

# Happy 109th Birthday VFW

Sep 28, 2008

One hundred nine years ago, veterans of three units returned home to form separate veterans organizations in different states at varying times.

What was started so many years ago has even more significance for all of us today than it did prior to September 11. The events that occurred back in 1899 when the first meetings of groups of concerned veterans took place, and from which the Veterans of Foreign Wars was born, have enabled those belonging to our organization to fulfill an important role.

For 109 years the Veterans of Foreign Wars has had a mandate of service to our nation and for those who serve her, “to honor the dead by helping the living.”

Through those many years, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has made a huge difference in the lives of so many. This organization has been tenacious and resolute, fighting to ensure that America lives up to its obligation to care for those who put their lives on the line in defense of our nation and our way of life.

Before the Veterans of Foreign Wars came along, veterans did not receive any health care for wounds received in combat; most of them didn't receive any treatment for any disease or illness acquired as a result of military service; the long and short of it is, veterans of that day served their nation and had no reasonable expectation of receiving compensation of any sort.

The widows and orphans of those veterans fared no better than their husbands and fathers—they were left totally on their own for survival.

The men who founded the VFW challenged the status quo and by doing so, helped shape the future for the millions of patriots-veterans-of future generations. Ordinary people who became extraordinary—because of the willingness to make a difference; to stand-up and do something to make things right for those who deserve it most.

For 109 years, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been steadfast in its determination to ensure that the values and principles upon which this great country was founded are maintained and protected.

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For 109 years, the men and women of the VFW have been advocating on behalf of veterans and our armed forces.

For 109 years the VFW has had a clearly defined path and a sense of purpose.

The generosity and commitment of the members of the VFW are demonstrated in numerous ways: national veterans and legislative services; community service programs; youth activities, scouting, youth scholarship programs and military assistance programs.

The VFW and its Auxiliaries also raise and contribute millions of dollars and donate millions of volunteer hours to their local communities.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is doing the right things at the right time for America. America is important to the VFW, and the VFW is important to America.