

NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

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Veterans of Foreign Wars
of the United States



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Volume 39 Issue 1



Thomas Todaro

State Commander

Dear Comrades:

This will be my last letter to you in this publication as your State Commander. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you this year. I am so proud of the work you have all done, the Department presently stands at **96.87%** and are in need of 1338 members to achieve 100% as of this writing – and we still have until June 30th.

During my remarks to you at the State Convention last summer I related to you that my theme this year was “Together We Can Make a Difference” and that I wanted us to work as a team, VFW and Auxiliary working hand in hand in our efforts for the coming year. Many of you took that to heart and became part of a well-attended Officer Training seminar in Albany. Many new Quartermasters were able to garner the basics of the position as well as our more experienced Quartermasters going home with some new information

— *STATE COMMANDER, continued on page 2*



Michael Hoag

State Jr. Vice Commander

With the date approaching for a newsletter, I found it difficult to find a Newsworthy subject. Covid 19 has, in one way or another, been brought to the forefront of our personal and VFW lives.

In New York State, one of the hardest hit, we really do not even know, at this time, the extent it has had personally to our members. We do not know how many of our members or their families have died as a result of covid 19. We try, to the level of what each post can do, to check in with our members and do whatever we can to assist when and where we are able. We also do not know how Posts being closed have been affected. There may be, unfortunately, Posts that will not recover from these events. I am hopeful that the Districts and Department can work with some Posts to try and make the best out of these bad situations. Communications through the chain of command needs to start as early as possible for anything

— *STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER, continued on page 4*



Tom Howard

State Sr. Vice Commander

As I sit here writing this I am thinking where the year has gone. To the districts that won the Commander's challenge congratulations and to the rest I want to thank you for your hard work. With this corona virus it was hard. I am proud of all of you.

A lot of you know things will be coming up, OTI is going to be on Zoom in August, and a good chance meetings will be also. We are forced to do this sooner than later, the Department has been working on this for a few years. Well, now we have to bring it up to the 21st century.

You have to June 30th to get your 100% membership in.

Some of the posts would have won All State but they did not attend OTI. So next year let's get it done early and not wait. I am proud to be

— *STATE SR. VICE COMMANDER, continued on page 4*



Harold Burke Jr.

State Adjutant

Comrades,

This has been another very busy and interesting year. Once again, we have had a series of unique situations which consumed my time as the State Adjutant. Everything from Posts surrendering their charters to preparing for this year's State Convention and then the unexpected Corona-19 Virus. It has been an interesting and challenging experience and I am looking forward to the future challenges of the Department.

To better prepare the membership, I would recommend when we return to normal activities, we continue a strong presence by the Department Officers at District meetings to provide training and bring the membership information pertaining to our mission. Additionally, the Department representative could bring back any issues to the State

— *STATE ADJUTANT, continued on page 2*

Photographer:



Editor:



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New York State Overseas Veteran

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** ARTICLES:

Articles: Any and all articles involving and/or including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, its members, member communities, awards and activities are welcome.

** SUBMISSION & FORMAT:

Please prepare all articles in Microsoft Word (version 2003 or newer) or plain text. Send JPG/PNG/PDF images with corresponding captions. E-mail articles and pictures as attachments with the sender's name, address and phone number in the base of the e-mail. Submissions from other sources must have complete credits such as publication name, address and dates published.

** EDITORIAL POLICY:

Inappropriate, demeaning, unduly critical articles and/or statements will not be published. Article length, inaccuracies, composition and other miscellaneous errors and/or mistakes may be edited.

Although every effort is made to maintain an honorable and accurate publication, the Department of New York and/or its staff, editor and other publication participants are not responsible for the content, views and/or positions of any article(s)/submissions.

**** ALL ARTICLES AND PICTURES MUST BE E-MAILED TO: CITadmin@VFWNY.com. They become the sole property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of New York.**

** DEADLINE:

Deadline: Articles must be submitted by the 15th of each month...July, October, January and April.

If you are using regular mail, send the items to CITadmin, P.O. Box 116, Carlisle, NY 12031.

** GRAPHIC DESIGN



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— *STATE ADJUTANT, continued from page 1*

Commander and Line Officers for resolution.

Further, we must encourage those Posts that have not attended OTI in a couple of years to attend as the By-Laws change every year and they can contact those who could be a resource in the future. I suggested that the District Commanders continue to share their OTI dates so that each could maximize the effect of the training.

Simply stated, the Department Line Officers and Membership Team need to be more visible at the Post, County Council, and District meetings.

Reminder: VFW Posts may change their Quartermasters this year. The IRS requires that the all new Quartermasters file IRS Form 8822-B within 60 days of taking office. This form provides the Quartermaster's current contact information and current address in the event that the IRS sends notifications and/or contact the Quartermaster. There is a link on the Department website to down load the IRS Form 8822-B.

Sincerely,

**Harold "Hal" Burke Jr., PSC, PSQM, PJAG
State Adjutant 2014-2021**

— *STATE COMMANDER, continued from page 1*

as well. Our Districts improved on that session and held District training with their own post members who could not attend the Department session. The Fall Conference this year was a joint one enabling our veterans and auxiliary to network as well as reduce travel costs by enabling those with spouses and partners to attend together. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic the Spring Conference and the State Convention were cancelled. As I made my visits to the posts and Districts this year, I could see that the VFW and Auxiliary are continuing to work well together and by doing so empowering both to be successful.

This year has been a precedent setting year, with the advent of Zoom C of A meetings and Monday District Commanders meetings, in place of our regular face to face meetings due to the Corona Virus. This has taught us a whole new way of doing our business, one that will probably stay with us long after the pandemic is over. We have brought the Sr. Vice Commanders in on the calls to mentor them to insure they will be prepared when their time comes and they step up into their important leadership roles. Again, this year the District Commanders were provided a Standard Operating Procedures Manual providing the guidance in the many facets of their responsibilities as new District Commanders in the Department. Additional resources will continue to be provided in the future coupled with additional training to ensure our District leadership knows how to do the job when they are placed in that position of responsibility that is so important in their roles on behalf of the Department. All of this is part of mentoring and the Department will continue to improve with each follow-on Department Commander.

As this year comes to a close keep in mind that another is just around the corner. I have full confidence in your incoming State Commander Tom Howard and ask that you give him your full support next year as you have for me. The Department has accomplished much this year and we as a Department need to continue the momentum and continue to build on the membership foundation you have worked so hard to create this year. As I have brought to your attention on a number of occasions, if the voice of New York veterans want to be heard, both at the State and National levels, we need to speak with a loud voice through a strong membership. The more members we have the louder our voice will be.

I wish to thank all my Chairmen who have worked very hard to further our VFW Programs and appreciate their diligence in selecting the best of the best in our scholarship and recognition programs.

**Tom Todaro
State Commander**





Bob Mitchell

State Inspector —————

Comrades,

It has been a very enjoyable and successful year working under the leadership of our State Commander Tom Todaro and I thank him for his appointment as our Department Inspector.

As we conclude our inspection year, I would also like to take the opportunity to thank each and every District Commander, District Inspector, and Inspection Team member for the outstanding work that was accomplished this year on inspections. Although it does not appear that we will reach our goal of having every Post inspected this year, we are at 255 of them completed, a very respectable 70% of the Department. I am very optimistic and confident that the numbers will continue to increase as we approach the end of the inspection year. The quality of inspections this year have been excellent with 84% of the inspections submitted being accepted and approved. During the course of the year, our Inspectors have greatly assisted our Posts by working with them to identify and correct various deficiency items, truly one of the primary objectives of the inspection process. If an inspection has identified deficiencies at your Post that you have not addressed, please continue to work with your respective Inspection Teams to rectify the issues. The inspection process is in place to ensure that all Posts are operating in a manner that is consistent with our Department and National By-Laws. Thank you again for a very successful inspection year!

As District 3 Commander, I would like to thank our District and Post Leadership Teams along with our membership for making this an outstanding year for District 3. I thank each and every one of you for all you have done in helping us achieve 100% in membership this year. Together our efforts have sustained the reputation of District 3 as being the "Premier District" and being a leader within the Department of New York!

Yours in Comradeship,

Bob Mitchell

**State Inspector/District 3 Commander
Department of New York - VFW**

ALS

Due to a recent change of events in my life, I have discovered some very interesting information concerning Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Lou Gehrig's disease.

While learning about ALS, I have been informed Veterans are 50% more likely to contract ALS than non-Veterans. At a recent ALS legislative information session there was information outlining how the Department of Defense is working on legislation for ALS. There was no information on whether any Veteran organization is also working on such legislation and or research at the present time.

Does anyone know if there is any involvement on the part of the VFW for legislative actions?

Thank you,

Dan McMahon
Quartermaster

Department of NY VFW
518-414-2505



Dan McMahon

State Quartermaster —————

While the 2019-2020 VFW year has seen its ups and downs, we have made some tremendous strides in keeping up with the changing environment and the needs of our Veterans. From COVID-19 to the way the VFW does its business it is a change.

After many hours on the phone and/or zoom meetings, the Department of NY is in good shape. Our investments continue to be a rollercoaster operation. One day, one hour or one week there are constant changes in the appearance of our investments. Overall we are staying very steady.

I cannot thank the many comrades who have assisted me during the past year we regards to the finances and the needs of the office of Quartermaster. It has been a pleasure to work with our Commanders and offices at all levels of the organization.

First to our many meetings, I cannot stress enough the importance of communications with in the organization. If we are to continue growing and help everyone, we need to communicate at every level of the organization. When an email arrives in your inbox, which is there to provide you with information and or direction, please, forward that email to other members of the VFW. If you receive several email on the same subject, take a quick look to see if there was anything added and if not delete it duplicate copies. If there was an addition to the email forward that email as well.

How does an officer develop an email list for VFW usage, one email address at a time. Create an email list for Post, County, District, Department and National Headquarters. When progressing through the chairs and chairperson of a program you will have the tools available to do the best job we can. The second way we can improve our operations is to READ, read the bylaws, read the manuals for the particular office or Chair we are in. Also, learn the duties for the next higher office. Thirdly, There is a tremendous amount of training documentation available online at either VFW.org and VFWNY.com, go there and look at the various ways to research the topics available.

Officers are available to assist you with your tasks and locating the information necessary for the top performance of your office.

Stay safe. Make contact with our comrades.

Dan McMahon
Quartermaster



— STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER, continued from page 1

to happen. As all of this is new, I must make it clear that there is no Department “program” that I’m aware of to “save Posts”. However, there may be ideas to help or other possibilities.

Speaking of communications for me personally, I am finding out just how poorly our VFW “communication system” works. There has been a ton of information put out by Department. One group will tell you too much, another will say not enough, or they didn’t get any. This is mainly because we currently rely on the “chain of commander” to disseminate. Most, if not all, of the District Commanders do very well with passing this information on, with hopes that they have all the email addresses of the Post leaders which, many times they don’t. There are too many post leaders who will not share their contact information. It is very important that the senior leadership of Posts provide an email address on their election report. Even if you must create a new address dedicated to VFW matters so that your personal email isn’t forever “out there”. By the publication of this newsletter, all election reports should have been filed. Your Quartermaster can, however, get into the report again for updates. These updates may not be totally reflected this year, but it would help. If you have accepted a leadership position, you should want to get all the information possible to make your post current with all that transpires.

On the other side of the communication coin, we at the department level have found additional and better ways to communicate amongst ourselves. We are now talking to the senior staff at least once a week and the Committee of Administration also “meets” more often. In future Department conventions you will see many updates and changes to our By-laws. There is no way to say what those will be specifically at this time because a committee has not been announced yet. Being able to conduct business in different, additional ways than we are used to, will certainly be on the agenda.

I am one who believes that, for our organization to be the most effective in addition to telecommunication ideas, we need to have occasions where we do meet as groups at our various levels. We need to share experiences, learn from each other, make sure we are all getting the same messages and maintain our comradery and friendships, which are key. I would hope that we never get to the point where we all know each other from ZOOM, Facebook live etc., but we do need to have other options available when needed and applicable.

I look forward to getting to our “new normal” and working with each of you to make our VFW an even more effective and strong organization, who does more for VETERANS.

Michael Hoag
Jr. Vice Commander

— STATE SR. VICE COMMANDER, continued from page 1

working for you next year as your Commander and if there is anything the Department can do for you let us know.

Thomas E Howard
Sr. Vice VFW State of NY



District 9 Briefing

Patrick Rourk, District 9 Commander

I would hope that this issue finds you and your families well and comrades also. The past 2.5 months have been a life changing period for all of us. Some of us fared well. Others who usually socialize at the Post found it hard to endure the separation. Some of us found out why we were smart enough to marry our spouses as well.

The Department also had to make many changes – cancelled spring meetings, conventions, and the like. But we endured and we continued. The District Commanders and Department Officers met on Mondays every week in a ZOOM teleconference. This kept us together and able to move things forward. Membership is always a challenge and this period made things quite a bit tougher.

We also learned that we could do things remotely when we try. I would suspect that we have only begun to see things change. Many of the in-person meeting of the past will start to be held via digital means. Why am I addressing this? We, the comrades of all ages need to become digital if we intend to make things happen in the future. Post commanders, quartermasters and adjutants need to be able to do email and become comfortable using digital communications – teleconferencing, videoconferencing, and the like. They need to read their email daily and answer it as well as if they received a phone call. Please look at it this way: The Department adjutant needs to get out a notice to more than 400 posts, 50 Districts and Department officers and committee chairs and members. If you USPS mail that notice, some do not receive it for 3 days. If out of town, you do not receive it until you return. If you get it via email and read the note, you can make decisions and give directions in a whole lot of ways and you didn’t need to make 16 or 40 or 80 different phone calls.

I’m old, but not ancient. I can barely hear even with hearing aids. But I have learned to use these new tools and if I can do it so can you. Instead of fighting change we need to embrace it. I think using these modern conveniences will also help us to attract quite a few of the younger veterans. They tweet, text, facetime and who knows what is next. So, comrades I challenge you – get off your duff and start to become a “modern member” of the VFW of the U.S.

Lastly, thanks to those who have helped me during my 2 years as the standup designee and Commander of the new 9th District of the Department of NY. It’s been one heck of a ride!





Mike Webster

Veterans & Military Support Programs

The District and State meetings were early this year so my wife and I were heading north earlier than usual but then the corona virus caused us to leave Florida even earlier. I was not looking forward to enjoying what turned out to be an extended winter. Almost everything came to a standstill. Then the cancellations started; no District, State or National Conventions.

One thing that did not stop was the need for assistance from veterans and military members and their families. In the last newsletter I pointed out the donations made by "Sports Clips" (Help a Hero Scholarship) and "Burger King" (Un Met Needs) so now I will ask you to support these two organizations if you can. As to the needs I mentioned. Just within the past four months Un Met Needs has given out 110 grants totaling \$126,372.14.

I asked Linda Ferguson at National if there was going to be a pin sales campaign this year and she said yes. The State Chairmen are the only ones that will be getting them. She and her team usually sell them at the National Convention and bring in thousands. That will not happen this year. Because you all have been very supportive of this fundraising method for many years now, I asked several supporters, should I order them this year? They said yes so I ordered \$1200.00 worth. Linda ordered the pins 5-19-20 and told me that I should have them by the end of June. I will be working on how to make the exchange; your money to me and the pin to you. For you early birds, you could call me or send me an e-mail.

The pins are something like a VFW collar device except the letters are VMS with the outlined bar on the bottom showing 2020-2021. They still come in gold (\$20), silver (\$10) and bronze (\$5).

Please make your regular donations today. To help the Department show participation and receive the credit due your Post or yourself, make the check out to the "Department of NY VFW" and annotate the memo block "Veterans and Military Support Programs". Mail it to the Department. I thank you in advance.

Michael W. Webster
Chairman

Post 5942



Representing Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor, Joseph Saladino, Councilman, Tom Hand distributed bags containing face masks. Included with the masks was a thank you letter to Commander Jack Stein and members of the Post for their service and commitment to honoring our fallen heroes on this Memorial Day.



May 18, 2019

Department Special Order No. 047
Series.....2019-2020

State Officers, District Officers, County Officers, Post Officers and VFW Members:


State Commander Todaro understands that the confinement as a result of the Covid-19 Virus has placed a strain on the VFW and its membership.

The State Commander must remind everyone that the Commanders and Membership at every level are required to follow the mandates/instructions of the Governor of New York during this crisis.

Commanders if you or your membership conduct an event that is in violation of the Governor's mandates you and your Post members are liable for any and all repercussions.

Commander Todaro asks that you consider this as a notification and act responsibility.

By Order of


Thomas Todaro, Commander
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of New York


OFFICIAL
Harold M. Burke Jr, PSC, State Adjutant
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of New York

HMB:

cc: Thomas Howard, Sr. Vice Commander
Michael Hoag, Jr. Vice Commander
File



Department Commander Tom Todaro has initiated an **END OF THE YEAR MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE** for the month of June, he is going to focus on increasing membership. He will be looking specifically New, Renewing, and Reinstated members. *The Commander is rewarding the Districts that show an increase in Membership of 45 or more New, Renewing, and Reinstated members. There will be NINE awards of \$1,000 EACH to the Districts that meet or exceed these goals.*

The Commander would like the Districts to add this funding in their membership programs and reward those Posts that assist with this membership effort.

Commander Todaro wants to thank all our Posts, County Councils, and Districts for all the hard work that they have put into reaching the Department membership goals this year, especially with the many challenges we have all endured.

As end of the VFW year approaches, we want to focus on membership growth. Whether by recruiting New members, making sure our Annual members renew their dues, or contacting lapsed members to reinstate them - it is time to get to work!

Our strength as an organization comes from our membership, and during this season we want to give our thanks to the members and Posts who are doing the hard work of recruiting, retaining, and mentoring our membership to help the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Membership totals will be figured from May 28, 2020 through June 25, 2020. All membership numbers for this contest will be final as of that time. Members should be processed using the Online Membership System on or before June 25, 2020.

Membership Applications sent into National via fax or mail will be processed when received at National.

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK



Community Service

POST 5350
101 Old Riverhead Road
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978
631- 653- 9898 www.vfw5350.org

Comrades,

I want to personally Thank all the Posts in the Department for stepping up to the plate in these trying times. What great work you have all done and we have the narratives, the data, and the figures to support our accomplishments. Just so the membership understands, all the Community Activity Reports are date stamped at our Headquarters and then each one is forwarded to the Chairman for entry. So, I really get to see the reports on what we do in our Communities, the programs, the hours, and the money spent. Besides the data entry, it is really gratifying and uplifting to see all the good we really do. When we are out in the world this is the “good news” that we should all be sharing with our neighbors and with all Veterans especially those who are eligible for membership. Folks who understand that we are still serving our Communities and our Nation love their VFW Posts, but we cannot hide our light under a basket. Share the good news because some still do not understand what we stand for. As an opening I usually state we support our military, our veterans, and the youth of our community, and we have the facts to support us. This year 2019- 2020 the Posts in the Department of New York spent \$956,391.00 and 105,712 hours helping our Communities.

Thank you and God Bless you all.

William Hughes
Community Service Chair
Dept of NY

Post 5942 VFW Day with the Elks

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5942 Plainview, invites The Huntington Elks Lodge to join with them in commemorating our fallen heroes on Memorial Day. Commander Jack Stein and President Alyssa Nightingale gave their respective speeches as members keeping the social distancing and wearing masks look on. A rifle salute with a closing prayer ended the ceremony.



Scouting May 30, 2020

Quote: A Scout is never taken by surprise; he knows exactly what to do when anything unexpected happens. Robert Baden Powell

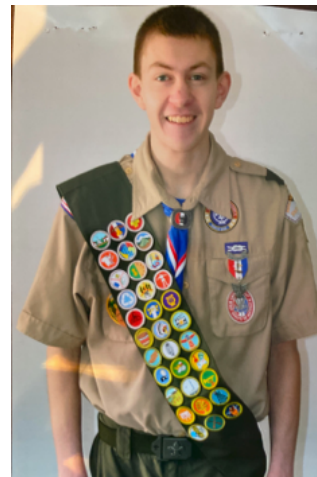
2019-2020 Scouting Award

1. The Annual Scout of the Year was completed this year and the following Districts submitted their Top Scouts to The State. The following is the submissions from the Posts, Troops and Districts:

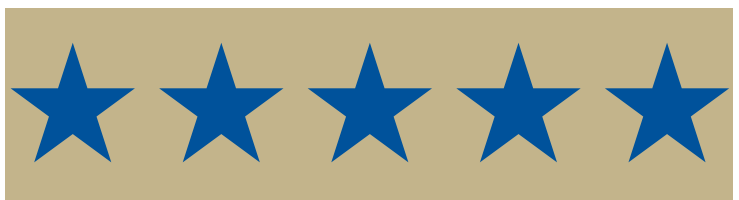
| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Sophie Goodman | Troop 3251/Post 5942 | -District 1 |
| No submission | | -District 2 |
| Charlie Fuller | Troop 6013/Post 6196 | -District 3 |
| Gage Kilborne | Troop 14/Post 2246 | -District 4 |
| Makenzie Kellogg | Troop 170 /Post 8139 | -District 5 |
| Eric Stuhr | Troop 285/Post 6247 | -District 6 |
| Christopher Treutlein | Troop 4070/Post 4823 | -District 7 |
| Matthew Morrison | Troop 363/Post 307 | -District 8 |

Quote: “Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.” Vince Lombardi

New York State Scout of the Year: **Matthew Morrison from District 8** **Post 307/Troop 363**



Jeffery T. Molitor
 GySgt USMC (ret)
 State Scouting Chairman
 631 495 USMC
 vfwscoutingnewyork@gmail.com



Bonds

POSTS THAT DO NOT HAVE BONDS THAT CONFORM WITH SECTION 703 OF THE NATIONAL BY LAWS WILL FAIL THEIR INSPECTION 2020-2021. THIS IS SPECIFIED IN SEC 218, 418 AND 518 OF THE NATIONAL BY-LAWS. PLEASE DO NOT BE ONE OF THOSE POSTS.

Sec. 703 - Bonds.

Each officer accountable for funds or property pursuant to any provision of these Bylaws shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, they may be accountable. The bond premium shall be paid from the funds of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Department, District, County Council or Post, as the case may be, to which each officer is accountable.

The bonds of such accountable officers, in amount and as to surety, shall be approved by their respective units and held by their respective Commanders. The Commander of each unit shall be responsible for the proper and adequate bonding of all accountable officers in their unit.

From our National Quartermaster General

Department Adjutants & Quartermasters:

I have recently received several inquiries regarding the subject of bonding. Specifically, Quartermasters are asking if insurance is an acceptable alternative to the requirement that accountable officers be bonded. The information below seeks to clarify this requirement and the difference between bonds and insurance.

VFW By-Laws Section 703 Bonds states:

Each officer accountable for funds or property pursuant to any provision of these Bylaws shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, they may be accountable. The bond premium shall be paid from the funds of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Department, District, County Council, or Post, as the case may be, to which each officer is accountable.

The bonds of such accountable officers, in amount and as to surety, shall be approved by their respective units and held by their respective Commanders. The Commander of each unit shall be responsible for the proper and adequate bonding of all accountable officers in their unit.

Sections 218, 418, and 518 of the Manual of Procedures require bonding of the Quartermasters at each level.

The purpose of bonding is to protect the VFW against actions of the Quartermaster, or other officer being bonded.

There is a difference between bonds and insurance.

A surety bond is an agreement under which one party (the surety company) guarantees to another party (VFW) the performance of an obligation by a third party (the accountable officer). Surety bonds do not have a deductible and do not require a conviction of the officer in order to be paid for the loss. Surety bonds serve to protect the obliged party (VFW) against losses that result from the failure of the principal (accountable officer) to meet their obligation.

Insurance is an agreement under which one party (the insurance company) guarantees protection to another party (VFW) due to dishonesty, forgery, computer fraud, theft, etc. Crime or employee dishonesty insurance policies may be subject to a deductible and may require a conviction of the officer, which can take time, before payment will be made.

So, any policy that provides insurance against theft where there is a deductible and a conviction is required is not considered a bond.

A bond is taken out by a party (post) to cover a specific person (post officer) who promises to act in a certain way. There is never a deductible, and no conviction is required. An insurance policy will generally apply to all officers, volunteers and employees who have access to Post funds. Posts need to look at the terms of the contract to make sure they are getting a bond and not an insurance policy. In many cases, a post may need both an insurance policy for the post and a bond for the individual handling funds.

Debra Anderson

Quartermaster General
VFW National Headquarters
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Kansas City, Missouri 64111
Office: 816.968.2777
Cell: 816.813.4248
Fax: 816.968.1189

SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING

Anti-Sexual Harassment Training. Under Local Law 96 of 2018, employers with 15 or more employees are required to conduct annual **anti-sexual harassment training** for all employees. **New York State Law** requires that employers of one or more employees must conduct **anti-sexual harassment training** for all employees.

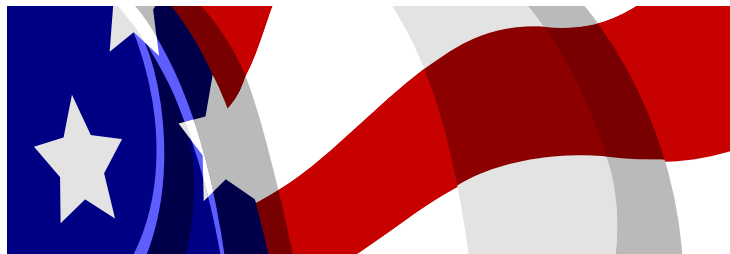
[Anti-Sexual Harassment Training - NYC.gov](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/law/sexual-harassment-training)

[https://www1.nyc.gov > site > cchr > law > sexual-harassment-training](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/law/sexual-harassment-training)

State Commander Todaro recommends that all posts provide this training to its officers and employees. Which can be completed online.

POST DEVELOPMENT

As you are planning for the new year, make sure your Departments are in contact with the National Membership department to identify an area in need of Post development or a revitalization effort. There are many resources available to you, all you need to do is call. We are looking to start a Post or revitalize an existing Post in every single Department. Let's not wait until the middle of the year to identify an area. Let the Membership Department know now what you're working on so we can start tracking that information and provide assistance as needed. For any questions or further information, you may contact Corey Hunt in the Membership Department **via email at coreyhunt@vfw.org or call us at 1.888.564.6839**



Commanders Special Project



The service dog programs of America's Vet Dogs were created to provide enhanced mobility and renewed independence to veterans, active-duty service members, and first responders with disabilities, allowing them to once again live with pride and self-reliance. America's Vet Dogs specialize in placing highly skilled service and guide dogs to individuals with physical injuries, PTSD, hearing and vision loss, and seizures.

Our mission is to help those who have served our country honorably live with dignity and independence. All services are provided at no cost — including transportation to and from our campus in Smithtown, New York, instruction, and more.

Once they make the decision to get a service dog, applicants become part of Vet Dogs' open and welcoming community. They are supported with an uncompromising commitment to excellence, from highly empathetic and certified trainers to a meticulously constructed curriculum. Vet Dogs teams each student with the dog that's right for them – and the power of their bond makes ordinary moments extraordinary. Crossing the street independently becomes a moment of liberation. Traveling alone becomes a welcome adventure. Embracing new experiences becomes an everyday occurrence.

How does one donate to the Commander's special project in support of America's Vet Dogs?

Donations to the Commander's Special Project can be made to the program through the Department of New York by mailing all donations to: Department of New York Commander's Special Project, 69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205.

TRAINING TOOLS AVAILABLE ON-LINE

In an effort to better serve the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, tools are available at "VFW Training and Support." There you will find Member & Officer Training, Forms and Templates; training material relating to Membership Recruiting and Retention; Community Service & Youth Programs; Communications & Public Affairs; Post Service Officers; and Veterans & Military Support. To utilize these valuable training guides, videos, forms and templates, please login at <https://www.vfw.org>, proceed to "My VFW" and click the link "VFW Training and Support."

The online "Document Repository" is a system of managing documents utilized primarily by Department Officers and members of the National Council of Administration.



***Bring Our Troops
Home Safely!***



Pre COVID -19 Cmdr Todaro visits Post 9593



PSC Gene Ratigliano, Post 9593 Cmdr. Larry Knott, Dept. Cmdr. Thomas Todaro, Dept. Jr. Vice Cmdr. Michael Hoag, Dist. 3 Cmdr. Bob Mitchell, Dept. VOD Chair. Wally Zincio

Post 5942

Commander Jack Stein, Post 5942 Plainview NY visits Pine lawn National Cemetery to place an American Flag on the grave of his cousin, Louis Chimeri jr U.S. Marines, KIA Vietnam May 5/1968. It was sad not to be able to decorate the graves this year due to the virus. Our fallen comrades will never be forgotten.



Apply for Burial in a VA National Cemetery and for Memorial Products



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Choose VA

This guide will help you apply for burial in a VA national cemetery, a Government-furnished headstone, marker, or medallion for burial in a private cemetery, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a burial flag for a loved one.

Apply for VA Burial and Memorial Products:

1

PREPARATION

- Decide whether burial will be in a VA national cemetery, state or tribal Veterans' cemetery or a private cemetery and desired memorial products
- For burial in a VA national cemetery, a private cemetery (for a headstone, marker, or medallion) or for a Presidential Memorial Certificate, collect the following information and submit it with your application, if available:
 - **Discharge document(s) (DD214 Member-4** or equivalent)
 - **Orders**, if activated by Executive Federal Order from the National Guard or Reserves
 - **Pre-need determination approval letter** (if previously completed)

2

APPLICATION

- Apply** for burial in a VA national cemetery by:
 - **Faxing** discharge document(s) to 866-900-6417, or
 - **Scanning** discharge document(s) to NCA.Scheduling@va.gov, and
 - **Calling** the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117
- Apply** for a Government-furnished **headstone, marker or medallion** for placement in a private cemetery by submitting a:
 - **VA Form 40-1330**, Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker, or
 - **VA Form 40-1330M**, Claim for Government Medallion for Placement in a Private Cemetery
- Apply for a Presidential Memorial Certificate** by submitting a:
 - **VA Form 40-0247**, Presidential Memorial Certificate Request Form
- Apply for a burial flag** by submitting a:
 - **VA Form 27-2008**, Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes
- Forms are available at: <https://www.cem.va.gov>

3

DECISION

- For more **information** or to find out the **status** of your claim, **call** the:
 - National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117 (for burial in a VA national cemetery), daily, 8am-7:30pm ET, or
 - Applicant Assistance Unit (for Government-furnished headstones, markers, and medallions) at 800-697-6947, M-F, 8am-5pm ET.
 - Presidential Memorial Certificates at 202-632-7300, M-F, 8am-4pm ET.

I WANT TO BE BURIED IN A STATE OR TRIBAL VETERANS' CEMETERY

State and tribal Veterans' cemeteries may have different requirements to apply for burial. Please contact the cemetery for a burial eligibility determination.

WHAT IS A PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE?

A Presidential Memorial Certificate is an engraved paper certificate signed by the current president.

WHERE DO I SEND THE FORMS?

Headstones, markers, medallions and Presidential Memorial Certificates, please: **fax** the form to: 800-455-7143, or **mail** the form to:
Memorial Products Service (41B)
Department of Veterans Affairs
5109 Russell Road
Quantico, VA 22134-3903

Burial flags:

Visit your nearest VA regional benefit office, or a United States Post Office. Your funeral director may also assist.

Voice of Democracy Report



It seems like only yesterday the theme for our VOD 2019/20 essay contest was announced, and here we are today. A trip to Washington DC and parade of winners and scholarships awarded are just a memory. What a world-wind program year.

Once again, it is you the Post, Auxiliaries and District VOD Chairman that make this program such a huge success. Thank You. I would also like to thank

Commander in Chief Wm Doc Schmitz and Council of Administration Member Bob Barnhart for giving me the opportunity to attend the Washington Legislative Conference and the VOD Parade of winners.

Before the parade of winners, I got to meet and speak briefly with our **DEPT. VOD WINNER SHALYNNE R. OUELLETTA**. She was a little nervous, but very honored to represent our Department. I assured her, win, lose or draw the entire Department of New York VFW and Auxiliary was wishing her the best at the night's awards. Shalynne was accompanied by our Department Commander Thomas Todaro and Department President Debbie Casella. During the event, the judges awarded Shalynne the prestigious Department of Kentucky & Auxiliary Brian Duffy & Marion Watson Scholarship.

Shalynne and I spoke after the event she told me how grateful she was to the VFW to be given to opportunity to be in Washington DC and meeting other Department winners and touring our Nation's Capital City. She is looking forward to attending our Department Convention where she will recite her winning essay. I hope you can attend to hear it and meet this young lady and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

Nationally there is a proposal afloat to drastically change the Voice of Democracy Program as we know it. I am strongly opposed to these program changes. I have contacted my District Commander expressing my opposition and stated why, hoping he will keep my thoughts in mind during our Department C of A meeting. I sincerely hope and encourage you to do the same.

In closing I would like to thank those of you that sent me Get Well Wishes during my hospitalization, they were much appreciated.

Any Post Chairman wanting to get a head-start on the 2020-21 VOD program the selected theme is;

Is this the Country the Founders Envisioned?

It has been my pleasure serving the Dept. and the Students of New York.

There have been many changes in our Department due to COVID-19 pandemic since I sent our Overseas Veteran Editor my final thoughts for our Department OSV. I had invited everyone to attend the Cmdrs. & Presidents testimonial dinner to hear ShaLynne Ouellette our Department's 1st place VOD winners' essay. Since that will not be happening, I have attached her winning essay for your reading pleasure. I am sure after reading it you will agree with the judging panel that ShaLynne's essay deserved being chosen Department winner.

Until we meet again

Yours in Comradeship,

**Wally Zincio, State Youth Development Recognition
& Scholarship (VOD) Chairman**

Voice of Democracy Speech



In one of the most iconic paintings by an American artist, two young children, a boy and a girl, sleep peacefully. Next to their bed, the floor is scattered with toys. Shadowy half-light from the open door illuminates the room and we see their parents standing vigil over them as they sleep. Their mother leans down. She tenderly pulls the covers more snugly over her children, as if to guard them

from the tragedy reported in the folded newspaper that her husband holds. A bombing has occurred. There is evil in the world. One might expect to see an anxious countenance, yet we see the father smile lovingly on his children. Both parents clearly understand the horror of that day's news, but these Americans have decided not to let fear settle in their home. One day years ago, my father hung a print of this painting, Norman Rockwell's *Freedom from Fear*, next to the front door of my home. Through this door I and my family go out into a world which sometimes produces headlines even more shocking than the "BOMBING HORROR" immortalized by Rockwell. Yet, we pass through our door without fear, not because we choose to pretend evil doesn't exist in our world, but because like the Americans depicted by Rockwell, we also choose not to let fear settle in our midst.

Freedom from Fear is one of four paintings Rockwell created following President Franklin Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union address, in which he said, "In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want ... -everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear ... That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation." Since then, Americans of all walks of life have answered President Roosevelt's call, giving their time, talent, and even their very lives, to ensure these freedoms are enjoyed at home and abroad. Though all of these freedoms are essential, the Freedom from Fear enables us to live the other three.

There are many whose heroism and dedication to upholding the Four Freedoms is apparent to all. Their choice to act free of fear has allowed them to live heroically in seemingly hopeless situations. The policemen, firefighters and civilians on September 11, 2001, who died saving others, ensured that every American heart today remains free from the cloud of fear caused by the terrorist attack that day. In May this year, a shooting in a Colorado high school left one student who charged to the rescue dead, another wounded. These two boys, along with the teachers and responders that day, are heroes, standing up for what is right and halting those who would threaten our freedom in their tracks.

However, not only do Americans heroically pursue these freedoms at home, but we go abroad, and we share them with the people of the world. Since 2001, 6,828 American servicemembers have sacrificed their lives to bring these freedoms to the people of the Middle East. On August 21, 2015, Spencer Stone and two of his friends, all members of the U.S. Air Force on leave, hazarded their own lives to save fellow passengers whose lives



were threatened by a terrorist with an automatic rifle on board a train bound for Paris from Amsterdam. These men had dedicated their lives to defending freedom, and they proved their commitment on that train on that day.

Civilians also make great sacrifices for the cause of human freedom. Members of the Carter Center ensure that people in the developing world can live in freedom from the fear of disease. This group, based in the U.S., works tirelessly to eradicate diseases affecting millions in over 80 countries. Through their efforts, the Guinea Worm disease was completely eliminated in Nigeria in 2009.

In 2017, a group of young American engineers, in an organization called Bridges to Prosperity, partnered with a local Haiti community to

build a bridge over the river near their village. The river had a strong current, and many people in the community had lost their lives just trying to cross it. The men and women in Bridges to Prosperity sacrifice careers with big, well-paying companies to be a part of a group that ensures that all people have the ability to live in safety, free from fear.

Like the father and mother in Rockwell's Freedom from Fear, Americans go out into the world not with trepidation, but with emboldened hope that catches the world on fire. We may not always agree on how this blaze should be set, but we do agree that every human deserves a life lived free from fear, free from want, free to speak or write, and free to worship. I am an American. Americans are what makes America great.



**NY/NJ VA Health Care Network
VA NY Harbor Healthcare System**
800 Poly Place | Brooklyn, NY 11209
718-836-6600

423 East 23rd Street | New York, NY 10010
212-686-7500

179-00 Linden Boulevard | Jamaica, NY 11425
718-526-1000

www.nyharbor.va.gov

Director's Message to Veterans

I want to take a moment to update you on what VA New York Harbor Healthcare System (NYHHS) is doing to support our local community in the fight against COVID-19, while also maintaining our exceptionally high level of care for our Veteran patients.

Helping Veterans is our first mission. From mid-March through June 3rd, NYHHS admitted 402 Veterans to our Brooklyn and New York Campuses for treatment of COVID-19. In times of national crisis, such as the current pandemic, VA provides services to the nation based on requests from states. This is known as **VA's Fourth Mission**. At the request of the State of New York NYHHS provided 50 total beds – 35 acute care and 15 Intensive Care Unit beds – for humanitarian cases. By making these beds available, we saved lives and provided desperately needed relief for city and private hospitals in our community. From March 28th through June 3rd NYHHS treated 111 civilians as inpatients.

In early May, our medical centers in Brooklyn and Manhattan accepted the remaining six non-Veteran, humanitarian patients from the **Javits Center Field Hospital**, helping them close out their mission.

We also accepted the remaining 11 non-Veteran humanitarian patients who were being treated by medical providers on the **USNS Comfort**. Transferring those patients to our medical centers in Manhattan and Brooklyn allowed the Comfort to complete its mission and return home to Virginia.

I want to be very clear that opening our doors to humanitarian, non-Veteran patients in no way impacted Veteran care during the pandemic; every Veteran requiring inpatient or emergency care received the same high-quality service our patients have come to expect from VA NYHHS.

Moving forward together, we will continue to provide exceptional care to our Veterans.

Martina Parauda
Director, VA New York Harbor Healthcare System

LAST UPDATED: JUNE 19, 2020 AT 2:00 PM

What You Need to Know

- New York City is on track to enter phase two of the state's regional phased reopening plan; Long Island and Mid-Hudson Valley are on track to enter phase three; the Capital Region, Western New York, Central New York, Finger Lakes, Mohawk Valley, North Country, and Southern Tier are in phase three.
- New York City has been cleared by global public health experts to begin phase two of reopening Monday.
- Governor Cuomo signs an Executive order stating that businesses violating the reopening guidelines could result in immediate loss of their liquor license and a shut down order; the area immediately outside their locations are also the responsibility of the business.
- Guidance for colleges and universities to allow some in person instruction and on-campus housing for the fall is coming soon.
- Hospitals and group homes will be allowed to accept visitors at their discretion, while following state guidelines including time-limited visits and requiring visitors to wear PPE and be subject to symptom and temperature checks.
- Governor Cuomo announced the implementation of a new early warning dashboard to monitor and review how the virus is being contained on an ongoing basis.
- The \$100M New York Forward Loan Fund will provide loans to small businesses, focusing on minority and women owned small businesses, that did not receive federal COVID-19 assistance.
- The New York State sales tax filing deadline has been extended to June 22, 2020.
- Governor Cuomo issued executive orders 202.17 and 202.18 requiring all people in New York to wear masks or face coverings in public, including when taking public or private transportation or riding in for-hire vehicles.
- New Yorkers without health insurance can apply through NY State of Health through July 15, 2020; must apply within 60 days of losing coverage.
- Health care workers can text NYFRONTLINE to 741-741 to access 24/7 emotional support services.
- New Yorkers can call the COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline at 1-844-863-9314 for mental health counseling.
- Testing is free for all eligible New Yorkers as ordered by a health care provider.
- Your local health department is your community contact for COVID-19 concerns.

