

ISSUE #48 | APRIL 2020

VETERANS VOICE

THE OFFICIAL NEWS OF NEW RICHMOND / ST. CROIX COUNTY VFW MEMORIAL POST 10818



**COVID-19
(CORONA VIRUS)
UPDATE**

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

OUR MISSION

TO FOSTER CAMARADERIE AMONG UNITED STATES VETERANS OF OVERSEAS CONFLICTS. TO SERVE OUR VETERANS, THE MILITARY AND OUR COMMUNITIES. TO ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF ALL VETERANS.

OUR VISION

ENSURE THAT VETERANS ARE RESPECTED FOR THEIR SERVICE, ALWAYS RECEIVE THEIR EARNED ENTITLEMENTS, AND ARE RECOGNIZED FOR THE SACRIFICES THEY AND THEIR LOVED ONES HAVE MADE ON BEHALF OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY.

The VFW is a dynamic United States combat veterans organization that serves, advocates and fosters camaraderie for ALL veterans, service members, their families and our community. The VFW harnesses its recognized authority, experience and resources to deliver comprehensive financial, educational, health and well-being programs and services at every stage of the veteran's military and civilian life.

ADDRESS

310 W N SHORE DRIVE

NEW RICHMOND, WI 54017

PHONE: 715-246-0226

EMAIL: ADMIN@VFWPOST10818.ORG

**WE'RE
TEMPORARILY
CLOSED**

PUBLICATION AWARDS

- 1st Place 2019 Wisconsin VFW Publications Contest
- 1st Place 2019 National VFW Publications Contest
- 1st Place 2018 Wisconsin VFW Publications Contest
- 3rd Place 2018 National VFW Publications Contest
- 1st Place 2017 Wisconsin VFW Publications Contest
- 2nd Place 2017 National VFW Publications Contest

ALL-STATE POST

2018-2019	2012-2013	2000-2001
2017-2018	2011-2012	1998-1999
2015-2016	2007-2008	
2014-2015	2004-2005	
2013-2014	2002-2003	

ALL-AMERICAN POST

2018-2019	2012-2013
2015-2016	2011-2012
2014-2015	1998-1999
2013-2014	

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Every month our Post has a monthly membership meeting. This meeting is for **YOU**, our members, to find out the latest and greatest of what your officers are doing, volunteer opportunities, voice your concern about veterans issues, vote on new projects and ideas, and to tell us what you want out of your membership and the VFW. Share your ideas on how to improve your Post and get the most out of your membership. It is also a great opportunity to connect with friends and meet other veterans with similar goals.

When: 3rd Tuesday of every month

Time: 6 PM - Social Hour 7 PM - Meeting starts

Location: New Richmond Civic Center - 156 East 1st St, New Richmond, WI 54017
(located in the downstairs of the Civic Center)



Post 10818

VFW Veterans Voice magazine is the official publication of the VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES POST 10818

OUR OFFICERS

Commander Ron Ramos 715-928-3606	Chaplain Mel Zehm 715-796-2915
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Sr Vice Cmdr Russ Donaghue 715-222-2659	Judge Advocate Dave Green 651-247-1801
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Jr Vice Cmdr Jasen Pomroy 715-377-6307	Surgeon Ben Anderson 715-245-6281
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Quartermaster Mitch Cline 651-492-9634	Adjutant Mike Ragsdale 678-953-5954
---	--

Service Officer
Ben Anderson
715-245-6281

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions for the VFW Veterans Voice may be submitted by email to: admin@vfwpost10818.org no later than the 25th of the month. If pictures are included, please provide names of all in the photo.

CONTACT THE COMMANDER

You can contact me by email at: commander@vfwpost10818.org or by cell phone at: 715-928-3606. If calling during the day, you may have to leave a voicemail as I do not have my phone while working. You can also text. I will try to answer as soon as I can after work.

VFW OBJECTIVES

To ensure national security through maximum military strength.
To speed the rehabilitation of the nation's disabled and needy veterans.
To assist the widows and orphans and the dependents of disabled and needy veterans.
To promote Americanism through education in patriotism and constructive service to the communities in which we live.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Whenever you move or have a change of address, please drop us a line at 715.246.0226 or shoot us an email at admin@vfwpost10818.org. Every time we get a Post magazine returned by the U.S. Postal Service because NO change of address was filed, the Post gets charged for the return postage. If you would prefer to receive your magazine by e-mail, let us know and we can get you on our e-mail distribution list. Please help us - we don't want to waste money.





**COMMANDER
RON RAMOS**

Greeting comrades. The last two months have certainly been filled with worry and uncertainty. This novel Covid-19 virus has taken the world by storm and I firmly believe that no-one can truly be prepared to take on an invisible enemy of this magnitude. With that being said, I hope everyone is safe and well at this time.

Due to the stay-in place order and recommendations by the Federal government and National Commander-in-Chief, our Post will continue to be closed until further noticed. This does NOT mean that we cease conducting the mission of the VFW. We will continue to

provide assistance as needed and as we're able to. We are coordinating with our County Veterans Service Officer, Phil Landgraf, any assistance a veteran may need.

If you think you may need some financial assistance due to being laid off, please do not hesitate to contact myself or our Quartermaster so that we may assist. We still have our Unmet Needs program that provides assistance and we can usually work remotely to take care of things. If there is a need to come into the Post, only the Quartermaster and I will be doing so with the stipulation that only ONE person will be allowed in the office with us. Fortunately, technology is on our side and we can utilize programs such as Zoom, FaceTime, Bluejeans, etc. to video conference and we still have the good ole' fashion phone calls.

I'd like to congratulate our Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, and Teacher of the Year winners. In February, we presented those awards and it was a great time. The themes for the 2020-2021 year have been released and we'll start getting this out to the schools as soon as possible. Those themes are as follows:

Patriots Pen: *What is Patriotism to Me?*

Voice of Democracy: *Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?*

Because the March meeting had to be canceled at the last minute beyond anyone's control, we were not able to hold nominations for officers for the 2020-2021 year. I am happy to say that b/c of the country, we are authorized to host a meeting via webcam without having to gather in one place. That means that we WILL be having our scheduled April meeting on April 21. The meeting will be hosted via the Zoom app. This app can be downloaded onto your computer, tablet, smartphone, etc. and is FREE of charge. You can also call in on the meeting with the provided number. We will also be having our nominations AND elections at this meeting. Here is the information to get into the meeting:

Topic: April Monthly Membership Meeting - VFW Post 10818

Time: Apr 21, 2020 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6527476036?pwd=QjUzUzlpGxpWENsRGd4Uy9wS3ppQT09>

Meeting ID: 652 747 6036 **Password:** 138678

+Dial into the meeting: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 652 747 6036 **Password:** 138678

The following members are running for an elected Officer position without any contenders (as per Post guidelines, the Judge Advocate is an elected position):

Commander: Greg Veldhouse

Sr Vice Cdr: Jeff Rusinko

Jr Vice Cdr: Brian Haglund

Quartermaster: Mitch Cline

Chaplain: Mel Zehm

Trustee 3-year: Dave Sharrets

Judge Advocate: Dave Green

For those who have been unable to make a meeting due to schedules, we hope this opportunity will be one you can take advantage of. If you have a web cam and mic, you can use that so we can all see each other and participate. Further in this newsletter is a quick guide on how to use the Zoom app as a participant.

This quarantine has not been easy to deal with and for extroverted people like myself, being locked up at home isn't the best situation. Please feel free to reach out if you're having problems or just want to talk.

I have included important information from State Commander Don Lynch and State Surgeon Adam Wallace in this month's newsletter.

The District 9 meeting has been rescheduled to May 30th due to the stay-in place order. Parades prior to June has been canceled. April's Meat Raffle is canceled as well. Our Spring Pancake Breakfast is canceled. As of now, our summer events starting in June has NOT been canceled and are proceeding as continued until further notice. We will keep everyone up-to-date on these events.

On a good note, I attended the Mid-Winter Conference in February and accepted the Mid-Winter Red Carpet Award on behalf of our Post. This is our third consecutive year earning this award.

Ladies and gents, please stay safe and stay indoors. If you need to go on a grocery run, do NOT take your whole family, just have one person go if possible. We can beat this if we work together. Do not hesitate to contact me with any concerns or questions. I am currently doing school online now but can answer calls and emails in-between classes since I am no longer traveling. Thank you for all your hard work and your patience.



Commander Ron Ramos receives the VFW Mid-Winter Red Carpet Award. Left to right: National Junior Vice Cdr. Fritz Mihelcic, Post 10818 Commander Ronald Ramos, Jr., and State Cdr. Don Lynch.

MOURNING FOR MORNING, LIVING FOR DYING

At some point in our life, we have been allowed to mourn greatly. We know this is as a given fact as living and dying itself. Our life ticket will be punched one day, and there will be mourning and celebrating for each of us. Many of us have mourned over the loss of a comrade friend, a battle buddy, or family member. We've seen the darkness of loss up close, and that memories have their wicked way of pestering us. We also have an opportunity to use our experiences for the help of others that are hurting. One of the benefits of this organization is looking at the person you're talking to and knowing that they too put their very life in danger's way, just like us. We know what it's like to give it all up for our Nation's Cause. The scars can be so deep, but we continue on. Oh, how sobering!

As I'm writing this article, I recount the life of someone who also willingly gave it all up so that we can make the decisions we do. This week we are celebrating the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who lived among us, died among us, and was resurrected among us. He alone did something for us that no one else has done, all for the good of His creation. In our second article on the beatitudes listed in Matthew 5:4, we are given a stark reality and reason for rejoicing. It says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." As the second blessing, Jesus is talking about mourning for specific reasons that apply directly to our experiences. You see, the world likes to be golly, successful, neat, and proper. But the reality is that the world is a better place because of the sacrifice of many others. We have mourned over losses, but the mourning

listed here speaks of how God mourns over a wicked and dark sin-filled culture. Christians realize that death is real, that Jesus will be either our Savior or Judge. It pains Him, but also gives us reason for hope and joy. The second part of verse 4 states "for they will be comforted", meaning that He will make everything right. The comfort he's talking about is ridding this world of pain.

This precept is foundational to our organization in that we oftentimes have been unsettled about the mission given us. Our mission today is to remember the past, but look forward to the future. We have an exceptional future ahead of us to rest our hope in. It is a future that should shake us up towards realizing the goal is within reach. The founders of our organization used this to reflect on what General Douglas MacArthur once stated that "the soldier, above all other people, prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war." The reason we embrace this is for the best of our Nation, our kids, and grandkids. It is also for the best for us. Don't forget that our best days are ahead of us. In Revelation 21:4, it says "There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things will have passed away." Each morning gives us reason to understand mourning. We need to keep an eye on the real prize though, that is a day without mourning.

God Bless You all!

VETERANS & FAMILIES IN NEED & ON SICK CALL

– John Heulling

If you would like a name added or removed from the list, please let me know.

“Please remember to pray for our comrades & their families & any we may have missed.”

For the sick and infected: God, heal and help. Sustain bodies and spirits. Contain the spread of infection.

For our vulnerable populations: God, protect our elderly and those suffering from chronic disease.

For our first responders, medical personnel, and workers who are vital to keep the nation moving: give them the strength and protection to continue to help others while risking their own lives.

For the young and the strong: God, give them the necessary caution to keep them from unwittingly spreading this disease. Inspire them to help.

For our scientific community, leading the charge to understand the disease and communicate its gravity: God, give them knowledge, wisdom, and a persuasive voice.

QUARTERMASTERS CORNER ★ MITCH CLINE

Follow Veterans,

This year has brought new challenges that we have never faced before. As we, the leadership of the post, continue to be vigilant we will come through this.

We still have our summer fundraisers that we need to plan for. Until we hear otherwise, hopefully not we will continue to work on those fundraisers. We must now more than ever control costs. If the post needs any supplies please let me know, so I can go and get them. Do not purchase anything for the post on your own. If you purchase something on your own you may not get reimbursed.

If you have any questions or comments please let me know.

A MESSAGE ON COVID-19 FROM STATE SURGEON ADAM WALLACE

Comrades,

I am writing this to inform you of some important facts and precautions that should be taken during the time of this global pandemic. Please forward and share this email with all of your VFW members.

First and foremost, I encourage everyone to visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) to read CDC's recommendations and to stay up to date on information about COVID-19. Also for Wisconsin specific information, please visit dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm for further information and updates.

What is COVID-19? COVID-19 (commonly referred to as the coronavirus) is a viral respiratory illness. According to the CDC, it is spread between individuals who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet). **The symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, coughing, and shortness of breath.**

Who is most at risk? According to the CDC, the people with a higher risk of getting severely ill from COVID-19 are older adults, specifically those over the age of 60. People with serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease are also at higher risk. A majority of the Wisconsin VFW population fits into the highest risk category of serious illness from COVID-19, which is why I recommend an abundance of caution be taken to protect all of our members.

Mass Gatherings: Current recommendations from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) states that mass gatherings of 250 people or more should be canceled. Many VFW Posts across the state hold gatherings this size, especially during this time of the year as spring is approaching. I encourage all Posts to adhere to Wisconsin DHS recommendations.

As for large gatherings of fewer than 250 people, WI DHS recommends you **consider the importance of the event**. Does it provide an essential service? Is it necessary for the public? What negative consequences are there if the event does not take place? WI DHS also recommends that you consider the risks to participants. Are those with the highest risk of getting seriously ill participating? Will people be in close physical proximity to one another? How long will people be in contact with each other?

Post Meetings: *The most important consideration before attending a Post meeting is to stay at home if you are ill.* When holding Post meetings, personal hygiene should be your utmost priority. It is recommended that you stay out of the CDC defined close contact range of 6 feet from other members to avoid any potential spread of asymptomatic individuals. These measures could include having tables or chairs spread out as far as needed in your meeting place. Also at meetings, and in general, you should **avoid handshakes and personal contact** with your comrades. Please consider using Zoom or Skype (video-conferencing) in accordance with the National By-Laws so Post members can attend meetings remotely.

Sanitizing: A Princeton University study found that COVID-19 can last up to 3 days on plastic and stainless steel. This means that **sanitizing common areas** of VFW Posts and members' homes is essential. CDC recommends household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions of at least 70% and most EPA registered household disinfectants to disinfect areas, items, and surfaces.

Personal Hygiene: Now more than ever, members should be practicing the best personal hygiene techniques. The simple and most basic way to do that is **hand washing**. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds (sing the Happy Birthday song)! You should be washing your hands or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer as often as possible. If you have to cough or sneeze, do it into a tissue and throw it away, or if none are available, look away and do it into the crease of your elbow. If you have a chronic cough or sneeze, wear a protective mask if available. **Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.**

I am publishing this to help spread information to Wisconsin VFW members and loved ones. This information is updated daily as doctors and scientists discover more about the coronavirus. Please visit and monitor the websites above for more detailed information.

As with any health matter, please consult your doctor with any personal medical concerns. I wish you all health and happiness through this tough time.

Your Comrade,
Adam Wallace
State Surgeon

Department of Wisconsin VFW

SERVICE OFFICER

This word is closely guarded by all men and women who have donned the uniform. Not only is it a essential part of our Core Values as brothers and sisters at arms, but it is also the life-blood of who we are. The theme for this year's Veterans Day Poster was "Service." We all dedicated our lives to this great country, and to each other during our tenure in the military. However, we carry this duty forward and beyond the call to action throughout our daily lives. Veterans continue to "Service" this country in many ways. Veterans are active within the community, and we take the lessons we have learned and experiences gained forward to help strengthen our community.

I encourage you all to continue this great work we have embarked in, as the days continue to shorten. While we served, we all had to figure out how to condense time. We adapted and overcame obstacles. We can always do more, and we have consistently shown the ability to do so. Ask yourself what else you can do to make your community better. I think it is an important trait to never be satisfied with where you are at, to strive to be better.

As we celebrate this holiday season, remember to keep "Service" close by. Many Veterans continue to struggle, and can use our support. Veterans are also proud people as well, and aren't accustomed to asking for help. We need to be cognizant of this and ask them how we can help. There are many of us who want to help, and there are also many in need of help. If we ask the tough questions, we can ensure no one gets left behind.

Use the resources available to you, as there are many out there. We are all in this together, and no one should have to go through a winter, cold, hungry, or in any other need. If you need assistance, contact me at 715-245-6281 or email me at andersonbenji4@gmail.com. I can help point you in the right direction.

Memo from National Secretary-Treasurer Ann Panteleakos

VFW Auxiliary Members,

Please see the memo from National Secretary-Treasurer Ann Panteleakos regarding meetings and the business of the Organization in relation to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) below.



PRESIDENT
JEN DONAGHUE

This memo was sent to Officers of local Auxiliaries, Districts, County Councils and Departments.

Please contact your corresponding President, Secretary or Treasurer with any questions you may have regarding the information below.

Communication is key!

As you know Coronavirus has hit all 50 states. The severity varies from state to state. We sent out an email to Department Presidents and Secretaries to share with Auxiliaries about conducting Auxiliary business. Now we are following that up with some guidelines that can be used by all for a longer period of time.

A) If you can hold your April meeting, nominate and elect Officers and Delegates please do so. You can also install at this meeting if you would like. (Be proactive)

B) If you need to cancel your April meeting but can have your May meeting, you can nominate, elect and install in May.

C) If you can't meet in April or May you have two choices:

1. Per order of the National President, if your Auxiliary agrees, you can have a virtual meeting without having 5 members in one location. You must have a quorum to hold the meeting, but the members can be in different locations. You must make every effort to notify your members of this meeting change.
2. Your current Officers will remain in office until the virus is clear and you may then have your elections at that time.

D) If your Post home is closed, you can meet elsewhere i.e. someone's house. Since we are being warned about large gatherings, some could attend in person with others by phone or Skype, whatever is available to you. Or you can postpone until the Post is open and you can hold your meeting there. We will not put you on suspension for not electing or installing Officers, or for not holding 10 meetings this year due to the virus.

E) Don't stress over deadlines. If your audit is late because you can't get the members together to do this, then it's late. If your previous 3 audits are in, we are asking Departments not to penalize them for voting at the Department Convention. We need to be flexible at this time.

This is an unprecedented time in our country and in our world. We need to remember to be flexible, kind and above all, safe and healthy.

The VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters office will be closed Monday, March 23 – Friday, April 3. We plan to reopen Monday, April 6. We will be doing most of our work remotely.

If you need any assistance please email info@vfwauxiliary.org and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

As more information is made available to us we will keep you informed. Thank you for your understanding and patience.



**UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR
UNCOMMON HEROES**

OUR OFFICERS

President	Secretary
Jen Donaghue	Gayle House
715-222-9868	651-770-6429

Sr Vice	Chaplain
Rhonda Rimarcik	Wanda Viellieux
715-246-4334	715-246-6867

Jr Vice	Guard
Kathy Berends	Pat Cunningham
715-246-4843	715-246-3598

Treasurer	Conductress
Karen Cline	Kerri Casey
715-381-6567	715-377-6860

Patriotic Ins.
To Be Appointed

CONTACT US

You can contact us by email at:
auxiliaryvfw10818@gmail.com

WHAT IS THE VFW AUXILIARY?

Established 1914, members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary set out to serve the veterans of this country and our communities in honor of the sacrifices and commitment of every man and woman who has served in uniform.

Through our National Programs, we assist the VFW pass or block legislation that impacts veterans and their families, provide nearly a million volunteer hours in the VA medical system, conduct patriotic programs with thousands of students and offer hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships for our nation's youth.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Every month our Auxiliary holds a monthly membership meeting to inform our members what is going on with their Auxiliary. This is your time to vote on projects and make this Auxiliary your own.

When: 3rd Tuesday of every month

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: New Richmond Civic Center
156 East 1st St
New Richmond, WI 54017
(located in the downstairs of the Civic Center)

VA Making Adjustments to MISSION Act During COVID-19 Pandemic:

VA is not pausing the MISSION Act. The department is ensuring the best medical interests of veterans are met by adhering to the law in a manner that takes into account whether referrals for community care are clinically appropriate during the COVID-19 outbreak. VA is taking the following steps in order to ensure the safety of veterans as they access care: VA community care referrals for emergent or urgent clinical needs will continue as necessary.

- Veterans with care currently scheduled in the community should continue with this care as clinically appropriate and if available.
- Referral requests for non-emergent care with community providers will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for immediate clinical need and with regard to the safety of the veteran when being seen in-person, regardless of wait time or drive time eligibility.
- VA is expanding the use of telehealth and telephone sessions to address many of veterans routine medical needs.

"We understand the need for community providers to halt in-person, non-emergent care to veterans, and all patients for that matter, in order to lessen the curve of this virus sweeping our nation," said VFW Washington Office Executive Director B.J. Lawrence. "Many private health care providers around the country are being forced to make similar difficult decisions, but ultimately decisions that keep the overall safety of all patients in mind. Vigilance is required in slowing this coronavirus pandemic. The Department of Veterans Affairs is taking the correct approach in handling this matter but it remains vital that many of our veterans are able to still receive the care they require. Telehealth and telephonic medical sessions are good adjustments to current conditions but VA must make accommodations for veterans who are unable to access these means of care."

VFW Testifies on VA Debt Collection Practices:



VFW National Veterans Service Deputy Director Michael Figlioli testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations on VFW-supported H.R. 5245, Stopping Harm and Implementing Enhanced Lead-time for Debts for Veterans Act, or SHIELD for

Veterans Act. Figlioli stressed that although the bill is about "debt", it is really about the Veterans Benefit Administration's internal business practices causing unnecessary stress for our nations veterans. Figlioli stated, "Veterans and the VFW understand that debts must be repaid. What we all fail to understand is how and why the burden almost always falls on the veteran, particularly when it was created by VA's lack of timeliness."

Student Veteran Housing Bill Passes:

The House and the Senate passed S. 3503, a bill to make sure student veterans impacted by the COVID-19-related closures would not see a decrease in their monthly housing stipends. Due to most classes around the country converting to online instruction for the remainder of the semester, VA determined those students should receive the "online only" housing rate, which is significantly less money each month. Veteran advocates and Congress swiftly stepped in to make sure students using distance learning due to the outbreak would not be affected. The bipartisan, bicameral bill quickly passed the House and Senate and is now headed to the president's desk to be signed into law. The VFW thanks all the representatives and senators who made sure student veterans and their families are taken care of during this difficult time.

Senate Passes Legislation to Expand Access to Tele-Hearings:



Last month, the Senate passed VFW-supported H.R. 4771, the VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act. This important legislation would permit appellants in disability compensation cases before the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA)

to appear remotely by picture and voice transmissions, also known as "tele-hearings," from locations other than VA facilities. Currently, veterans may appear via tele-hearing from one of roughly 65 locations in BVA cases. This legislation would undoubtedly improve access for veteran appellants in disability compensation cases and would permit a greater number of veterans to attend their own hearings. The bill passed the House in November and now heads to the president. The VFW urges the president to swiftly sign this important legislation.

U.S. Navy to Allow Enlistment Extensions and Veteran Re-Entry Due to COVID-19:



The Navy released a memo authorizing enlistment extensions and re-entry opportunities. In an effort to keep the fleet manned, the Navy is offering waivers and monetary incentives for many enlisted and officers to extend their careers. The Navy is also opening up for separated enlisted and officers to return to active

duty. While the Navy would like recently separated sailors, they encourage all former sailors who are interested to contact a prior enlisted or officer recruiter.



Agent Orange

Legislation Introduced to Add New Presumptive Diseases for Agent Orange Exposure:

Senator Tester (D-MT) introduced VFW-supported S. 3444, the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2020. This important legislation would expand the list of presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure to include parkinsonism, bladder cancer, hypertension, and hyperthyroidism. "Vietnam veterans did our part," said VFW Commander-in-Chief William J. "Doc" Schmitz. "After winning every battle they fought while they were in Vietnam, many of them have lost their fight to the horrible health conditions they received from Agent Orange exposure. It's unacceptable that the list of conditions presumed to be associated with Agent Orange exposure does not include bladder cancer, Parkinson-like symptoms, hypertension, and the other conditions that the scientists have said are connected to military service. The VFW is proud to support the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2020, which would correct this wrong."

VFW Commander-in-Chief Brings Veterans' Voices to Congress:

Veterans of Foreign Wars National Commander William "Doc" Schmitz called for "accountability for failure to grant benefits to Vietnam and Post-9/11 veterans suffering from toxic exposures" during a special joint hearing of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans Affairs. The VFW expressed its frustration with the Department of Veterans Affairs' lack of urgency in providing benefits to individuals who suffer from conditions associated with toxic exposures, especially when there is science to back up veterans' claims. "The VFW proposes a permanent, comprehensive, and evidence-based framework of granting presumptive benefits for toxic exposure," said Schmitz. "Veterans who were exposed to burn pits and now suffer from pulmonary conditions and rare cancers should not have to wait decades for benefits – like Vietnam veterans did." Schmitz reminded committee members that the VFW has led or played a major role in every reform or expansion of veterans benefits since the institution of the VA.

Retired VA Health Care Workers Are Called to Serve:

With the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) approval, VA announced this week that they are inviting retired physicians, nurses, pharmacists, laboratory technicians, respiratory therapists, and other medical professionals to consider coming back to VA during the COVID-19 pandemic. Opportunities are available in Tele/Virtual Care, the National Call Center, and Direct Patient Care/Support. VA is asking that interested individuals register online so that the individual can be matched with a VA location according to the individual's profession, location, and interest. Read more. Share the stories of those medical professionals who are **#StillServing**.



Legislation Introduced to Modernize Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance:



Representative Mike Bost (R-IL) and Representative Kathleen Rice (D-NY) introduced VFW-supported H.R. 6013, the Veteran Families Financial Support Act. This important legislation would increase the maximum payment under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) program from \$10,000 to \$40,000 and extend eligibility beyond the current two-year period after a veteran receives notification of a new service-connected disability. "The current payment amount of \$10,000 under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance program does not cover the rising cost of end-of-life expenses," said VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Matthew Doyle. "The VFW is proud to support this legislation, which would increase the coverage amount of Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance and expand eligibility beyond the current two-year window after a veteran receives notification of a new service-connected disability. The VFW thanks Rep. Bost and Rep. Rice for introducing this legislation and for their efforts to expand disability benefits for veterans."



FOR MORE INFORMATION about specific legislation or VA benefits, contact VFW's Washington Office at vfw@vfw.org. A member of VFW's National Veterans Service staff will respond as soon as possible.

Patriots Pen & Voice of Democracy Winners

New Richmond/St. Croix County Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial Post 10818 is proud to announce the Post winners of its 2019-20 Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen youth scholarship competitions.

The Voice of Democracy included students from multiple high schools throughout the region submitting their audio essay to this year's theme, "What Makes America Great."

Claire Pommier, a freshman at St. Croix Central High School, took first place and the \$1,000 award. You may recognize Claire's name as she was our winner for the 2017-2018 Patriots Pen Essay Contest in which she took 1st Place in the entire state of Wisconsin.

The second-place winner, Riley Henk, will be awarded \$750 for her audio essay. Riley is a senior at St. Croix Falls High School.

Third-place this year is New Richmond's very own Katelyn Moeller, a senior at New Richmond High School. Katelyn will be awarded a \$500 scholarship for her audio-essay.

For 24 years, the Patriot's Pen essay program has fostered patriotism by allowing students in grades 6-8 the opportunity to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society based on an annual theme.

2019-20 first-place winner is eighth-grader Jada Altena from New Richmond Middle School. She will receive a \$300 award due to her winning essay on this year's theme, "What Makes America Great."

The second-place winner is eighth-grader Cole Trosen, from New Richmond Middle School. Cole will receive a \$250 award, while third-place winner sixth-grader Kaylin Brandt, from Glenwood City Middle School, will receive a \$200 award. Nearly 130,000 students participate in the competition annually.

First place winners Claire Pommier and Jada Altena have been advanced to the District level for judging for their respective competitions, representing VFW Post 10818 and St. Croix County. If they win the District level, they will advance to the Department level.

Our Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen programs are a very sacred part of our organization. We believe our nation's future lies in the hands of America's youth, and if we empower our youth and demonstrate how to honor, respect and show compassion for their fellow man and their country, not only will they have a greater sense of patriotism, they'll become better citizens and greater leaders for future generations.



TEACHER OF THE YEAR

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 10818 is proud to announce our 2019-2020 Teachers of the Year!

Elementary School: Heather Mitchell (Trinity Academy of Hudson)

Middle School: Corey O'Keefe (Hudson Middle School)

"We are so appreciative of all of our teachers and every teacher who was nominated for this prestigious award. Their commitment to teaching good citizenship to their students will greatly benefit our communities as these students grow into involved adults," says VFW Post 10818 Commander Ron Ramos.

The VFW Teacher of the Year award program was enacted in 1999 as a way to identify and recognize America's best educators who instill a sense of national pride in students by teaching citizenship education topics regularly and promoting America's history and traditions effectively. The program continues to exceed expectations, and program administrators expect the number of participants will continue to grow each year.

Congratulations to Heather and Corey! We couldn't think of any more deserving teachers!



Important Notice for the State Commander

Due to the COVID-19 virus we have to think of our members' health and well being. This past week, I have been on the phone every day with National, State Headquarters, and several Posts about what path to take.

I am not taking anything lightly. As of today, March 17, 2020, President Trump has stated "no groups of 10 or more" and Wisconsin Governor Evers has said "no gatherings of 50 or more". Some Posts are closing their doors for two weeks to see where this goes. At this time I am not directing Posts to shut down or cancel meetings, but I am asking Commanders to think very seriously about whether or not to hold your meetings, taking into consideration members' ages and health.

Members: if you don't feel well, please stay home and self-quarantine for up to 15 days so you don't spread this virus – or other illnesses. Better safe than sorry.

Please remember we still have a job to do, for the VFW and all Veterans. We must hold elections and follow the By-Laws of the organization. Please read your By-Laws and only hold meetings with minimum attendance and allow for either teleconferencing or video-conferencing for your vote.

I will allow elections to be done up to one week prior to the State Convention. You must elect Delegates for District, State, and National Conventions and must have all paperwork in before the start of State Convention to have a vote. If you have any questions please contact me or State Headquarters for answers.

We have postponed the Commander and President Testimonial (was March 27-28) and will advise if we are able to reschedule. We have CANCELLED the Loyalty Day event (was April 25). We are watching the status of things every day and will send out information through the District Commanders and website as we get updates to share.

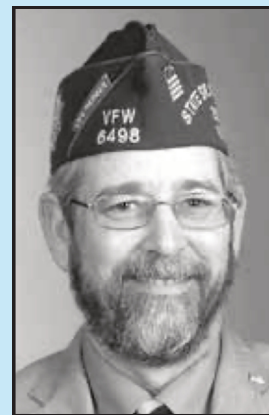
Please follow all federal, state, and local mandates. Last, and most important: PLEASE STAY SAFE! I look forward to seeing everyone on the other side of this mess.

Keeping members safe,

Donald Lynch

VFW State Commander

Department of Wisconsin



CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Patients with COVID-19 have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

***Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.**

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms



STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

**Wash your hands often
with soap and water for
at least 20 seconds.**



[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

CS316038A March 17, 2020 2:06 PM

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



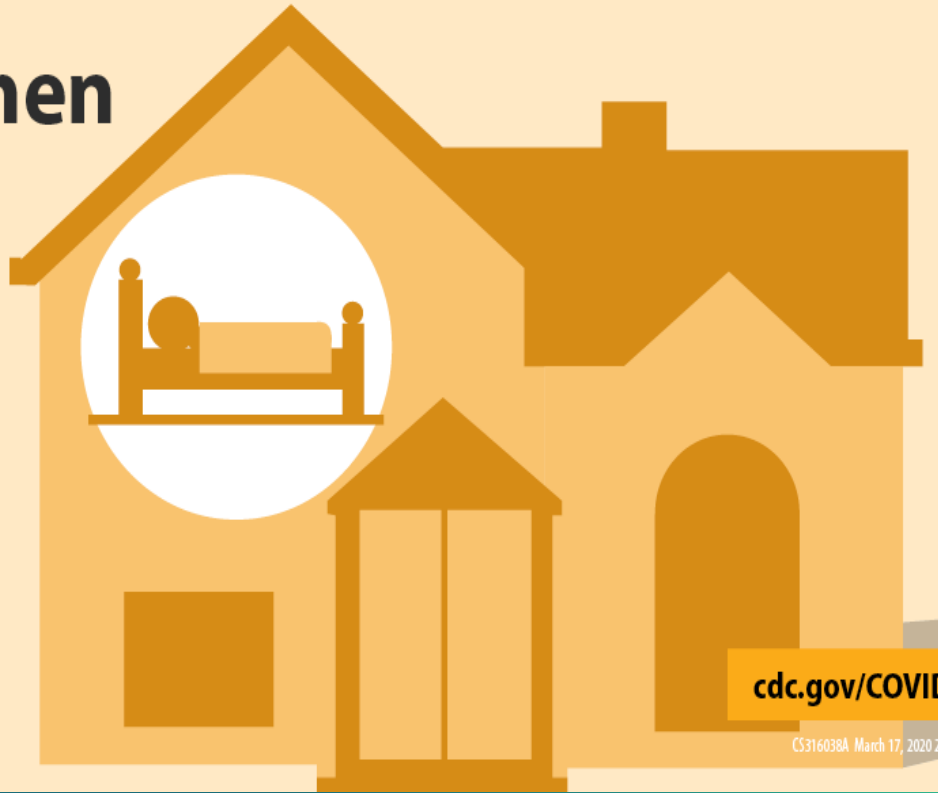
[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

CS316038A March 17, 2020 2:06 PM

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

**Stay home when
you are sick,
except to get
medical care.**



cdc.gov/COVID19

CS316038A March 17, 2020 2:06 PM

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

**Clean and disinfect
frequently touched
objects and surfaces.**



cdc.gov/COVID19

CS316038A

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

**Avoid touching your
eyes, nose, and mouth.**



cdc.gov/COVID19

CS316038A March 17, 2020 2:06 PM

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

**Cover your cough or
sneeze with a tissue,
then throw the tissue
in the trash.**



cdc.gov/COVID19

CS316038A March 17, 2020 2:06 PM

Zoom Participant Guide

Zoom is a web conferencing solution that provides both video conferencing and screen-sharing capabilities. Its high-quality and easy to use format has made it a great choice for Swarthmore College.

If you're experiencing issues with Zoom, after reading this guide, please contact Media Services at 610-957-6201.

Additional documentation is available via the Zoom online knowledge base:

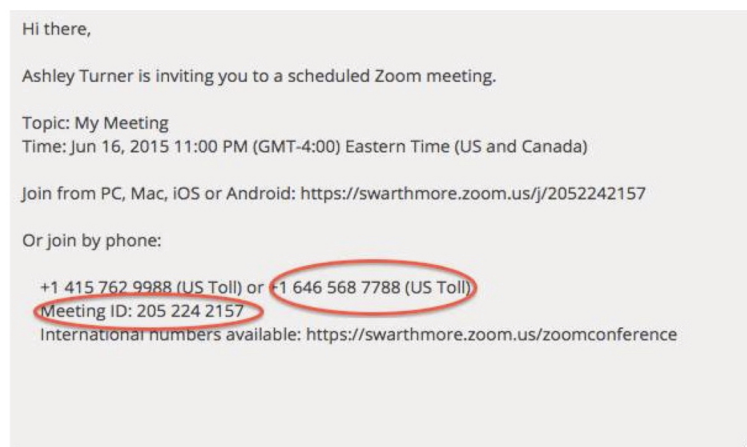
<https://support.zoom.us/home>.

What You Need To Get Started

- An internet connected computer, laptop, or mobile device
- Your meeting ID #
- A webcam, computer microphone, headset or ear buds (if you're participating with a laptop)
- A phone (if you're unable to receive audio via your computer, laptop, or device)

How to Launch Zoom and Participate in Your Meeting

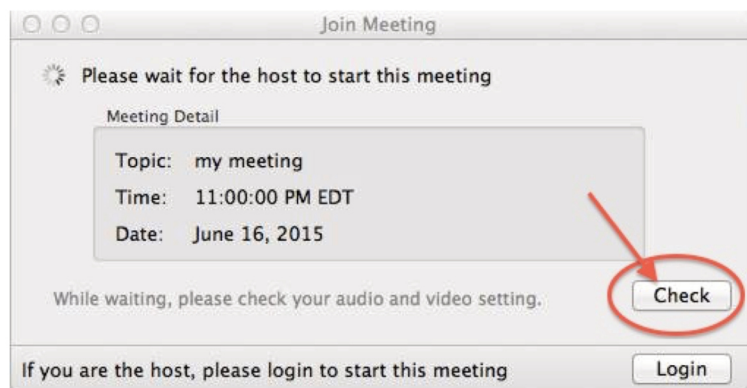
When you're invited to participate in a Zoom meeting, you'll receive instructions similar to what you see below. You can either click on the link provided, or go to the Zoom web site at <http://swarthmore.zoom.us/> and click on "Join a Meeting" where you can enter the 9 or 10-digit Meeting ID number. Audio is integrated in the meeting. However, you have the option to participate via audio-only if a web connected device is not available.



While You're Waiting for the Meeting to Begin

You'll be presented with the following screen if the host hasn't started the meeting at the time you join. We recommend that you check your audio settings while waiting for the meeting to start.

Furthermore, we recommend that laptop users participate with a headset to avoid audio feedback.



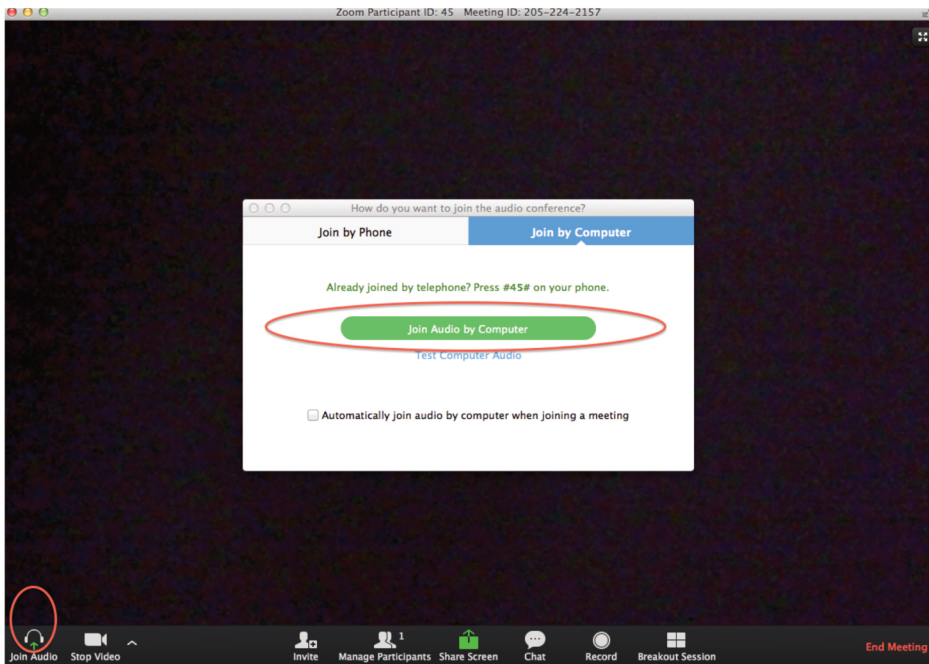
Join By Computer Audio

Once you join the meeting you will be asked whether you want to join using your computer audio or join by using your phone.

If you're using your computer microphone you **MUST** click the green button to join audio by computer. No one on the call will be able to hear you until you click this button.

If for some reason you do not see this window pop up, look for the small green arrow on the bottom left in the tool bar asking you to Join Audio.

If your computer does not have a microphone you can join by phone using the toll number given to you in the invite.



The Zoom Menu Bar

The Zoom menu bar appears at the bottom of the Zoom window once the meeting begins. If you don't see the menu bar, move your mouse slightly and the bar will appear. (The bar disappears after a few seconds when in full-screen mode.)



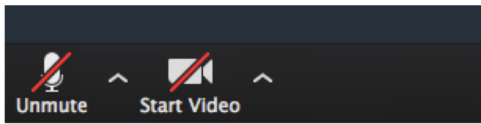
You can:

1. Mute/unmute your microphone
2. Choose your microphone settings
3. Mute/unmute your video camera
4. Select video settings
5. Invite more people to join by email, IM, SMS (mobile users)
6. View a list of participants
7. Share your screen (everything you have open) or select a specific application to share (e.g., Microsoft Excel)
8. Send a chat message to one person (private chat) or to all participants
9. Record the meeting (Host only, unless you have been granted permission)
10. Leave or end the video meeting

Audio and Video Mute and Unmute

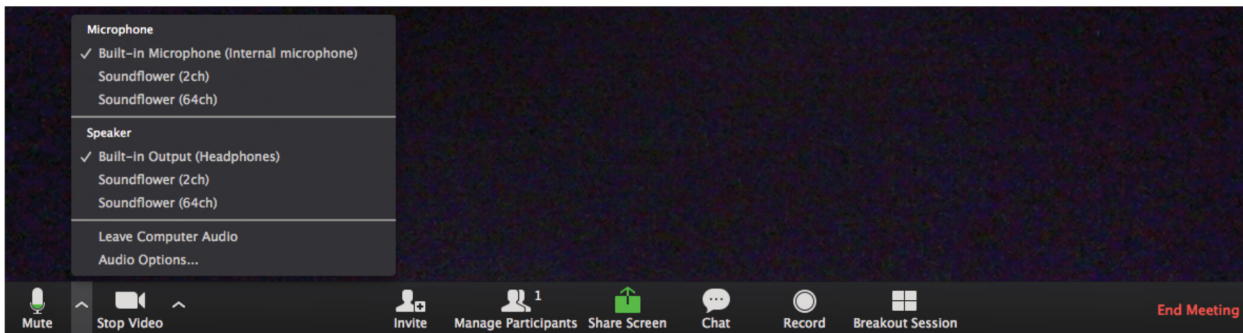
During a session you might be asked to mute your microphone until you have a question or comment.

This helps to minimize background noise and audio feedback. Mute your audio by clicking on the microphone icon located in the lower left-hand corner of the menu bar. You can mute your video by clicking on camera icon as well.



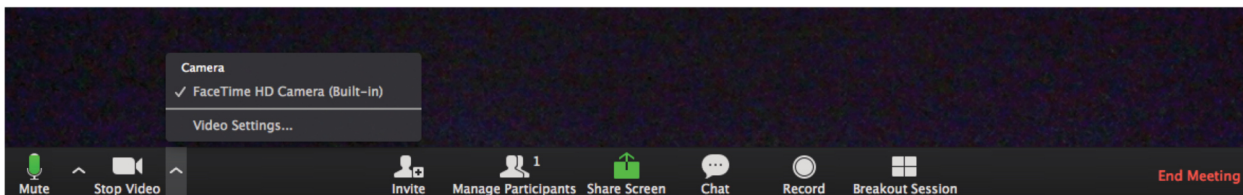
Audio Settings

By clicking on the small carrot next to the microphone icon, you can choose your microphone and speaker settings. It normally defaults to your built-in microphone and speakers but you can select any other microphone or speakers you have plugged in to your computer.

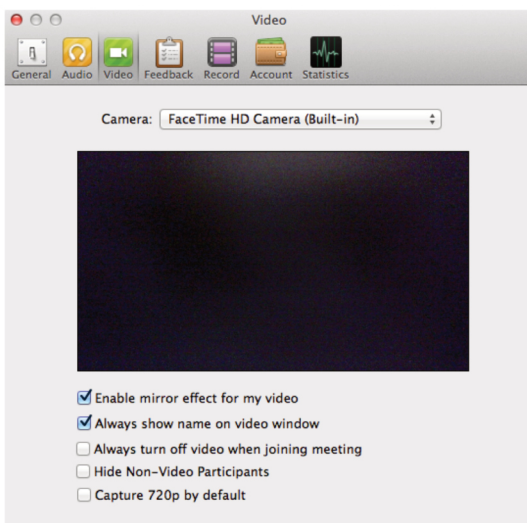


Video Settings

By clicking on the small carrot next to the camera icon, you can choose which video camera you want to use.



If you click on Video Settings at the bottom it will show you what the camera image actually looks like so you can make adjustments.



Testing Your Speakers

By clicking on the audio icon you can test your speakers to make sure they are working and you can hear others. Once you click on the “Test Speaker” button music will play through your speakers until you press stop. If you do not hear music playing please make sure you have the right audio output selected in the drop down menu to the right.

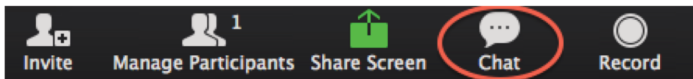
You can also select your microphone from the drop down menu and see your microphone input level.



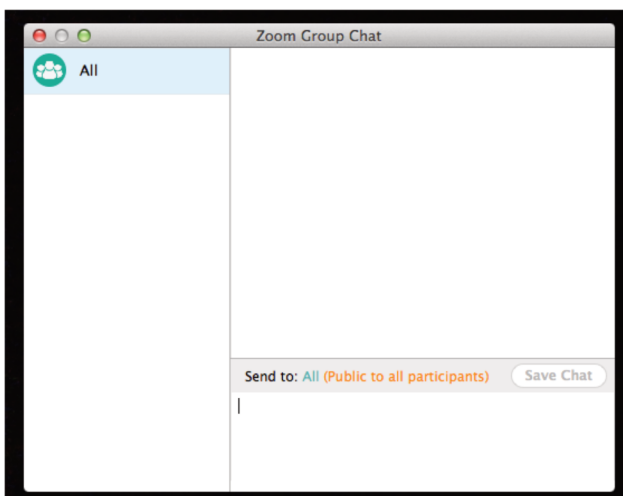
Chat

The chat feature provides the ability to send instant messages during the session. You can send a private chat to one person or message to everyone.

1. Click on “Chat”:



2. Type a message and press “Enter” on your keyboard to send. Messages are sent to all participants by default. You can message an individual participant via private chat by selecting the individual’s name on the left column.

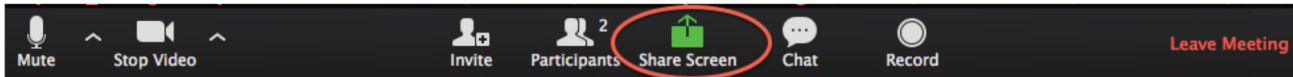


Switching Between Views (Share Screen and Video)

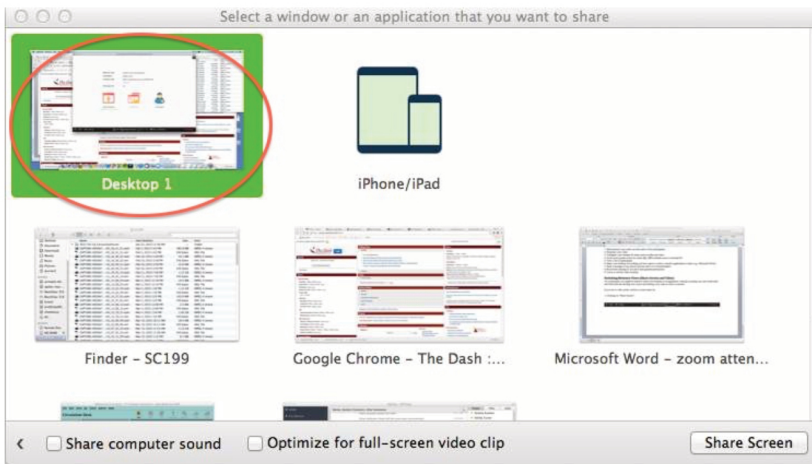
As a participant you might be asked to share your desktop or an application. During a meeting you can switch back and forth between sharing your screen and sharing your video as often as needed.

If you are in video mode, switch to screen share by:

1. Clicking on “Share Screen”

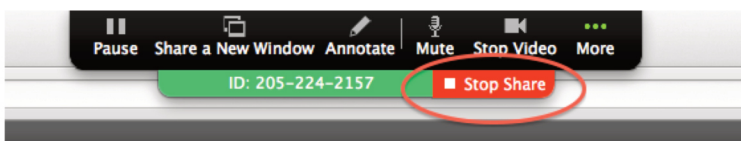


2. A window showing all possible options for you to share displays. Click on the item you want to display and then click “Share Screen”:



If you are displaying your screen, switch to camera video by:

1. Clicking “Stop Share” from the sharing/annotation menu at the top of the screen:



The view will immediately switch back to showing the webcam videos of the participants.

Leaving the Meeting

At the end of the meeting when you are finished click the “Leave Meeting” button to log off.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- ✧ **April 16 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **April 21 - Post Meeting:** Meeting conducted via Zoom. Social hour begins at 6:00PM. No Auxiliary meeting. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. **Nominations & Election of Officers. Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **May 14 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **May 19 - Post & Auxiliary Meeting:** Social hour begins at 6:00PM. Auxiliary meeting starts at 6:30PM. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. Every month at our Post Meeting, we have a drawing for some very neat prizes. **Swearing in of Officers. Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **June 4 - Drill Team:** Drill Practice at 6:30PM. This will be for those in the Color Guard and Honor Guard.
- ✧ **June 5 - 6 - Park Art Fair:** More info to come
- ✧ **June 6 - June Bug Days Parade:** More info to come
- ✧ **June 10 - 13 - Wisconsin VFW State Convention:** Department Convention held at Holiday Inn at Rothschild, WI
- ✧ **June 15 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **July 15 - 19 - St. Croix County Fair:** Information & recruiting booth will be setup during the fair. More info to follow.
- ✧ **June 16 - Post & Auxiliary Meeting:** Social hour begins at 6:00PM. Auxiliary meeting starts at 6:30PM. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. Every month at our Post Meeting, we have a drawing for some very neat prizes. **Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **July 2 - Drill Team:** Drill Practice at 6:30PM. This will be for those in the Color Guard and Honor Guard.
- ✧ **July 9 - 12 - New Richmond Fun Fest -** Volunteers needed for food wagon and grill. Sign up sheets will be at the post.
- ✧ **July 12 - Fun Fest Parade -** 11:30 - 1 - Color Guard for parade. Point of Contact: Todd Smrz
- ✧ **July 16 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **July 18 - 22 - National VFW Convention:** Officers will be attending the National VFW Convention in Reno, NV.
- ✧ **July 21 - Post & Auxiliary Meeting:** Social hour begins at 6:00PM. Auxiliary meeting starts at 6:30PM. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. Every month at our Post Meeting, we have a drawing for some very neat prizes. **Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **August 6 - Drill Team:** Drill Practice at 6:30PM. This will be for those in the Color Guard and Honor Guard.
- ✧ **August 4 - National Night Out:** 7PM at the New Richmond Police Station, more info to follow
- ✧ **August 13 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **August 15 - VFW King Day:** Officers will travel to visit the Veterans Home in King, WI.
- ✧ **August 18 - Post & Auxiliary Meeting:** Social hour begins at 6:00PM. Auxiliary meeting starts at 6:30PM. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. Every month at our Post Meeting, we have a drawing for some very neat prizes. **Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **September 3 - Drill Team:** Drill Practice at 6:30PM. This will be for those in the Color Guard and Honor Guard.
- ✧ **September 10 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **September 15 - Post & Auxiliary Meeting:** Social hour begins at 6:00PM. Auxiliary meeting starts at 6:30PM. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. Every month at our Post Meeting, we have a drawing for some very neat prizes. **Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **October 1 - Drill Team:** Drill Practice at 6:30PM. This will be for those in the Color Guard and Honor Guard.
- ✧ **October 10 - VFW Meat Raffle:** Meat Raffle held at Cedar Creek Inn. Starts at 6:30PM. Chairperson: Mitch Cline 651-492-9634
- ✧ **October 15 - Finance Committee:** Finance meeting starts at 6PM. The management meeting will begin shortly after the closing of the finance meeting. The management meeting will **only** consist of the Post Officers unless invited by an Officer.
- ✧ **October 20 - Post & Auxiliary Meeting:** Social hour begins at 6:00PM. Auxiliary meeting starts at 6:30PM. Post meeting promptly begins at 7:00PM. Every month at our Post Meeting, we have a drawing for some very neat prizes. **Post meetings will take place in the downstairs of the New Richmond Civic Center, 156 East First Street (across from the Fire Department).**
- ✧ **October 23 - 25 - Trip to the National Home for Children:** Wisconsin will be heading to the Annual Meeting at the National Home for Children as well as assisting with their Annual Halloween Party.



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