

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA  
HEADQUARTERS**

**Ocala, Florida**

**January, 2015**

**“Team Florida Together”**



## VFW COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

The Christmas holidays are over, the trees and lights are down and we are at the half way mark of our VFW Program year. I am so thankful to all of you for the hard work and commitment that you show every day. You have wholeheartedly embraced our motto of “No One Does More for Veterans” as evidenced through the countless community and Post projects supporting Veterans and their families. As we approach the beginning of the second half of the 2014 – 2015 VFW Program year I encourage you to be mindful of VFW Program Reporting, Post Audits and Inspections and of course Membership. If we could each impart our own enthusiasm and commitment to the VFW to just one eligible Veteran and make them a welcomed and valued member of our VFW team we would be doing great. I challenge each of you to do just that, reach out to one fellow Veteran and ensure they know what a great support team the VFW is. Throughout all of our military careers we were part of a team and learned early on that working as a well-rehearsed and cohesive team we got more done and did it better than we could as individuals. With that in mind please work within your Districts to help those Posts and Post Commanders that may be struggling. We have time before the end of the year to “right the ship” if need be and get those Posts with challenges going in the right direction. We are only as successful individually as we are as a total organization.

I appreciate everything you do and wish you all the best of luck for the New Year.

*“No One Does More for Veterans”*

T Wayne Markham  
Commander  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Department of Florida

## LEADERSHIP

*“Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work”*

**Vince Lombardi**

*“Nothing will work unless you do”*

**Unknown**



## MEMBERSHIP

Congratulations to the thirteen Posts who have achieved 100% in membership. Your effort, determination and commitment to growing the organization are outstanding! In addition to those great Posts at 100% or better, another 85 Posts are currently at 90% or better.

DISTRICT 1: POST 5450

DISTRICT 8: POST 4643

DISTRICT 2: POST 8095

DISTRICT 9: POST 6827

DISTRICT 4: POST 7361

DISTRICT 11: POST 4423

DISTRICT 5: POST 3559, POST 3911, POST 4127

DISTRICT 18: POST 10139

DISTRICT 6: POST 2391

DISTRICT 19: POST 2380

DISTRICT 22: POST 6389

Continuing membership webinar training will be held on the second Wednesday of each month from 11 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. CST. The next Membership webinar link will be sent to the Department HQ on Monday, January 12 and conducted via Adobe Direct Connect Wednesday, January 14. If your membership Chairman or interested members want to participate contact the Department Adjutant for instructions and assistance.

National Online Membership System was down for processing but as of Monday, 5 January it is back up and accessible.

There will be a Membership Roundtable at the Mid-Winter Conference on Saturday, 31 January from 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the Magnolia Room. Post and District Commanders and Membership Chairmen are encouraged to attend. If you have questions contact the Department Membership Chairman Glen Tilley at [gftilley@comcast.net](mailto:gftilley@comcast.net).

# PROGRAMS

I hope that everyone had a Happy and safe holiday season.

Thank you for working diligently on reporting your programs through the holidays.

Although the December 31, 2014 reporting deadline for many programs that provided points towards All State has passed, please remember that our programs and the reporting of programs never ends. Please continue to work within your communities and report those activities.

If you have any questions or concerns about Programs, please do not hesitate to contact me at 904-762-9364 or email at [profwmn@att.net](mailto:profwmn@att.net) or [progdir@flvfw.org](mailto:progdir@flvfw.org).

Dani Hernandez  
Department of Florida Program Director

## **Program Dates to Watch For**

### Scout of the Year:

March 1: Scout entries to Post

April 1: Post entries to Department Scouting Chairman (Bruce Sitki: [sitki@aol.com](mailto:sitki@aol.com))

May 1: Department entry to National

### EMT, Law Enforcement and Firefighters:

April 1: Post winners to Department Chairman Gary Johnson

Posts are encouraged to recognize their Public Servant nominees whether they win at Department level or not. For that purpose, there are citations offered in the 2014-15 VFW Store catalog on page 68. You may also view them at [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org). You are encouraged to appropriately recognize your Post winners in a public ceremony.

## **Suggested Activities for May 1 Loyalty Day and June 14 Flag Day Programs**

It is not too early to start planning for May 1 Loyalty Day and June 14 Flag Day. Posts are encouraged to celebrate 1 May as Loyalty Day, a day to reaffirm our strong allegiance to our flag, Country, and the men and women in uniform through active participation in patriotic programs. Work with your local schools, churches and businesses to celebrate our solemn allegiance to the United States of America. Look for Loyalty Day speeches (and other patriotic days) by logging on to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) and clicking on Resources and Holiday Patriotic Speeches. Commanders are reminded that these program reports will go toward 2015-2016 All State points and cannot be reported until after the 2014 – 2015 program reports are cleared. If you have questions contact the Department Adjutant or the Programs Chairperson.

### **Florida VFW Mid-Winter Conference**

All members are encouraged to attend the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference to be held January 30 – 31 at the Hilton Walt Disney World, 1751 Hotel Plaza Boulevard, Lake Buena Vista. The agenda and hotel contact information can be found on the Department web site at <http://myfloridavfw.org/>. Click on Mid-Winter at the top right of the page. Highlights of the Conference will be the Council of Administration meeting on Friday at 1:30 pm, the General Meeting on Saturday at 8:30 am, recognition of the VFW Legislator of the Year, and the Celebration of Achievement Banquet honoring our Youth and Teacher winners on Saturday at 6:00 pm. **Payment for the Banquet tickets must be in to the HQ no later than 16 January.** Don't miss this opportunity to stay informed, participate and hear the VFW National representative Bill Thien and your State Commander T Wayne Markham. If you have questions contact the Department Adjutant. For your planning purposes the tentative agenda is at the end of this Bulletin.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS**

**Department Raffle tickets** were distributed to Post and District Commanders at the Department Leadership School. To date there are still 196 tickets that were distributed that have not been turned in either with money or as unsold. Additionally we have had numerous requests for additional tickets.....so.....if you have tickets that you have not or will not sell PLEASE turn them back in to Department Headquarters as soon as possible so we can sell them. This raffle is one of our primary Department fund raisers and its success depends on the sale and accountability of tickets. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Let's get them all sold for the grand drawing at the State Convention and GOOD LUCK!



## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS – PLEASE TAKE NOTE**

**Inspections** Post and District Commanders and Inspectors are reminded that the Inspection period for Post Inspections is 1 December 2014 – 28 February 2015. All inspections are due to Department Headquarters 30 days following the inspection with a complete narrative of corrective actions taken.

**Audits** Several Posts remain delinquent in submitting quarterly Post audits for the quarters ending in June and September. Post Commanders and Quartermasters are strongly encouraged to ask for help if you cannot get these completed and turned in immediately. The audits for the quarter ending in December 2014 are due no later than 31 January 2015.

**IRS Form 990's** IRS Form 990 was due to the IRS in November 2014. Those who submitted are requested to provide a copy of the confirmation received from the IRS. If you have questions contact the Department Quartermaster.

## **BUDDY POPPY CONTEST**

**Buddy Poppy Contest:** Posts and Auxiliaries are reminded that the 2014-2015 Buddy Poppy Contest will be held at the Mid-Winter Conference. Judging will take place on Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 pm. There are three categories for entries.

**Category 1:** Public Promotion of Poppy Campaign. Display must be designed for public exposure and must bear a message soliciting a donation for and wearing of the Buddy Poppy. At least one Poppy use in the display must be in its original form and color, with label attached.

**Category 2:** Memorial or Inspirational Display. Must be designed to honor the dead, to inspire devotion to God and Country, or to dramatize the activities supported by the Buddy Poppy. At least one Poppy used in the display must be in its original form and color, with label attached.

**Category 3:** Artistic or Decorative Use of Poppies. Post home displays, table centerpieces, corsages, pictures, plaques, models, scenes, hats, novelty pieces etc.

## **FLORIDA VFW RECEIVES DONATION**

On Friday, 5 December the Florida Veterans of Foreign Wars was honored by MEZ Security in their annual “Salute to the Stars” Holiday Gala. MEZ, a South Florida company specializing in comprehensive security services prides themselves in hiring military Veterans. Proceeds from the second annual networking holiday awards gala were donated to the Department Help a Hero fund. The Color Guard from VFW Post 8195 lead by Phillip Davis presented the colors in an impressive opening ceremony to the Holiday Fund raiser. MEZ President and CEO James Mesidor and all of his employees and partners thanked the VFW for all they do for Florida’s Veterans.

*MEZ Security Systems*

*<http://www.mezsecurity.com/services.html>*

## **POST BUSINESS AND LEADER ROLES**

The VFW is not a canteen and the canteen is not the VFW. All posts with canteens are encouraged to keep the “canteen business” separate and distinct from the mission of the VFW which is to support and help fellow Veterans and their families. Many of the problems and conflicts that arise in Posts are a direct result of actions at the canteen. Leaders and members are strongly encouraged to review the *Rules for the Operation of Club Rooms, Canteens and activities by Posts in the State of Florida* which can be found on the Department Web Page under Department and By Laws and rules. Each Post with a canteen should have Post Canteen Operating Procedures which have been approved by the membership.

## **VFW Training**

Have you checked out the VFW Training Hub yet? Go to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org), sign in with your e-mail address and then go to Member Tools and Resources and then Training Hub. Currently there is training for Post Service Officers, Administrative Operations, Programs and Membership. Recently added is a Training Video on Section 108: Challenging a Member’s Eligibility. It is only about 6 minutes in length and provides step by step guidance on eligibility challenges. The trailers to each training section are some great VFW information and recruiting videos. Check out the section with Commander John Stroud and President Ann Panteleakos about the VFW and Auxiliary partnership. If you need assistance call the Department Adjutant.

## PUBLICATIONS CONTEST

Changes have been made to the VFW Publications Contest. This year the publications contest will be judged in the categories of Department and District / Post (now combined). District and Post newsletters will be judged on overall design and content. Three places; a grand first place, silver second and bronze third will be awarded. In addition, a new competition for Best Feature Story will be judged. The story must be a published article of at least 300 words. It can be originally written by your newspaper staff or by a free-lance writer or be reprinted from a newspaper within Florida. Examples of eligible subjects include National Guard/Reserve unit deployments to Afghanistan/Iraq, troop-support activities, VFW Programs, dedication of state memorials, state commemorative events for the 50th anniversary of Vietnam and editorials advocating positions on Veteran issues within the state. The new contest for feature stories is retroactive a decade to 2004, so you can submit articles published on home-state units supported while serving overseas in the war zones. In the future, entries will be from the current calendar year. **Post / District publication entries should be forwarded to the Department Adjutant no later than 2 March, 2015.** Department winners will be forwarded on for National judging. For questions contact the Department Adjutant.

## VETERAN FRIENDLY COMPUTER REPAIR

Is your personal computer on the fritz? Or maybe the old clunker at the Post needs a little TLC? There is a Veteran friendly business that will help you make the right fixes. All American Solutions hires only military Veterans as technicians. They perform remote repair of PC's and smart phones over the internet for \$89 with a money back guarantee. You will also find a 10\$ discount to this 89\$ fee on the company web site. Simply enter the discount code military. In addition to repair services they offer live, online, semi-private training on the most popular PC programs. Check them out at this link which will bring you to their "live" ad. Simply touch your mouse on the ad and it will bring you to their web site. The company's goal is to eventually hire between 200-300 technicians, all Military Veterans who will work from home. If anyone out there uses this service please forward your evaluation to the Department Adjutant. You can contact them at 305-951-0755.

<http://are-you-intuit.com/all-american-female/email.html>

## MEN'S AUXILIARY TO THE VFW

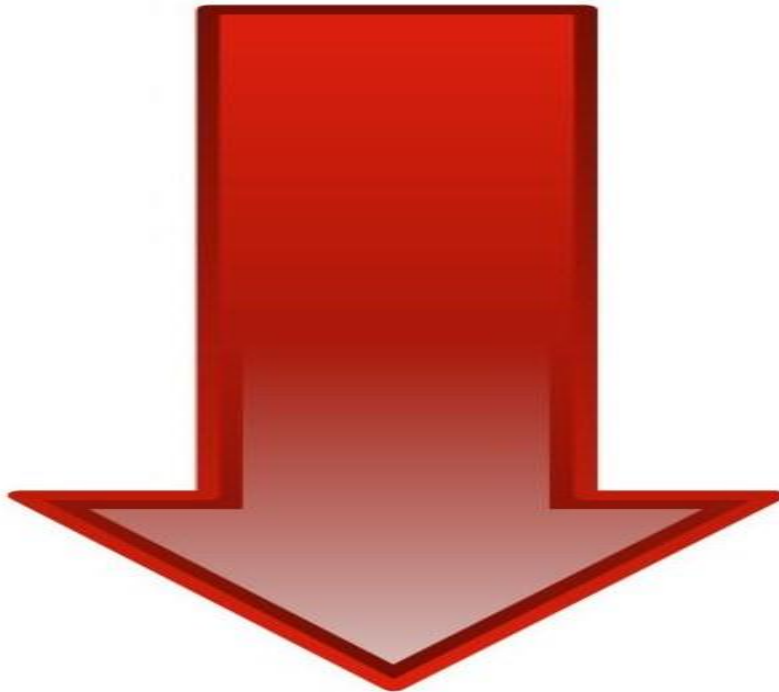
Post Commanders are reminded that Post Men's Auxiliary Treasurer Bonds were due September 30, 2014. To date thirteen Men's Auxiliaries have not submitted verification of Treasurer Bonds. Please check and contact Robin at HQ if you need assistance.



## **VFW DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Posts initiating disciplinary action in accordance with Article IX of the VFW By-laws must ensure that the process is compliant with the By Laws and done in a timely and fair fashion. The VFW Disciplinary Guidelines are a helpful tool and can be accessed on the National Web Site in the Document Repository. Simply log on to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) and click on Document Repository on the left side. Click on the Leadership Reference Guide and you will find the Disciplinary guidelines starting on page 48. They are also available on the Department Web Site under District and Post Forms. If you need help finding it contact the State Adjutant at [knigara@flvfw.org](mailto:knigara@flvfw.org) or 352-622-5126.

**DON'T STOP READING HERE.....  
MID-WINTER AGENDA FOLLOWS ON THE NEXT PAGE**



**TENTATIVE VFW MID-WINTER CONFERENCE AGENDA  
HILTON WALT DISNEY WORLD, ORLANDO  
JANUARY 29 – FEBRUARY 1, 2015**

**Department of Florida Mid-Winter Conference  
Tentative Agenda**

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2014**

- 10:00 a.m.** Budget & Finance Committee Meeting ~ Palm Ballroom 5  
Dress Code ~ VFW Casual
- 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.** Council of Administration Meeting ~ Palm Ballroom 2  
Dress Code ~ VFW Casual

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2014**

- 6:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.** Past State Commander's Association Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 Noon** VFW General Meeting ~ Palm Ballroom 3-5  
Dress Code ~ State Officers – Suit & Tie
- District Commanders ~ Blues & Grays  
Membership ~ VFW Casual
- 1:00 Noon – 3:00 p.m.** VAVS Representatives Inspection ~ Magnolia Room
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Membership Roundtable ~ Magnolia Room
- 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Men's Auxiliary Workshop ~ Narcissus/Orange Room
- 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.** Celebration of Achievement Banquet ~ Palm Ballrooms 1  
Dress Code ~ Head Table ~ Tuxedo  
District Commanders ~ Suit & Tie  
Members ~ Semi Formal or Appropriate Dress

Subject to change  
Addition Added 12/30/14