

Dates to Remember for 2025-2026

School of Instruction Florida Hotel, Orlando, FL	July 31 – Aug 3, 2025
National Convention Columbus, Ohio	August 9-14, 2025
C.A.F.E. Washington D.C. National Legislative Conference	February 28, 2026 March 2 – 4, 2026
Department Fall Conference Florida Hotel, Orlando, FL	October 16-19, 2025
Southern Conference Montgomery, Tx	Nov. 6 – 9, 2025
National Mid-Year Conference Cruise – Key West and Bahamas	February 9 – 13, 2026
Department Mid-Winter Conference Florida Hotel, Orlando, FL.	February 12 – 15, 2026
National President's Visit (Fri – Mon,)	March 20-23, 2026
Dept. Commanders & Auxiliary Presidents Homecoming Florida Mall	March 14, 2026
National Sr. Vice Conference	March 19 – 22, 2026
Veterans Village Picnic This is the correct date as of 6/26/2025	March 21, 2026
Planning Meeting for Kathy Wright (May Change)	April 4, 2026
Department Judging	April 29-30, 2026
National Jr. Vice Conference	May 14-18, 2026
Department Convention Renaissance Orlando, FL	June 11 - 14, 2026
National Convention Reno, Nevada	July 24-30, 2026

JULY 2025

AMERICANISM & PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR



PROGRAM GOALS

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

National President's Theme *"From Sea to Shining Sea our Veterans Keep Us Free"*

Department President's Theme *"Building Bridges for our Veterans"*

ARE WE READY FOR A GREAT YEAR!

"Teamwork makes the Dream Work Together we can Do the Impossible" John C. Maxwell

We should be thinking of what comes nextfor us school of instruction

- Does the school need new Flags, POW/MIA Flag?
- Set up with the school when to do flag education
- Supply art supplies so they can help make cards for our veterans
- Start Promoting Smart/Maher VFW Nation Citizenship
- What is happening in your community
- For the entire month it is **Antiterrorism Awareness Month**



Important Dates

August 4th Coast Guards Birthday

August 7th Purple Heart Day

August 10th Agent Orange Awareness Day & U.S. Department of Defense Birthday

August 14th Navajo Code Talkers Day

August 16th National Airborne Day

August 29th Marine Corps Reserve Birthday

Approved by:
Department President
Mike Yates

Michelle Butler
Americanism/PI Chairman
American.Patriotic.2526@gmail.com

AUXILIARY OUTREACH

July 2025

National Ambassador Sara Manke's theme is: **"As you shine your light, the world grows bright, you are a beacon of love."**



As the national program page states, "Volunteering is second nature for the VFW Auxiliary members. It's what we do, how we do it, where we do it, and why we do it".

We need to not only increase our "bridges" by looking at new ways to SHINE our light into the Communities, we also need to increase the NUMBER of our Members who participate. And MAKE SURE you post those videos on your website, Facebook, and other social media platforms to reach even MORE possible Community members.

Department President Mike Yates' theme is: **"Building Bridges for Our Veterans"**.

Let's all be a **strong bridge** for our Veterans into the Community!

And let's make Florida a **Beacon**!

Get with your local businesses, churches, Police, Firefighters, etc. See what projects they need volunteers to help with. Have you considered participating in a walk that benefits another organization? You could be a "spotter", hand out water, check participants in, etc. And get MORE of your Members to participate !

REQUIREMENTS:

Approve the partnership at an Auxiliary meeting and record it in your minutes.

Make sure you wear something that identifies you as VFW Auxiliary. (Shirt, Hat, name tag, etc.)

REPORT THE EVENT IN MALTA!!

And AS ALWAYS: NO \$\$\$!!! YES HOURS !!!



Approved by:

Department President

Mike Yates

Becky Kieffer

Auxiliary Outreach Chair

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**Buddy Poppy/VFW
National Home
Department of FL
School of Instruction
Contest
August 1, 2025**



In honor of our 2025-2026 National President Lois Callahan's Motto "Be The Lighthouse in Somebody's Storm" we invite all Auxiliaries to join in a creative and meaningful challenge.

Build and Decorate a Lighthouse using Buddy Poppies!

Let your Auxiliary's light shine through creativity and patriotism. Construct a lighthouse and decorate it using Buddy Poppies, this also will be showing our Dept. President Mike Yates some love as his chosen flower is the Poppy!

Rules:

- Lighthouse must include at least 1 Buddy Poppy in the original format.
- Lighthouse must not be taller than 18" and width/length must not be longer than 24".
- All displays must be set up before 4:00 on Friday, August 1, 2025.
- Your Post number & the number of Poppies must be on a piece of paper and put in an envelope taped to the bottom of your display.
- All displays must be picked up before closing of SOI on Saturday.

Judges will be chosen from the VFW.

The winners will be chosen on theme, creativity and how many poppies used.

Let's show our National President the Love that Dept. of Florida has for her!
We will be videoing and sharing our amazing displays with her!



Approved by:
Department President
Mike Yates

Buddy Poppy/VFW National Home
Jennifer Holland
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Presidents Special Project

Veterans Village

JULY 2025



**It takes a team To build a bridge
So lets build that bridge!**



The Mission Behind VETERANS VILLAGE

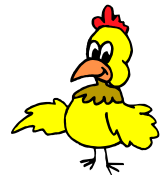
Our Guiding Principle is to offer affordable, comfortable and independent living accommodations to our Veterans of Foreign Wars, Auxiliary members, spouses, widows, and honorably discharged personnel as determined by the VFW Veterans Home. We are committed to providing a home-like atmosphere to those who have sacrificed and shown their loyalty and patriotism by serving our country.

Adopt-A-Room

You Donate \$500 and the money is placed in an account for that room when repairs are needed the money is readily available. If you would like to replenish the fund you can. If your auxiliary chooses not to replenish the account, it opens up for another post or auxiliary to adopt.

Chicken Coop with Chickens

One special project that the residents want is a chicken coop and chickens. The current coop at Veterans Village is close to the wooded area and they are unable to keep wild animals from getting into it. They would like to have a new one closer to the building and more secure.



Have your Auxiliary to assist with weekly Bingo, Ice Cream Social and bring special gifts for the residents

**All Funds donated to this year's Presidents Special Project will go to Veterans Village.
Please write in the memo line Presidents Special Project, PSP or Veterans Village.**

Approved by:
Department President
Mike Yates

Kelly Barr
Department Presidents Special Project
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EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION

JULY 2025

●
"BUILDING BRIDGES FOR OUR VETERANS"



National Ambassador QR Code



5 Essentials of an Auxiliary

National requires only five (5) things of an Auxiliary:

- 1) Auxiliaries should have at least ten (10) business meeting per year. Five (5) members in good standing (of that Auxiliary) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- 2) Dues should be paid by at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year.
- 3) Quarterly audits by Trustees must be submitted.
- 4) Officers elected, installed and reported to National no later than June 30. This generates the bond application via email.
- 5) The offices of President and Treasurer MUST be bonded by August 31.

National President's Theme

"From Sea To Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free"

Department President's Theme

"Building Bridges for Our Veterans"

Don't forget to
Report, Report, Report!!

Extension

Have you ever wondered what the steps are for bringing on a new Auxiliary? Are you a District President that has Unaffiliated Posts? Are you a Post Commander that would like to bring on an Auxiliary? The steps are all the same:

- 1) An Auxiliary cannot exist without a Post and there must be a vote from the Post by 2/3 majority to have an Auxiliary.
- 2) A minimum of 15 new eligible applicants.
- 3) Department President will appoint the official organizer.
- 4) The Post must also be willing to pay the \$100 Charter Application fee.

Please reach out to Department or myself if you would like more information on bringing on a new Auxiliary.

Approved by:
Department President
Mike Yates



Sherri Golder
Ext/Rev Chairman
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352-445-9993

Historian Media Relations

July 2025



How To Create a Facebook Reel

To make a Facebook Reel, you can either record a new video or upload an existing one. Photos can also be used then add audio, text, effects, and a description, and finally choose your audience before publishing.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

1. Start your Reel - From your Feed: Tap "Reels" (or "Create" then "Reel") or the camera icon. From your Profile: Tap your profile picture, then "See more" > "Reels", then the camera button.

2. Add video content - Record: Tap the camera icon to record a new video. Upload: Tap the photo icon to upload an existing video or photo.

3. Edit your Reel - Trim: Trim your video clips if needed. Add audio: Tap the Audio icon to add music or sounds. Add text: Tap the Text icon to add text to your Reel. Add effects: Tap the Effects icon to add filters, stickers, etc. Adjust speed: Use the Speed option to change the video's pace.

4. Describe your Reel - Write a description: Tap "Describe your reel" to add a caption.

5. Choose your audience - Select an audience: Tap the current audience setting to choose who can see your Reel (Public, Friends, etc.).

6. Publish - Share: Tap "Publish" to share your Reel.



"Building Bridges for Our Veterans"

DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

Most outstanding social media reel highlighting the VFW in action. Special award to one Auxiliary in each of the Membership classes. Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Send the required entry form to the Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2026.

Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



Kathy Ingall
Historian/Media Relations
shanily.05@gmail.com



Hospital
July 2025



Department President Theme

Building Bridges for Our Veterans

National Presidents Theme

***"From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans
Who Keep Us Free"***

**Keep Your Helping Hands Busy
Remember Many Hands Make Light Work**

Hospital Goals

➤ **Patient Center Care:**

Focusing on the needs and references of patients to ensure they
Receive personalized and compassionate care.

➤ **Quality improvement:**

Continuously evaluating and enhancing healthcare practices and procedures
to ensure the highest standards of care.

➤ **Staff development:**

Providing ongoing training and support for medical staff to maintain and improve their
skills and knowledge.

➤ **Community engagement:**

Building strong relationships with the local community to promote health and wellness
through outreach programs and educational initiatives.

➤ **Resource management:**

Efficiently utilizing hospital resources, including finances, equipment, and personnel
to ensure optimal operation and patient care.



Approved by:
Dept. President
Mike Yates



Viki Stripling
Hospital Chairman
vikiplottsdistrict11@yahoo.com



LEGISLATIVE

July 2025

Be an Advocate – Be Informed – Be Engaged

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The VFW has played an instrumental role in nearly every piece of veterans' legislation passed since the beginning of the 20th century. Everything we do on Capitol Hill is with the VFW's Priority Goals and veterans' well-being in mind. With the strength of the more than 1.4 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary, our voice on Capitol Hill cannot be ignored!

Take action today on key legislation regarding our Veterans and Active duty service members.

Approved by:
Department President
Mike Yates

FOLLOW THE BILLS AND TAKE ACTION

*Bridge the gap between our
veterans' issues and legislators*



Study the issues laid out clearly in the VFW Priority Goals. The goals are grouped under six areas of concern:

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

Follow the progress of the bills in the House and Senate that address these veterans' issues, and actively lobby Congress and the administration to get their support.

Did you know?

VICTORIES

Among the VFW's most recent and important legislative victories was:

- The expansion of college education benefits for military service members with the signing of the Forever GI Bill
- Ensuring America's service members and veterans receive the care they deserve - whenever and wherever they need it - by passing the VA MISSION Act.

This information is readily available at
www.VFW.org/Advocacy



Pamela Monroe
Legislative Chairman
Anamcarax2@gmail.com

VFW AUXILIARY DEPT. OF FLORIDA

Mentoring/ Membership

Check out M.A.L.T.A under membership resources for several tools to help with Membership materials!

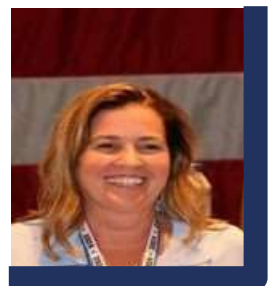
Our Key Focus for the August:Include!

As we move into August, we want to see what our Auxiliaries can do to help focus on our members. We want to keep building our bridges to help our Veterans and here are some ideas to help with this!

- Offer “Early Bird” specials for your annual members to renew with \$10 off and encourage your annual members to transfer to Life with \$25 off. Be sure to vote on this at your July meeting.
- *Planning Committee - Have you invited your members to join your planning committee? You want to include anyone who is interested and start looking at your year.*
- Did your Auxiliary start a membership contest? Are you keeping track and keeping the contest front and center?

As your Membership/Mentoring chairman, I want to hear from you! I want to know how you're inviting new members and including your current members. I want to read your reports. Please encourage your membership to report.

Our members love a raffle! Raffle off a lifetime membership to your annual members. We want to keep investing in our membership and encourage attendance at our Auxiliary meetings... offer to place each annual member into a drawing for a free upgrade for each meeting they attend.



Approved by:
Department President
Mike Yates

Holly Evans
Membership/Mentoring
Chairman
hadams1221@hotmail.com

SCHOLARSHIPS

JULY 2025

Building Bridges for Our Veterans

Program Goals

- Student Participation
- Community Awareness
- Recipient Recognition
- Increasing the Fund

<https://vfwauxfl.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=133704>

National VFW Auxiliary Scholarship



Auxiliary Award:

Most creative and/or unique activity and/or event educating their community about the scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary. Look for the entry form on both the National and Department Websites. Entry form due to Department Chair by 31 March 2026.

PROMOTE, PROMOTE, PROMOTE!

- Reach out to your School District Superintendent – smooth the path for getting the schools involved and student awareness (some districts may require this).
- Know a teacher, school employee – Encourage class project.
- Order Brochures for your Membership/Poppy Drives– VOD, Patriots Pen available through the VFW Store. Young American Patriotic Art order form on the Department Website.
- Print out the QR code – Display at your Post, schools, business (with their permission).
- Start lining up judges for the essays and artwork. Don't wait until the last minute to coordinate.



Voice of Democracy (grades 9-12) Patriots Pen (grades 6-8)

Work with your VFW Post to promote this program.

Refer to the Chairman's Guide

How will you recognize the students; teachers too.

- a Post event, presentation at the school
- Certificate (check out the VFW Store)
- Monetary award, other prizes

The **Theme** is the same for both this year: "How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?"

Deadlines:

Local VFW Post - 31 October 2025

District VFW Chairman – 15 November 2025

Department VFW Chairman – 15 December 2025

Continuing Education



- You and immediate family (spouse, son, daughter) at least age 21.
- Entry deadline is 15 February.
- Promote – fund raiser – National President's Project Increase the fund

<https://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/continuing-education/>





Veterans & Family Support Program

Building Bridges for our Veterans

BECOMING THE BRIDGE

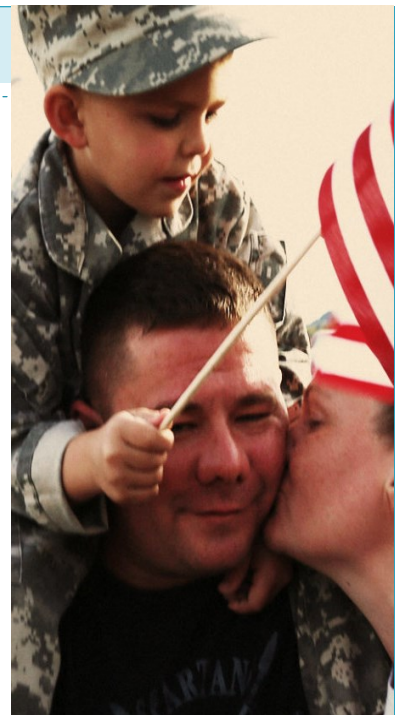
Veteran resources offer a vital lifeline, providing access to healthcare, mental health support, and disability benefits. They assist with navigating complex systems like the VA, securing housing, and finding meaningful employment through job training and placement programs. Furthermore, support networks and peer groups offer a renewed sense of community and understanding from those with shared experiences.

By linking Veterans with the tailored services, we acknowledge their sacrifices and empower them to overcome obstacles. Familiarize yourself with the resources provided in the Program guide and others so you can bridge the gap and support our Veterans and their families!

SUPPORT SPOTLIGHT:

VFW MENTAL WELLNESS CAMPAIGN

The VFW Mental Wellness Campaign aims to combat the stigma surrounding mental health for veterans and the broader community. A key initiative involves educating the public on the "Five Signs of Emotional Suffering" to help identify those in need. The campaign encourages community engagement, supports research, and promotes intervention, ultimately striving to connect veterans with vital resources like the Veterans Crisis Line and foster a supportive environment for mental well-being. Learn more at <https://vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness>



PROGRAM PLANNING

Event Planning

Involve all of your members in the planning and execution stage!

Online Reporting

Remember to report all of your activities supporting Veterans & Family Support as soon as possible after the event!



Ryan Harris
Program Chair

Ryan.Harris.CISA@gmail.com

Auxiliary Youth Activities

July 2025

“Be the Lighthouse in Somebody’s Storm”

“Bridging the Gap for Our Veterans”



Program Goal 2:

Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans citation

This Citation is awarded to youth groups that:

- Volunteer at VA Hospitals or Facilities
- Host events in support of veterans
- Send care packages to active-duty military or veterans
- Demonstrate leadership and community involvement by giving back to or honoring veterans

To download and print the **Citation**:

- Go to MALTA (<https://malta.vfwauxiliary.org>) and log in with your username/password.
- Once logged in, click on “**Member Resources**” on the *top* menu, then “**Youth Activities**” on the *left side* menu.
- Click on the Citation which is located at the bottom of the page under the “**Youth Recognition Awards**” and save to your computer (it is editable)

Approved By:
Dept. President
Mike Yates

Kristy Possert
Auxiliary Youth Chairperson
2025-26
goldenanchorteam@gmail.com

