

The "Butterfly Effect."

Are you familiar with it? The "butterfly effect" describes a mysterious phenomenon of the interconnection between people and our larger world. A small, seemingly unimportant action or decision that leads to a larger, unexpected outcome.

Your fall unit contributions, sent in to benefit a myriad of programs, are not "mysterious" or "unexpected" because we know where our money is going and how those programs benefit our veterans. Then again, do we really know the benefit? What we do not see is the emotional or sometimes physical impact these contributions have on others. I contemplated on this as I wrote out checks to many programs in January - money received from YOU. I am humbled by your generosity for our veterans and the programs that are there to benefit them and their families. I wondered which programs received these funds "at the perfect time", just when they really needed it. What connection will take place because of those donations? I imagine it will come full circle in some "mysterious and unexpected" way and time.

Are contributions "done" for the year? No. You can make contributions to these programs all year long! Consider sponsoring a fundraiser for a favorite project or program during the year. I encourage you to do things for your local veterans and then include something that branches out to benefit a Department program as well.

Never underestimate the power of the dollar you give, the smile you share, or even the seemingly insignificant handwritten card you send. It will lead to something bigger and leave you with gratitude in your heart.

What small action did YOU take that you later realized had a "butterfly effect", one that turned into something much more important?

Blessings to you all!

Sonnie Otto