

Gerald J. (Mort) Ward was elected and installed as State Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Ohio at the 91st State Convention, held in Independence, Ohio. Mort has been a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars since 1968, life member since 1976 and gained his eligibility with honorable service in the U.S. Army at Camp Bearcat, Vietnam with the 5/42nd Artillery. He served as its Headquarters Battery Motor Sergeant, deploying with his unit from Ft Bragg, NC in 1968. His stateside duty included serving on the "Command Maintenance Readiness Inspection Team" as a repair parts supply (PLL) inspector. His service medals include: National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Presidential Unit Citation and Two Letters of Accommodation.

In 1968 while still serving in Vietnam, Mort joined VFW Post 5713 in Celina, OH where he became a life member in 1976. Mort is currently serving his 29th year as Post Quartermaster and has held most of the offices of his post since being appointed Post Adjutant in 1969 by his late father, past District Two Commander Don Ward. He attained All-State Post Quartermaster and/or Membership Chairman 12 times and helped grow his post membership from 298 members in 1990 to and all time high of 619 members. Mort has served on the VFW and American Legion Guards in his community for nearly 42 years.

Mort served VFW District Two as its Commander in 1996-97 attaining 100% in membership and served as its Quartermaster from 1998-2003. VFW, Department of Ohio Offices and Chairmanships held include: State Youth Activities Chairman 1997-98, Americanism Chairman from 1998-2002 and State Inspector from 2003-2007. He is a member and Past President of VFW Ohio Past Commanders Association. Mort has served on numerous National Committees and is currently serving on the National By-Laws Study group. He has been an integral part of the VFW of Ohio Charities since its inception in 2003 and now serves as its President. Mort was very instrumental in adopting its By-Laws, Fundraising and Operations Policy.

Mort retired from the Reynolds & Reynolds Company in Celina after 25 years of service as a Maintenance Technician. Prior to that, he was self employed at Ward's Garage in Celina from 1970-86. During those years he was also Co-Owner/Manager of a stock car racing team which campaigned cars on the USAC, ARCA and NASCAR stock car circuits.

Other affiliations include: Life member of the VFW National Home for Children, Life Member American Legion Post 210, Celina, Ohio, Military Order of the Cooties Pup Tent 6, Lima, Ohio and a Charter & Life Member of Chapter 783, Vietnam Veterans of America, Eagles Lodge 1291 and Loyal Order of Moose 1473 all of Celina, Ohio. Mort has also served on the Board of Directors of the Freedom Day's Family Picnic, Inc. as Treasurer where he developed the By-Laws, Conflict of Interest Policy, and filed IRS paper work for recognition of Exemption as 501c3 Public Charity. He and his wife Candace of 30 years reside in Celina, Ohio.