

# SAVE THE DATE

## Department President's Homecoming

**Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront**

**2601 North A1A**

**Melbourne 32903**

**March 14 - 15, 2025**

For dinner reservations contact

Mary Kellner

321-914-9292 or [maryk1895@yahoo.com](mailto:maryk1895@yahoo.com)

Deadline: March 1st

To receive the discounted group rate of \$245+ for a Standard Room and \$265+ for a Balcony Room over the dates of Friday, March 14th, 2025 through Sunday, March 16th, 2025 please reference group code "VFW" when reserving by phone at 1-877-701-9252 or online at <https://www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels/us/en/melbourne/mlboc/hoteldetail>.

Reservations will be accepted at the group rate until February 9th, 2025. After this date any unused room in the block will be released back into inventory for general sale and your guests will be quoted the prevailing rate at the time of the reservation.

Please also feel free to share your direct booking link (which will not need your group code):

[VFWA Department of Florida Homecoming Booking Link 2025](#)



“Unity”  
 1 Family  
 1 Voice  
 1 Team



*Americanism/  
 Patriotism....  
 How  
 Passionate are  
 you?*



## WELCOME 2025

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

**Americanism** versus **Patriotism** - are closely related concepts, but they have distinct nuances:

**Patriotism** is a general love of one’s country. It encompasses feelings of pride, loyalty, and a desire to support and defend one’s nation.

**Americanism** is a more specific term that refers to the ideals and principles that define the United States. It often emphasizes concepts like democracy, liberty, equality, and individual rights.

**Key Differences:**

**Scope:** Patriotism is a universal concept applicable to any nation, while Americanism is specific to the United States.

**Focus:** Patriotism focuses on love and loyalty to one’s country, while Americanism focuses on the specific values and principles upon which the United States was founded.

**Overlap:**

Both Americanism and patriotism involve a deep connection to one’s country,

Americanism can be seen as a specific form of patriotism that is unique to the United States.

Approved by:  
 Department President  
 Virginia Brehmer

**In Summary:**

You can be patriotic to any country, but you can only be an Americanist in the context of the United States.

It’s important to note that both terms can be used indifferent ways and sometimes interchangeably.

“This American system of ours, call it Americanism, call it capitalism, call it what you will, gives each and every one of us a great opportunity if we seize it with both hands and make this most of it.” Al Capone

Have you been out there teaching our children flag etiquette. The answer is simple, the flag embodies what the United States stands for, love of country and national purpose, liberty, justice, and freedom. It has flown in every war this great country has been involved in. It is recognized in every country in the world and respected most.

Flag education should be taught beginning around 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. We need to get permission from school principals to attend classes, or better yet to attend rallies and teach children flag etiquette to include .....

- How and when to fly the flag
- What the red and white stripes stand for and what the blue and stars represent.
- How to properly salute the flag and when to salute it
- What does each fold of the flag mean?
- How to properly fold the flag, with student participation
- How to properly dispose of the flag.

**January:**

- 24 -26 – Mid-Winter Conference
- 27 - Vietnam Peace Accord

**February:**

- 2 – Auxiliary Appreciation Day
- Groundhog Day
- 3 – Four Chaplains Day
- 15 – Sinking of the Maine
- 19 – President’s Day
- 20 – Inauguration of the President of the United States
- 22 – Washington’s Birthday
- 28 – Liberation of Kuwait



Carol Franker  
 Americanism Chairperson  
[Qcarol4u@gmail.com](mailto:Qcarol4u@gmail.com)  
 352-400-9016

# AUXILIARY OUTREACH

**“1 Family, 1 Voice, 1 Team”**

**“From our roots to our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans”**

**MANY HANDS TOGETHER FORM A PICTURE-PERFECT FLOWER!**

**Will you be those hands?**

- ✓ **Form that partnership with another organization, make their event a success.**
- ✓ **Ask what you can do for your town or community.**
- ✓ **Remember to emblem: hat, shirt, pin, etc.**
- ✓ **Vote, approve, record in secretary minutes**
- ✓ **REPORT YOUR EVENTS**
- ✓ **Help make our auxiliaries shine in our communities!**



**DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2025**

**Mail me your photo collage along with the Auxiliary Outreach entry form found on Malta Member Resources or [www.vfwauxfl.org](http://www.vfwauxfl.org). Dimensions no smaller than 8 x 10 no larger than 14x18 inches.**

**Sandi Hendriks  
311 Waterford Heights  
Debary, FL 32713**

**DO NOT MAIL ANYTHING TO NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**



- ❖ 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](mailto:sandihendriks@yahoo.com)

# Happy Valentine's Day

## Buddy Poppy/National Home

Issue 2425 Volume 9

February 2025



### Tired of giving candy and Flower?



Here are some fresh ideas.

**Give the gift of a Life Membership to the National Home for Valentines day.**

**Buy a brick for the walkway from the National Home and present the certificate that goes with it to your Valentine. The bricks pave the way to the National Home and monuments.**

**Use money from the relief fund to become a Home Town Hero and make monthly donations for as little as \$10.00 a month. This money is used to support the home in many ways.**

**Make a Buddy Poppy Valentine Wreath and have a Raffle. Use the money to support local veterans in their time of need.**

**Valentine's Day is on Friday, February 14th. Use that weekend to do Buddy Poppy Drives and Educate people about the need of taking care of our veterans and their families that are left behind to take care of the home front.**

**Start talking to your local stores and churches about doing a buddy poppy drive along with educating people about the national home. Remember you don't have to be a VFW member or auxiliary member to donate to the VFW National Home. You only have to have the want to take care of the people that fight for our nation.**

**Wear a buddy poppy everyday and if someone comments on it give it to them and explain what it is about?**

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer

Kelly Barr  
Buddy Poppy/National Home Chairman  
[buddypoppy2425@gmail.com](mailto:buddypoppy2425@gmail.com)

# Freedom Rides

## **“Wow”! A Chili Cook Off**



**Let's get that Chili Cook-Off up and running!**

**Put together great prizes for the winners, you can ask for a donation to enter the contest! And a donation for tasting and judging all the fabulous Chili. Another great idea for entertainment, have a “Chili Trivia Contest”, this is a lot of fun for those who think they know CHILI.**



Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer

LET'S NOT FORGET TO HAVE  
INFORMATION HANDY FOR  
**“DEPARTMENT SPECIAL PROJECT”  
“FREEDOM RIDE”**

If information pamphlets are  
needed, I will have some with me  
at Mid-Winter



An equine assisted therapeutic program for U.S. Veterans offers the opportunity to interact with horses in a way that allows for increasing self-awareness, enhancing coping skills and learning more effective ways to interact and move forward within the community and with friends and loved ones.

**Let's have fun with those fundraisers!**

**Pauline Riddle  
Department Special Project Chairman  
Fireballs44@hotmail.com**

# EXTENSION, REVITALIZATION & MENTORING

Volume 9 February 2025



Please go to the Department website and report your great work! I know your out there working the program, tell me about it!



Elections are right around the corner, and we need to do everything we can to create and maintain health Auxiliaries. "Retreads" or same officers sitting in the same chairs for years is a Yellow or Red light! New officers bring new excited, eager ideas and a healthy Auxiliary. We must train the new officers to understand the responsibilities involved to fulfill the duties of the office for the whole year.

The health of your Auxiliary is tied directly to fielding new candidates for elections!



## Mentoring



### Leaders

Have you celebrated your teams' successes or individuals that have been critical to the wellbeing of your Auxiliary. Thank you's & certificates of appreciation go a long way in providing a positive atmosphere.

**Mentors**, please make sure you are seeking to help all the members of your Auxiliary. Don't always wait till someone asks for help, be observant of actions and reactions and jump in where you can to be a positive influence!

Most importantly EVERYONE needs to stop any & all Bullying! If you hear someone being unkind, **SPEAK UP! Kindness should always Win!**

*I'd rather regret the things I have done than the things that I haven't*

*Lucille Ball*

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer

Debbie McCollum  
Chairman & Chief of Staff  
Ucfnole21@vahoo.com

# Historian Media Relations

Volume 24-25

Issue 9

February 2025



**facebook**

## Communication through **Social Media**

Posters, Flyers, E-Mails, Newsletters, texting, Verbal.

Getting the information out to your members, and community.

Telling your Story.

Sharing all the Programs.

## “Go back and re-read past promotions”

On [Vfwauxfl.org](http://Vfwauxfl.org) “print them out”.

### **REPORT REPORT REPORT**

## “Win Buckeroo”

Explain & Mentor all new Members  
What we do for our Veterans.

## Creating your President’s Year-end Memory Book.

Shutterfly, snapfish, Mixbook, chatbooks, Walmart, mpix etc.

- ❖ Have good clear pixels photos.
- ❖ Use your home computer, Laptop or cell phone to create the book.
- ❖ Add words telling the story of the photos.
- ❖ Have fun creating your Presidents book of their year of the history of your Auxiliary.
- ❖ This book is a wonderful keepsake.
- ❖ Google to find the assorted Apps.
- ❖ Present the Memory book to your President at the end of their year.



## **Awards for your Historian/Media program.**

### Report your Activity

One 8x10 Photo of one of your chairman’s programs.

With a sentence describing the activity in the photo. Mail to:

Jeanne Laurine Historian/Media  
1112 Caldwell Ave  
Orange City, Fl 32763

Deadline: March 31, 2025

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer

Jeanne F Laurine  
Historian/Media Relations  
[jeannelaurine8@gmail.com](mailto:jeannelaurine8@gmail.com)

# HOSPITAL PROGRAM

“UNITY, one FAMILY, one VOICE, one TEAM”

### Who can volunteer?

- \*Auxiliary members
- \*Sponsored volunteers
- \*\*\*Family
- \*\*\*Friends
- \*\*\*Youth, 14 yrs old and up
- \*\*\*Those who don't qualify for the Auxiliary, but want to help.

### Where can you volunteer?

- \*Both VA and non-VA medical facilities w/ Veterans.
- \*Both VA and non-VA nursing homes w/ Veterans.
- \*Domiciliaries
- \*Local Hospitals.

Wear your Auxiliary shirt and name badge, take pictures, and report your fabulous work!

### Schedule of Events to Remember at the VA facilities

- \*February, Salute to Veteran Patients Week, 2/10-2/14. Hand out Valentine's Day cards, handmade gifts of appreciation, host a luncheon at the CLC or nursing home.
- \*March, Salute to Vietnam Veterans Day, March 29. Show thanks for their service with a comfort table at a VA facility, made “thank you” gifts to hand out.
- \*April, Volunteer Appreciation Month. All volunteers count. Let's thank those who are mobile, those who make crafts, bake, and sew, and those who write reports!
- \*May, Memorial Day “Garden of Flags and tags w/ poppies” to honor those gone before us. Make a garden at your post, a nursing home, or at the VA.



Approved by:  
 Dept. President  
 Virginia Brehmer

Karen Heikkila  
 Hospital Chairman  
 Hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com



Volume 2024 2025

February

Issue #9

# V.A.V.S

Veterans Administration Volunteer Services

## Salute to Veteran Patient Week

February 10-14,2024



Share the love we have for our Veterans by making them Valentine's Day cards. Sign them "with love" from your Auxiliary. Host a n event at a VA facility, have a party for your Vets at your post or a community center. Fellow members can use their creativity to show compassion for our Veterans and service members.

\*\*\*\*VOLUNTEERING at a VA FACILITY CAN BE AN EVENT WITH YOUR AUXILIARY AND POST. \*\*\*\*\*

### YOU CAN VOLUNTEER AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BRING A SPONSORED VOLUNTEER, such as a FRIEND OR STUDENT OVER 14 YEARS OLD..... REPORT ALL VOLUNTEER HOURS ... **Text your pictures to: Karen Heikkila**

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer

Hospital Chairman, VAVS Representative  
[hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com](mailto:hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com)  
386-453-6513

"From our Roots to our Branches, Extending Service to our Veterans"

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



*Thank you for your precious time and selfless service in supporting our veterans, military, and their families through legislation. You are truly heroes by changing history by acting on key legislation.*

Did you know that the VFW is contacted about more veteran issues than any other organization?

Remember our **Priority Goals**, teach them to our Representatives, other members and the community.

### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY GOALS

- BUDGET
- HEALTH CARE
- DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS
- EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRANSITION ASSISTANCE
- MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE
- NATIONAL SECURITY, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND POW/MIA

Did your Auxiliary promote, participate, hosted or co-hosted with their VFW Post activities regarding the VFW Priority Goals? **Report it !**

Did your Auxiliary contact their legislator on veteran's issues by any means (example: emails, letters, postcards, phone calls, Acton Alert)? **Report it !**

Did your Auxiliary attend events where they could interact with legislators (legislative conferences, town halls, meet-and-greets, etc)? **Report it !**

### National Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event collaborating with the VFW Post connecting members with local lawmakers.

Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions with most outstanding activity and/or event that collaborated with the VFW Post connecting members with local lawmakers.

Entry form required and available in MALTA- Member Resources. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to their Department Legislative Chairman by March 31, 2025 for judging. The Department Legislative Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Legislative Ambassador by April 30, 2025 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2025 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

Department Reports for Legislation are due by April 15, 2025

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer



Melissa McKeon  
Legislative Chairman  
Melissamckeon6767@gmail.com



# MEMBERSHIP

*Happy Valentine's Day!*

**What a sweet treat for those you love.... forget the dinner, chocolate, roses, and give the gift of membership to continue the legacy of your veteran to your special family loved one.**



Share this code, copy and print it out on small sheets instruct and distribute to members, remember to report it under mentoring.

How does your Auxiliary recognize volunteers? Awards, Luncheon, Dinners, Gifts, Certificates

Is your family tree of membership growing, how many branches have joined? You are the roots for family make your tree grow

**Circle of Champions** – *Must be 100%+3 by 4/15/25, Reports needed: Americanism, Veterans & Family Support, Legislative and Hospital, and required dues, donations, audits completed.*

**AS 12/31/24 MALTA - MEMBERSHIP CONGRATULATIONS**

**Districts over 100% - 2-102.37% , 7 - 100.34%, 13- 100.8%, 17- 102.61**

Approve By:  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer

Betty A. Bailey Chairman  
[bann652@aol.com](mailto:bann652@aol.com)

# SCHOLARSHIPS



**“UNITY**

**1 Family**

**1 VOICE**

**1 TEAM**

**Student Participation**

**Recipient Recognition**

**Community Awareness**

**ISSUE 7**

**Increasing the Fund**

**February 24/25**

**TIME IS RUNNING OUT !**

The VFW Auxiliary is pleased to present this National Scholarship to assist VFW Auxiliary members and their immediate family who wish to further their education by pursuing a college degree or a career direction at a vocational/technical school. One (1) scholarship will be awarded each year to a selected candidate in each of the four (4) VFW Auxiliary Conferences. The \$1,250 scholarship shall be used in the academic year following completion of the contest. The scholarship will be paid directly to the American college/university or vocational/technical school of the awardee's choice. Eligibility: • VFW Auxiliary member for at least one full year by the application submission deadline of February 15. • The spouse, son and/or daughter of a VFW Auxiliary member that has been a member at least one full year by the application submission deadline of February 15. • Applicant must be 21 years of age or older by the application submission deadline of February 15. • Previous National Continuing Education Scholarship winners are not eligible. Application is available under resources on the National and Department website.

**Creative Patriotic Art & 3 Dimension Art**

**Deadline to Auxiliary March 31st**

**Deadlines to me APRIL 15 !!**

Judging forms are available on the National & Department website under Resources

Please make sure all ART mailed to me is properly pack so that

no damage is done



**Approved by  
Dept. President  
Virginia Brehmer**

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



# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM



February 2024-25, ISSUE 9

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*

# TIME TO LOVE GIVE

***HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!***

***HAVE YOU HUGGED A VETERAN TODAY?***

**PLAN SOME FUN EVENTS TO SAY *THANK YOU!***

- ◆ HOST A VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE
- ◆ HAVE A SPECIAL DINNER TO HONOR OUR VETERANS
- ◆ HOST A STORY TIME / CHILDREN'S MOVIE AT YOUR POST
- ◆ TAKE SIGNED VALENTINE'S CARDS TO YOUR LOCAL VA HOSPITAL
- ◆ HOST A SPECIAL BREAKFAST / BRUNCH FOR OUR VETERANS
- ◆ OFFER CHILDCARE TO VETERAN FAMILIES

***ALWAYS REMEMBER... FREEDOM ISN'T FREE!***

**ALL GAVE  
SOME!  
SOME GAVE  
ALL!**

## *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 Activities Program

## STAYING CONNECTED IS KEY



Stay Connected with all the previous Nursing Homes, Youth Groups, Schools, Boys and Girl Scouts and Clubs, Non-Profits and Churches that you have already arranged previous events with. Needs do transpire in the community and what better way to meet the need, by STAYING CONNECTED with youth & VFW Auxiliary Volunteers!

Approved by:

Dept. President

Virginia Brehmer

**PLEASE VISIT  
THE  
NATIONAL  
VFW  
AUXILIARY  
WEBSITE**

Download  
'Patriotic Days'  
& Review Youth  
Program Blogs.  
These two  
resources will  
help Auxiliary's  
plan more  
Patriotic Themed  
Events & Learn  
Ideas from our  
National Youth  
Activities  
Ambassador!  
[vfwauxiliary.org](http://vfwauxiliary.org)

Amy DiMauro

Youth Activities Chairman

[stavamy@aol.com](mailto:stavamy@aol.com)