



Please be advised that the Online Membership System (OMS) will be shutting down at 4:00pm Central Standard Time on Monday, December 31st. Any transactions that are submitted through OMS on December 31st up to the closing time will be posted to Memstats and Post Query later that evening and available for viewing the morning of January 2, 2018.

***REMINDER! Mail received at the National HQ prior to December 28th will be processed and counted in the December total. Mail received after that date, regardless of the postmark date, will not be counted in the December total. We suggest you have your posts mail in their membership as early as possible.***

The cutoff for email transactions with the Member Service Center is 12:00 noon on Friday, December 28th.

The OMS system will be back on line for the submittal of transactions at 12:00 noon Wednesday, January 2nd however, membership transactions that are processed will not be posted to Memstats until January 5th.

Should you have any questions, please contact either myself or the member service center and we will be happy to assist you.

***Special Offer:*** Recently, the Department office has received books called ***“The Liberation of Kuwait” Honoring the Veterans of Desert Storm.*** We have some books left over from Fall Conference so if you would like one please let Department know. I would like these books to be offered to all Desert Storm Veterans first.

***Membership Drawing:*** Any Post that obtains 100% by Mid-Winter Conference that was not 100% by Fall Conference will be put into a drawing for \$200.00.

Members are reminded that their annual membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been changed to a 12-month dues structure that started July 1, 2018. The changes to subscription dues to a “DMV” model now allows anyone who becomes a member or renews membership after July 1, 2018, to postpone expiration until the last day of their 12<sup>th</sup> month. For example, if a new member joins or an existing member renews on July 5, 2018, their dues now expire on July 31, 2019. The annual membership card (effective July 1, 2018) reflects the month and year dues expire. Current members that are in good standing as of July 1, 2018, have been extended in OMS through the last day of the month when their dues are scheduled to expire. Regardless of the month they renewed, if they were in good standing as of July 1, 2018, they now have until the end of the expiration month to renew their dues.

Members that are in good standing but have not renewed for the 2018/19 membership year will see the changes on their digital ID card reflecting the updated month and year when their dues expire. They will have the option to request an updated annual membership card with the change reflecting the expiration month and year.

The purpose of the changes to subscription dues to a “DMV” model was to streamline the process for both the Post and Department Quartermasters to track expiring annual members. No longer will Posts and Departments have to chase annual members’ dues on a daily basis; instead they can see a block of members during a specific month (one, two and three months out), allowing them to formulate a plan to collect dues at one time. This also makes it easier for

the Department/District/Post Sergeant-at-Arms to quickly see if a member is in good standing prior to a meeting.

Section 220 of the National By-Laws, "Vacancies and Removal of Elective Officers or Committee Members" states "Any elective Post officer removed by the Department Commander, by reason of failure to pay current dues or by vote of the post under the provisions of this section, shall not be eligible to serve in any Post office in the same administrative year in which the officer is removed."

For the purpose of establishing continuous membership, a member may reimburse Department and National dues for all delinquent years, provided they were a member in good standing for five (5) consecutive years prior to the delinquency.

**Post Commanders:** VFW Posts should take the necessary steps to incorporate under the laws of the state in which the Post is located. Financial responsibility laws, as interpreted by the courts, may cause members of unincorporated Posts to be at risk. Incorporating under the provisions of Sections 708 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure and the laws of the state will provide protection for Post members. Posts are urged to contact their Department Adjutant to obtain the proper forms for incorporating. The Articles of Incorporation must be reviewed by the Commander-in-Chief prior to forwarding them to the proper state authorities. It shall be the responsibility of the Post Commander to ensure full compliance with both sections and to ensure that all state requirements for annual filing, fees, etc., are met in a timely manner.

The attention of Department, District, County Council and Post Commanders is directed to Section 103, Manual of Procedure, which prescribes the way applications for membership will be handled. Applications for membership of new, reinstating or transfer members must be voted on by the members present at a regular Post meeting. No Post, County Council, District, Department or National officer, or any other member, has authority to reject the application card of a person who is eligible for membership.

Sections 219 and 704 of the Manual of Procedure outline the various things for which the Post Relief Fund can be used. A few years ago, the phrase, "To foster true patriotism through historical and educational programs," was added to this section. This allows the Post to use the relief funds for the Voice of Democracy program or other Americanism programs that are educational. This does not include Post building projects, hall remodeling, color guard uniforms or any other expenditure that does not follow these guidelines.

**All Districts/Posts:** All Districts/Posts Commanders wishing to have the State Commander or designee attend a function are requested to forward their request to the State Adjutant for review of calendar of events.

**All Posts:** Every Post chartered by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States will be expected to participate in the following programs during the 2018-2019 year: Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teachers' Awards, "Buddy" ® Poppy and Veterans and Military Support Programs. Additionally, it is necessary

that all Post and Department Commanders comply with all provisions of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure and Ritual.

***Dates to Remember:***

7 Dec > Pearl Harbor Day

15 Dec > Wreath Across America Day

25 Dec > Christmas Day

1 Jan > New Year's Day

***Directory Changes: Everyone is asked to review their information in the 2018-19 directory to make sure that all information is correct. If there is a discrepancy, please notify the State Adjutant office for correction.***

***Audits:*** Please see Section 218 of the Manual of Procedure, "Duty of Trustees". Trustees Report of Audit must be completed in detail at the close of each quarter. Commanders are reminded that accurate and complete records shall be kept by all persons handling Post funds, including the Club Manager, Bingo Chairman and VFW Riders Groups. These records shall be audited by Post Trustees in the same manner as Post Quartermaster and Adjutant records.

The 4th Quarter Audits are due January 31st, there are still many Posts who have not submitted their 3rd Quarter audits to date. If you have not turned in your 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter audit, please do so. If you are 2 Audits behind your Post will be placed on suspension or if you submit an audit and the previous quarters audit has not been submitted your current audit will not be accepted and you will be considered delinquent and you will be placed on suspension. You may fax it in at 517-485-6432 or mail it to Dept. of Michigan VFW 924 N. Washington Ave. Lansing, MI 48906.

***POPPIES:*** Many posts have ordered their Poppies, to them a big "Thank you" for getting them ordered and done. For those who have not, please do so now that way we know you will receive them in a timely manner. Deadline for Poppy order is December 31,2018.

***Bonding:*** Each Post should have submitted their Bonds in August because once September rolled around and the QM didn't renew their bond, then that means they have expired, and the Bonding Company is no longer reliable if something has happened. I can't stress enough the importance of getting these things taken care of and on time. As the QM, you agreed to maintain all books records and monies of the position. If anyone needs help, call Dept. QM Patterson at 517-485-9456. I always hear of people needing help, but we get very few calls or emails asking for help.

***Commanders:*** IAW Section 105 of the National By-Laws, a member whose current dues are paid through their anniversary date is in good standing and, unless suspended or terminated, is entitled to all membership rights IAW the National By-Laws. A member whose dues are unpaid after their anniversary date ceases to be a member in good standing and loses all rights of membership in the Veterans of Foreign War

***Half Staff U.S. Flag December 7<sup>th</sup>:*** Public Law 103-308 passed in 1994 designates December 7 as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day" and requests the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff (sunrise to sunset) in honor of the individuals who lost their lives on that day.

**District Meetings:** All District Commanders are reminded that if a District meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, that they are to immediately notify the Department Representative, the State Adjutant office and their respective Post Commanders. ***We do not want anyone to have an accident due to inclement weather.***

**Post Commanders:** Section 203 - Regular Meetings – All Posts shall held at least one regular meeting each month. Failure to comply can result in immediate revocation of the Post Charter notwithstanding the provisions of Section 211 of the Manual of Procedures.

**National By-Laws and Manual of Procedures 2019 Edition:** Post Commanders are reminded that the new edition became effective 24 August 2018 with many changes. It is recommended that all Post Commanders purchase a copy from National Headquarters.

**VFW Foundation Community Support Grant:** The VFW Foundation Community Support Grant is open. Qualified Posts and/or Auxiliaries may receive grants of up to \$1,000 to support local nonprofits or important outreach projects in their communities. New to the grant this year, an applicant may be eligible to receive up to \$500 in additional funding by organizing a community service project that involves a local branch or affiliate of a VFW national corporate supporter (e.g. Burger King, Sport Clips, Walgreens, Humana, Ace Hardware, etc.). To view application guidelines or to apply for the VFW Foundation Community Support Grant, please visit [www.vfw.org/grants](http://www.vfw.org/grants). For questions, contact Jason Couch, Grants Coordinator, at [jcouch@vfw.org](mailto:jcouch@vfw.org) or (816) 968-1174.

**Displaying Military Service Symbols:** Military service flags, insignias, etc., should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to <http://www.vfwstore.org/products/GP238>.

**VFW Special Project Program:** This program was put in place to recognize VFW units for creating and completing unique and extraordinary community service projects. Record book entry nominations that are found to be complete and well-substantiated should be endorsed by the Department Adjutant or VFW Department Community Activities Chairman and forwarded to National Programs Department. Deadline for entries is April 30 of each year. Every Post Special Project receiving the Award of Excellence in the May judging will be entered in the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Competition. Complete information can be found in the 2018-19 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman's Manual.

Recent changes to the VFW National By-Laws, Manual of Procedures and Ritual establish that ***Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*** shall be the parliamentary authority on procedural matters not governed by VFW By-Laws and Manual of procedure. Newly revised ***Robert's Rules of Order*** is readily available at local book stores and online retailers such as Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

#### **COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT**

Once again, my Special Project this year is Cancer. Please make sure all your donations go through Department so that you may receive the proper credit.

I am asking that all Post issues try to be handled within your District prior to bringing them to the Department example:(QM questions, 990's, audits, monthly reporting etc.....). Try to establish a good working relationship within your District, every District has a lot of comrades that have a wealth of knowledge that they are willing to share with you, all you have to do is ask them. If your District cannot answer your questions by all means call Dept.

The 40th Annual Mid-Winter Conference will be held January 24-26, 2019 at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo, MI. As of right now the banquet ticket form and the hotel form are on the Department website. As more details come in and get finalized the Agenda & Dress Code will be on the Department Website ([www.vfwmi.org](http://www.vfwmi.org)) under News & Events.

VOD/PP/TOY Deadline for all 3 programs to the Post was Oct. 31, 2018. Deadline for the Post to the District was Nov. 15, 2018. Deadline for District to Department is Dec. 16. 2018 these dates/deadlines are for all 3 Programs.

Post and District Chairman please make sure all required documentation accompanies your entries. District Chairperson make sure your District report form, participation report for all 3 programs are forwarded to the Dept. Director, there are All-State points tied to Post participation. The Award ceremony will be held at the Mid-Winter Conference to be held January 24-26, 2019 at the Radisson Hotel in Kalamazoo, MI. Hotel accommodations for your District Winners student and family is the responsibility of each District this includes their banquet tickets. All scholarship sponsors or any one that is interested in sponsoring/ co-sponsoring a scholarship for VOD/ PP please contact Dept. QM/ADJ Lynn Patterson to make arraignment to submit your sponsor fees.

At our Mid-Winter Conference Karen Greene will be putting on a PTSD seminar for all veterans. This will be on Friday January 25, 2019 at 9:00 AM. Karen will also be available all weekend to answer any other questions that you may have. Hope to see you all there.

***Changes to Department Roster:***

Historian/MOV Editor:

Stacey Roberts

7901 Backus

Greenville, MI 48838

616-902-5877

\*\*Mail all MOV related correspondence to her home address or email to [mov@vfwmi.org](mailto:mov@vfwmi.org).

Past State Commander:

Ronald Amend

837 Saint Lawrence St.

Marysville, MI 48040

586-255-3871

Post 2272 Commander:

Joseph Cooney

620 W. Courtland St.

Durand, MI 48429

810-265-2763

Post 4005 Commander:

Fred Blair  
3939 Garrison Rd.  
Durand, MI 48429

\*\*The January meeting has been changed from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.

Post 4087 Adjutant:

Jonathan Boris  
7255 Richfield Rd.  
Davison, MI 48423  
810-577-9964

Post 4126 Commander:

Ronald Knott  
653 E. 11<sup>th</sup> St.  
Mio, MI 48647  
989-826-5081

Post 4126 Quartermaster

Lawrence Largent  
2520 Cedar Run Rd.  
Mio, MI 48647  
989-848-2144

Post 6579 Commander:

Stephen Williams  
8303 Easton Rd.  
New Lothrop, MI 48460  
810-638-5630

Post 9021 Commander:

Ronald Kosal  
13000 E. 12 Mile Rd.  
Warren, MI 48088  
586-563-3512

Post 9344 Commander:

Neal Stanley  
9664 Cherry Rd.  
Harbor Beach, MI 48441  
989-479-0697

Post 9344 Adjutant

Dennis Essenmacher  
8268 Schweigert Rd.  
Minden City, MI 48456  
989-864-3124

Post 10704 Quartermaster:  
Gary Gravit  
PO Box 92  
Cassopolis, MI 49031  
269-228-1946

BY COMMAND OF:

*Phil Patterson*

Phil Patterson