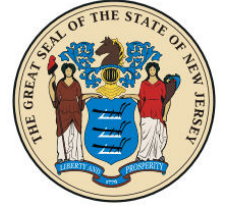




Stephen G. Fodor
Project Chairman

Veterans of Foreign Wars

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Commanders Project 2020-21

Commander Brian Wiener

My project will have 3 separate recipients.

1. My first is the Vineland Veterans Home Movie theatre makeover. The CEO of Vineland Veterans Home approached me earlier this year for some assistance. As many of you may or may not know, Past Commander Jack Shiverdaker installed a movie theatre in the home. Quite some time has passed and the theatre has been left to function with its original equipment, very antiquated and nowhere near today's technology. My goal is to upgrade the theatre to accommodate all the residents. This will include a permanent ceiling mounted WIFI/Bluetooth projector (and its installation including all materials), a drop down retractable screen, upgrading the sound system, and the updating of the theatres overall appearance. In addition will be a license to purchase movies for the residents already playing in theaters. My goals are to donate the total cost of this project.
2. My second project is to assist the Last Salute Military Funeral and Honor Guard. Last Salute military funeral honor guard is the most elaborate military funeral honor guard outside of Arlington National Cemetery. Conducting free final honor ceremonies for our fallen heroes is Last Salute's primary mission. Honoring the fallen and comforting their families carries forward a solemn promise and inherent duty society is obliged to observe and reflect upon. Service and sacrifice in defense of our great nation and its people is a commitment unlike any other. Those willing to place themselves in imminent danger to preserve the safety and security of our people exhibit a valor which merits recognition, especially, at their memorial service.

The United States Military has many great traditions. Paramount among them is honoring our fallen. This legacy of honor continues from the absolute dedication of the "Tomb Guard" at Arlington to local veterans and communities observing Memorial Day. Last Salute conducts highly professional and formal military funeral honors. These honors include but are not limited to, the stately transport of flag draped casket by military vehicle caisson to grave, the firing of a single volley from a Civil War cannon, the ringing of a large memorial bell three times, a three volley gun salute, the playing of Taps and the presentation of an expertly folded memorial flag.

One of the most emotional moments of a Last Salute memorial is the "Prayer Box" ceremony. The Last Salute prayer box is a chest built from wood taken from within a church. At each funeral service the prayer from a top the chest is read aloud and then a family member places a photo or prayer card of their loved one inside. They are told that their loved one is now a permanent member of the honor guard; they will be with us always, and to travel with us everywhere we go and watch over everything that we do. The Last Salute Prayer Box has been held and prayed over by countless clergy and dignitaries including senators, congressmen, police and fire chiefs, mayors and most notably many Medal of Honor recipients.

Last Salute serves primarily Atlantic County New Jersey but when able provides services to adjacent counties. In addition to funeral ceremonies, Last Salute supports other veteran's services organizations as well as visiting schools for exhibitions and engaging the students about military service, military traditions and military history.

Last Salute has a strong desire to extend its services to other areas. The expansion of services will require additional volunteers and funding. As many VFW and Legion Posts discontinue rifle teams, Last Salute believes that assembling individual volunteers to represent their posts as part of a regional honor guard will provide an adequate number of volunteers. A long term organic recruiting effort will also provide manpower as well as assist posts with acquiring new members.

3. Any and all remaining funds from the Commanders Project will be placed in the Department of New Jersey's Veterans Assistance Program established by Past Department Commander Sarmiento which is:

The Department currently maintains a Military Assistance Program (MAP) which has assisted veterans, military personnel and their families. This program is often confused with our National MAP program and with the exception of donations made at our State Convention very minimal funds have been donated to the program by Posts or individuals. The name change to NJVFW Veterans Assistance Program (VAP) should avoid confusion between our Department and National programs.

The program is not meant to replace the local Posts Relief Fund nor their obligations to assist worthy comrades, veterans and families. We believe this valuable program will allow the VFW to lend a hand up and not a hand out to our NJ Veterans. Funds will only be distributed for the aid, assistance, relief and comfort of needy or disabled veterans or members of the Armed Forces and their dependents. All funds will be distributed by the Department Quartermaster and all requests will be approved or disapproved by a four (4) member committee appointed by the Department Commander.

***Mail all donations to:
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