

SUNSHINE E-NEWSLETTER



November 2025 Issue NO 5

Team Florida

Building Bridges For Veterans



FROM THE DESK OF THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



Greetings,

November is upon us as we begin the Holiday season. Veterans Day is fast approaching; we are very thankful for all that our Veterans have done to keep us safe, by enduring all the hardships they were put through to make our everyday living safe for all of us who enjoy the freedoms of everyday life. So, every day should be celebrated as Veterans Day. Moving forward to Thanksgiving Day, we must make sure that all our Veterans receive a well-deserved and resounding Thank You! On Veterans Day, we must ensure that our veterans and their families understand the gratitude we have for all they sacrificed for us, while we are thankful to be celebrating Thanksgiving Day with our

We as a department must reflect and be thankful for all we have done so far. Going through this year from the June convention, we have made many Veterans and their families feel the appreciation we have for their service that their veteran provided for all of us. As we gather in gratitude, let's also take a moment to recognize our own growth and value. Confidence begins when we remember how far we've come and how much we already contribute. Every effort, big or small, adds to the spirit of progress that defines us.

Continuing in Building Bridges for Our Veterans will help all of us in Bridging the Gap for Our Veterans to provide the services and help they and their families need. We all then will become the Light in Somebody's Storm!

Michael Yates
President



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

VFW 3282 Post Member WWII Veteran Turns 105 Years Old



A recent news article authored by an Auxiliary 3282 member, highlighted a special report on Fred's LaPonzina. In a collaborative effort between the Auxiliary and Post, they proudly celebrated Fred's 105th birthday at the Post -- an event that drew a standing-room-only crowd.

The auxiliary ensured that all guests were well cared for, providing food and support throughout the celebration with special attention given to Fred and his 95-year-old wife the couple remains active in our community, visiting the Post weekly to enjoy a meal, share a glass of wine, and remarkably still take to the dance floor. Fred is a proud World War II veteran who served as a tail gunner on a B-24 bomber in the Pacific Theater, bravely fighting against the Japanese forces. His legacy and continued presence are a source of inspiration to us all.

The Post's canteen was recently named for Mr. Laponzina in an official ceremony.



VALENTINE WEEKEND MID-WINTER CONFERENCE



Florida Hotel & Conference Center

1500 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, Florida 32809

February 12-15, 2026

Phone: 407-859-1500

Room Rate: \$145 .00 plus tax

(Mention Veterans of Foreign Wars Mid-Winter Meeting)

Complimentary Self-Parking

CUT OFF DATE - Wednesday - January 21, 2026

Friday- February 13, 2026

8:30 AM - 10 AM Floor Practice & Officers March

10:00 AM: Dept. Chairmen's Meeting (*closed meeting*)

10:45-12:00 PM: District Presidents Meeting (*closed meeting*)

Blue Auxiliary Shirt/Black Pants/Black Skirt

1:00 PM: Council Meeting and

Opening Ceremonies Mid-Winter Conference

Saturday, February 14, 2026

Blue Auxiliary Shirt/Black Pants/Black Skirt

8:00AM JOINT OPENING

9:30 - 1:00 PM

Mid-Winter Conference

Saturday Evening

*Celebration of Achievement Banquet Tickets only available from
Department VFW Headquarters More Information to Follow
Dressy - Semi-Formal*

NOTE: THIS IS A TENTATIVE AGENDA - ALL TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

**Birthday party for PDP Maggie
Gilchrist will be held on November
1st 6:00 PM at VFW Post 4287
3500 S goldenrod Rd. Orlando 32822**

VFW FLORIDA

VETERANS VILLAGE

Adopt-A-Room

Beginning July 1st

Adopt-A-Room Program is back!

*For \$500 you can help make a residents life better by
ensuring that their room and furnishings are always what
they need.*

*Money for this program will be kept in a
restricted fund by the Dept. A/C and all
monies should be sent to headquarters
earmarked Adopt-A-Room.*

*When money is used to do repairs etc, you will receive the
statement of that repair and will have the option to send
that amount in so that the fund for your room
stays at \$500 or let the fund deplete.*



Let's show them we Care



**Share Your Stories,
Share your Light -
Sunshine E
Newsletter Fall
Conference Video**



Veterans Village Golf Tournament



On October 4th 2025 the VFW Veterans Village held its Annual Golf Tournament at Juliette Falls Golf Course & Country Club. The event was well attended with 144 players in arriving for a fun day of golf. The rain held out and only lightly came down for a brief interval. "This was one of the most successful tournaments we have had" said Mike Cline Veterans Village Director and Department Surgeon.



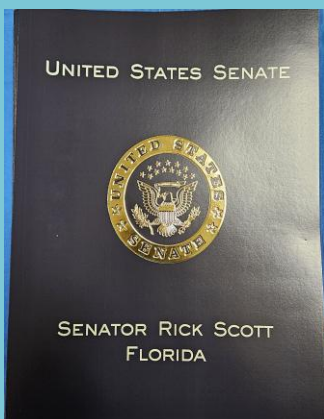
VFW POST 1590 Illustrating America Art Contest Winners

VFW POST 1590 Daytona Beach Congratulates their K-2 and 3-5th grade Illustrating America Art Contest first place winners in the State of Florida. Both entries went on to the National level, where their 2nd grader won the 1st place National award!



VFW Post 7721 & Auxiliary Honor Korean War Veterans

VFW Post 7721 recently hosted a special ceremony honoring Korean War Veterans, with the US senator Rick Scott attending as a distinguished guest. Senator Scott presented each veteran with a personalized letter of appreciation and a commemorative challenge coin in recognition of their service. The post Auxiliary members volunteered their time to warmly greet attendees, serve refreshments, and help ensure the event ran smoothly creating a meaningful and memorable tribute to those who served during the Korean War.



Monthly Program Focus: Historian / Media Relations

The 5 W's

Capture activities, achievements, and the dedication of our Auxiliaries in action by using the 5 W's:

Who: Identify the individuals or groups.

What: The actions, events or the objects.

When: Timelines, milestones and events.

Where: The physical or virtual location of the event.

Why: The reasons, motivations or justifications of the event.

Media Platforms

- FACEBOOK
- YOUTUBE
- INSTAGRAM
- PINTEREST
- REELS – Used to showcase small clips of videos or pictures to highlight important moments.



Tips for best Photographs

❖ Educate Yourself

- ❑ What can you do with your camera/phone
- ❑ How to position your camera/phone correctly

❖ Be mindful of your subject

- ❑ Ask permission
- Make sure everyone's eyes are open

❖ Check your lighting

- ❑ Bright light/sun behind your subject
- ❑ Change position to better capture your subject.

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.

Creating & Utilizing Reels!

National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador Kristin DiGiacomo wants to focus this year on using & creating reels to spread the word about our programs and what our Auxiliaries are doing in our communities! Reels are videos up to 90 seconds long and can be made up of a single video, multiple video clips, still photos or a combination of all.

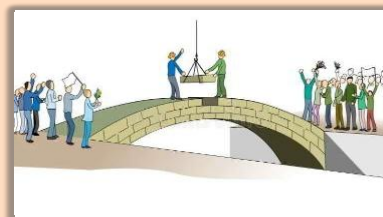


Kathy Ingall
shanily.05@gmail.com
Auxiliary 8189 Homosassa
Historian/Media
Relations

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

Department Awards

Most outstanding social media reel highlighting the VFW Auxiliary in action awarded on each Membership Class entry form and the social media reel to the Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2026





Fall Conference 2025



SUNSHINE WORD SEARCH

AMERICANISM
AUXILIARY
CADET
CEREMONY
HISTORIAN
MEDIA
PATRIOTS
PINK
PROGRAMS
SENATOR
VETERANS
VILLAGE
WHEEL
WINNERS

H	T	F	P	F	N	C	S	T	O	I	R	T	A	P	S
N	P	W	N	C	A	D	E	T	E	L	E	E	H	W	E
Q	A	R	K	O	Y	U	K	R	Y	G	B	J	A	N	N
I	V	I	X	S	R	N	X	U	E	L	A	T	M	M	A
S	M	A	R	G	O	R	P	I	H	M	X	L	X	S	T
S	B	Q	S	O	Q	D	L	O	L	M	O	U	L	C	O
J	J	M	R	C	T	P	M	E	D	I	A	N	R	I	R
W	I	N	N	E	R	S	I	I	V	M	A	W	Y	U	V
X	L	H	E	F	M	S	I	N	A	C	I	R	E	M	A
S	N	A	R	E	T	E	V	H	K	C	C	Z	Y	P	E

"Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause."
— Abraham Lincoln

Department Officers 2025 – 2026

President

Michael Yates
1620 W. Evergreen Drive
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(330) 233-2133
Brusdtwice1@gmail.com

Senior Vice President

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Junior Vice President

Margaret Rementer
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Secretary

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22 Surfcrest St.
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Conductor

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Fireballs44@hotmail.com

Guard

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rkabala@tampabay.rr.com

Chief of Staff

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4444 Royal Fern Way
Palm Beach Gardens, FL
33410
(561) 386-6108
leemvfw@comcast.net

Know your Department Chairmen:

- Americanism – Michelle Butler American.patriotic.2526@gmail.com
- Auxiliary Outreach – Becky Kieffer bkiso2012@gmail.com
- Buddy Poppy / VFW National Home – Jennifer Holland Jenniferlholland72@comcast.net
- Extension Revitalization & Mentoring – Sherri Golder sherrigolder@gmail.com
- Historian / Media Relations – Kathy Ingall shanily.05@gmail.com
- Hospital – Viki Stripling wikiplottsdistrict11@yahoo.com
- Legislative – Pamela Monroe Anamcarax2@icloud.com
- Membership & Mentoring – Holly Evans hadams1221@hotmail.com
- Scholarships – Carrie Messer messerca@gmail.com
- Dept. President’s Special Project – Kelly Barr Flpresproject2526@gmail.com
- Veterans & Family Support – Ryan Harris ryan.harris.cisa@gmail.com
- Youth Program – Lanaie Reed lanwileth@gmail.com
- Program Advisor - Debbie Tilley dktilley@comcast.net

Keep up to date with the monthly promotions from your chairmen!

TAKE NOTE: “FOR ASSISTANCE LOGGING ON TO OUR REPORTING WEBSITE:

CONTACT DEBBIE TILLEY @ dktilley@comcast.net or call 904-460-9345

DO NOT USE THE CONTACT US BUTTON!”

Dates to Remember for 2025 – 2026

• School of Instruction	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	July 31 – August 3, 2025
• National Convention	Columbus, Ohio	August 9 – 14, 2025
• Department Fall Conference	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	October 16 – 19, 2025
• Southern Conference	Montgomery, Texas	November 6 – 9, 2025
• National Mid-Year Conference	Cruise – Key West & Bahamas	February 9 – 13, 2026
• Department Mid-Winter Conference	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	February 12 – 15, 2026
• C.A.F.E National Legislative Conference	Washington D.C.	February 28, 2026 March 2-4, 2026
• Dept Commander & Auxiliary Presidents Homecoming	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	March 14, 2026
• National Sr. Vice Conference	TBD	March 19-22, 2026
• National Presidents Visit (Fri – Mon)	Various	March 20-23, 2026
• Veterans Village Picnic	Fort McCoy, Florida	March 21, 2026
• Planning Meeting for Kathy Wright (May change)		April 4, 2026
• Department Judging		April 29-30, 2026
• National Jr. Vice Conference	TBD	May 14-18, 2026
• Department Convention	Renaissance Orlando, FL	June 11-14, 2026
• National Convention	Reno, Nevada	July 24-30, 2026

Patriots Pen VOD Deadlines

Local VFW Post - 31 October 2025

District VFW Chairman – 15 November 2025

Department VFW Chairman – 15 December 2025



Scan the above QR code for the Sunshine E. Newsletter video presentation featuring photos of Auxiliaries from across the state.



Scan the above QR Code to submit stories & photos of your Auxiliary.

