



# **CHAIRMAN'S MANUAL**

## **VFW SAFETY & RECOGNITION**

### ***SERVING AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES AND HONORING THEIR PROTECTORS***

#### **The Role of the Chairman**

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

#### **You Are the Point Person**

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

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

Seek out these new relationships. When it comes time to recruit volunteers or you need specialized expertise for Post projects, these community contacts will prove invaluable. Project an outgoing, friendly personality. Speak positively about your Post, your community and your projects. Articulate your thoughts and plans clearly, concisely and coherently. Remember, you represent

not only your Post, but the entire VFW organization as well.

#### **Reporting Your Activities**

You may have heard it said that "the job's not over until the paperwork is done!" That is especially true of VFW Programs.

Chairman must report their Post activities in their respective areas at least twice each year. Check with your respective Department chairman to learn what should be reported and in what form. Documentation of your programmatic efforts is the thing that ensures the VFW's reputation and our not-for-profit status.

#### **Master Organizational Skills**

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

Some of your specific duties include:

- recruiting and maintaining a pool of active volunteers
- identifying and initiating programs needed in your community
- motivating your Post members, community volunteers and sponsors involved in your various projects
- recognizing your volunteers efforts

- organizing and maintaining records, photos and newspaper clippings the document your activities
- reporting to your Department chairman the volunteer hours, dollars donated by VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, Cooties, Junior Girls and Men's Auxiliary members and other information requested.

Through the contacts you've developed in your community, cooperate with other civic or fraternal groups. They may already be involved in community service programs you would like to undertake, or they may be eager to help with projects that you've planned. Also identify resources at your Post, talk with members and find out what special skills or hobbies they may have. Since 1923, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has concerned itself with the safety of the communities in which their Posts and members reside.

Alarmed over the post-WWI use of drugs, *VFW Magazine*, then called *Foreign Service*, printed a resolution calling for President Warren G. Harding to declare a *National Anti-Dope Week* and set up a national conference to deal with the problem. VFW Posts began a process of making the public aware of the dangers of drug use that continues to this day.

Early on VFW Posts began sponsoring bicycle safety clubs. In 1962, Posts started providing reflective stickers through the Lite-a-Bike program. When manufacturers began putting lights on bicycles, the reflective stickers were moved to backpacks and jackets and the program became Lite-a-Tike.

Working with the National Safety Council, driver safety programs were part of the first safety efforts. Later the VFW began to promote AARP's 55 Alive/Mature Driving program.

Throughout the history of the VFW, Posts have been quick to recognize the contributions of those who make our homes, highways and communities safer. Today, VFW Posts regularly honor citizens who save lives and those who serve the community as emergency responders. A special section in this manual is dedicated to the ways in which these courageous individuals can be recognized at every level of the VFW. In the late 1970's, VFW families became increasingly concerned about the safety of their children. One of the first organizations to create a child ID, kit, the VFW has provided hundreds of thousands of parents with this tool they hope will never be used.

With the tragedy of 9/11/2001, the VFW has begun encouraging Posts to utilize the resources of the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These organizations, as well as hundreds of other, provide printed materials about safety in the home, community,

while traveling, almost anywhere. Chairman should visit the following websites and review the materials and information relevant to almost any emergency or security situation a community might encounter. Chairman should

<http://www.fema.gov/>  
<http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>

**VFW Post, District and Department Safety Chairmen** play a vital role in the VFW's impact on our communities. They are responsible for overseeing the various safety programs at their respective level. To accomplish this purpose it is essential that they do the following:

- Read and understand all Safety Program materials
- Maintains a working knowledge of all program aspects so as to be the authority on the Safety Program
- Promotes the execution of Safety Programs at their respective Post, District or Department levels.
- Provide timely and accurate program activity reports of Safety Program activities at their level.

**VFW RECOGNITION PROGRAM:** The purpose of the VFW Recognition Program is twofold. First and foremost, as an organization of wartime veterans and their spouses, the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary understand the need to recognize and honor those individuals who have performed above and beyond their peers. Of particular significance are those who, like wartime veterans, have placed the safety and welfare of others above their own. Secondly, the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary realize the value of these awards to the Post, District, Department and National organization. Recognizing worthy individuals makes the public aware of the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary and increases the public's respect and appreciation for these organizations. That increased respect and appreciation results in greater public support for these organizations and membership growth.

For those reasons, it is important that VFW and Ladies Auxiliary leaders at every level take advantage of every opportunity to honor worthy individuals and sometimes organizations. With that in mind, the VFW National organization has established a number of suggested awards. The Post/Auxiliary Safety Chairman should constantly be on the lookout for opportunities to honor individuals of all ages in the community. The following are suggested awards:

### **NATIONAL CITATION OF RECOGNITION**

These citations are available to recognize Posts or individual Post chairmen who have demonstrated an exceptionally high level of service to their community. VFW Department Chairmen are given sole responsibility for identifying those Posts and individuals within their Department worthy of this citation. Application forms

including all criteria and instructions are sent to all Department Chairmen in February. Completed forms listing each Post or chairman by name and Post number must be submitted to the national organization by April 1<sup>st</sup> to allow time for proper presentation at the Department Convention.

**GOLD MEDAL AWARDS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS, LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL AND FIREFIGHTERS:** Each year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars selects an emergency services person, a law enforcement officer and a firefighter to receive VFW Gold Medal Awards. Post Safety Chairmen are encouraged to submit a candidate for these awards to their Department Headquarters by January 1. The Department must select a single candidate for each award and submit those to VFW National Headquarters by February 1. Eligible candidates for each award are as follows:

**VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Citation**

– any individual, who actively gives emergency medical treatment, provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care, provide rescue and civil disaster assistance to our nation’s citizens.

**VFW National Law Enforcement Citation** – any individual who serves in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with enforcement of the laws pertaining to their area of responsibility. This award does not apply to individual employed by private companies or security services.

**VFW National Firefighters Citation** – any individual who actively fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and give assistance to our nation’s citizens.

**Criteria for these awards** – Candidates must have demonstrated:

- 1) Recognition by their colleagues or those they serve.
- 2) Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties
- 3) Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities over a period of years and continuous growth in responsibilities and skills within their profession.

**Documentation required for all Candidates**

- 1) Nomination letter containing the candidate’s name, title, address, telephone and identifying the award for which the individual should be considered.
- 2) One (1) page resume of the candidate’s overall background.
- 3) One (1) page resume of the candidate’s background in their field.

- 4) One (1) page listing of the candidate’s accomplishment and awards in their field.
- 5) Photograph (preferably a head shot) of the candidate.

**Nomination** – Post Safety Chairmen should send the above information to their Department Headquarters to arrive not later than January 1. Departments should forward their candidate and documentation to arrive not later than February 1 to:

VFW National Headquarters  
Attn: Programs - Recognition  
406 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111

**LIFE SAVING AWARDS:** Safety Chairmen at Posts, Districts and Departments are encouraged to regularly identify and honor individuals throughout the year in their geographic area who have saved a life. The VFW National Programs Office provides the following three different citations, free of charge, for local presentation.

- 1) Regular Life Saving Citation – Honors individuals who have, without regard for their own comfort, taken action resulting in the saving of another human life.
- 2) Line of Duty Life Saving Citation – Honors individuals who, in the execution of their assigned duties, have taken action resulting in the saving of another human life.
- 3) Valor Life Saving Citation – Honors civilians who have taken action resulting in the saving of another human life and have placed their own safety at risk.

Safety Chairmen should request citations by sending the following to VFW Programs, ATTN: Life Saving Awards, VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO 64111:

- 1) Documentation of the event – newspaper clippings, etc.
- 2) Name of the individual receiving the citation.
- 3) Date of presentation and date desired on the citation
- 4) Name and address of the Post Commander or Ladies President who will be sent the citation for presentation.

**EAGLE SCOUT OF THE YEAR AWARD:** Each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars recognizes an Eagle Scout who has risen above his peers in exemplifying the exceptional qualities of that rank. Candidates must be exceptional in all six of the critical elements of healthy youth development as defined by The Louis Harris & Associates, Inc. study of Scouting. These elements are outlined on the judges score sheet. To be eligible for the award, the candidate must:

1. Be a registered, active member of a Boy Scout Troop, Varsity Scout Team, or Venturing Crew.

2. Be the recipient of the Eagle Scout Award.
3. Have demonstrated practical citizenship in school, Scouting and community.
4. Have reached his 15<sup>th</sup> birthday and is enrolled in high school at the time of selection.
5. Have submitted a complete entry form to a VFW Post in his community.

Eagle Scouts still in high school who reach their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday during the nomination year remain eligible if otherwise qualified. A Scout may enter through only one VFW Post. A sponsoring Post can be located by contacting the respective VFW Department (state) headquarters as listed on the VFW website: [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org).

**MARCH 1 – DEADLINE FOR ENTRY TO THE POST**

**APRIL 1 – DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION TO DEPARTMENT SCOUTING TEAM MEMBER FROM POST**

**MAY 1 – DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FROM DEPARTMENT SCOUTING TEAM MEMBER**

***CANDIDATE ENTRY FORMS ARE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT SCOUTING TEAM MEMBER OR BY CALLING 816-756-3390, EXT. 220***

The following documentation should be attached to the candidate's entry form:

**High School Participation Record** – a single page, one side resume of the candidate's high school activities listing offices held, honors received and significant participation in other activities.

**Scouting Record** – maximum of three pages, one side only listing of all Scouting participation beginning with Cub Scouts to include years of participation, unit numbers, and sponsors. Also include when Eagle Award was received and Palms. Identify leadership positions held at all levels, participation in Scouting activities (jamborees, Order of the Arrow conferences, etc.) and the candidate's Eagle Scout Project.

**Community Service Record** – a single page, one side resume listing participation in community service organizations (excluding Scouting and school), noting leadership positions held and any recognition received.

**Letters of Recommendation** – A maximum of five letters, none exceeding two pages, will be judged. The five letters must include one each from a representative of the school, community and a Scout leader. The two additional letters should be from members of the local community who have special knowledge of the candidate's abilities and/or accomplishments.

**NATIONAL VFW SCOUTING TEAM** - The Veterans of Foreign Wars has been proud to sponsor, support and provide leadership for Scouting programs since VFW Post 2100 teamed up with the Order of the Elks to

establish Troop 1 in 1915 in Everett, Washington. That was just five years after the founding of the Boy Scouts of America. Today, the VFW encourages Scouting through our National Team of VFW Scouters. VFW Departments are encouraged to identify active members within their state who are also active in Scouting to serve on this team of VFW/BSA professionals. Nominations for the VFW National Scouting Team should come from the Department Headquarters. A letter, on Department stationary, should identify the candidate; provide his address, telephone numbers (both home and work), e-mail address, as well as his Post and District number. The letter should include the signature of the Department Commander and the candidate (signifying his willingness to serve). Also attached should be a summary of the candidate's VFW background and activities as well as his background and activities in the Boys Scouts of America. This information should be forwarded to:

**VFW National Scouting Team  
VFW National Headquarters  
406 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111**

**YOUTH CADET AWARDS PROGRAM** – VFW awards for special recognition of outstanding achievement and exceptional leadership are available for Junior and Senior ROTC programs, Naval Sea Cadets and Civil Air Patrol Cadets. If any of these programs exist in your community, these awards provide your Post an outstanding opportunity to honor these patriotic young people.

**AWARDS ADMINISTRATION:**

Cadet awards may be initiated by the local VFW Post or directly by the cadet's unit. In either case, documentation should come from the unit as follows: Naval Sea Cadets – from the unit commanding officer in a letter with copy to NSCC HQ. Civil Air Patrol Cadets, from the candidate's squadron by submitting a CAPF-120. JROTC/SROTC Cadets – from the unit by submitting a letter documenting the criteria.

All letters of nomination should be sent to:

**VFW's Department of Youth Development  
VFW National Headquarters  
406 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111**

**CRITERIA FOR CIVIL AIR PATROL AND NAVAL SEA CADET AWARDS:**

- Good academic standing
- Satisfactory progress in the cadet program
- Outstanding achievement in community service and/or the cadet program
- Outstanding leadership in the cadet program
- High moral character

- Exceptional professionalism in appearance and actions (Officer Award)
- Outstanding military bearing and conduct in and out of uniform (NCO Award)
- Involvement in patriotic programs, drill team, color guard, etc.
- Demonstrated potential and willingness to assume higher levels of responsibility

Additional criteria for JROTC & SROTC awards:

- Positive attitude toward the ROTC program
- For JROTC, must be enrolled as a 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade JROTC student
- For SROTC, must be an undergraduate student enrolled in Military Science I through IV
- Must maintain a "B" average in ROTC curriculum and a "C" average in all remaining subjects with no failing grades in the previous semester
- Active in at least one other student extra-curricular activity (music, athletics, government, etc.)

Upon receipt of the letter and documentation, VFW Dept. of Youth Development personnel will review the submitted materials, approve and contact the VFW Department. The Department or Post may then purchase the award(s) through VFW Emblem & Supply for presentation. Awards, stock numbers and contact information are as follows:

JROTC MEDAL - #1229  
 JROTC CITATION - # 4387  
 ROTC MEDAL - #1226  
 ROTC CITATION - #4386  
 NAVAL SEA CADET MEDAL - #1207  
 NAVAL SEA CADET CITATION - #4393  
 CIVIL AIR PATROL OFFICER MEDAL - #1208  
 CIVIL AIR PATROL OFFICER CITATION - #4394  
 CIVIL AIR PATROL NCO MEDAL - #1209  
 CIVIL AIR PATROL NCO CITATION - #4395

Mail or call orders to:

**VFW Emblem & Supply Department**  
**VFW National Headquarters**  
**406 West 34<sup>th</sup> St.**  
**Kansas City, MO 64111**  
**816-756-3390 Ext. 191**

Recognizing local heroes, heroines, patriots and outstanding youth with VFW awards, citations and medals is one of the easiest and most effective ways to grow a VFW Post. Every time your VFW Post honors a local individual, you spread good will among the individual's family, friends and your entire community. That good will returns to your Post in the form of increased public support for your fundraising, increased attendance at your events and, perhaps most

importantly, more members for your Post and its Ladies Auxiliary. VFW awards don't cost, they pay – big dividends.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING VFW SAFETY AND VFW RECOGNITION PROGRAMS CONTACT:**

**Tammy Beauchamp – 816-756-3390, ext. 287**  
**e-mail – tbeauchamp@vfw.org**

**OR**

**Susan Wilson – 816-756-3390, ext. 220**  
**E-mail – swilson@vfw.org**