

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS
PROGRAM BULLETIN**

DECEMBER 2018

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM 2018-2019

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“THE HEAT IS ON AGAIN”

IMPORTANT—ALL POST AND DISTRICT OFFICERS: We have several elected and appointed officers who have not yet paid their annual dues this year. If your dues remain unpaid and past due, the Department has no choice, and must remove you from office. Don't let this happen! If you are close to renewal, please just go ahead and pay your dues. If you become a Life Member, you will never have to worry about this again.

We have several Posts that are already at 100% - CONGRATULATIONS! We also have several Posts that are very close, needing ten or fewer members to reach 100%. If your Post is one of these, it would really help your District and our Department to achieve the 100% mark by the end of the year. This would increase the momentum going into next year and set the pace for your respective Districts.

We still have way too many Posts that have not recruited or reinstated **any** members this year. If you are one of these Posts, and you need help, please contact your District Commander, Assistant Membership Director, or me, and let us know how we can help. If you are one of the elected leaders in these Posts, a part of your responsibility is to maintain a strong membership base. **It is simply unacceptable for a Post not to attempt to maintain or grow their Post membership**, and even worse to do that year after year. You need to develop a plan and have recruiting activities to turn things around. Once more...we are here to help; just tell us what you need!

We will soon be half way through our Membership year. Are you on schedule for the goals you have set for your respective Post or District? If so, that's great! If not, then it's time to work a little harder. Remember, as a Department, we are only as good as our weakest Post. **District Commanders**, please look at the Posts in your District and reach out to those that are struggling and offer a helping hand. We're all in this together, and we need to do our best to stabilize the membership of our Department.

We literally have hundreds of prior unpaid names of members, going as far back as 9 years. As I have said in the past, these lists are not 100% accurate. However, there is potential in following up and contacting these prior members. I can pull these names up by zip code that includes a

radius of 5, 10, 15 or 20 miles for you. If this will help you, please contact me or our Adjutant/Quartermaster, and we can get them to you. Stay positive and **BELIEVE** you can make good things happen. Thank you for all the effort you put into our Department and the work you do for our veterans. Here's wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

AMERICANISM PROGRAM

Tom Davidson, Director

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Cell: 847-347-8884

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The Teacher of The Year District Judging should be done by December 15, 2018 and sent either to me or Department as soon as possible for the Department Judging. The Department Judging will take place in very early January so please get your nominees forwarded. Make sure that you make copies of everything that you send so if things get lost in the mail you have copies. As always if you have any questions just call me at 847-347-8884 if I don't answer just leave a message and I will return your call.

One important date to remember in December is Pearl Harbor Day on the 7th. If your Post or District Plan to do an event that day make sure to report it.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

Charles Ingle, Director

(815) 979-7152

E-mail: chuck@roscoevfw.com

There still time to apply for a Home Depot Community Impact Grant.

Keep in mind:

- [] Applications must be made, only by the Post, for the renovation of their *own* building.
 - [] Applications are accepted through the **end of 2018**.
 - [] Grants for up to \$5,000 are for materials such as: paint, flooring, landscaping, etc...
 - [] Work must be performed by Members and other Volunteers, NO Contractors.
 - [] Upon notification of the Grant, projects need to be completed within six months.
- Please email me to request the necessary support documents for a successful grant.*

Two VFW Foundation Grants:

Community Support

It is said that this is the easiest grant to obtain. This program is designed to support the efforts of a Post conducting projects that are Community outreach, in nature. And are not for the direct benefit of the Post internally. Applications for your piece of the \$400,000 fund (\$1,000) are now being accepted into the first half of 2019. If \$1,000 is not enough, your Auxiliary may request their own Grant of up to another \$1,000 in support of the same, or other Project. This Grant is one-time annually. This fund has previously been exhausted in March.

Regular

Applications for this Grant are also being accepted. Because this \$100,000 fund is also available to other Non-Profit Groups outside of the VFW (Post **or** Auxiliary not both), they are somewhat more difficult to obtain. A Grant amount from \$5,000-\$15,000 is intended to support larger-

scaled projects having a direct benefit to active duty military or veterans, and their families. One example would be: service to a van, used for regional transporting of Vets. Previously the Foundation has paced these awards, allowing the fund to last into July.

For more details, please examine: <https://www.vfw.org/community/community-initiatives/post-grants>

The new X-Sheet now shows a single column for Community Activities. But please remember that Commanders must report on-line or on the Community Activities Report Form by March 15, 2019, for a **National Certificate of Recognition**.

Each Post must **still report** in each of the following categories to qualify:

- a. Community Involvement
- b. Cooperation with other organizations
- c. Aid to others
- d. School and Church assistance

As November ends, here's a look at your District's reporting for Community Activities.

VFW 2018-2019 Community Activities, Dept. of IL					
<u>District</u>	<u>Commander</u>	<u>Posts Reported</u>	<u>District</u>		<u>Community Activities Director</u>
3	Samuel Scaife, Jr.	8	50%		Richard E. Bukowski
4	Joseph P. Scanlon	7	44%		Thomas W. Davidson
5	Raymond O. Rigsby	11	55%		Daniel J. Pearson
6	Gary Holmes	17	100%		Rick Frank
7	Robert Sable	7	33%		Donovan L. Eskeson
8	Russell "Pete" Mosher	7	41%		Mark W. Sowers
9	"Scott" Buennemeyer	8	36%		Daryle D. Peters
10	Michelle K. Ramlow	4	24%		Jim Duvendack
11	Joseph S. Swinford	5	33%		Steve Jurgens
12	Christopher R. Retzer	6	32%		John "Jack" Fessler
13	Christopher L. Hatcher	5	42%		Elmer McDuffee
14	Maurice F. Bridges	12	63%		John Barrett
15	Clarence E. Caraker	3	21%		Barbara R. Wilson
16	Eugene C. Blackwell, Jr.	5	45%		William A. Browne, Jr.
17	Sean D. Conner	2	14%		Dan R. Swaner
18	Robert M. Adame	7	54%		Robert McLeod
19	Robert Zeman	24	96%		George R. Cramer
					Assistant State Director

Total Posts	X-Sheet Data	Department Percentage	Compiled by
288	27-11-18	48%	Chuck Ingle

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Robert E. McLeod, Director

(708) 363-7462

E-mail: rock76@yahoo.com

Merry Christmas to ALL. Thank you to all post and district chairman and your Auxiliary counterparts. Please ensure that all the paper work is filled (correctly) and sent into Department.

When your District has their ceremony for the students and when the District winner has been announced, take some time with the student and their family and give them a quick overview of the weekend in Springfield. Make sure that if there are any special requirements for the student, i.e. medical or diet. Please ensure that information gets to Department so that if there is anything that we need to take care of that Department has time to make arrangements.

I look forward to hearing your District winners this year. See you in February.

NATIONAL HOME

Michael J. McGrath, Director

(630) 357-2680

E-mail: mackcav1@sbcglobal.net

SANTA'S SHOP

Comrades as Christmas approaches we ask that you remember our National Home's Santa's Shop and Santa's Helper Fund which helps the kids purchase gifts for family members based on volunteer hours they accrue through the year - a great way to reward them for service they give to the community.

NATIONAL HOME LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

A great gift idea for the holidays comrades and still only \$40.00 including the membership pins a Life Membership in the National Home!! It is also a great way to get an "x" for your posts and districts.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DISTRICT 7

Congratulations to District 7 and Commander Robert Sable for being the first District to reach 100% participation for the National Home for the 2018 ó 2019 program year!!

AND DO REACH OUT

Comrades, please do reach out if you have any questions. Your efforts are appreciated and I am glad to help you.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND BEST HOLIDAY WISHES TO ALL!

HOSPITAL/VAVS REPORT

Harold Olsen, Director

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Hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving and remember our comrades in our homes and hospitals. Christmas is coming soon so let's make sure they have a good one. But remember to do something for them the rest of the year also. They get a lot of attention over the Christmas Holidays but not so much the rest of the year so don't hesitate to keep a little of the funds back for an outing when the weather is nice. They always like to get out once in awhile.

Hope you all have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Don't forget to report!!!

SAFETY PROGRAM REPORT

Robert Mattson

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The Christmas season is upon us. I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and had safe driving to their relative's locations.

As I had stated in my last report, I know that many will be decorating for the Christmas Holiday. Please be careful when installing the lighting because know that many of you will be using step ladders in order to reach the roof line for the lighting. A good safety point here is to have someone help you and have them hold the ladder as you proceed.

We have also had some early snow fall that has been somewhat heavy. Please be careful and take your time shoveling and do not overdo it. When one gets up in age the stress could trigger health problems, so please be careful!

With the early snowfall we also have problems on the roads with the ice and snow. Make sure that you have a shovel and salt in the trunk of your car just in case. Also you should have extra clothing along with boots. One can never be too careful.

I hope that you take some of these tips to heart and share them with your post and districts at your next scheduled meetings.

As I stated in my last report, District #4 was having their Safety Seminar on the 27th of October. We had a great turnout, with everyone truly enjoying the speakers that included K9 police dogs and comfort dogs.

Please have a safe holiday with your families and please share this with your comrades!

VETERANS AND MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Clarke G. Christiansen, Director

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E-mail: Clarke@chicagomx.com

Happy Holidays comrades! If you haven't already begun to plan an Adopt-a-Unit event, it might not be too late. You'd have to hurry, but I guarantee our service members will be grateful. If you'd like any help getting something going, please don't hesitate to contact me. We have funds set aside specifically for aid to units and we should use it.

If you happen to be visiting some of our comrades in nursing homes over the holidays, pick up some Operation Uplink PINs from PJ. There are still folks out there without mobile phones and unlimited calling. These PINs would be an appreciated gift.

Finally, if you are aware of veterans who are struggling, please take advantage of our Unmet Needs program and help them out. It's what we are here for.

BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM

Walter Sanders, Jr., Director

(312) 805-0490

E-mail: waltsanders722@comcast.net.

Fellow veterans. A very merry Christmas to you all in the Department

As we all know that the season is one of giving and I can't think of a better present to give than a pint of blood to our fellow veterans. It is something that doesn't take long to do. I encourage each veteran out there to give that present of life. You can contact givelife.org or lifesource.org, to find a place to donate that pint of blood that could help out another veteran.

I have noticed that there are only two districts out there that are 100% reported. Congratulations to those districts. Now with 2/3rd of our reporting year over with that there is still a lot of work to be done. District chairman get on the phone with that post chairman and see what can be done to get a post member to donate a pint of blood or even better yet have a blood drive at the post or in the community. We still have some time left to give that special Christmas present this year.

Have a Merry Christmas!

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT

Carl Sorensen, Director

847-721-0281

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Veterans Day, Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Scout of the Year Scout of the Year, Teacher of the Year Thanksgiving, Christmas

Getting it Published

The famous line from *Field of Dreams*, "If you build it, they will come" does not hold true for promoting your Post. Here are a couple things you need to think about as you visit a nursing home, VA Hospital, and talk to a member of the Greatest Generation, the Korean War or a member of the "next generation" of veterans.

1. Establish contacts with your local newspapers; ask them what type of press releases they want. Don't even think about sending in an article about your fish fry, Bingo night, Queen of Hearts. Offer press releases with photos (more about that later in this edition) about the winners of your Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Teacher of the Year, and

Scout of the Year. These are local interest, especially if someone from your posts advances past the District level onto Department.

2. PHOTOS: Photos may be worth a 1000 words, but a good photo draws attention to your press release. Use Horizontal format, not vertical. A horizontal formatted photo can be sized to fit across two columns, one column, but you limit options for the make-up editor with a vertical format. Next, FILL THE FRAME. This is important. Do not stand 40 feet away, get in close so your subject matter fills the frame.
3. I'm sorry but I don't agree that while you have a super cool cell phone, it's not the same as a real camera. There are many good digital cameras available for less than a super duper, model 24X cell phone. Invest in a decent digital camera for around four or five hundred dollars and read the instruction manual. If you want to aggravate your subject, stand and fidget with your cell phone camera trying to hold it steady, pinch and zoom while I can move in, set up my shot, move people into a tight photo, take four or six exposures while you are working on your first.
4. If for no other reason, at least act like a photographer with a camera, you get more and better cooperation if you take command.

USE YOUR RESOURCES: Many of the smaller daily papers or some locals have a website that you can enter photos and stories, and if you make it professional, with local interest to your community they may pick it up for inclusion in their print or web edition. Have you spoken to a local FM station in your area? Check the website for your local FM, AM station and get the name of the station/program manager. Visit the station, and have a conversation, and offer one of the "Canned" PSA's you can obtain on the VFW website. Ask if they can add a "kicker" "For additional information contact (Your Post name and telephone number). Most cable companies have a "local access" channel or a Community bulletin board channel, USE THEM. They are free. Check and see if you can produce a short video segment, and promote your Poppy Distribution, talk about your posts and what you bring to the community. A lot of people think they know what we do, but tell them, about UNMET NEEDS, "Help a Hero", a Welcome Home event for a local military unit, National Guard, Reserve, blood drive you are hosting.

Finally, Happy Holidays, I look forward to helping you promote the Veterans of Foreign Wars in your community NEXT YEAR. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

MARKETING PROGRAM

2019 Illinois VFW Raffle Calendar - The 2019 Illinois VFW Raffle Calendar is on sale through the Illinois VFW State Headquarters Office. Calendars are \$20 each and must be paid for in advance. The drawing will begin with the Illinois Lottery Midday Pick Four drawing on January 1, 2019 and continue daily through December 31, 2019. The Midday Pick 4 will determine each day's winning calendar.

For Posts and/or Districts needing calendars to sell, we can (upon request of the Post/District) send calendars on consignment (no money in advance needed). As calendars sell, please send the money and completed stub to Headquarters Office. The calendars can be paid with a credit or debit card online and the stub scanned and emailed to Headquarters

This is a great way to support our Veterans Service programs while having an opportunity to win

365 times in 2019. The raffle calendar will take the place of the 2019 Mid-Winter Sweepstakes Raffle in February. Complete rules can be found on our website and in the calendar itself.

ASSISTANT YOUTH ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR/SCOUTING

Ronald Milton

(618) 604-0423

E-mail: usafret1@charter.net



YOUTH PROGRAM – SCOUTING

Its getting closer to when the scouts will be submitting their packages for the Scouting Scholarship, below is the link to the application

<http://vfwil.drivepath.info/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=35600>

Additionally, here are the deadlines for submission of the applications

- **Deadline for entry to VFW Post is March 1.**
- **One candidate with full entry criteria must be submitted by a VFW Post to the next level of judging by April 1. The VFW Department (state) Scouting chairman can provide this information.**

If you have any questions please contact Ron Milton, usafret1@att.net