

A Message from Commander-in-Chief Thomas J. Tradewell, Sr.

I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to every member of VFW, our Ladies Auxiliary, the Cooties and our Men's Auxiliary for all the hours of hard work and commitment to our programs. We have made some changes we hope will help make your efforts more focused and effective.

VFW Programs are now divided into three areas. The greatest emphasis will be on our "Core Programs." These will be emphasized in training, supported with materials, reported and are expected to be a part of every Post's effort. "Special Projects" will also be supported and encouraged but should be considered as electives based on the interest and desires of the local Post. "Other Activities" are suggested efforts that are, again, up to the discretion of each Post and the needs in their community.

I strongly urge every Post to participate in our Core Programs. Beyond those, I hope you will participate in the

other programs and activities that fit your Post and your community.

In the final analysis, VFW Programs are the most public face the VFW has in the community. By actively working our programs, every Post will achieve tangible public good that will result in greater honor for our organization and our veterans, increased community support and new members. Viable programs, well executed, are the best thing you can do for your Post and your Post can do for the community.

Thank you again for all you do for our veterans, those in uniform and the communities in which you live.



The Role of the Chairman

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

You Are the Point Person

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

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

Seek out these new relationships. When it comes time to recruit volunteers or you need specialized expertise for Post projects, these community contacts will prove invaluable.

Project an outgoing, friendly personality. Speak positively about your Post, your community and your projects. Articulate your thoughts and plans clearly, concisely and coherently. Remember, you represent not only your Post, but the entire VFW organization as well.

Reporting Our Community Service Volunteer Efforts!

Posts and Ladies Auxiliaries should strive to report the community service efforts of their members to their Department in a timely manner. Efforts that benefit non-members are reportable and can include some of the following activities.

- Veterans in the classroom activities (speakers, flag education, Ladies Auxiliary Patriotic Art and Young Volunteer, etc.) in local schools.
- Assisting/visiting veterans at local VA or community hospitals and state veterans homes.
- Conducting a military support activity.
- Supporting a community based recognized charity or national effort.
- Providing color guard and participants for community parades and local ceremonies.
- Donating items to charitable organizations. Report cash value and actual time to collect. (remember to include the IRS regulated 14¢ mileage amount for charitable work and the value of donating the Post hall use to nonprofit groups.)

Master Organizational Skills

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

should be fully developed.

Some of your specific duties include:

- maintaining a pool of active volunteers;
- identifying and initiating programs needed in your community (A majority of the suggested activities in this booklet are related to the VFW's Veterans in the Classroom program.);
- motivating your Post members, community volunteers and sponsors involved in your various projects;
- recognize volunteers through the various activities available;
- organizing and maintaining records, photos and newspaper clippings; and
- reporting to your Department chairman the volunteer hours, dollars donated by VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, Cooties, Junior Girls and Mens Auxiliary members and other information requested.

Through the contacts you've developed in your community, cooperate with other civic or fraternal groups. They may already be involved in community service programs you would like to undertake, or they may be eager to help with projects that you've planned. Also identify resources at your Post, talk with members and find out what special skills or hobbies they may have.