

CHECKPOINT



NEWS FROM VFW'S FRONT LINES

96-Year Relationship

Scouts, VFW Joined by Americanism, Patriotism

PHOTO COURTESY ILLINOIS VFW NEWS



Hank Toppett, adjutant for Post 2791 in Tinley Park, Ill., displays the Post's ceremonial M-1 rifles to Cub Scouts of Pack 3337 last November. The Post hosts Scouts regularly and participates in an annual Eagle Scout ceremony. Toppett earned his Eagle Scout badge in 1977.

VFW HAS A LONG HISTORY with Scouting. It began in 1915 when Post 2100 in Everett, Wash., helped sponsor Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Troop 1 in its city. It was only five years after BSA was established in 1910.

A century later that relationship is stronger than ever with VFW offering three national scholarships (\$5,000 for first place, \$3,000 for second and \$1,000 for third) in its annual Scout of the Year competition.

On the local level, two good examples of the bond between VFW members and BSA are Post 2791 in Tinley Park, Ill., and Post 584 in Albany, Ore.

"VFW and Scouts share the common bond of patriotism," said Hank Toppett, Post 2791's adjutant and Voice of Democracy chairman. "Scouting teaches Americanism and patriotism, and we support that."

Toppett, who earned his Eagle Scout badge in 1977, hosts Scout groups "about five or six times a year," and teaches flag-folding, flag-raising and proper flag-disposal techniques. One of the more

popular seminars features lessons about the Post color guard's ceremonial rifles.

"The M-1s are always a big hit," says Toppett, who earned the Navy Expeditionary Medal for service off Iran in 1979 and Beirut in 1983. "The Cub Scouts 'ooh and aah' and tell me they can't believe how heavy the rifles are."

The suburban Chicago Post and area Scouts have forged a symbiotic relationship.

"We let the Boy Scouts use the Post for their pancake fundraisers," Toppett said. "In turn, they provide Scouts to help us with our fish-fry dinners."

Post members also attend the local Boy Scouts annual Eagle Scout ceremony, where they present certificates and special VFW/Scouting badges.

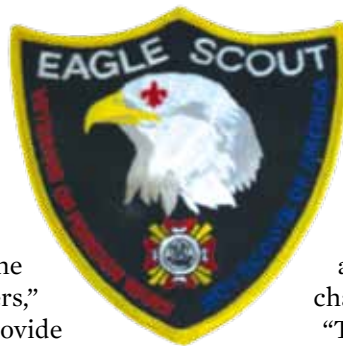


PHOTO BY BOB GORE/POST 584

Members of Cub Scout Pack 359 attend their annual Blue and Gold Awards ceremony at Post 584 in Albany, Ore., in February. The Post sponsors the pack and hosts Cub Scout meetings twice a month.

EASING FINANCIAL BURDEN OF PARENTS
In Albany, Ore., another Post sponsors a local Cub Scout pack.

"The support of VFW has been incredible," said Joe Lovato, junior vice commander of Post 584 who also serves as the Post's Pack Committee chairman. "The members jumped at the chance to support Cub Scout Pack 359. They paid half of the first year's charter fee, and the Post and Ladies Auxiliary members always offer a friendly, welcoming atmosphere."

The 13-member Cub Scout pack has been meeting at Post 584 twice a month since December 2010, said Lovato, a Vietnam War vet. The Post hosted the pack's annual Blue and Gold Awards ceremony in February, and members paid the leadership portion of the pack's re-charter fee and annual dues for three Cub Scouts.

"Some of the parents just can't afford the fees," Lovato said. "In fact, it's one of the main reasons parents cite for withdrawing kids from Scouting."

With that in mind, the pack has used Post 584, located about 22 miles south of Salem, to plan fundraisers—one in August and another planned for this fall—to pay its charter fees and other various dues.

"The goal is to raise enough funds so that no money comes out of the parents' pockets," said Lovato, whose son, Rory Donley-Lovato, 8, is a pack member, and wife, Patricia Donley, is the pack leader.

With Post 584's help, they're well on their way.

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Here's the latest list of WWII vets who remain active in official roles at their Posts.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS ON YOUTUBE

Did you miss the 2011 VFW National Convention? Watch video highlights from San Antonio online at www.YouTube.com/VFWVIDS.



VFW STORE OFFERS NEW ITEMS FOR 2012



Check out the new items in the 2011-12 VFW Store catalog, which will be mailed in September, or go online at www.vfwstore.org.

If you can't find what you're looking for, call

1-800-821-2606. The Store has endless resources and savings that can be passed on to you—anything from bowling team shirts, water bottles or Koozies to gift items. The Store can also assist with designing customized logos for special events.

The VFW Store and its authorized licensed vendors are the only source for merchandise with the VFW logo. When you buy from the VFW Store, the money stays in the organization, and all levels of VFW benefit.



VFW OFFERS DENTAL INSURANCE

Maximize the value of your VFW membership with VFW-sponsored dental insurance.

With all of the emphasis on healthy living these days, it's refreshing to know VFW provides dental benefits that can help you and your family keep a healthy regimen while helping to reduce your out-of-pocket expenses.

The preferred dentist program (PDP) is available to VFW members. With the PDP, you have access to a nationwide network of more than 130,000 dentist locations consisting of general and specialty dentists who meet credentialing standards.

Plus you'll enjoy lower out-of-pocket costs for in-network services. The PDP offers you plan benefits based on negotiated fees that typically range from 15% to 45% less than the average fees for the same or similar services charged by dentists in your area.

With the PDP, you can go to the dentist you're most comfortable with, even if he or she isn't in network.

Savings from enrolling in a dental benefits plan will depend on various factors, including the cost of the plan, how often participants visit the dentist, and the cost of services rendered.

For more information, call VFW Member Insurance at **1-800-821-2606, option 1**.

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES

Allen "Gunner" Kent, Adjutant General

Commemorate Afghanistan's 10-Year Mark

HOW DOES YOUR POST plan to commemorate the sacrifices of our nation's men and women who have fought the Afghanistan War? The *Checkpoint* staff would like to know about your projects and publish them in future issues.

Sept. 11 this year marks the 10th anniversary of the horrific terrorist attacks on our nation. Oct. 7 marks the 10th anniversary of American troops taking the fight to the Taliban in Afghanistan. These are obviously significant dates in our nation's history.

If Post commanders are looking for commemoration ideas, they can turn to the "VFW in Action" section of the October 2011 issue of VFW magazine. In it, they will read about Post 10077 in Deer Park, Md., which earned the 2011 Fred C. Hall Post Special Project Award for its work in commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Korean War.

An example of a Post offering a heartfelt tribute to an Afghanistan War veteran was covered in *Checkpoint* more than two years ago. Post 3154 in Sonora, Calif., renamed itself in honor of Sgt. Robert Theodore Rapp, an 82nd Airborne Division trooper who was killed by a suicide bomber in March 2008 in Afghanistan.

Larry Maher, Quartermaster General

Take Advantage of Online Tools

AT VFW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, we have spent considerable time and money to develop an online membership system (OMS). It isn't perfect, and perhaps never will be, but in the technology arena, the next great thing seems to occur daily. Nevertheless, the OMS employed by VFW is a very valuable tool.

As leaders in this organization, we must make sure that our Posts are using that tool to their best benefit. Used properly, this tool can save quartermasters time, reduce errors, improve money management and provide a host of other efficiencies.

Here is a brief look at some of the helpful quartermaster tools. With these, you are sure to stay on top of your Post's membership management duties. Once you log in, here's what to look for:

- Manage Payment Profile—The quartermaster electronic checkbook
- Request Duplicate Card
- Convert To Legacy Life
- Renew Members—Transmit one or 100
- Change Member Addresses
- Mark a Member "Undeliverable"
- Mark a Member "Deceased"
- Convert Annual Members to Life Members
- Transfer a Member

To be considered for coverage in *Checkpoint* of your Post's project commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Afghanistan War, send a message to tdyhouse@vfw.org.

In a letter home to his parents the year before he died, in which he provided instructions for his funeral in case he was killed, Rapp wrote, "Let the world know I died doing what I love, and dying for my country is the greatest honor I could ever receive."

Robert's mother, Jennifer, told *Checkpoint* that "the [renaming] of the Post is just one more tribute to what he wished. It means the world to us."

Let's all remember the sense of duty and willingness to sacrifice displayed by our Afghanistan War veterans. And let's remember to honor that sacrifice in some tangible manner this upcoming year.



- Complete New Member Form
- Manage Account—Change quartermaster e-mail address or password
- View Account History
- Manage your address

All of these functions can be performed from any computer—at home, at the Post or on the road.

In the end, it's about making the leap from sticky-notes and notepads to OMS.

If quartermasters aren't using this valuable tool, the leadership owes it to the members and to the organization to encourage it.

CHECKPOINT

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Assisting the victims of the Joplin, Mo., tornado were Post 534 members, Commander Gerry Wiseman, Ladies Auxiliary President Teresa Baker and (far right) Vice President Jackie Collins. In the middle are Post 2203 member Charles Patrick, Missouri District 7 Chief of Staff, and his wife, Cindy, a Ladies Auxiliary member.

'We are all Neighbors'

VFW Assists Veterans after Natural Disasters

ON APRIL 27, 2011, Tuscaloosa, Ala., was hit with an EF-4 tornado that caused an estimated \$1.5 billion in damage and killed 47. Less than one month later, on May 22, an EF-5 tornado devastated some 8,000 buildings in Joplin, Mo., and killed 160 people.

In each case, VFW was there to help, offering assistance at all levels. VFW National Headquarters' disaster relief fund donated \$10,000 to both Alabama and Missouri. The two Departments matched the \$10,000 donations. The *Unmet Needs* program provided some \$103,000 to 264 families in need. Dozens of Posts from around the world donated thousands of dollars worth of goods. Countless VFW members offered an incalculable number of volunteer hours.

"The outpouring of care and hope from VFW Posts in other areas of Alabama and out of state was

simply heartwarming," Walter Turner, commander of Post 6022 in Cottondale, Ala., said.

Posts in Alabama and Missouri cite the non-monetary assistance as being some of the most substantial aid.

"One of the most important things to us was the response from VFW's National Military Services," Charles Patrick, Department of Missouri District 7 chief of staff said. "They cut the red tape out and made everything as smooth as possible. I could talk for hours about what VFW has contributed. It's simply amazing"

Volunteers unloaded pallets of water, cooked meals, transported victims to area medical centers for treatment and went through hundreds of trash bags sorting clothing. Post 534 in Joplin, Mo., opened its doors to the public to disperse "anything you can imagine a family would need," said Jackie Collins, Post 534 Ladies Auxiliary senior vice president.

"The first three days were absolutely critical," Collins said. "We saw victims who were literally dug out of the debris with nothing but what they were wearing. We helped them pay for new glasses, dentures and hearing aids. We helped them sign up for unemployment checks."

The outpouring of support from across the country was so great that Post 534 gave leftover goods to churches and other support facilities in the community.

"We didn't buy anything," said Gerry Wiseman, Post 534 commander. "People were coming down with cars full."

Patrick, Wiseman and Collins worked around the clock to make sure that the Post's members, as well as other veterans and active-duty

"A vet is a vet is a vet, and we'll stick together come hell or high water."

—Charles Patrick, Missouri District 7 chief of staff.

servicemembers, were safe.

"I might not know the guy who lives next door to me, but you can bet your life that I'd help him if he needed it, or he'd be there to help me," Patrick said. "A vet is a vet is a vet, and we'll stick together come hell or high water."

Post 7117 in Worthington, Ind., echoed that sentiment when it sent 40,000 pounds of relief goods to Cottondale, Ala., to assist in the Tuscaloosa aftermath.

Post 7117 Commander Ken Stalcup didn't have any connection to Post 6022, but he said he's built a strong bond with the Alabama Post by offering aid.

"Sometimes it takes something of this magnitude to make us realize that we are all part of the community," Turner said. "We are all neighbors and we need to help those in need."

The clean-up process is underway in both Missouri and Alabama. Millions of cubic yards of debris have been moved, and new structures are beginning to appear.

Tuscaloosa commissioned a committee to research ways to rebuild the community in a stronger, environmentally friendly manner—one with more safe rooms and shelters.

"It is like a blank canvas to paint a new city," Turner said.

Read more about VFW's involvement in disaster relief efforts in the October issue of *VFW* magazine.

E-mail kgibson@vfw.org

Top Post Donations to Joplin Tornado Relief

Post 3944 Ladies Aux., Overland, Mo.	\$5,000
Dept. of Missouri Ladies Aux.	\$3,700
Post 3282, Port Orange, Fla.	\$2,100
Post 1694, Shelton, Wash.	\$2,000
Post 7183, Lilbourn, Mo.	\$2,000
Post 513, Du Quoin, Ill.	\$1,800
Post 2203, Shell Knob, Mo.	\$1,500
Post 259, Troy, N.Y.	\$1,500
Post 4541, Mt. Vernon, Mo.	\$1,500
Post 2866, St. Charles, Mo.	\$1,164
Cootie Pup Tent 10, Joplin, Mo.	\$1,500
Post 4709 Ladies Aux., Conroe, Texas	\$1,000
Post 7031, Boone, N.C.	\$1,000
Post 1299, Edwardsville, Ill.	\$1,000
Post 2591, Ladies Aux., Sedalia, Mo.	\$1,000
Post 1667, Ridgedale, Mo.	\$660

Remembering Bill Ruth and Jamie Fallon

SEPTEMBER marks the 10th anniversary of one of America's darkest days—the Islamist terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Among the 189 people killed at the Pentagon that day were William “Bill” Ruth and Jamie Fallon. Both were VFW members.

To honor them, here is a brief look back at their lives as well as their last day at the Pentagon.

‘LIKE A NIGHTMARE’

In the fury of the burning Pentagon on Sept. 11, Ruth crawled on his stomach in search of an escape. Others followed behind their leader. But before he could reach a safe zone, the floor collapsed beneath him and his co-workers, burying them for days to follow.

Located in the D ring, Army Chief Warrant Officer Ruth's office was almost exactly where American Airlines Flight 77 hit the Pentagon on Sept. 11.

Like that which scarred the Pentagon, a gaping hole was left in the lives of those Ruth knew. One group in particular felt the bitter sting of his memory; Ruth was commander of VFW Post 10076 in Mt. Airy, Md., at the time of his death.

“It was like a nightmare for us,” said Bill Guilday, a close friend of Ruth and VFW member. “We camped out in front of the television just waiting to hear he was all right.”

Ruth's first meeting as Post commander was Monday, Sept. 10, 2001, just one night before America was changed. Always one to express his love of country, he wore an American flag tie to preside over the meeting.

“He was a leader,” Post member Bill Hauptman said. “He was the kind of guy who would go out of his way to do something for you.”

‘A LOYAL AMERICAN’

Born Nov. 29, 1943, in Knoxville, Tenn., Ruth resided in Alliance, Ohio, until he was 20, at which time he joined the Marines. In 1966 he went to Vietnam as a helicopter pilot and flew 640 missions in his 13-month stint.

With a love of history and geography, Ruth finished his schooling at Bowling Green State University where he earned a master's degree in geography.

To the surprise of many, Ruth later joined the Army National Guard's 29th Infantry Division. He said he didn't join the Marine Reserve because they did not fly the “Huey” helicopters. While in the National Guard, Ruth taught geography and history at various middle schools, such as John T. Baker Middle School in Damascus, Md., until retiring in 1997.

When the Persian Gulf War broke out, Ruth went with his Medevac unit to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq. Though away from his classroom, Ruth's students were in the forefront of his mind. He recorded tapes describing the people and land, and mailed them back to his eager learners. He also brought back the U.S. flag he carried on his missions and donated it to the school.

Though Ruth retired from teaching in 1997, his mind was far from retiring to a condo in Florida. Instead, he was encouraged to go on active duty in the regular Army by taking a job at the Pentagon. He gladly accepted, and at the time of his death, Ruth had been promoted to a CWO4.

With a life as rich as Ruth's, it's easy to see why he'll be remembered for years to come.

From coast to coast, people mourned the loss of friends and family after the terrorist attacks on America. In Ruth's case, his VFW family of more

VFW FILE PHOTO



Commander of Post 10076 in Mt. Airy, Md., Bill Ruth conducted his first VFW meeting the night before he was killed at the Pentagon.

than 1 million will not forget.

“We still feel the loss of Bill Ruth,” Guilday said. “He was a loyal American and a dedicated member of VFW.”

On Sept. 11, 2002, the city of Mt. Airy dedicated Patriot Park in honor of Ruth and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Ronald Vauk, the second Mt. Airy resident killed at the Pentagon. A granite memorial marker with the two names honors the men.

During a Patriot's Day ceremony on Sept. 11, 2011, the memorial will be moved to Pine Grove Chapel and re-dedicated.

FALLON KNOWN FOR HER SPUNK

Sunday, Sept. 9, 2001, marked the beginning of a new chapter in 23-year-old Jamie Fallon's life. She

PHOTO COURTESY RON COGSWELL



Army Chief Warrant Officer Bill Ruth's bench above is one of 189 at the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial. Each bench has the name of an individual who was killed while working the Pentagon or was a passenger on American Airlines Flight 77 when it slammed into the government building.

and her baby son, Kahleb, had moved from her parents' home to their own apartment in Dale City, Va. But little more than 48 hours later, her life ended, closing the book on this young sailor known for her spunk, wit and deep respect for veterans.

A life member of Post 1503 in Dale City, Fallon is not likely to be forgotten. She made an indelible impression on everyone she knew.

The loss felt by the VFW membership pales in comparison to that of Fallon's parents, Mike and Pat.

Pat, who at that time worked for the Post, talked with her "baby girl" just minutes before American Airlines Flight 77 tore through the military complex.

"She said she had to go because she was very busy, but that she loved me, and that we would see each other that weekend," Pat said. "I was in agony worrying about her, and we never heard from her that night."

Later in the week, Mike Fallon, a 20-year Navy veteran, received his daughter's Purple Heart during a memorial service held at the Post. Less than six months later, he, too, died after a long battle with cancer.

'BIG RED'

Growing up, Fallon was always taller than most kids and had "beautiful red hair," which she always joked she bought from Kmart. According to her brother Michael, who served in the Army for eight years, that hair earned her the nickname "Big Red."

"Big Red was my dad's faithful companion," he said. "She had the gift of gab from a very early age."

Pat recalls her daughter being teased at school for her fair skin and freckles: "I told her she was blessed by God with angels' kisses. She seemed to like that story."

From the time she was four years old, Fallon's second home was Post 1503. She helped form the Jr. Girls Unit and rose to the position of president. She later joined the Ladies Auxiliary like Pat, who is a life member. As a teenager, she worked as a helper in the Post's kitchen, and according to Wallace, excelled at it.

"Though sometimes she was a little stubborn, she consistently treated all veterans with respect and dignity," he said.

Unlike his sister, Michael didn't spend much time at the Post but recalls Jamie always helping distribute Buddy Poppies and selling Christmas trees. She helped her dad with July 4th parades. When the Cooties visited hospitalized vets, Jamie could be found passing out magazines and snacks.

VFW FILE PHOTO



A member of Post 1503 in Dale City, Va., Jamie Fallon was a single mother in the Navy when her life was cut short.

FOLLOWING IN HER FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

It was Fallon's experiences with veterans and her close relationship with her father that led her to enlist in the Navy in March 1996.

Pat said her boisterous daughter was bored with school and wanted to see the world. She wanted to experience things she often heard about at the Post.

Following her training at Great Lakes, Ill., and Meridian, Miss., Fallon was stationed at Bahrain (headquarters of the U.S. 5th Fleet) at the Naval Computer and Telecommunications Center from 1996-97. There she earned an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and her VFW eligibility.

She received a life membership as a gift from her "adopted uncles" at the Post.

From November 1997 through March 2000, Fallon served on the USNS Concord. At the time of her death, she had achieved the rank of storekeeper third class and worked for the Chief of Naval Operations Support Activity. She was awaiting her official discharge.

While it's been 10 years, Post members haven't forgotten Fallon.

Her photo hangs on the Post's "Wall of Honor" where members pass as they come into the Post. Commander Thomas Gimble said the Post plans to pay tribute to Jamie on Patriot's Day 2011.

Her son, Kahleb, now 10, lives with his uncle Michael and his family in Iowa City. Pat, who had Kahleb for the first five and a half years, says she talks with him often and that he is doing great.

"He's big, tall and blonde," she said. "And Kahleb has a family with my son and his children. He loves them all."

Michael and Kahleb plan to travel to the Pentagon for the memorial services on Sept. 11.

The little girl covered in "angels' kisses" grew to be a mother and a patriot. Her spirit will echo always throughout the halls of Post 1503.

E-mail jblankenship@vfw.org



PHOTO BY PHIL DRAKE

Remembering the Fallen

In the years that have passed since the attack on the Pentagon, online memorial sites have cropped up offering friends, family and even strangers a forum to post their thoughts on the victims. Here's a look at what some of those people had to say about Ruth and Fallon.

"I can say that a small handful of teachers made a real impact on my life. Mr. Ruth was one of them. Thank you, Mr. Ruth, for what you did to help me in class and thank you for what you did to help our country."

Scott Martindill

"Jamie was my roommate on the *USNC Concord*, and I certainly hope her family and friends know that she was loved and will be missed."

Laura Burdine

"I will never forget the amazing man [Ruth] who was so many things to so many people. A Gulf War veteran, a committed teacher, a father, son and friend."

Denise

"Jamie was to me the little sister that I never had. I still remember her tagging along with us older kids when we were all Jr. Girls at the VFW Post 1503."

Tammy Bynum

"Jamie was someone who no one will want to forget. I don't know what my Naval career would have been like if she had not been in it."

Angela Brooks

"Mr. Ruth was my science teacher at T.W. Pyle Middle School, and he was my favorite teacher. I learned so much from him."

Paula Martindill

DOD PHOTO



A devastating look at the western side of the Pentagon after terrorists crashed a 757 jet into it at 9:37 a.m. EDT, on Sept. 11, 2001. Including the hijackers, there were 64 people aboard the airplane.

Salem State University and VFW Honor Student-Veterans with Stoles

THIS SPRING, Salem State University (SSU) in Salem, Mass., joined a number of universities nationwide that hold a special ceremony for graduating student-veterans. And VFW was there to honor the students as well.

On May 11, 2011, 29 student-veterans each were presented a graduation stole to wear over academic regalia at the commencement ceremony. The stole, made of hand-woven Kente cloth (native to the Akhan people of Ghana and the Ivory Coast, and known as the “cloth of kings”), signifies the student’s veteran status.

The stole ceremony brought alumni, veterans, faculty and staff together to celebrate the success of the student-veterans. There is no academic achievement requirement to receive the stole, but it is simply a way to honor each student-veteran. Additionally, VFW gave each vet a congratulatory citation.

“The VFW is a valuable asset for our student-veterans, and we are extremely fortunate to have such a great relationship,” said Sam Ohannesian, veterans affairs and enrollment services manager at Salem State.

Several VFW representatives attended the event, including VFW Commander-in-Chief Richard De Noyer, Department of Massachusetts Senior Vice Commander Tim Smith, and Post 2016 member Michael Gormalley.

The stole ceremony was just one way for VFW to get involved on campus and show support for Iraq and Afghanistan War veterans.

Initially, the VFW Department of Massachusetts set out to develop a good relationship with various area colleges and universities to recruit younger members.

Smith began building a relationship with SSU when he brought members of the local Marine Corps JROTC to visit. He and other VFW representatives noted a need for VA claims consulting for veterans on college campuses. So Smith and Patricia Merservey, president of SSU, worked with a team to



VFW representatives Michael Gormalley, Tim Smith and Richard De Noyer congratulate student-veteran Rebecca Hegarty on May 11 at Salem (Mass.) State University’s first veteran stole ceremony.

come up with new ways to support and honor student-veterans at the university.

Now Smith works as a campus outreach service officer and has recruited 29 new VFW members over the past year.

“My hope is that this program at Salem State, as well as VFW involvement in other institutes of higher learning, can grow so that VFW can achieve its mission to assist recently returned veterans,” Smith said.

E-mail kgibson@vfw.org

“The VFW is a valuable asset for our student-veterans, and we are extremely fortunate to have such a great relationship.”

—Sam Ohannesian, Veterans Affairs and Enrollment Services Manager at Salem State University

Post Offers Proper Flag Disposal



PHOTO COURTESY FRANK MUCCI

After seeing a number of tattered U.S. flags in the community, Post 3047 in Harrison, N.Y., placed a painted barrel outside of the Post for residents to discard retired flags for proper disposal.

“The flag is beautiful but when it gets distorted and ripped, nobody has a place to put it,” said Frank Mucci, member of Post 3047 and flag project coordinator. “The painted barrel should cause people to take notice since the paint job is so beautiful.”

Flags are simply dropped in the barrel and don’t need to be folded in a special way. The Post held a flag disposal ceremony at Veterans Park in Harrison on Flag Day.

2011-12 Schedule*

Operation Uplink Free Call Days

Date		Sponsor
Sept. 4	Labor Day	Sport Clips
Sept. 11	Day of Service	DRS Defense Solutions
Sept. 29	VFW Day	VFW Ohio Charities
Oct. 9	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	Sport Clips
Oct. 23	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Nov. 11	Veterans Day	Sport Clips
Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Day	Harleysville Insurance
Dec. 11	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Dec. 25	Christmas Day	Sport Clips
2012		
Jan. 1	New Years Day	Sport Clips
Jan. 22	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Feb. 14	Valentine’s Day	VFW Dept. of MN & KSTP-TV
Feb. 26	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	Sport Clips
Mar. 11	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Mar. 25	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	Sport Clips
Apr. 8	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	Sport Clips
Apr. 29	Easter	Texas VFW
May 13	Mother’s Day	Ladies Auxiliary
May 27	Memorial Day	Sport Clips
June 3	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
June 17	Father’s Day	Sport Clips
July 4	Independence Day	Sport Clips
July 22	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	VFW Dept. of Delaware
Aug. 11	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Aug. 19	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	Sport Clips
Sept. 2	Labor Day	Sport Clips
Sept. 29	VFW Day	VFW Ohio Charities
Oct. 7	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Oct. 21	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	Sport Clips
Nov. 11	Veterans Day	Sport Clips
Nov. 22	Thanksgiving Day	Harleysville Insurance
Dec. 2	VFW Salutes the Armed Forces	TBD
Dec. 25	Christmas Day	Sport Clips

*Dates are subject to change

VFW Awards Top Three Patriotic Educators

FOR 12 YEARS STRAIGHT, VFW has honored three outstanding educators for their exceptional commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism.

Posts in every Department submit nominees. More than 1,194 teachers earned about \$212,000 in VFW awards in 2010-11. National winners are selected in three categories: elementary school (K-5), middle school (6-8) and high school (9-12).

“Honoring America’s teachers has been a tradition for nearly 100 years,” Steve Van Buskirk, VFW’s director of Programs said. “Next to parents, they hold the key to raising young civic-minded patriots who will perpetuate the values that have made this nation great.”

Each winning national-level teacher received \$1,000 for personal professional development, and another \$1,000 went to their schools. The awards were presented during VFW’s National Legislative Conference in March in Washington, D.C. Here is a look at those winners.

STUDENTS HELP WRITE STATE LAW

At Bridge Creek Elementary in Blanchard, Okla., Annette Dake teaches gifted/talented children, as well as teaching art. Post 3608 in Blanchard nominated Dake for the work she and her students do for veterans.

Over the years, Dake’s students have participated in the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Project. She was instrumental in the “I’m a Veteran Reader,” program in which veterans come to school and listen to first-grade students read weekly and then reward those students with a baseball-type card with the veteran’s photo and military service stats included.

“These items have become collector’s items for the first graders,” Bridge Creek Elementary Principal Kay Norman said in her recommendation letter for Dake. “This project is such a hit with the veterans, they watch the weather and express disappointment if school is closed for snow on ‘their day.’”

Dake also worked with another teacher to help students understand how the government works. The students proposed a law to their state representative about childhood obesity and it ended up becoming state law *H.B. 1647—Oklahoma Kids’ Fitness Challenge*. Norman credits Dake’s leadership for this law.

‘AN UNBELIEVABLE JOB AS A TEACHER’

Nominated by Post 688 in Boerne, Texas, Bryan Degner teaches history at Boerne Middle School North, where he often dresses as historical figures, according to his co-worker Jody Johnson.

“Honoring America’s teachers has been a tradition for nearly 100 years.”

**—Steve Van Buskirk,
VFW’s director of Programs**

“He was the brains behind our re-enactment of the Boston Tea Party and the American Revolution at Boerne town square,” Johnson said in her recommendation letter for Degner. “Eighth-grade students perform for the community in full-blown historical uniforms.”

Degner also led a group of students to a national competition for their presentation on the Women Air Force Service Pilots.

Students under Degner’s supervision have the opportunity to interview veterans, including Medal of Honor recipients. His current project is to have students interview the World War II veterans of Kendall County to place in an exhibit at the public library.

“The work he has done with children has impacted not only the students themselves and their families, but the community of Boerne,” Johnson wrote. “He has done an unbelievable job as a teacher instilling the love of historical events by making them come alive.”

TEACHER MAKES HISTORY ‘COME ALIVE’

A history teacher at Barnegat High School in New Jersey, Lesley Ann Thomson was nominated by Post 10092 in Barnegat.

To bring history directly to her students, Thomson created the “Greatest Generation” program where she invites WWII vets into the classroom to share their experiences about the war. She also developed “Civil War Day” for which re-enactors come into the classroom to talk about their vast knowledge of the Civil War.

Last year, Thomson took a group of students on a tour of the sites of the WWII concentration camps in Germany.

She also is known well at VFW because her students work with veterans on Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. Together, they commemorate the day with various activities.

“She works sedulously to make history come alive for her students,” Joseph Saxton, Jr., principal of Barnegat High, wrote in recommending Thomson. “Students interested in history thrive by her extensive historical knowledge.”

E-mail jblankenship@vfw.org



Annette Dake of Bridge Creek Elementary School in Blanchard, Okla., incorporates veterans in her reading programs.



Bryan Degner of Boerne (Texas) Middle School North often dresses as historical figures to enliven his lessons.



Lesley Ann Thomson of Barnegat High School in New Jersey led a group of students on a tour of WWII sites in Germany.

Be Aware of VFW Deadlines

Here are upcoming deadlines for various VFW program and award nominations over the next seven months.

Citizenship Education Teacher Award

- Nov. 1 Teacher Nominations to the Post
- Nov. 15 Completion of Post judging
- Dec. 15 Completion of District judging
- Jan. 10 Completion of Department judging
- Jan. 15 District participation reports to Dept.
- Jan. 15 Department winners to National
- Jan. 31 Department reports to National

Community Service

- Dec. 1 Department 6-month Community Service Report to National
- April 30 Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project to National
- May 1 Community Service Post to National
- June 1 Department Year-End Report to National

Public Servant National Award

- Jan. 1 Nominations from Post to Department
- Feb. 1 Nominations from Department to National

National Certificate of Recognition

- March 1 List to National from Department

Scout of the Year

- March 1 Scout entries to the Post
- April 1 Post entries to Department
- May 1 Department entry to National

Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen

- Nov. 1 Student entries to Post
- Nov. 15 Completion of Post judging
- Dec. 6 Completion of District judging
- Jan. 7 Completion of Department judging
- Jan. 15 District participation reports to Department Chairmen
- Jan. 15 Department winners to National
- Jan. 31 Department reports to National

Posts with the Most

VFW POSTS OF 1,000 MEMBERS OR MORE AS OF JUNE 30, 2011

Rank	Post No.	Location	Members
1	1114	Evansville, IN	2,637
2	1503	Dale City, VA	2,194
3	9972	Sierra Vista, AZ	2,034
4	8862	Vicenza, Italy	1,777
5	6506	Rosedale, MD	1,759
6	4647	North Highlands, CA	1,724
7	392	Virginia Beach, VA	1,712
8	972	Terre Haute, IN	1,683
9	628	Sioux Falls, SD	1,659
10	27	Wiesbaden, Germany	1,641

Rank	No.	Location	Members
11	63	Boise, ID	1,622
12	4372	Odessa, TX	1,605
13	2485	Angeles City, Philippines	1,578
14	7686	Alamogordo, NM	1,532
15	6873	Abilene, TX	1,518
16	9785	Eagle River, AK	1,488
17	1146	St Clair Shores, MI	1,472
18	7234	Ocean View, DE	1,453
19	5958	Titusville, PA	1,421
20	2503	Omaha, NE	1,402
21	10097	Fort Myers Beach, FL	1,398
22	1296	Bloomington, MN	1,391
23	7330	Oakville, CT	1,372
24	1079	Elyria, OH	1,371
25	2111	Chula Vista, CA	1,354
26	4809	Norfolk, VA	1,344
27	1599	Chambersburg, PA	1,323
28	9534	Mannheim, Germany	1,311
29	10047	North Las Vegas, NV	1,268
30	1308	Alton, IL	1,263
31	8951	West York, PA	1,236
32	1273	Rapid City, SD	1,230
33	1326	Bismarck, ND	1,226
34	788	Cedar Rapids, IA	1,225
34	10692	Grafenwoehr, Germany	1,225
36	1512	Lemon Grove, CA	1,206
37	401	Albuquerque, NM	1,205
38	549	Tucson, AZ	1,199
39	10420	Murrells Inlet, SC	1,189
40	969	Tacoma, WA	1,158
41	3282	Port Orange, FL	1,137
42	76	San Antonio, TX	1,131
43	10436	Kitzingen, Germany	1,129
44	56	Leavenworth, KS	1,126
45	7175	Millington, TN	1,124
46	1170	Middletown, KY	1,114
47	5555	Richfield, MN	1,092
48	379	Yakima, WA	1,091
49	7674	Fort Walton Beach, FL	1,086
50	7564	West Fargo, ND	1,069
51	10209	Spring Hill, FL	1,059
52	8541	San Antonio, TX	1,045
53	9927	Kettering, OH	1,038
54	9808	Mechanicsville, VA	1,032
55	3838	Cape Girardeau, MO	1,030
56	7041	Vista, CA	1,024
57	4548	Jacksonville, AR	1,017
58	3579	Park Ridge, IL	1,016
59	9539	Spartanburg, SC	1,013
60	8696	Palm Coast, FL	1,011
61	9400	Sunnyslope, AZ	1,003

1,088 Recognized to Date

World War II Veterans Leading VFW Posts from Coast to Coast

THE CHECKPOINT STAFF EXTENDS A HEARTY "THANK YOU" to all our World War II Post leaders, members and veterans. And we want to recognize those who still devote time and energy to VFW causes.

Listed below are 48 WWII veterans who serve VFW Posts in official capacities. Checkpoint has recognized a total of 1,088 such Post leaders since the March/April 2009 issue. We will continue to feature this section in subsequent issues until every WWII Post leader whose name is submitted is recognized.

If you would like to recognize a WWII veteran who currently serves your Post, please send us his or her name, official Post position and your Post's location. Send information to:

Checkpoint
Attn: WWII Leaders
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
E-mail: tdyhouse@vfw.org



Name	Position	Post/Location
Art Abronzino	Jr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 7827, East Hartford, Conn.
Joseph Arena	Judge Advocate	Post 3445, Cleveland, Ohio
Don Auperin	Surgeon	Post 7223, Amityville, N.Y.
Andy Banas	Jr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 2697, Munster, Ind.
Dick Barney	Quartermaster	Post 7827, East Hartford, Conn.
Vernon Beal, Jr.	Surgeon	Post 1000, Independence, Mo.
Al Carollo	Chaplain	Post 2697, Munster, Ind.
Madeline C. Chaffee	Jr. Vice Comdr.	Post 10038, Lyndonville, Vt.
George Chicoine	Service Officer	Post 450, Alsip, Ill.
Arnold Clark	Judge Advocate	Post 7147, Cuba, Mo.
Walter Daehn	Trustee	Post 7147, Cuba, Mo.
Max De St. Jeor	Commander	Post 8376, Orem, Utah
C.L. "Jack" Dobbs	Quartermaster	Post 10483, Hot Springs Village, Ark.
Donald Drown	Officer of the Day	Post 10038, Lyndonville, Vt.
Robert L. Filler	Commander	Post 5675, Odessa, Mo.
Ray Fleming	Chaplain	Post 1000, Independence, Mo.
Joe Glowik	Surgeon	Post 3445, Cleveland, Ohio
Albert L. Gorham	Honor Guard Capt.	Post 3233, Sarasota, Fla.
Paul Hawley	Trustee	Post 10420, Murrells Inlet, S.C.
Jesse R. Hensarling	Trustee	Post 2618, Brookhaven, Miss.
Cliff Huber	Trustee	Post 2697, Munster, Ind.
Arthur Kickland	Trustee	Post 4837, Marlette, Mich.
Frank Koehn	Quartermaster	Post 6141, Longdale, Okla.
Kenneth "Bill" Krieger	Sr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 3445, Cleveland, Ohio

Name	Position	Post/Location
Ed Lebryk	Trustee	Post 2697, Munster, Ind.
Harold Lumm	Sr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 4837, Marlette, Mich.
Genaro Luna	Sr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 8927, Lockhart, Texas
Lawrence Mahoney	Chaplain	Post 450, Alsip, Ill.
Clyde Marriott	Chaplain	Post 5714, Canyonville, Ore.
Joseph "Bud" McKay	Bugler/Surgeon	Post 3233, Sarasota, Fla.
John Mika	Officer of the Day	Post 1000, Independence, Mo.
Eddie Miles	Jr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 6141, Longdale, Okla.
Ovidio Montella	Jr. Vice Cmdr.	Post 7223, Amityville, N.Y.
Boyd E. Moore	Trustee	Post 5697, Holly Springs, Miss.
Sandy Olson	Chaplain	Post 6534, Highland, N.Y.
Charles Penman	Surgeon	Post 7183, Lilbourn, Mo.
Michael Prorock	Service Officer	Post 3445, Cleveland, Ohio
William "Bill" Reid	Chaplain	Post 7183, Lilbourn, Mo.
Arturo Rios	Commander	Post 2035, Brownsville, Texas
Pete Roussel	Judge Advocate	Post 5852, Lutcher, La.
Norm Schoon	Sergeant-at-Arms	Post 2697, Munster, Ind.
Horace E. Sears	Chaplain	Post 3233, Sarasota, Fla.
Merlin M. Shaver	Service Officer	Post 4073, Marshall, Mich.
James W. Smith	Adjutant	Post 1574, Staten Island, N.Y.
Mel Stokes	Quartermaster	Post 1173, Boise, Idaho
Howard H. Tirrell	Surgeon	Post 2539, Gulfport, Miss.
Hank Wellin	Chaplain	Post 7827, East Hartford, Conn.
Gene Westfall	Chaplain	Post 10420, Murrells Inlet, S.C.