

“Unity”

1
Family

1 Voice

1 Team



*“From Our
Roots to Our
Branches –
Extending
Service to Our
Veterans”*

HAPPY NEW YEAR

January 27th – Paris Peace Accords

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Many people say every year “Where has the time gone?” At my age it seems to move so much quicker than when I was 30. I also wonder where my glasses are, oh no my keys, or I can’t find my left shoe.

We should never misplace or lose the Love for our Country!!!! Our Americanism. Our Patriotism. Our care of Veterans. Our Americanism program must remain strong, and it will because of you, our members, love your county and the Veterans who keep it safe.

I can’t believe the year is almost over, we need to check to make sure all our goals are being met. First, please report all the things you and your auxiliary do for Americanism like projects held on patriotic holidays or prisoner of War/Missing in Action flags, this is what I need you to report to me.

Auxiliaries are to send the form to me, Americanism Chairperson, by March 31. 2025.



Approved by:
Department President
Virginia Brehmer

Have you been in the community – Schools teaching respect and proper care for the U.S. Flag.

U.S. flag is essential in fostering patriotism. The flag serves as a powerful symbol of national unity, representing the values and ideals upon which the United States was founded. By instilling an understanding of its significance, education on the American Flag can cultivate a sense of pride and ownership, encouraging to honor the sacrifices made by those who fought to protect the freedoms associated with this emblem.

Proper care for the U.S. flag involves adhering to established guidelines outlined in the Flag Code, which emphasizes respectful display, maintenance, and disposal methods. lessons on these practices into their curricula, ensuring that all comprehend not only how to handle the flag but also why such protocols exist. This knowledge promotes a culture of respect and reverence for national symbols while discouraging neglect or misuse.

Flag Education:
<http://vfwauxiliary.org/wp-content/uploads/VFW-Auxiliary-Flag-Education-for-Kids-For-Web.pdf>

How to Retire A Flag

- ✪ The flag should be folded in its customary manner.

- ✪ It is important that the fire be fairly large and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.
- ✪ Place the flag on the fire.
- ✪ The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.
- ✪ After flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.
- ✪ Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.



Continue to educate our members, communities and youth on the importance of Patriotism.

January:

- 1 – New Year’s Day
- 16 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 24 -26 – Mid-Winter Conference
- 27 - Vietnam Peace Accord



Carol Franker
Americanism Chairperson
Qcarol4u@gmail.com
352-400-9016

ISSUE 8
JANUARY 2025

AUXILIARY OUTREACH

“1 FAMILY, 1 VOICE, 1 TEAM”

“UNITY IN OUR COMMUNITY”



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

LET'S ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES AND PUT THOSE HANDS TO WORK!

HERE IN FLORIDA, WE HAVE LOTS TO DO! CLEAN UP BEACHES, HIGHWAYS, HELP AT ANIMAL SHELTERS, SERVE AT A FOOD BANKS, SOUP KITCHENS, VOLUNTEER AT CANCER RUNS, HELP AT COMMUNITY EVENTS! HELP WITH HURRICANE RELIEF, CHECK WITH ROTARY CLUBS, MOOSE CLUBS, CHURCHES, SEE IF THEY HAVE ANY EVENTS YOU CAN HELP WITH. THESE ARE EXAMPLES.

Send me pictures and videos of events you are working. Get in all your reports, because our Ambassador Bambi Johnson wants to see all the great things we are doing in Florida! A big THANK YOU for your CONTINUED hard work, I know you're out there in the community working this program. We want everyone to know who we are and what we do. I'm only a phone call away for any help you might need. 386-748-1186

- ❖ Dept. Awards for most outstanding photo collage in each of the 5 membership groups created by the VFW Auxiliary of their VFW Auxiliary Outreach partnerships during the current program year. 1 picture for each event worked
- ❖ Dept. Special Award to one Auxiliary in each of the 5 membership groups who volunteer the most Auxiliary hours with another organization NOT affiliated with the VFW or VFW Auxiliary or any other Veteran Organization.
- ❖ National Award for the most outstanding photo collage – 1 picture for each event worked

Approved by,
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

Sandi Hendriks
Auxiliary Outreach Chairman
sandihendriks@yahoo.com

Buddy Poppy



National Home

Issue 2425 Volume 8

January 2025

Start the New Year off right and support our National Home

How many Life Members to the National Home do you have in your Auxiliary?

To support your National Home, consider holding a drawing at your meeting each month for a Life Membership. You may use the money collected in your Silver Drill or Relief fund to do this. By doing so you are continually supporting the National Home!

Have the story along with contact information printed out and hand out to your members!

The National Home offers families of veterans, active-duty military and members of the VFW and its Auxiliary opportunities for growth and development in our nurturing community. All 42 of our beautiful homes are located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan.

Consider sharing this information with your local recruiters and military bases

At any time you can reach out to their helpline. 800-313-4200

Take the time to educate our members and Community about this wonderful asset.



Start now planning your Memorial Day Poppy drive. Contact potential sites to get permission to distribute.

Encourage your members to wear a poppy every day. In the lapel, on their purse or even in their car!

Use the Buddy Poppy to spread cheer when you send out cards to our members and include them in care packages to our troops!

Approved By:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

Kelly Barr
Buddy Poppy/National Home Chairman
buddypoppy2425@gmail.com

Freedom Rides

Baby it's cold outside!

How about a soup and salad night?

This always goes over well, have members make their best soup recipe and salads.

This is also a great time for all members to come together and enjoy a nice hot soup night on these chilly days.

The Shoe Drive!

<https://funds2orgs.com/>

This is just one of the many shoes drives you can call. Have members go through their closet and donate shoes they no longer wear. This is also a great way to help in the community and surrounding areas. The shoes are refurbished and cleaned, then they are donated to families and children in need.

Remember, at Mid-Winter we will be competing with the post side with "Pass the Hat" this to see which side can raise the highest amount for DPSP.

"Great Fund-Raising Ideas"

Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

Is your Auxiliary having great fundraisers! Please share. We all would like to know all the great ideas out there.



"The Triple Crown Winner is"?

**Who will be the overall winner of the Triple Crown?
Remember to qualify for the trophy donations must be \$1600.00 or more.**

Pauline Riddle
Department Special Project Chairman
Fireballs44@hotmail.com

EXTENSION, REVITALIZATION & MENTORING

Volume 8 January 2025



Encourage all you members to attend the VFW Aux. Dept. Mid Winter Conference in Orlando on Jan. 24-25, 2025



District & Auxiliary Presidents,
Has your Auxiliaries paid all their obligations?

Are all of your officers' dues paid for this year?

Are all of your Audits complete & turned in?

Have you & your members attended all your District meeting?

These are warning signals that your Auxiliary may be heading for yellow Caution lights!

Contact the Department Pres. Ginger or Dept. Chief of Staff Debbie ASAP



Mentoring

MENTORS

Have you started talking to your members about the different offices and what the position entails? Elections will be here before you know it and the health of your Auxiliary is tied directly to fielding new, excited, eager candidates.

Make sure you are using the guide book- "Building on the Foundation". The book goes into great detail about all the offices, and the chairmanships.

Have you done any trainings to create interest within your members? Getting involved helps your members grow & develop new skills

If you're always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be Maya Angelou

Historian Media Relations

Volume 24-25

Issue 8

January 2025



New Year

**New Beginning
We as Auxiliaries
Capture our History
Through Media
Year after Year
1 Family 1 Voice 1 Team**

Re-cap the past months of info

Using the 5 W'S?

Reporting your Historian/Media work in Malta?

Photography capturing your Auxiliaries' Historical moments.

Using all forms of social media?

Creating a book for your Auxiliary President?

Awards for your Auxiliaries.

Vfwauxfl.org

Vfwauxiliary.org

Vfwauxiliary malta

Your info



**TOOLS
for
Media**



Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

E-MAIL CHANGE

Jeanne F Laurine
Historian/Media Relations
Jeannelaurine8@gmail.com

Volume 2024-2025
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January 2025

Hospital Program

!!! HAPPY 2025!!!

TO ONE AND ALL

Time to roll up our sleeves
and get to work. Our Veterans
would love to see your smile.

Where can we volunteer?

Local hospitals, Veterans in
nursing homes, Hospice,

Domiciliary, CLC, VA facilities. Follow the guidelines given by that
facility and ask how you can assist them.



Salute to Veteran Patient Week, February 10-14, 2025

Now is the time to collect Valentine's Day cards and candy and cute gifts for our Veteran Patients. *Host a luncheon where your Auxiliary can have fun signing cards together. *Collect miniature candy bars, regular and sugar free.

*Schedule a day and time during that week at a Veteran facility, to host a Valentines Day table of love, appreciation, and smiles.

Approved By
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

Karen Heikkila
Hospital Chairman
hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com

Volume 2024-2025

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Issue #8

V.A.V.S. Program

Veterans Administration Volunteer Services Program of VFW Auxiliary

Happy New Year! May 2025 be bright and beautiful!!

This year, YOU are the Veteran patient's "little ray of Sunshine". Let's think outside the box, use our imagination, and ask, if it was you, what would you like from volunteers?

When you visit a Veteran patient, remember, you are there to brighten their day. Give a big smile and a big hello. Take the time to get to know them. Let them tell you about their stories. As VA hospital volunteers, we are there to help them get through one more day.

BECOMING A VAVS REPRESENTATIVE or DEPUTY

Our Auxiliary has been a big part of serving our Veteran patients since 1914. The VA facilities rely on us to support our Veterans with food and clothing, and much needed emotional support. As a VAVS Representative or Deputy, your job is to communicate the VA's needs to the Auxiliaries. These needs are every day, and our Veteran patient population is growing.

You would need to become a certified hospital volunteer, and would then officially represent our Auxiliary with pride. There are awards for certified hospital volunteers, given by the Veterans Administration for time accumulated, and outstanding service.

A special thanks to all the Auxiliary members who volunteer by sewing, cooking, traveling, hosting comfort tables, honors escort and more.

Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

Karen Heikkila
Hospital Chairman/VAVS Representative
hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com

We the Auxiliary; Can Be An Advocate, Be Informed, Be Engaged

We the Auxiliary, have firsthand knowledge for what our veteran's need. We have the power of our voices to let our representatives know where we stand in solidarity, whether to pass, block, or amend legislation.

Did you know...Only 1,789 people responded to the stop Claim Sharks? The VFW asked if we could get more involved. Congress isn't going to know how we feel unless we ACT. Our **National Madam President Brenda Bryant** says, "All we need to do is **PUSH THE BUTTON** when an Action Alert comes out!"

Our Recent Legislative Victories Include:

- Passage of the *Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022*, known as the PACT Act. This historic, comprehensive legislation expands health care for generations of veterans who previously had to prove their conditions or illnesses were the result of service-connected exposure to toxic substances or environments. It includes VA provisions for 23 presumptive conditions for rare respiratory diseases and cancers, and creates a framework for the establishment of future presumptions of service connection related to toxic exposure.
- Passage of the *Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act* expands eligibility for VA mammography screenings to veterans who served in certain areas during specific time periods, and the *Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act* addresses provisions of mammograms and breast cancer treatment within VA.
- *Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act* and Uniform Code of Military Justice reform on sexual assault and harassment included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022.
- Implementation of VA's maternity care coordination program to equip community care providers with training and support for the unique pregnancy and postpartum needs of women veterans.
- Passage of the *PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act* which will establish a pilot program on dog training therapy for veterans diagnosed with PTSD and require VA to provide service dogs for those veterans, including veterinary insurance.
- Inclusion of bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism to the list of Department of Veterans Affairs presumptive conditions for herbicide exposure.
- Passage of the *Deborah Sampson Act*, which will remove the barriers to health care impacting women veterans.
- Elimination of the 12-year limit on using Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits.

Remember to appoint a legislative chairman within your Auxiliary and at each meeting, give them 1-2 minutes to keep a tally of how many members have joined Action Corps, or have written or talked to representatives & report it. They can also talk about a bill that needs attention. Can you imagine if every Auxiliary member let our representatives know how we feel? Remember, you don't have to be a VFW member to join Action Corps, anyone can.

Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer



Melissa McKeon
Legislative Chairman
Melissamckeon6767@gmail.com



Happy New 2025 Year!

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP PINS: At fall conference, Presidents received their qualifying pins, at the mid winter conference **TREASURER** pins will be given to the president and any additional pins for levels achieved will be issued.

Did you Know:

- Purple Heart recipients qualify for membership in the VFW, so if you have any relative who received a purple heart sign them up for post or auxiliary..
- Your membership applications are processed 2-3 times a week by Cindy Estell
- Membership Statistics – Florida as of 11/28/2024
 - YTD – 739 New Members
 - Total members 36,462 – (Last Year 38,877) - 2,415

Membership QR Code has changed make sure you are using this one for direct access to membership information



Thankful for your Membership and serving our Veterans many ways, thru your volunteering or just your smile to a Veteran makes a difference.

Yes, we MAY use the photo of the headstone as proof of qualifying service, if it is the headstone provided by the Department of Defense (ie. the white ones/government issued), not one provided by the family. In order to receive that headstone, the cemetery/funeral home has to verify the deceased DD214 in order to request that stone. So, we're good on that part. As for dates of service, my advice is to approximate the dates of service as closely as you are able and don't leave the slot blank.

Do you realize that is what you do every day as an auxiliary member? We show our gratitude for our veteran, for those veterans in our Post and Community, and for each other by providing love and support to each other

Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

Betty A. Bailey, Chairman
bann652@aol.com

SCHOLARSHIPS



ISSUE 7



January 24/25

“UNITY

1 Family

1 VOICE

1 TEAM

Student Participation

Recipient Recognition

Community Awareness

Increasing the Fund

I hope everyone had a great holiday.

But as usual it's time to get back to work.

We have to get to the schools now because, we need to give these students a proper amount of time to get there art projects done before they have to be back to you for judging.

Be sure that the art teachers understand the requirements and are repeating these to their students.

Remember March 31, to the Auxiliary

Mailed to me by the 15th of April.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Be sure that all your members are aware of this grant.

Last years winner was from Florida and received monies to help with her furthering her education.

This is open to any auxiliary member there spouse or son or daughter who wish to further their education by going to college or a career direction at a vocational or tech school.

Applicant must be 21 or older.

To submit an application applicate must go to Vfwauxiliary.org/

I have received 83 reports and they concern the activities done for the Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy. I thank you for the inventive ways you have help promote these programs. But now I want to see reports. Concerning what you have done to promote our Patriotic Art contest, and our 3-Dimensional Art Contest. As well as the Continuing Education Scholarship.

**Approved by
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer**



**Ann Batson
Scholarships Chairman
annbatson@att.net**



VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM



January 2024-25, ISSUE 8

FL DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT'S THEME:

"One Family One Voice! One Team!"



2024

2025

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S THEME:

*"From Our Roots to Our Branches...
Extending Service to Our Veterans"*

Together, our focus this year is to *Keep Moving For-*

Remember: *REPORT, REPORT, REPORT*

JANUARY... A NEW YEAR, A NEW BEGINNING!

Please Reach Out to Our Veterans, Their Families, and Our Communities!

WHEN THEIR SERVICE IS OVER, OUR MISSION BEGINS!

THE MISSION OF OUR AUXILIARY IS TO BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY BY ENGAGING WITH AND SUPPORTING OUR MILITARY FAMILIES, VETERANS, FIRST RESPONDERS AND ENCOURAGING MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH PROGRAMS. WE CAN ONLY ACCOMPLISH THIS...

BY GETTING INVOLVED!

WHAT DOES "AUXILIARY" MEAN TO YOU?

- ◆ A — ALWAYS PUTTING OUR VETERANS FIRST
- ◆ U — UNITY! ONE FAMILY! ONE VOICE! ONE TEAM!
- ◆ X — XENIAL BEHAVIOR BY TREATING OTHERS WITH KINDNESS AND COURTESY
- ◆ I — IMPROVING VETERAN CARE THROUGH COMPASSION
- ◆ L — LEADING BY EXAMPLE AND MENTORING NEW MEMBERS
- ◆ I — INCREASING PATRIOTIC AND AMERICANISM AWARENESS
- ◆ A — ASSISTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES THROUGH A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS
- ◆ R — RESPECTING VFW AND AUXILIARY TRADITIONS
- ◆ Y — YEARNING FOR SELFLESSNESS THROUGH SINCERE GENEROSITY

LET US NEVER FORGET THEM FOR PROTECTING OUR FREEDOM!

Our 2024-2025 National Goals

- Goal #1—National Veterans Suicide Prevention
- Goal #2—Childcare for Active-Duty Service Members
- Goal #3—Veterans and Military Support Programs

Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer



Bob Kabala
Veterans & Family Support Chairman,
rkabala@tampabay.rr.com

Youth Program

NEW YEAR ACTIVITIES

Key points

1. Follow up with Youth Groups about Literacy
2. Invite Youth to deliver items to Veterans
3. Prepare Awards, Entry Forms & Art Pick up Dates

FOLLOW UP with Schools, Churches, Youth Groups, Women & Children Shelters, and ascertain if their reading rooms/libraries need more books. **ASK** for youth age ranges and the number of books they could use more of and purpose another Patriotism thru Literacy activity, to support Youth Groups, by sharing this info at your next VFW Auxiliary Meeting. If a donation is approved, via formal vote, **please share** the National VFW Auxiliary Reading List in advance, to choose and officially approve their selections. Be sure to print and affix the National President Labels inside each book!

Maybe your VFW Auxiliary was booked solid with holidays events this year. *No Worries*, This New Year, remember to invite local Youth, while delivering any Donations, Gifts Valentines Cards or Supplies to Nursing Homes and VA Hospitals to Veteran Residents. Allow them to hand deliver, Log their Hours for Graduation Requirements and Award them with VFW Auxiliary Youth Awards and or R.A.P. Cards. They can list these on Scholarship Apps and build a true sense of Patriotism and Accomplishment.



“BY FAILING TO PREPARE, YOU ARE PREPARING TO FAIL,” A FAMOUS QUOTE ATTRIBUTED TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PREPARE:

AWARDS TO PRESENT

Not only does Malta have choice fillable & printable Youth Awards, you will find Youth Group Supporting Agency Awards, signed by our National VFW Auxiliary President, Brenda Bryant!

Approved by:
Dept. President
Virginia Brehmer

PREPARE:

ENTRY FORMS/ SUBMIT

The Department & National Program Award, Entry Forms are due to Youth Chairmen by March 31st. You worked the Program and deserve the special award, monetary and citation for your diligent care!

PREPARE:

DATES TO PICK UP ART

March 31st is also the same due date for sponsoring VFW Auxiliaries to accept student art entries. This takes careful planning to arrange, schedule pick up and or set delivery times, well in advance!

Amy DiMauro
Youth Activities Chairmen
stavamy@aol.com