

Past National Commander Clifford G. Olson Jr. Passes at 89

Olson spent 53 years an active VFW member

Jul 15, 2022

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – It is with deep sadness that the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) announces the passing of past VFW Commander-in-Chief Clifford G. “Cliff” Olson Jr.

Clifford G. Olson Jr., of Bryantville, Massachusetts was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars during the 84th annual national convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 19, 1983. The organization surpassed the two-million-member mark for the first time during his term.

Olson was born in the Dorchester section of Boston and graduated from Hyde Park High School.

Entering the U.S. Navy at age 17, he became an air crewman and hydraulic specialist and served from 1951-1959. During the Korean War he was assigned to Patrol Squadron 7, a P2V aircraft unit, which provided air cover for the 7th Fleet and worked extensively carrying out anti-submarine patrols, weather reconnaissance and intelligence missions.

He initially became involved with the VFW through the athletic and community activity programs sponsored by Lower Mills Memorial Post 8699 in the Boston suburb of Mattapan. Becoming active in the administration of the Post, he was elected Post Commander in 1964-1965 and was accorded All-State honors in those years. Olson was an All-American District Commander in 1971 and 1972 and an All-American Department Commander for the State of Massachusetts in 1978-79. He was primarily responsible for the establishment of many new programs in the Department including the Cancer Sticker Program, various cancer research programs and assistance projects for St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital.

Following his tenure as Commander-in-Chief, Olson served on several VFW national committees and as Post quartermaster from July 2010 – November 2014 and was a Gold Legacy Life member of VFW Post 144 North End Post in Attleboro, Massachusetts.

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This post will be updated with information on potential services and arrangements as it becomes available.