

# CHECKPOINT



## WHAT'S INSIDE

### Extra Extra ..... 2

- Youth essay themes announced
- Members can now have digital membership cards
- VFW Store will be at convention with new merchandise

### Post Presents Gift ..... 2

Students receive package from deployed soldier.

### Unmet Needs ..... 3

Afghanistan War vet gets help from VFW's assistance program.



### Kansas City Welcomes VFW ..... 4

Members will delight in knowing what the "City of Fountains" has to offer.



### Publications Contest Winners ..... 6

More than 50 entries were judged this year.

### VFW Foundation ..... 7

Meet the staff and read about how to support the work of VFW Foundation.



### First Female Commander ..... 8

California Post elects its first female commander, and she's ready for the task at hand.



## 'Uniting to Combat Hunger'

# VFW Headquarters and Others Team Up to Help End Food Insecurity in Kansas City

**On June 6, VFW National Headquarters aligned with Humana, Harvesters – The Community Food Network and After the Harvest to launch the "Uniting to Combat Hunger" campaign. The goal is to provide 50,000 meals to people with food insecurity in or near Kansas City, Mo.**

At the campaign's launch, employees from National Headquarters and Lockton Affinity, the broker of VFW's Insurance Program, gathered on sites near Kansas City, Mo. Volunteers picked fresh produce and pulled weeds – all to combat hunger. One location – the Community Covenant Church Community Garden in Lenexa, Kan. – had a lot of kale to glean.

After the Harvest promotes "gleaning," which is picking edible crops that remain after crops are collected for distribution. Located in Kansas City, After the Harvest aims to provide fresh produce to food banks, pantries, shelters and community kitchens in Missouri and Kansas.

"Some 25 percent of military households and 27 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan vets are affected by food insecurity," said VFW Commander-in-Chief Keith Harman. "This is something VFW won't tolerate. That's why we are teaming with others to do something tangible in our Kansas City community."

Food insecurity doesn't just mean being hungry – people with food insecurity don't know where the next meal for them and their family will come from. In Kansas City, 15 percent of the population faces food insecurity.

At this month's VFW National Convention in Kansas City, Harvesters – The Community Food Network, also located in Kansas City, will host a food-packing event. Those who want to volunteer while in Kansas City for the convention can pack and sort food July 21-22 (Saturday and Sunday) in the exhibit hall at the convention center.

Convention attendees also are asked to donate canned food in the barrels placed at the Kansas City Convention Center.

To learn more, download and view VFW's convention app, VFW KC 2018, which will be available in Apple and Google stores after July 4. The app can be found by searching "VFW Convention."

To help another way, "dip jars" will be placed throughout the convention center for those who want to donate money.

EMAIL: [dspiva@vfw.org](mailto:dspiva@vfw.org)

"Some 25 percent of military households and 27 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan vets are affected by food insecurity. This is something VFW won't tolerate."

—Keith Harman,  
VFW Commander-in-Chief



Volunteers pick fresh produce and pull weeds as part of the "Uniting to Combat Hunger" campaign. About 25 percent of military households and 27 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan vets are affected by food insecurity. PHOTOS BY DAVE SPIVA/VFW



An employee from Lockton Affinity, the broker of VFW's Insurance Program, gently picks kale for a "gleaning" on June 6 at the Community Covenant Church Community Garden in Lenexa, Kan. VFW National Headquarters, along with Humana, Harvesters – The Community Food Network and After the Harvest, launched the "Uniting to Combat Hunger" campaign to fight food insecurity in the Kansas City, Mo., area.

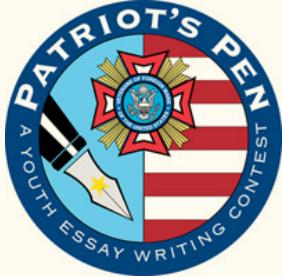


Employees from VFW National Headquarters and Lockton Affinity gather at the Community Covenant Church Community Garden in Lenexa, Kan. As a part of the "Uniting to Combat Hunger" campaign, VFW leadership hopes to provide 50,000 meals to people with food insecurity in or near Kansas City, Mo.

# EXTRA! EXTRA!

## YOUTH ESSAY THEMES ANNOUNCED

The 2018-19 Voice of Democracy theme is: "Why My Vote Matters." The Patriot's Pen theme is: "Why I Honor the American Flag." To download and print the student entry forms for Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen, visit <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>.



## A SIMPLE WAY TO HELP VETERANS

There are several easy ways to support VFW that only take a few minutes and don't require you to donate any money today. Consider naming the VFW as a beneficiary of your retirement, bank accounts or life insurance policies. For details, see [www.vfw.org/plannedgiving](http://www.vfw.org/plannedgiving) or contact the VFW Planned Giving Office at (816) 968-1119 or [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org).

## HELP A STUDENT PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

If you or someone you know is heading to college soon, help ensure they're prepared. eKnowledge provides SAT or ACT PowerPrep programs to VFW members, relatives and dependents at drastically reduced prices. Help your student prepare for their college entrance exams today. To order, visit <http://eknowledge.com/vfw>.



## DIGITAL MEMBERSHIP CARDS NOW AVAILABLE

VFW members now have the ability to download a digital version of their membership card through the VFW app available in the Apple and Google Play stores. The digital version will not replace the physical VFW membership card — those cards will still be sent to annual and life members. The digital version is intended as another option for our members' convenience. A member can now display either a physical or digital card when asked to show a VFW membership card.

## JOINING US IN KANSAS CITY?

Check out the VFW Store's booth for your official convention pins, T-shirts and polos. You also will find lots of new items in stock, including accessories for your furry friends, new jewelry and even a teddy bear. Also visit [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) or call 1-833-VFW-VETS.



Kansas City Convention Center  
PHOTO COURTESY OF VISITKC.COM

## Showing Appreciation to Third Graders

# VFW Post Presents Students Gift from Deployed Soldier

Members of VFW Post 6172 in Alta, Iowa, gave a special presentation and gift to third-grade students at a local elementary school in March.

Last fall, Post members asked third-grade students from Alta-Aurelia Elementary School to create cards for troops deployed overseas. The cards were placed in 10 care packages that were put together by Post members. Ten additional care packages, along with more cards, were sent to the same soldiers in January. Donations for the care packages were collected at a VFW soup supper in November. Post Commander Don Fisher said the Post sent homemade cookies, snacks and socks to soldiers in Afghanistan.

One of those soldiers was 1st Sgt. Adam Martinez. To show thanks, Martinez sent a miniature replica of a T-Wall, which are concrete barriers used on bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. Inscribed on the replica was a message to the third graders, stating "Thank you for your enduring support and dedication."

In March, Post members presented the gift to the students. Fisher, a Vietnam War veteran who served with the Army's 84th Engineer Battalion in 1968-69, invited Martinez's aunt, Alta resident Jeri Kolpin, to the special presentation.

"She brought pictures of him, so that the kids could see who Adam is," Fisher said. "She also read a letter from Adam to the kids thanking them for their support. She wanted to show that he is a regular guy."

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*"Thank you for your enduring support and dedication."*

—1st Sgt. Adam Martinez's message to Alta-Aurelia Elementary School third-graders



(From left to right) VFW Post 6172 Commander Don Fisher; his wife, Cathy, an Auxiliary member; 1st Sgt. Adam Martinez's aunt Jeri Kolpin; and Post 6172 member Dan Young give a special presentation to third-grade students at Alta-Aurelia Elementary School in Alta, Iowa, in March.

PHOTOS BY MARA ROHWER/COURTESY OF STORM LAKE PILOT TRIBUNE



Alta-Aurelia Elementary School students, along with VFW Post 6172 Commander Don Fisher, Auxiliary member Cathy Fisher, Jeri Kolpin and Post 6172 member Dan Young, in March. Last year, the children made cards for deployed soldiers in Afghanistan. To show thanks, 1st Sgt. Adam Martinez sent the children a letter and a miniature replica of a T-Wall.

# CHECKPOINT

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Checkpoint is an award-winning newsletter published six times a year in January, March, May, July, September and November. Its purpose is to provide VFW Department, District and Post leaders with information to enhance their job performance and furnish them with a more comprehensive understanding of the organization.

Correspondence can be sent to the editor at VFW National Headquarters.

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Internet address: [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org)

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**NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.**

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## Unmet Needs Program Helps Missouri VFW Member

An Army veteran received \$1,500 from VFW's *Unmet Needs* program for living expenses because he is unable to work.

Jesse Thorsen, a member of VFW Post 5789 in Lee's Summit, Mo., served two deployments in Afghanistan. During the first in 2009-10, Thorsen was an infantryman with 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn., 509<sup>th</sup> Regt., 25<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div. He later served as a combat engineer with the 402<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Company (Sapper) while in Afghanistan in 2012-13.

Thorsen, of Lee's Summit, Mo., said that he suffers from epilepsy and had to separate from the Army after 14 years of service in August 2016. He is rated 70 percent disabled by VA due to his service-connected disabilities. After his discharge, he applied for social security disability due to having seizures.

"Originally, I was denied on my social security disability," Thorsen said. "So, I figured I would work to try to make some money for my family."

Working as a bricklayer, Thorsen suffered a seizure on a job site and was unable to keep his job because of the episode.

"I understood why I had to be let go," Thorsen said. "I thought I was going to eventually kill myself one day by working if I kept trying to work."

Because he is epileptic, Thorsen is unable to work, and his wife, Susan, can't work because she is his VA caretaker. Thorsen, again, applied for social security disability after losing his job. His claim eventually was approved, but in the meantime, Thorsen and his family needed money for rent. That's when Thorsen found out about the *Unmet Needs* program through the Kansas City (Mo.) VA Medical Center.

Thorsen applied for the *Unmet Needs* grant in February, which he said was an "easy" process. He said the program paid his landlord directly.

"We were very happy about that," Thorsen said. "Our landlord was very understanding and good to us. It was nice to be caught up."

After receiving the grant, Thorsen said he and family were able to financially get back on track. He said that he thanks VFW for helping for him and his family during a "hard time."

"VFW has helped me so much," Thorsen said. "The *Unmet Needs* program really helped out our family in a time that we needed it. We appreciate everything the VFW does for not only disabled vets but also for veterans of foreign wars and all veterans alike."

**EMAIL:** [dspiva@vfw.org](mailto:dspiva@vfw.org)

### Unmet Needs has Disbursed More Than \$10 Million

VFW's *Unmet Needs* program helps America's military families who have experienced unexpected financial difficulties.

The program, supported by Burger King franchisees, provides financial aid to assist those with basic life needs in the form of a grant — not a loan.

Since 2004, Unmet Needs has given \$10.16 million to more than 8,300 military and veteran families. This includes 389 families in Puerto Rico, who each received a \$300 grant after hurricanes devastated the island in 2017.

Learn more about the Unmet Needs program at: <https://www.vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants>.



### DO I QUALIFY FOR UNMET NEEDS?

To be eligible to receive financial assistance through VFW's *Unmet Needs* program, a recipient must:

- ✓ Be on active duty, whose financial hardship is a result of deployment, military pay error or medical discharge.
- ✓ Have been discharged on or after Sept. 11, 2001, whose financial hardship is a direct result of military-service connected injuries and/or illnesses that are causing an employment hardship.
- ✓ Have been discharged prior to Sept. 11, 2001, who is on a fixed income (VA compensation, SSI, SSDI) and/or whose financial hardship is an emergency situation.

### The financial hardship can't be caused by:

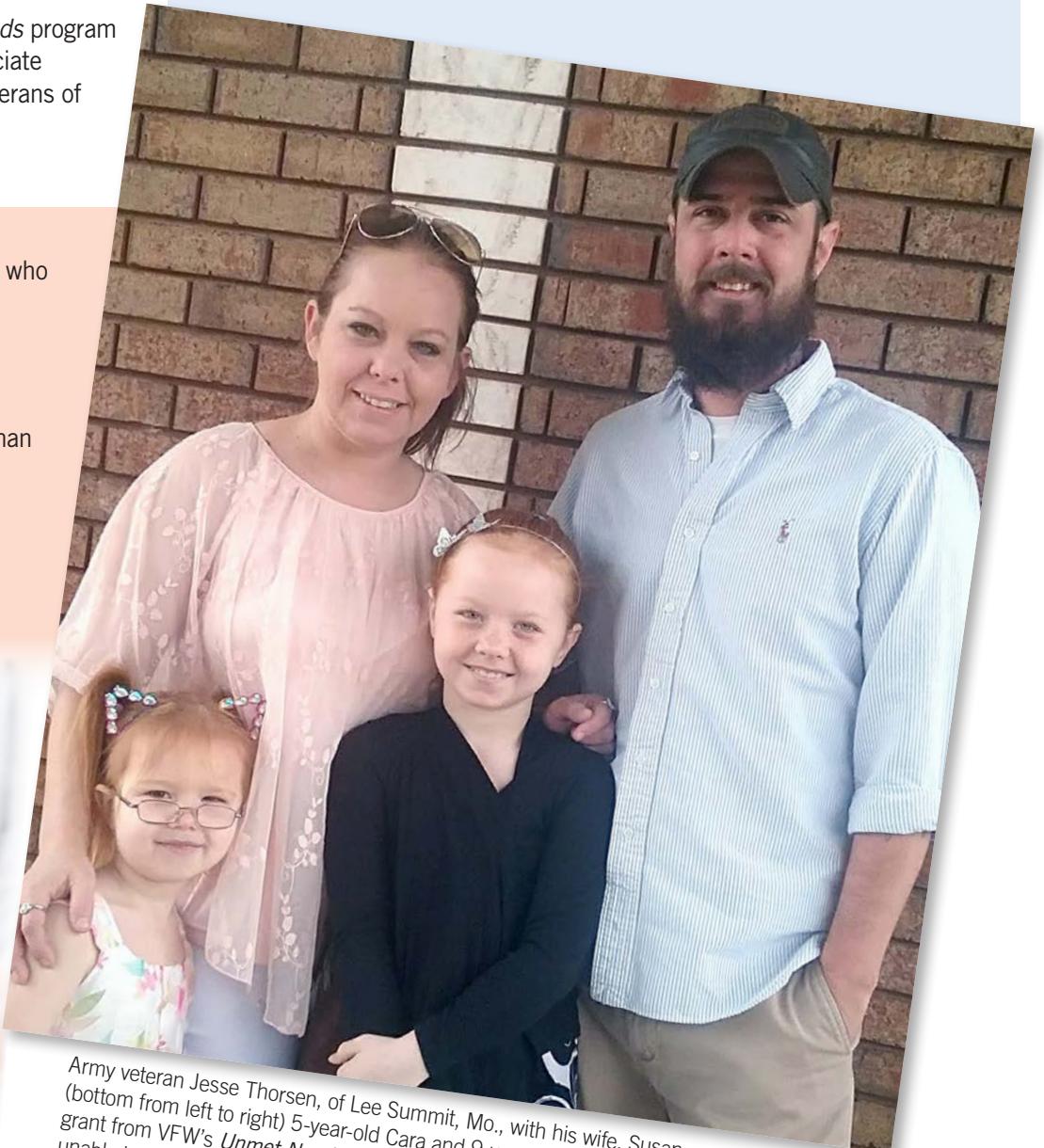
- Civil, legal or domestic issues; misconduct; or any issues that result from spousal separation or divorce.
- Financial mismanagement by self or others, or due to bankruptcy.

### Eligible expenses

- Household (mortgage, rent, repairs, insurance)
- Vehicle (payments, insurance, repairs)
- Utilities
- Food and clothing
- Children's clothing, diapers, formula, school or childcare expenses
- Medical bills, prescriptions eyeglasses

### Ineligible expenses

- Credit cards, military charge cards or retail store cards
- Cable, internet or secondary phones
- Cosmetic or investigational medical procedures/expenses
- Taxes
- Furniture, electronic equipment or vehicle rentals
- Any other expenses not determined to be a basic life need



Army veteran Jesse Thorsen, of Lee Summit, Mo., with his wife, Susan, and his daughters, (bottom from left to right) 5-year-old Cara and 9-year-old Alyssa. Thorsen received a \$1,500 grant from VFW's *Unmet Needs* program earlier this year to help with rent while he was unable to work due to epileptic seizures.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSE THORSEN



Marine Corps veteran and Kansas City Mayor Sylvester "Sly" James with VFW employees who are military veterans in April in Kansas City's Union Hill neighborhood. From left: Zach Schwenk, Teresa Johnson, Dave Spiva, Tara Arteaga, Nick Lopez, Mary Spencer, Johnathan Duncan and Quentin Carroll. PHOTO BY SUSAN MCSPADDEN

*City of Fountains to Welcome VFW*

## Kansas City has Attractions for Everyone

**Those attending VFW's 119th National Convention in Kansas City, Mo., July 21-25, understand the importance of the business at hand. But make sure to take some time to reconnect with old friends and take in the flavor of Kansas City.**

For the fourth time in the organization's history, Kansas City will host VFW's national convention. Unlike the last time VFW held its convention in Kansas City, a new streetcar is in place to make getting around town much easier. Before your visit, check out [kcstreetcar.org](http://kcstreetcar.org) to see what businesses are along the route.

The "Paris of the Plains" has a lot to offer convention-goers. Here is a sneak peak of some of the exciting places to experience during your visit to Kansas City.

### Crown Center

[www.crowncenter.com](http://www.crowncenter.com)

If you are traveling to Kansas City with children, Crown Center is a must-see. From the LEGOLAND Discovery Center to the Sea Life aquarium to the myriad eateries, it's a fun place for people of all ages. The Crown Center Square Fountain has 48 water shooters that spout up to 60 feet in the air. Watching the dancing water shows synchronized to music recorded by members of the Kansas City Symphony is a nice way to unwind after a day of convention business.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VISITKC.COM



PHOTO BY LAUREN GOLDMAN/VFW

### The Roasterie

[www.theroasterie.com](http://www.theroasterie.com)

Coffee drinkers will delight in a visit to The Roasterie. With a DC-3 aircraft hoisted atop the factory (it's the company's logo), you can't miss it. Take a tour of where the coffee is produced by reserving your spot online. Each tour takes about 45 minutes. Tours are offered twice per day Monday through Friday, five times each day on Saturday and once on Sunday. Be sure to visit the gift shop and enjoy a Roasterie coffee and a pastry at the café.

### Power & Light District

[www.powerandlightdistrict.com](http://www.powerandlightdistrict.com)

Located in the heart of downtown Kansas City, the Power & Light District has more than 50 restaurants, bars, shops and entertainment venues. The nine-block neighborhood links the Kansas City Convention Center on the west and the Sprint Center on the east.

In the middle of the district is Kansas City Live!, an outdoor concert venue where live entertainment can be heard weekly during the summer months.

Located on the streetcar line, the Power & Light District is easily accessible.

### Historic 18th and Vine District

[www.kcjazzdistrict.org](http://www.kcjazzdistrict.org)

Located just two miles southeast of downtown Kansas City, this area is rich in jazz history. Hometown of legendary saxophonist Charlie Parker, it earned its name during the 1920-40 period when it became the center of jazz music. Jazz greats such as Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald and Louie Armstrong could be heard there.

Today, it is home to the American Jazz Museum and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. If you are a true lover of jazz, you will want to take in a show at the Blue Room or Gem Theater.

Be sure you have your veteran or military ID, as some places in the district offer free or discounted admission.

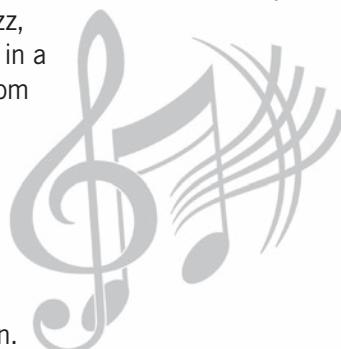


PHOTO COURTESY OF VISITKC.COM

The Kansas City Convention Center is the site of VFW's 119th National Convention July 21-25. Unlike the last time VFW was in town, a new streetcar is in place. It's free and easy to ride. Above right: VFW Membership Associate Director Tara Arteaga and her husband, Fray, with their children – Lucia Gianna and Kiara – in April at Kansas City's Crown Center. Convention attendees planning to bring children or grandchildren will want to visit all of the attractions at Crown Center.

**National World War I Museum and Memorial**

[www.theworldwar.org](http://www.theworldwar.org)

This is the only museum in the U.S. dedicated to showing the Great War through the eyes of those who fought in it. Interactive displays and eyewitness testimonies guide visitors through one of the largest collections of WWI artifacts in the world.



Life-sized trenches offer below-ground views and actual tools and equipment used by Doughboys. Recorded statements from the writings of participants from the period and relevant ambient sounds add to this experience.

Perhaps one of the most poignant sites at the museum is the Paul Sunderland Glass Bridge, which you must cross before entering the Main Gallery. Beneath the bridge are 9,000 red poppies, each representing 1,000 deaths – a reminder of the 9 million who died as a result of the war.

**Boulevard Brewing**

[www.boulevard.com](http://www.boulevard.com)

Beer enthusiasts will enjoy a tour of Boulevard Brewing, which launched in Kansas City in 1989. A 45-minute walking tour of the brewery, located about a mile northwest of VFW National Headquarters, concludes with samples in the Tasting Room, so



be prepared to show your ID. Tickets are \$5 and are available on a first-come, first-served basis at the Tours & Rec Center welcome desk. Tour hours are Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Friday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Country Club Plaza**

[www.countryclubplaza.com](http://www.countryclubplaza.com)

This 15-block district about three miles south of downtown Kansas City features more than 150 shops and dozens of restaurants and bars. Most impressively, the Plaza is like an outdoor art museum with Spanish architecture and European art. Designed in 1922 as the nation's first suburban shopping district, the Plaza has a statue of Sir Winston Churchill. Just steps away, replicas of two of Spain's landmarks — the Giralda Tower and the Seville Light — punctuate the horizon. In a quiet courtyard sits an original bronze of Pomona by Italian sculptor Donatello Gabrielli.

Running along the Plaza is Brush Creek, where gondola rides are offered through Ambiance on the Water ([www.ambianceonthewater.com](http://www.ambianceonthewater.com)). Rides last from 20 to 35 minutes and are a good way to end the day.



Ken Romine, Nick Lopez, Mary Spencer and Quentin Carroll, all of whom are VFW members employed at VFW National Headquarters, enjoy time in March at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City's historic 18th and Vine District. With a valid military or veteran ID, visitors get in the museum for free. PHOTO BY LAUREN GOLDMAN/VFW

**VFW Convention App**

Download the 119th VFW National Convention app to stay on top of any last-minute changes. It will be available after July 4 in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store by searching "VFW KC 2018" or "VFW Convention."

**Important Locations at Convention**

Convention Office .....	Halls BCD
First Aid .....	Outside Hall D
Information Desk .....	Lobby 2200
VFW Registration .....	Halls BCD
Mother's Room .....	Show Office A

Examinations Offered

**Visit the Health Fair in Kansas City**

A staple at all VFW national conventions, the health fair should be on the bucket list of all convention attendees. Sponsored by Humana, the health fair offers a variety of wellness checks. In recent years, lives literally have been saved by these checks.

Open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day in Halls BCD at the Kansas City Convention Center, the health fair will offer screenings including abdominal aortic aneurysm, vision, blood pressure and skin cancer.

See below for a complete list of companies expected in Kansas City.

- Abbie Inc.
- National AMBUCS Inc.
- American Liver Foundation
- American Optometric Association
- AAAneurysm Outreach
- Veteran Outreach at *Asbestos.com*
- Clear Captions
- Military Health System
- Delta Dental of California
- Help Heal Veterans
- Humana
- IA AIS
- Inside RX
- Live Life Alarms Medical Alert
- M&E Sales
- Truffoire Skin Care
- Neurolumen, LLC
- Occfit Solutions
- Oticon Inc.
- Philips
- Retreat Premier Addiction Treatment Centers
- Sivantos Inc. SIGNIA Hearing Aids
- Songs for Sound
- Massaging Insoles
- Veterans Against Alzheimer's
- VA Health Information Exchange/VHA
- Veterans Crisis Line
- VETS Prostate Cancer Awareness
- Office of Research and Development/Million Veteran Program
- Dept. of Veterans Affairs-Telehealth & MyHealthVet
- Kansas City VA Medical Center
- Kansas City Mobile Vet Center
- Walgreens



## Comments From Judges

- Exceptional front/back covers!
- Excellent publication — Think about increasing the font size and add a little leading to help the publication breathe.
- Be careful of image dimensions (stretching) and resolution (recommended 200 dpi).
- Great intro — captured my interest right off the bat.
- Quotes would be great, if possible.
- Overall, great content and images.
- Keep fonts consistent. Include more info in captions.
- Run spellcheck.
- Excellent content and photos!
- Great layout overall! A few images are low-res.
- I like where you are going with the layout, but there are several images that are low-res and don't have cutlines.
- Add more local coverage.
- Putting copy in all uppercase font is difficult to read.
- Nice photos — try to add cutlines; add more local content.
- Nice, clean layout overall. Add more local coverage and photos.
- The front layout of newsletter is very nice. Try using columns inside.

## Department Publications Large Frequency

(printed 5+ times per year)

- Grand Award:**  
Wisconsin VFW News  
Marla J. Morgan, Editor
- Silver Award:**  
The Oregon VFW News  
Sue Piper, Editor

## Department Publications Small Frequency

(printed 1-4 times per year)

- Grand Award:**  
Illinois VFW News  
Barb Wilson, Editor
- Silver Award:**  
Pennsylvania VFW News  
David Sandman, Editor
- Bronze Award:**  
Virginia Veteran  
Rick Raskin, Editor
- Iowa Voice  
Linda Jones, Editor

## 17 Awards Issued

# More Than 50 Entries Received in VFW National Publications Contest

Thanks to all of the participants of the 2018 VFW National Publications Contest. Covering the 2017 calendar year, the contest garnered 56 entries, 23 less than last year.

Entries came in from 37 Posts/Districts and 12 Departments. There were two submissions for the "Best Magazine" category, and nine submissions for "Best Feature Article." Of the 56 entries, 17 placed.

Two non-VFW-affiliated journalism professionals served as judges for the competition. This is designed to guarantee impartiality and objectivity in the judging.

The Checkpoint staff congratulates all entrants for their hard work and service to their respective members. The pool of entries this year, while smaller than past years, proved to be very competitive.

If you have suggestions for how we can improve the National Publications Contest for 2018, write to us at VFW Publications Contest, 406 W. 34th Street, Suite 523, Kansas City, MO 64111.

Email: [kwilliams@vfw.org](mailto:kwilliams@vfw.org)

## 2017 VFW National Publications Contest Winners

### Magazine

**Grand Award:**  
Texas VFW News, Roy Grona, Editor



**Silver Award:**  
NC VFW The Leader Magazine  
Russ Chambers, Editor

### Best Feature Article

- Grand Award:**  
"Feather in her cap"  
Andrea Brown, *The Daily Herald*  
Everett, Wash.
- Silver Award:**  
"Delegates' Action Addresses Smoking Issue"  
David Sandman, *Pennsylvania VFW News*  
Department of Pennsylvania
- Bronze Award:**  
"VFW Member Receives French Legion of Honor Medal"  
Wanda Butler, *NC VFW The Leader Magazine*  
Department of North Carolina



### District/Post Publications

**Large Frequency**  
(printed 5+ times per year)

- Grand Award:**  
Greenwood Memorial VFW Post 5864 Newsletter  
Steve Milbourn, Editor  
Department of Indiana
- Silver Award:**  
Cannon News (Post 7589)  
Rick Raskin, Editor  
Department of Virginia
- Bronze Award:**  
VFW Post 10818 Monthly News  
Ron Ramos, Editor  
Department of Wisconsin

### District/Post Publications Small Frequency

(printed 1-4 times per year)

- Grand Award:**  
VFW Post 4495 Quarterly Newsletter  
Anthony Durbin, Editor  
Department of Illinois
- Silver Award:**  
VFW Post 1177 Newsletter  
Les Flores, Editor  
Department of Virginia
- Bronze Award:**  
VFW Post 2016 News  
Ski Iworsky, Editor  
Department of Massachusetts



## VFW Foundation Supports Veteran Initiatives

**At the VFW Foundation, a team of seven employees works together to raise funds, foster relationships and create partnerships in support of VFW's goals.**

"Through strategic relationships with corporate, foundation and individual supporters, the VFW Foundation fills in governmental assistance gaps for troops abroad, military families at home and America's often-forgotten veterans," said Foundation Administrator Richard Potter. "These programs are provided at no cost to the recipients and require no VFW affiliation."

The VFW Foundation, established in 1996, is VFW's official 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization and has cultivated relationships with the likes of Sport Clips, Burger King and gun manufacturer Henry Repeating Arms. Ben Vargas has been instrumental in overseeing such special projects, including the relationship with Burger King. He also coordinates details and logistics for VFW National Convention sponsors.

Also involved with convention is Kevin Jamison, who manages and fosters corporate relationships, member benefit partners and program supporters. Jamison is a Marine Corps veteran who served in Iraq and is a member of VFW Post 5717 in Kearney, Mo.

The Foundation's goals also include individual donor outreach, which Richard Freiburghouse oversees in addition to coordinating the Foundation's communications. Individuals can support the VFW Foundation by donating a vehicle, such as a car, truck, motorcycle, trailer or boat. After expenses, 80 percent of the vehicle's value is donated to the Foundation. To donate your vehicle, call 1-844-839-44438 (1-844-VFW-GIFT) or visit [vfw.careasy.org](http://vfw.careasy.org) to schedule a free pickup. Donors will receive a tax receipt for the donation.

Freiburghouse said, in 2017, 137 vehicles were donated. As of June, 48 vehicles have been donated in 2018.

Additionally, Henry Repeating Arms has donated funds to VFW at the VFW National Convention, and

offers tribute rifles to VFW Posts at a reduced rate for fundraising efforts. More than 500 VFW tribute rifles have been sold. A Tribute Edition is available for \$790, and a Post Tribute Edition, emblazoned with the Post's number, costs \$750. Both feature the Cross of Malta and the U.S. flag.

Anthony Imperato, Henry Repeating Arms President and CEO, said he was "moved to announce" a \$50,000 donation to VFW when he attended the National Convention in 2015.

"I looked out at the audience of veterans from all walks of life, all races and creeds, all parts of the country, all wars from WWII to Afghanistan, and felt compelled to do so in memory of my father. He served in the Korean War," Imperato told *VFW* magazine in October.

Jason Couch, an Iraq War veteran who served from 2003-2009 and is a VFW life member, oversees the grants program, which disburses roughly \$400,000 annually to VFW Posts and Auxiliaries for community service projects. Nonprofit organizations also are eligible to receive those funds.

Supporting all of the Foundation's efforts are Renee Martin and Becky Curtis. Martin monitors and documents all donations that come into the Foundation, managing the donor database, while Curtis supports the administration of the foundation, including managing applications for the Combined Federal and State Employee campaigns and arranging the Foundation's board meetings.

In recent months, the Foundation has brought in new corporate partners, such as Ace Hardware, ComcastNBC, Inside RX and Identity Guard. Looking to the future, Potter said the Foundation will continue to focus on expanding relationships with current and new corporate supporters. For more information, or to donate to the Foundation, visit <https://www.vfw.org/foundation>.

**EMAIL:** [kwilliams@vfw.org](mailto:kwilliams@vfw.org)

## You Can Support the VFW Foundation

- Donate your car.
- Text "VFW" to 80888 to make a donation.
- Give a tax-deductible gift online at <https://www.vfw.org/foundation/foundation-donate>.
- Donate to the VFW Foundation by mail. Donation forms can be found at <https://www.vfw.org/foundation>.
- Shop online with AmazonSmile.

### Where does your money go?

When you make a donation to the VFW Foundation, your money supports the following initiatives:

- Providing grants to VFW Posts, Auxiliaries and Departments, as well as qualifying nonprofits, to offer support to America's heroes and their families.
- Providing scholarships to student veterans without the veteran incurring excessive student loan debt.
- Supporting troops and their families in need of financial assistance for housing, medical or basic life needs.
- Sponsoring "welcome home" and "send off" events to boost the morale of returning or deployed military units.
- Offering veterans VFW counsel and assistance to navigate VA entitlement and disability claims.
- Sponsoring admission to popular entertainment events and attractions for veterans and their families.



The VFW Foundation is the seven-person nonprofit team that raises funds for VFW programs and initiatives. Its team has fostered partnerships with the likes of Sport Clips, Burger King and gun manufacturer Henry Repeating Arms. Pictured are Foundation employees Kevin Jamison (front), Richard Freiburghouse, Jason Couch, Richard Potter (front), Ben Vargas, Becky Curtis and Renee Martin. PHOTO BY LAUREN GOLDMAN/VFW

# Female Post Commander Wants to Send Message of Hope

**Cheyenne Bart is one of two female members of VFW Post 5731 in Gridley, Calif., and in May was elected Post Commander — a first for the Post. As she leads its 104 members, she plans to do so with a message of hope.**

Bart, who served during the Persian Gulf War and *Operation Southern Watch* from 1996-97 aboard the *USS Stump* as a deck seaman, was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Getting involved in the community and helping others, in turn, helped her heal.

"I feel like I'm in this position where I might offer a little hope to someone who's suffering," Bart said. "And I have message of hope for other survivors."

Bart said she feels "honored" to lead the Post.

"I go back and forth between honored and overwhelmed," Bart said as she returned from representing the Post at a Flag Day ceremony in June. "It's very new to me. I told them all along, 'I can't be commander — I was low-ranking in the service.' They always said, 'Rank doesn't matter. Your military rank doesn't count here.'"

Over the past eight years, Bart said, she has been volunteering in the community and has worked with homeless organizations. She has been a VFW member for 11 years and a member of the Gridley, Calif., Post for two years.

"I've always wanted to be in a position to help veterans because of my experience... [and] being a struggling veteran who didn't have access or knowledge of services that were available," Bart said. "And I just, I have an eye to spot people who are struggling but might be too proud to speak up."

As commander, Bart said she hopes to get the Post involved with fundraisers for a program that provides service dogs to veterans, among other efforts.

"If there's a comrade in distress, I'd like to be able to have the funds to maybe pay a few of their monthly bills to lighten up their load for a month," Bart said.

Bart said she feels the biggest issue facing veterans is VA health care. But for now, she said she sees her Post growing.

"I want to try to make it as fun and interesting for the younger people," Bart said, "and I know for a lot of the younger crowd [they're] interested in social issues. And, also, I want to hear their ideas and see how we can incorporate those ideas."

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Cheyenne Bart performs her duty as a deck seaman in 1996 in the Persian Gulf while aboard the *USS Stump*. Post commander Bart wants to lead an effort supplying service dogs to veterans.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHEYENNE BART

(Left) VFW Post 5731 Commander Cheyenne Bart (far right) participates in her first honor guard ceremony as commander. The guard combines American Legion and VFW members. Pictured are: Louis Krasovic, Frank Bartolomucci (American Legion), Ed Kawasaki, Aaron Burks (VFW and American Legion) and Bart, who is Post 5731's first female commander.

JULY | AUGUST 2018

## CHECKPOINT

VFW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS • PUBLICATIONS  
406 WEST 34TH STREET, KANSAS CITY, MO 64111

### Posts with the Most VFW POSTS OF 1,000 MEMBERS OR MORE AS OF JUNE 18, 2018

Rank	Post No.	Location	Members	Rank	No.	Location	Members	Rank	No.	Location	Members
1	1503	Dale City, VA	2,861	11	76	San Antonio, TX	1,588	28	9399	Apache Junction, AZ	1,176
2	27	Wiesbaden, Germany	2,621	12	7968	Apache Junction, AZ	1,560	29	56	Leavenworth, KS	1,159
3	1114	Evansville, IN	2,175	13	10047	North Las Vegas, NV	1,445	29	2111	Chula Vista, CA	1,159
4	9972	Sierra Vista, AZ	2,162	14	6506	Rosedale, MD	1,444	31	549	Tucson, AZ	1,152
5	392	Virginia Beach, VA	1,996	15	4647	North Highlands, CA	1,416	32	1512	Lemon Grove, CA	1,120
6	8862	Vicenza, Italy	1,907	16	63	Boise, ID	1,368	33	3282	Port Orange, FL	1,105
7	10692	Grafenwoehr, Germany	1,829	17	4809	Norfolk, VA	1,366	34	2503	Omaha, NE	1,098
8	4709	Conroe, TX	1,807	18	9342	Ansbach, Germany	1,357	35	972	Terre Haute, IN	1,093
9	9785	Eagle River, AK	1,742	19	628	Sioux Falls, SD	1,343	36	7686	Alamogordo, NM	1,089
10	2485	Angeles City, Philippines	1,672	20	2391	Saint Augustine, FL	1,335	37	10281	Radcliff, KY	1,075
				21	7234	Ocean View, DE	1,328	37	1170	Middletown, KY	1,075
				22	6873	Abilene, TX	1,261	39	7564	West Fargo, ND	1,063
				23	4372	Odessa, TX	1,245	40	969	Tacoma, WA	1,035
				24	10097	Fort Myers Beach, FL	1,244	41	2866	Saint Charles, MO	1,029
				25	10216	Songtan-Si, Korea	1,218	42	1273	Rapid City, SD	1,027
				26	1146	St Clair Shores, MI	1,209	43	1326	Bismarck, ND	1,025
				27	8951	West York, PA	1,194	44	10436	Kitzingen, Germany	1,003

