

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Dept. Commander & President
Joint Homecoming

March 13 - 14, 2026

Florida Hotel - Room rates \$139

1500 Sand Lake Rd.

Orlando, Fl.

Phone: 800-588-4656

(Must mention VFW Homecoming)

Hotel Reservations Cut-off

February 16, 2026

Reservations for Banquet on March 14, 2026

Must be sent to Debbie Tilley

904-460-9345 or cell 904-495-3622

dktilley@comcast.net

cut-off February 27, 2026



December 2025

Americanism

As Holiday's approach and we spend time with our families, let us honor our Veterans and inspire new generations to join us in

"BUILDING BRIDGES FOR OUR VETERANS"

Baking cookies and sharing a cup of cocoa and a conversation goes a long way to bring a smile and show you care it also adds a distraction.

Holidays can be a lonely time as well!

Suicide Awareness Dial 988 PRESS 1



December Dates

12/07	Pearl Harbor
12/07	Bill of Rights Day
12/13	U.S National Guard Birthday
12/20	U.S Space Force Birthday
12/22	Forefathers Day
12/24	Christmas Eve
12/25	Christmas Day
12/26	Kwanzaa
12/31	New Year's Eve



**"FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA HONORING VETERANS WHO KEEP US FREE"
SHINE BRIGHT * BE PROUD * REMEMBER OUR HEROES WITH HONOR**

#AuxiliaryPatriotism

**"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself"
by: Joseph Campbell**

PROGRAM GOALS

****Flag Education*Promote Patriotism*POW/MIA*Star Recognition***



Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates

Michelle Butler
Americanism Chair/PI

American.Patriotic.2025@Gmail.com

PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR

December 2025

As we are hitting our ½ way mark a refresher is to review our Duties; found in Malta, member resources, Americanism.

Do you know the Ritual Section of the VFW Auxiliary Bylaws?

Official Look -Pages 32 & 33

General Instructions- Pages 2-7

Can you tell me who is pictured on page #6....



- (1) Raps of the gavel means- **ATTENTION**
- (2) Raps of the gavel means-**STAND FACING FRONT**
- (3) Raps of the gavel means – **PLEASE SIT**

As the Patriotic Instructor you are to:

- *See the room is keeping up with the Ritual*
- *Instruct in the proper use of and salute to the flag*
- *Educating significance of all National Holidays*
- *May carry the Flag in events and Parades*
- *Educating on the Flag and showing Respect*
- *Place Flag and Wreaths at Veterans graves*
- *Educating on Proper way of retiring a Flag*
- *Teaching Auxiliary Traditions*
- *Attend Auxiliary sponsored Events and Ceremonies*
- *Promote Patriotism*



Most Missed: showing proper respect for the Alter & Bible

Whenever the Chaplin is opening or closing the Bible everyone should stop all movement and talking!!!



Wishing Everyone a Happy Holidays!

Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates

Michelle Butler
Americanism/Patriotic Instructor
American.Patriotic.2526@gmail.com



AUXILIARY OUTREACH

DECEMBER 2025

MERRY CHRISTMAS FLORIDA!!!

In this season of giving, have you thought of all the ways to partner with your Community to Build Bridges for Our Veterans and Be the Light in Someone's Storm?? There's PLENTY of opportunities !

December 2nd is Giving Tuesday. Have you considered ways to "give" of your time to help your Community reach their goals?

December 7th is Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. There will be ceremonies and events held by government entities, Veterans groups, churches, etc you can volunteer to help. Maybe setup/cleanup, flag placement, and so on. (report under Veterans & Family)

December 13th is Wreaths Across America. Is there a local group that places grave-stone wreaths and needs help with identifying Veterans headstones, or wreath placement? (report under Veterans & Family)

December 24th is Christmas Eve and December 25th is Christmas. There are NUMEROUS church events, school events, homeless soup kitchens, and pet shelters that can always use extra hands.

ASK what you can do !

BUILD those Bridges into the Community

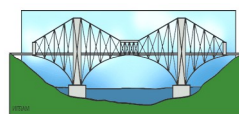
for Our Veterans !

SHINE your light of love into the Community !

BE THE SHINING STAR ON SOMEONE'S CHRISTMAS TREE!

Remember if it can go under another program it CAN NOT be reported in Auxiliary Outreach

Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



BECKY KIEFFER
AUXILIARY OUTREACH
bkiso2012@gmail.com



Buddy Poppy Monthly Promotion - December Edition

"Honoring Our Heroes with Holiday Hearts"

As we enter this beautiful Christmas season, it is a perfect time to reflect on the true spirit of giving — a spirit that aligns perfectly with the meaning behind The Buddy Poppy. While many families gather to celebrate, countless veterans and their loved ones continue to carry the burdens of service, sacrifice, and loss. December gives us a special opportunity to ensure they are remembered, honored, and supported.

A Season of Giving Back

The Buddy Poppy is more than a small red flower — it is a symbol of hope for veterans and a reminder of those who never made it home. Every Poppy distributed helps provide vital assistance to veterans, active-duty service members, and surviving families. This month, let's encourage our Auxiliaries to embrace the holiday spirit by incorporating Buddy Poppies in all December activities:

- Add Buddy Poppies to wreaths, garlands, or Christmas centerpieces
- Create Buddy Poppy ornaments for trees at Post homes or community events
- Include a Buddy Poppy with holiday cards to members, veterans, and local supporters
- Host a "Poppy & Cocoa" table at parades, festivals, or school holiday programs
- Share the Buddy Poppy story in your December newsletters, church bulletins, and social media

Spread Holiday Cheer — and Awareness

This is also a wonderful time to educate the public about how their donations directly support the VFW and VFW Auxiliary programs that care for veterans in need. A simple smile, a "Merry Christmas," and a Buddy Poppy can make a tremendous difference.

Let's challenge each Auxiliary to make December a month of meaningful outreach. Whether through decorating, distributing, or simply sharing the history of the Poppy, every effort helps keep our mission alive.



**Thank You Dept. of Florida Auxiliaries,
Your dedication to the Buddy Poppy Program is a true gift, not only to our Veterans but to your
Community and the legacy of the VFW Auxiliary.**

Thank you for everything you do throughout the year and especially during the season of compassion.

**I wish you all a Merry Christmas, a season filled with gratitude
and a renewed commitment to honoring our veterans
through the Buddy Poppy Program.**



**Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates**

**Dept. of FL Buddy Poppy Chairman
Jennifer Holland, jenniferLholland72@comcast.net**



VFW NATIONAL HOME MONTHLY PROMOTION DECEMBER EDITION

DECEMBER FOCUS HOLIDAY HOPE & SUPPORT

THE HOLIDAYS CAN BE A DIFFICULT TIME
FOR VETERAN FAMILIES

THE NATIONAL HOME PROVIDES
STABILITY, HOUSING, COUNSELING AND
COMMUNITY SUPPORT—ENSURING THAT
NO MILITARY OR VETERAN FAMILY MUST
FACE HARDSHIP ALONE DURING THE
HOLIDAYS AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

HOW CAN YOU OR YOUR AUXILIARY SUPPORT THE
NATIONAL HOME THIS DECEMBER

Gift a Life Membership for a friend or loved one

"Let's Do More Stock the Store" Whitmore's Warriors

Purchase Items from The National Home's Amazon Wishlist as a Christmas Gift



*Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates*

DEPT. CHAIRMAN VFW NATIONAL HOME
JENNIFER HOLLAND
JENNIFERLHOLLAND72@COMCAST.NET



Adopt a Veteran at Veterans Village

December 25th is Christmas and December 14 through December 22nd is Hanukkah.

Now is the time to remember our veterans. Some residents at the Village do not have families, we are their family. It is a wonderful time to send those care packages. If you did not sign up for Adopt a Vet, you can send cards to the village and address them to **any veteran**. If you send more than one card, send them in one package and address them to **Veterans at the Village**. If you adopted a vet address them to that Veteran. This is a wonderful time to send home-made or store-bought items like blankets, Christmas. Hanukkah cards or ornaments. Other items you could send are Baseball caps, Couch cup holder trays, Tea shirts, Sweatshirts, or soft socks. I recommend if you are Jewish send them a Hanukkah card if you are Christian send a Christmas card. **Everyone loves cards.**



Who works or volunteers at Veterans Village?

Did you know that there are about twenty-six employees and volunteers at the village? We must remember that the Veterans Village is open 7 days a week 24 hours a day, someone is on staff. Is your auxiliary wanting to remember the workers that spend so much time and talent there also? If your auxiliary would like to send them a gift or a card, you can address those to the employees. If your auxiliary would like to make Christmas dinner and give the employees a day off contact Veterans Village at 352-236-0823. Let us not forget Mike Cline, please make sure he receives cards and gifts for all the work he does at Veterans Village. He is a very fun-loving Navy Veteran.



Presidents Special Project



Those beautiful floors please remember to keep running those fundraisers and those donations coming in. I am sure we will have another parade of checks at Mid-Winter Conference. There is nothing more fun than to walk up and hand over that check no matter what the amount. You will see, just try it.



Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates

Kelly Barr
Department Special Project
flpresproject2526@gmail.com

Extension and Revitalization

December 2025

What is a PIP?

A **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** is more than just a form—it's a lifeline. It's a chance for an Auxiliary to pause, reflect, and take ownership of its future. Instead of waiting for problems to overwhelm us, a PIP empowers us to say: *We see the challenge, and we will rise to meet it.*

With clear goals, a timeline, and the courage to act, Auxiliaries can transform obstacles into opportunities. The Department President may appoint a mentor or team to walk alongside the Auxiliary, but the real power lies in the Auxiliary itself—crafting its own plan to grow stronger, healthier, and more united.

Who Can Initiate a PIP?

The **Department President and Secretary** hold the keys to beginning a PIP. Why? Because leadership must be fully engaged in the process. When the Department President initiates a PIP, it ensures accountability, guidance, and oversight. Together with the Chief of Staff, they provide support—but the Auxiliary leads the way forward.



Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates

How Does a PIP Benefit the Auxiliary?

A PIP is not punishment. It's a tool designed to prevent suspension and keep Auxiliaries moving forward while resolving issues. Here's how it inspires growth:

- **Keeps the mission alive** – Problems are addressed without halting the Auxiliary's vital work.
- **Tailored to your needs** – Timelines and strategies fit the unique situation of each Auxiliary.
- **Empowers decision-making** – Members choose how to heal and move forward.
- **Encourages teamwork** – With mentors offering feedback, Auxiliaries learn, adapt, and thrive.
- **Transforms challenges into victories** – A PIP says, *We will not be defined by our problems—we will overcome them.*

Why It Matters

When we solve problems ourselves, we grow stronger, more confident, and more united. That's the heart of a PIP: giving Auxiliaries the chance to rise above difficulties with courage and wisdom. And when we succeed, the ultimate reward is clear—**our veterans benefit.**

Because every step we take toward working smarter, healthier, and together is a step toward serving those who served us.

A PIP isn't just a plan—it's a promise. A promise that we will face challenges head-on, support one another, and emerge stronger than before.



Sherri Golder
Ext and Rev Chairman
sherrigolder@gmail.com



HOSPITAL

December 2025



MERRY CHRISTMAS FLORIDA

Here it is the last month of the year 2025!

Remember our Veterans in the Hospitals during the Christmas Season. They enjoy visitors and little gifts such as.... Cookies, socks, pajamas, slippers, robes, playing cards, Christmas cards from your Auxiliary & even Post Members can sign them, put a HUGE smile on their face.



Dates to Remember:

- ✓ December 7th - Pearl Harbor Day
- ✓ December 25th - Christmas Day
- ✓ December 31st - New Year's Eve

Wishing everyone a Very Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!!

Don't forget to report & send me pictures!!!!



Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



Viki Stripling Hospital Chairman
Vikiplottsdistrict11@yahoo.com



LEGISLATIVE

December 2025



VFW PRIORITY GOALS

- Budget
- Health Care
- Disability Assistance & Memorial Affairs
- Education, Employment and Transition Assistance
- Military Readiness
- National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA

Seasonal Greetings

from Dept of Florida VFW Legislative Program Chairman

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a prosperous New Year! As we celebrate, let us remember the importance of advocacy for our veterans and the impact your voice has in shaping legislation that supports those who have served our nation.

The holiday season is not only a time for gratitude and reflection, but also a time to renew our commitment to advocating for the rights, benefits, and well-being of America's veterans. **Your efforts make a difference!**

Take this season as an opportunity to get involved, stay informed, and connect with your elected officials.

KEY LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE THIS SEASON

- Send a Holiday Card to Your Representative: Express gratitude for their service and remind them of the importance of supporting veteran-focused legislation.
- Share VFW Legislative Priorities: Use the holiday break to inform your community and local leaders about ongoing legislative goals.
- Invite Legislators to VFW Holiday Events: Build relationships by inviting lawmakers to your Post's holiday gatherings or service activities.
- Promote the VFW Action Corps: Encourage members and supporters to sign up for action alerts and legislative updates.

Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



Pamela Monroe
Anamcarax2@gmail.com
401-368-3275

MEMBERSHIP GOAL BY 12/31/25

98%

CONGRATULATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA!
WE WERE NUMBER ONE
AT SOUTHERN
CONFERENCE WITH
94.27% IN MEMBERSHIP!

Membership/Mentoring
December 2025
Focus:...INVITE

A new bridge building tool for
our Auxiliaries...

The 2026 Auxiliary Applications have been
emailed to all Auxiliary Presidents and
Treasurers.

These new Membership Applications must be
used for all New Members, Rejoins, and Transfers
that are processed beginning January 1, 2026.
This will be the only Membership Application
accepted starting 1/1/26

Obsolete Forms: All previous versions of the
Membership Application must be destroyed
and are no longer valid.

During the 2025 VFW National Convention,
Resolution One, was adopted,
This is a must-read resolution for all Auxiliaries
as it affects our current membership.
Please take the time to go to M.A.L.T.A.
under membership resources, National
Convention, and read the adopted resolution.



What Holiday events does your Auxiliary have planned?
Be sure to encourage your members to invite guests to these
events and have membership applications available,
let's share what we are all about!!

Do you have any annual members that may need help
with their dues? Maybe give them a Christmas gift by paying and
sending them a Christmas card announcing the gift?



Wishing you ALL a wonderful
Holiday Season,
a very Merry Christmas
and Happy New year!

Holly Evans
Membership/Mentoring
Chairman 2025-2026



APPROVED BY
Dept President
Mike Yates

SCHOLARSHIPS

DECEMBER 2025



TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING – CONTRIBUTING TO THE NATIONAL
PRESIDENT’S SPECIAL PROJECT OF BUILDING THE
CONTINUING EDUCATION FUND

Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



Carrie Messer
Scholarship Chairman
messengerca@gmail.com

Youth Activities

"Be the Lighthouse in Somebody's Storm"
"Bridging the Gap for our Veterans"



Program goal 7

December 2025

VFW Auxiliary National Art Contest Illustrating America **2025-2026**

VFW Auxiliary National is pleased to present this national art contest to introduce, encourage and recognize young artists with patriotism through art. Entries will be judged on patriotic themes and technique.

- A patriotic art contest for elementary and middle/junior high school students that encourages students' artistic abilities and rewards their hard work. It's fun to see how our youth see the world through their drawings and paintings.
- The contest consists of three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8. There are National awards for first, second and third place in each grade division.

VFW Auxiliary National Level Awards

Grades K-2 First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Grades 3-5 First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Grades 6-8 First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Contest Eligibility

- Students do not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate
 - Students in grades K-8 by **March 31 deadline** who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school program in the United States, its territories and possessions, or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools.
 - Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 15 or older are not eligible.
 - Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National Illustrating America Art Contests are not eligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous national winner. However, the students may enter the subsequent grade division.

Contest Rules

- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
 - Entry must be two dimensional.
 - Entry must be on canvas or paper.
- Canvas entries must be submitted on a stretcher frame or canvas board.
 - Paper entries must be reinforced with heavy paper.
 - Do not frame art with wood, metal, plastic or glass.
 - Mats may be used, including mounted and floating mats.
- Entries may not be smaller than 8"x10" and not larger than 18"x24" including mat.
- Acrylic, chalk, crayon, ink, marker, pastel, pen, pencil, tempera, watercolor, glitter or other media may be used.
- If the American Flag is used, it does not need conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, numbers of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
 - Coloring sheets, digital art and photography are not accepted.
- Completed typed or printed legible entry form including parent and/or guardian signatures.
- Students' name, age and grade level must be printed on back of art entry.

Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



**Lanaie
Reed**

Auxiliary Youth Chair
Dept of FL 2025-
2026

lanwileth@gmail.com

