

**YOU**  
Make It Happen

## Helpline Offers Aid to Heroes Nationwide

Sometimes the best way to help an American war hero is just to listen, get to the heart of the problem, and find the right kind of assistance in his or her local community.

That's the important job of our toll-free Military and Veteran Family Helpline.

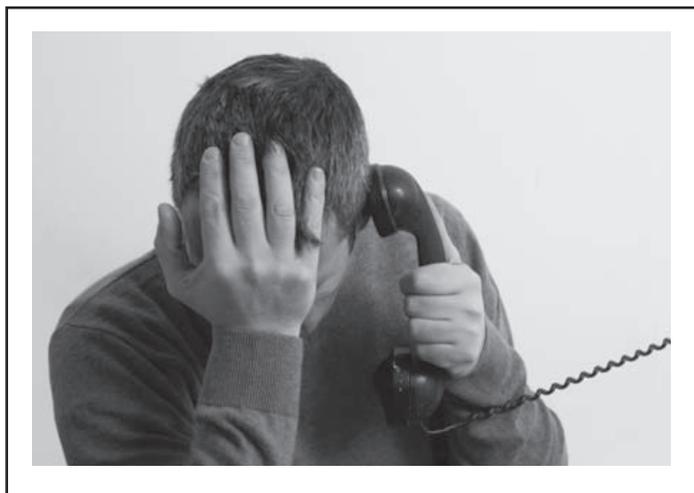
Since 2008, the Helpline has assisted more than 2,000 veterans, active-duty soldiers and their family members with a multitude of pressing issues – helping them to find rehabilitative services, return to school or work, and resolve family conflicts, for example.

Frequently, Helpline callers have gotten the run-around or been refused help any number of times before reaching us. "You're the first one who has really listened," they tell us.

And every day, there are more urgent calls for assistance, for example...

...from a veteran with daughters whose wife had recently abandoned the family. Our Helpline staff helped him secure daycare services and apply for a HUD affordable housing voucher.

...from the worried father of a deploying soldier. Our Helpline staff took the time to



discuss a variety of support groups he could participate in, and gave him the contact information for groups in his area.

...from the wife of a Vietnam veteran. Suffering from COPD, this veteran needed a portable oxygen concentrator to regain his mobility, and we were able to locate a company that provides such medical devices free to veterans!

With our unique knowledge of the issues facing veterans, our valuable nationwide network of community service contacts, and our eagerness to listen and serve, the Helpline is really a one-of-a-kind resource for veterans and their families. Thank you for helping us keep it alive and growing!

***If you know a military or veteran family who is struggling, encourage them to contact the Helpline: 1-800-313-4200 help@vfwnationalhome.org***

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### *Did you know...*

Approximately two million American children have experienced a parental deployment since 2001?

## THE HOME FRONT

A publication of:

**VFW National Home  
for Children**

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## Thanks for your good wishes!

The children were thrilled to receive so many signed ornaments from friends like you – enough for two trees! It is truly wonderful to let them know that others care for them, and wish them well at Christmas and throughout the year.

But that's not all the Christmas spirit you helped us to spread. Look on the back page of this newsletter for more!

## A Word from... Patrice Green, Executive Director

I know you agree: after the sacrifices they have made, veterans should not have to beg, or wait, or battle bureaucracies to get help when they need it. And thanks to the support you provide to help us keep the Military and Veteran Family Helpline going, they don't have to.

As our front page article describes, the staffers on our Helpline are uniquely qualified to guide veterans and their families to a resolution of pretty much any kind of problem they may be experiencing.

They have even been known to change lives, as with a Vietnam veteran who nearly lost his family. The vet's wife called the Helpline, wanting to divorce her husband and live at the National Home because she could not live with his depression any longer.

Listening carefully, however, our Helpline staffer could tell that she still loved her husband very much – and was able to

convince her to hold the family together while we sought help for his problems.



We found a counselor with a military background for the veteran, someone he would feel comfortable with, right in his community.

And it worked!

A few months later, the woman called back to let us know her family was together and happy and loving, and that things were better than they'd

ever been. She thanked us over and over for giving her back the man she married.

And that's just one example of why I'm so determined to thank you over and over, for trusting us with your support, and for allowing us to serve the brave veterans who have done so much for our country. I hope you share my pride in the accomplishments of our Helpline staff, which could not happen without you. Thanks again!

*Patrice Green*



## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

# Jeffery E. Friar

Duty, Honor and Commitment. For Jeff

Friar, his uncles – veterans of WWII and Korea – were living examples of these core values. But we think Jeff represents them equally well.

“I truly believe that our service men and women are protecting our vital freedoms,” Jeff says. “They have handed us a blank check that we hold, payable with up to their own life. Should we not return a portion of what we have from our safe and comfortable homes to help them and their families?”

Jeff served in the US Navy for more than 20 years. Retiring as a Commander in the Civil Engineer Corps, he took care of military organizations (and the family housing) around the world. And during his time as an officer, he learned the importance of taking care of his troops and making sure that they had what they needed to accomplish their mission.

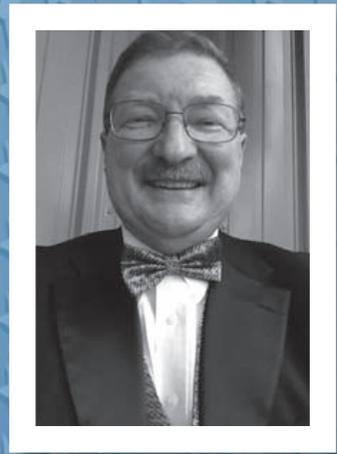
That’s why the VFW National Home for Children tops the list of causes that Jeff believes in.

He explains, “I’ve been to Eaton Rapids, I’ve seen firsthand the hard work of the decent and honest folks who run our Home. While that was and is enough to merit my support, I was eager to and did double my support after the independent national review gave the Home top ranking for ethical and transparent accounting and maximum percentage of contributions going directly to the cause.”

With his background in facilities management, Jeff recognizes the challenges inherent in maintaining the Home’s building and grounds in Michigan’s sometimes harsh environment. But what surprised him most were the resources and energy put into teaching life skills to the adults of the families living in the houses at the home.

“I was very impressed with the success stories and the track record of families and children who have ‘graduated’ from the Home,” Jeff says.

He concludes, “I’m proud to associate myself with an organization that is daily making a positive impact on the children



*Retired Commander, Civil Engineer Corps, US Navy, and National Home Life Member*

and families of my fellow servicemen and women. It is all an extension of the vows we have to ‘Honor the Dead, through service to the Living.’”

### Where should we shine the Spotlight next?

If you would like to nominate another member of our community – or volunteer yourself – for a future Donor Spotlight, please contact Nancy Archambeau at (866) 483-9642, or by e-mail to: [info@vfwnationalhome.org](mailto:info@vfwnationalhome.org)

## 90 Years of Memories to Preserve and Share

Thanks to the dedicated support of caring Americans like you, the VFW National Home for Children is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. And since our founding in 1925, a great many memories have been made here by a great many veterans, children and families.

As part of our anniversary celebration, we want to honor those memories. On behalf of everyone who has passed through our doors, we want to remodel and update our campus museum so that this inspiring history can be shared with everyone still to come.

Our current museum is seriously outdated and much too small. As a result, there are boxes and boxes of materials representing years of stories and significant moments that are not being remembered and shared

in our museum. To add a few decades worth of pictures and artifacts, we need more space.

And we have it – a building is available to us that will be remodeled and prepped to host the museum. Also, local museum curators are willing to consult with us on the best ways to preserve and share this bounty of history. Along with the typical displays, our new exhibits will include video/film and interactive displays.

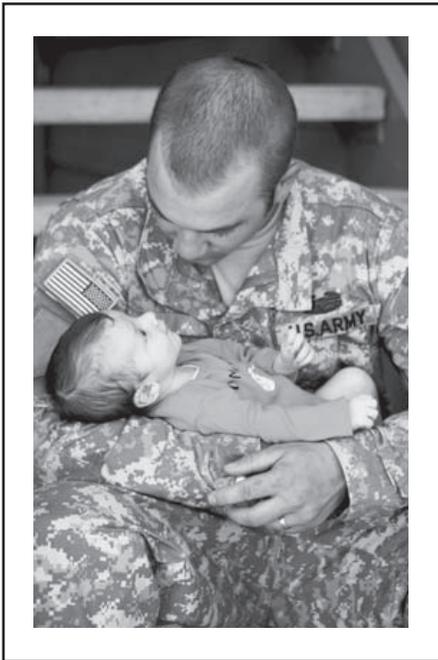
The only thing missing is the funding to complete this project. Please join in, and help us make this a museum that our veterans can take pride in.

#### **How to help:**

**You can donate specifically for the museum by writing “Museum” in the**

**memo line on your check. Or, if you have pictures or artifacts that you would like to donate or loan, please call Sue toll-free at 866-483-9642.**





## Help us Meet the Challenges of the Future

If you want to ensure that the National Home can meet the future needs of veterans' families and children, please consider a planned gift.

Nancy Archambeau, Assistant Development Director, can help find the option that's right for you – whether it's an estate gift, a gift annuity, or an investment in our Amy Ross Endowment Fund. To get started, simply use the enclosed reply form to request our brochure, or contact Nancy directly. Call toll-free 866-483-9642, or reach her by email at [info@vfwnationalhome.org](mailto:info@vfwnationalhome.org).

## Calendar of Events

**Feb 4** • Trustees Board Meeting  
• NH Campus

**Mar 22-28** • National Home Awareness Week • NH Campus

**Mar 28** • Easter Treat Weekend  
• NH Campus

**May 14-16** • Jr. Vice Orientation  
• NH Campus

**June 10** • Trustees Board Meeting  
• NH Campus



**Visit the Home online**  
**Come see our NEW website:**  
[www.vfwnationalhome.org](http://www.vfwnationalhome.org)

## Christmas Spirit at the Home

**YOU**  
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The giving spirit of Christmas filled the VFW National Home for Children throughout the season, thanks to our family of supporters.

Santa and Mrs. Claus visited each boy and girl. The excited children jumped up and down and ran to the front door to greet Santa and Mrs. Claus as they pulled up in the National Home fire truck. And the jolly old elf brought toys and other goodies to the children, much to their delight.

"A tool bench!" exclaimed one little boy. He was a little shy at first about approaching Santa and Mrs. Claus, but soon he was hugging them tight.

At one house, twins dressed in pink frilly skirts twirled about as they approached the couple from the North Pole. The house was decorated with lights and a white Christmas tree bedecked with colorful ornaments.

Next stop was a home with a little boy dressed up, including a tie, and his sister in a bright red dress.

"I got Power Rangers!" he shouted. "Just what I wanted!"



At another house, a little girl worked hard to open a gift that was larger than she. Finally, the present was revealed.

"A crib for your baby," said her mom. "Now you can put her night-night."

The little girl toddled off, entranced by a small piece of wrapping paper with a penguin on it.

The Christmas spirit continued with a holiday craft show, the annual Christmas lunch, the fun of the Cootie clowns, and a final visit by Santa Claus

before he headed back to the North Pole.

