National will award \$50 to each Auxiliary that is 100%+ by January 31, 2020. I would love to be able to BRAG when I go to the Mid-Year Conference in February that Maryland is 100%+ in membership. Some auxiliaries have already qualified for this award. Some only need a few to qualify to get the \$50. Please reach out to those members who have not yet paid their dues.

Many of our members do not know that they can pay their dues on line. Encourage them to use MALTA. Do your

members know that MALTA accepts credit card payments? Please send out another dues reminder, but this time include verbiage informing them that National, through the MALTA system, will accept credit card payments for renewing their membership. Also, our Department Treasurer will send out dues reminder for your Auxiliary, upon request. The Auxiliary will be obligated to reimburse the Department for the postage.

Keep in mind, that sometimes our membership, for whatever reason, may not communicate with us that they are in need of help with paying their membership. It is my belief in a time when many of us have to decide whether to buy their medicine or pay their dues. Medicine and other obligations will probably win out. Treasurers, please transmit dues, upon receipt, as soon as you can or send appropriate information to our Department Treasurer so that she can transmit them.



At this point, in our program year, the Department should be 100% reported in all programs. As I traveled to each of the Districts, You impressed me with all the GOOD you do. Others need to know as well. Many of us, including me, don't like to write the report. Reporting is important. Our organization needs you to report. Through your reports is how our organization tells our legislators, our local communities, as well as our nation how we provide love, care and support to our veterans, our military and their families. We need your reports to help make the needed impact that moves others to support us and our cause. If you need any assistance with reporting, please call me or any of the Department Officers or Chairmen. **We will accept your reports in any form.** If you want to make an oral report we will even accept them over the phone.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend our VAVS Representatives and Deputy Representatives. As I made my hospital visits, it warmed my heart to witness the care, attention and love our Hospital Representatives and Deputy Representatives give to our hospitalize veterans. They are doing a wonderful job! I consider the Deputies and Representatives my "Elite Angels".

I hope to see everyone come and support our Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Awards Dinner on January 26, 2020. The Awards Dinner will take place 1PM at E. E. Streets Memorial VFW Post 5118 in Easton Maryland. Let's come out and support our youth participants.

As I close, I want to take this opportunity to thank Betty Ann Johnson, Debbie Sturgis and all who helped to make the Christmas Conference a wonderful celebration! Chairman you all had wonderful presentations. And the centerpieces that the Auxiliaries made using our Buddy Poppy were all fabulous! As Lyn MacArthur conveyed, I too hope to see each of them at our Department Convention. Also, thanks to every Auxiliary who donated to my Special Project. Special Thanks to VFW Post 5118 who donated \$5,000 to my Special Project, McVET.



To all of you...keep up the good work! To care for our military, veterans and those that love them is a great work. I am so proud of all of you!

Cynthia Davis
Cynthia Davis
Department President



Betty J. Stahm, PDP
Chief of Staff
Dept. of MD VFW Aux.

Brothers & Sisters,

How did it get to be 2020? Seems like only yesterday we were worrying about Y2K. It's a new year to continuously keep our Auxiliaries Healthy. Our National goals are:

- Establish New Auxiliaries
- Maintain Current Auxiliaries
- Transfer Members-at-Large to Local Auxiliaries
- Present to Bachelor Posts
- Official Visit Inspections Completed by December 31, 2019

A letter was sent to every Post Commander that does not have an affiliated Auxiliary to support them. I am asking each Commander to give me an opportunity to speak to your membership about why an auxiliary will be an asset to your Post. No one does more for veterans than the VFW along with the Auxiliary by its side. One Family, One Mission..... Our Veterans, Our Military Personnel and their Families.

Congratulations to the following Auxiliaries for achieving their Healthy Auxiliary Award at Christmas Conference:

- District 1** J. Paul Duke Jr. Memorial Auxiliary Post 9376
Southern Charles County Memorial Post 10081
- District 2** Largo-Kettering Auxiliary Post 7757
- District 4** Kent County Memorial Auxiliary Post 652
E. E. Streets Memorial Auxiliary Post 5118
- District 5** Weedon-Elliott Auxiliary Post 8126
Darlington-Dublin Memorial Auxiliary Post 10146

- District 7** Yingling-Ridgely Auxiliary Post 7472
- District 10** Cecil County Memorial Auxiliary Post 6027
Chesapeake City Memorial Auxiliary Post 7687
- District 14** Charles Evering Auxiliary Post 6506
- District 16** Meuse Auxiliary Post 194

The District Presidents/Deputy Chief of Staff were given a spreadsheet of the Auxiliary stats. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

In closing, I wish each Auxiliary & Post Member a Happy Healthy New Year! May it be one that is rewarding to our Veterans, Military Personnel and their families! Here's to a successful 2020!

We are "Staying Connected to Our Veterans" so that we can continue "Serving our Veterans with Aloha"! *Be Healthy and stay on the right path*





Cheri Brown, JVP
Membership Chairman
Dept. of MD VFW Aux.

**TO EFFECTIVELY ADVOCATE FOR
OUR VETERANS, MILITARY & THEIR
FAMILIES...WE NEED TO HAVE
STRONG MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT!**

MEMBERSHIP

It's time to go through your membership list and CALL your members to remind them to pay their dues. A member may be going through a financial problem or medical issue...the Relief Fund is available to help.

Remember what your membership means to those overseas fighting to protect our country. Remember our Veterans at home. Our membership is a voice for our Heroes! We must continue recruiting and rejoining efforts.

Let's get our Department of Maryland to 100% plus! Encourage your members to pay today. A phone call may be all they need to remind them.

- ◆ **Remind your members they will have to rejoin if membership dues are not received; causing them to lose their continuous year status.**
- ◆ **Remind members of the many benefits of our membership (example Cancer Grant).**



Section 104—Members in Good Standing

- The membership year of the Auxiliary if from January 1 to December 31.
 - A member who has paid their dues to December 31 is in good standing.
 - A member ceases to be in good standing on January 1 immediately following the year for which dues have been paid.
 - A member shall not again be in good standing until their dues have been paid for the current year.
 - Dues must be paid by June 30 to remain a continuous member.
 - Prior year's dues may not be paid after July 1.
 - Any member who has not maintained continuous membership shall submit an application and be accepted in the same manner as a new member.
 - No admission fee shall be required.
 - Continuous membership begins again upon payment of dues.
 - Date of rejoin starts new continuous membership timeline.

Congratulations!

January 2020 VFW Dept of Maryland Auxiliary

Membership Group Raffle Drawing @ Christmas Conference

Group 1 \$200 – Aux # 5633	Group 4 \$200 – Aux # 7472
Group 1 \$100 – Aux # 9451	Group 4 \$100 - Aux # 10067
Group 2 \$200 – Aux # 1411	Group 5 \$200 – Aux # 3285
Group 2 \$100- Aux # 10077	Group 5 \$100 – Aux # 194
Group 3 \$200 – Aux # 652	Group 6 \$200 – Aux # 8672
Group 3 \$100 – Aux 8810	Group 6 \$100 – Aux # 5118

Membership Drawing for 100% plus
for November 2019

Cecil County Memorial Auxiliary # 6027

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE VFW DEPARTMENT OF
MARYLAND AUXILIARY
95% MEMBERSHIP AWARD OF \$500
CONGRATULATIONS TO AUXILIARIES RECEIVING
\$50 FOR 95% MEMBERSHIP
BY NOVEMBER 30, 2019**

MARYLAND PROUD!!!!

Cheri J Brown, Membership & Recruitment
VFW Dept of Maryland Auxiliary

**VFW Dept of Maryland Auxiliary
Membership & Recruitment
Cheri J. Brown, Chairman**

Thanks to every auxiliary for your dedication to our Veterans.
Congratulations for all your achievements.
We have worked hard for our 2019 goals and it is now time to
move forward to accomplishing 2020 goals...

100% Plus Membership

We must work together to keep our Auxiliaries, Districts and
Department strong!!

Don't forget our National Membership Goals

Auxiliary Awards – 50/50 - \$50 to each auxiliary that reaches
100% by January 31, 2020, based on the June 30, 2019 total
membership numbers.

Department Award – Award #2 for 100% plus membership by
January 31, 2020 = \$500

Testimonial Dinner Celebrating

CYNTHIA DAVIS
STATE PRESIDENT



THOMAS WILLIAMS
STATE COMMANDER

Molleville Farm VFW Post 467 • 519 Poole Road • Westminster, MD 21157 Saturday—March 14, 2020
5:00 PM until 10:00 PM Social Hour (Cash Bar/Free Soft Drinks)—5:00 PM Dinner (Buffet Style)—6:30 PM

Appetizer: Vegetable Tray, Assorted Cheeses, Crab Dip, Sweet & Sour Meatballs, Pretzels and Chips.
Dinner: Vegetable Lasagna, Roast Beef, Fried Shrimp, Chicken Marsala, Buttered Red Potatoes, Rice Pilaf, Brussels Sprouts, Green Beans, Rolls, Butter, Ice Tea, and Coffee. Dessert: Cake and Cookies.

Tickets—\$40 Per Guest Table of Eight Guest—\$320 Table of 16 Guest—\$640
For Tickets Send Request to: Tom Kimball, PSC • 1019 Queen Avenue • Salisbury, MD 21801
Please make your checks payable to the **Department of Maryland VFW**
443-235-0742 • thomaskimball@comcast.net

Guest desiring to be seated together **MUST** send their money together. We may not be able to honor your seating request if money is not sent together. Thank you for your cooperation.

Love Gifts will be accepted for the State Commander and State President. Music following Dinner and Program. Cocktail Attire Requested



Ticket Request—Please write Legibly

Send Money and Request for Tickets to: Thomas Kimball, 1019 Queen Avenue, Salisbury, MD 21801.

Make checks payable to Department of Maryland VFW. Guest desiring to be seated together must send their money together.

Contact Name _____ Telephone _____

Email _____

Send tickets to _____

Address _____

Number of Tickets (Table Seating is 8 or 16) _____ x \$40 = \$ _____

Testimonial Lodging

Days Inn Westminster
25 South Cranberry Road
Westminster, MD 21157
410.857.0500

Room Rates
\$75 + Tax Per Night
Room Rate Deadline
March 1, 2020
Rooms held until 4PM

Group Name
VFW Maryland



DEPARTMENT OF MARYLAND
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
AND ITS AUXILIARIES



You Are Invited...

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND
PATRIOTS PEN AWARDS DINNER

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2019 1:00 PM

E. E. STREETS MEMORIAL 5118
355 GLEBE ROAD
EASTON, MD 21601

Come out and show your support for our students
as they express their opinion on this year's theme,
"What Makes America Great"



FACT SHEET

As the nation's oldest major war veterans' organization, the VFW has an impeccable and longstanding record of service and stewardship. More than 4.5 million patriotic Americans, both members and non-members, entrust the VFW with financial contributions and dedicate millions of volunteer hours.

YOUR DONATION OF

\$20

ENSURES THE VFW CAN

Educate a separating service member about his or her well-earned VA benefits through a private benefits counseling session with a VFW Service Officer.

Provide training to 4 VFW Service Officers on signs of emotional suffering so they can better direct veterans to programs and services.

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

Deliver 5 morale-boosting "welcome home" celebrations for service members who have returned from combat.



2,100+

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

48

Number of VFW-SVA Fellows (student veterans) who have traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for veterans' rights.

\$9 billion+

The total annual amount the VFW helped veterans recoup in VA disability compensation and pension benefits – which includes \$1.6 billion in new benefits paid to veterans in fiscal year 2019.

2.3 million+

Number of service members and their family members hosted at VFW Military Assistance Program (MAP) events since 2005.

22

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

\$3 million

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

\$11.6 million

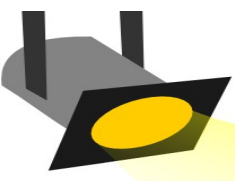
Value of financial assistance awarded to military families since 2004 to help cover basic needs in times of crisis. 44% of the funds covered basic housing needs.

\$7.2 million

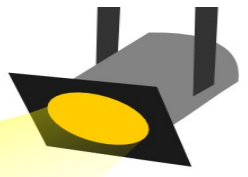
Amount of scholarships awarded to more than 1,606 veterans and service members through VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" since January 2014.

Updated December 2019

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

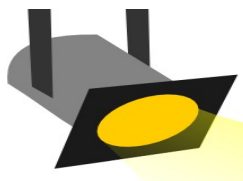


MD VFW & AUXILIARY

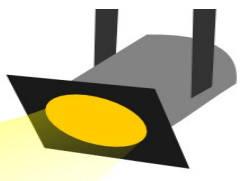


In the Spotlight





MD VFW & AUXILIARY



In the Spotlight

