

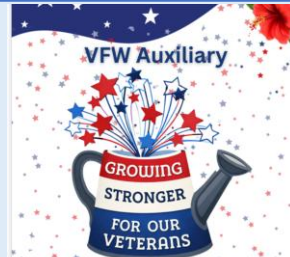
# SUNSHINE E-NEWSLETTER

2026-2027 July - Issue # 1

Team Florida



**FROM THE DESK OF THE  
DEPARTMENT  
PRESIDENT**



**GROWING STRONGER  
FOR OUR VETERANS  
2026-2027**

Dear Department of Florida VFW Auxiliary Members,

I am so excited about this new year and grateful for your trust and confidence in me! It's time for us to get our hands in the dirt and begin "Growing Stronger for Our Veterans," which is my theme for 2026-2027. Born and raised on an Iowa farm, I was surrounded by agriculture. For anything to grow one must prepare the soil before planting the seeds. That's where we are! Preparing and planning! The wonderful program chairmen have their program pages and June promotions on the website, [www.auxfl.org](http://www.auxfl.org). Some have even promoted their programs with posts and reels on Facebook. I love their enthusiasm! I know our members never stop working for our veterans and their families so it's wonderful that the reporting site is ready for those reports.

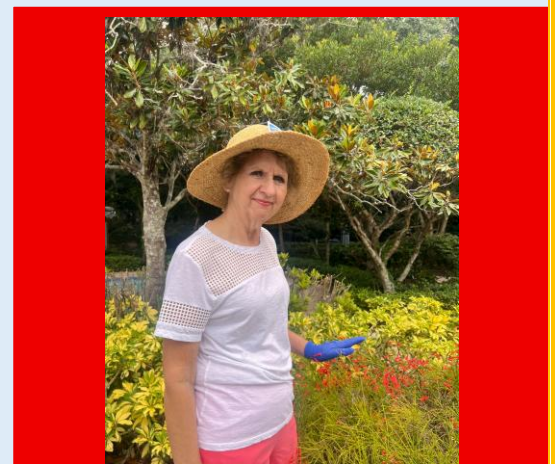
My pin is a watering can because one must always provide moisture for seeds to sprout and grow. All our programs will be sprinkled with our patriotism and love for our country which is symbolized by the red, white, and blue stars coming out of the watering can. The can itself has bands of red, white, and blue for our country which is celebrating 250 years as a democratic republic.

My home state of Iowa is the top producer of corn in the country, and one always heard the saying that the corn should be "knee high by the Fourth of July." That was a benchmark for farmers to know that they were on their way to a successful harvest. Along the same lines I would like to invite you to the School of Instruction on August 14-15 at the Florida Hotel in Orlando where you can learn good practices and make your auxiliary more productive. I know we're going to have a great year, and together we will "Garden with Grace and Goals."

With love and loyalty,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Kathy Wright".

2026-2027 President  
VFW Department of Florida Auxiliary



# Past Department President Mike Yates 2025-2026 – A Great Year!



# Incoming Department President Kathy Wright 2026-2027 Looking Forward to a Great Year!



# 2025-2026 Program Award Winners





## VFW Post 7721 Auxiliary Sends Monthly Troop Supplies to Soldiers in Kenya

This month, the VFW Post 7721 Auxiliary sent troop-support packages to 200 soldiers serving with an Army Rifle Unit in Kenya, Africa. The unit will receive monthly shipments filled with items donated by local businesses, members, and community supporters. Each package includes books, nuts, Slim Jims, beef jerky, and essential personal hygiene products—small comforts to show appreciation for their service far from home.



## Planting Seeds of Service

Today we plant more than flowers—we plant seeds of kindness, hope, and caring. Each tiny seed represents a Chairman Program, nurtured by the hands and hearts of dedicated volunteers.

As flowers bloom with sunshine and water, our programs flourish through service, compassion, and commitment.

A helping hand to a Veteran, a smile shared with a family, a gift of time to our community—these are the seeds we sow throughout the year.

May these seeds remind us that even the smallest act of kindness can blossom into something beautiful.

Together, we cultivate a garden of service, where every volunteer is a gardener, every program is a growing flower, and every good deed helps make our Auxiliaries brighter.

“Plant a seed, grow a dream, share a kindness, and watch it bloom.” 🌻 🌺

**Jeanne F Laurine**

## VFW Auxiliary Post 7674 Unveils Granite Bench Honoring Women Veterans

On June 7, 2026, members of the VFW Auxiliary Post 7674 attended the unveiling of a granite bench sponsored by the Harvey-Eckhoff VFW Post 7674 Auxiliary. The bench now stands in a memorial park dedicated to honoring our nation's women veterans.

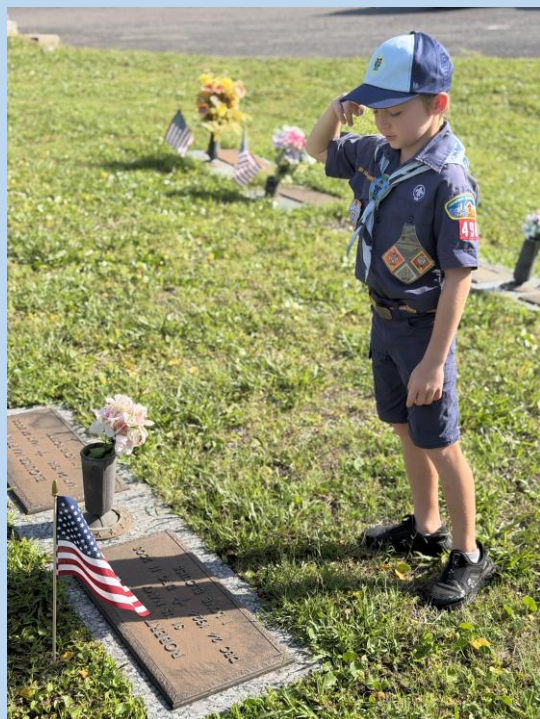
Auxiliary President Betty Riker read a narrative written by former Senior Vice President June Scroggin, emphasizing that the bench is more than a seat—it is a lasting symbol of reflection, gratitude, and the enduring strength of those who served. The ceremony took place near the statue of Naseema, who was born in Afghanistan, came to the U.S. as a teenager, and later enlisted in the Air Force. She earned her master's degree, graduated Officer Training School, and retired as a Major in 2011. Her service included critical real-time intelligence support at the NSA for U.S. operations in Afghanistan and later directing the first Building Partner Aviation Capacity Seminar at Hurlburt Field, FL.

The Auxiliary expressed appreciation to the Okaloosa County Commissioners for creating this meaningful memorial park and extended heartfelt thanks to Naseema and all women veterans. The bench and surrounding memorials ensure their dedication to freedom is honored and never forgotten.



## Auxiliary 1590 and Cub Scout Troop 490 Honor Veterans at Daytona Memorial Cemetery

Auxiliary 1590 partnered with Cub Scout Troop 490 of Daytona Beach to place flags at the headstones of veterans in Daytona Memorial Cemetery. As each flag was set, the Cub Scouts paused, saluted, and read the veteran's name aloud—offering a heartfelt tribute to those who served. The joint effort reflected respect, gratitude, and a shared commitment to remembering the heroes laid to rest there.



## VAVS, Lake Nona Orlando

VAVS at Lake Nona Orlando hosted meaningful flag and tag tables, offering veterans and their companions the chance to write the names of veterans who have passed. Auxiliary members from Districts 8, 18, and 19 assisted by tying the remembrance tags onto flags adorned with poppies, then placing them in the Memorial Day Garden at the facility. Their teamwork and dedication helped create a heartfelt tribute to those who served.



2026



2027

## ***PAYING YOUR AUXILIARY / DISTRICT BOND***

Per the National Bylaws your Bond must be at least **1.25%** the amount of funds and value of property for which, so far as can be anticipated for the 2026-2027 year in your bank accounts.

(The President and Treasurer may be accountable)

Page 89, Sec. 814, letter E, # 1

For example: you have \$10,000 in your account you would need to set your bond for \$12,500.

**ALL BONDS MUST BE PAID BY AUGUST 31, 2026 in MALTA or the Auxiliary and or District will be put into suspension!**



VFW Auxiliary  
Department of Florida

## 250TH BIRTHDAY MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL!

Let's celebrate our Nation's birthday with a special for our annual members to convert to Life!

**25% OFF**



At your May or June Auxiliary meeting discuss with your members to offer a 25% off converting to life sale! Promote the sale in your Post, email your annual members, call and make sure they are aware what the cost would be to convert! They could save money!

## **LET'S RETAIN!**

For example... If you have a member that is between 61-65 their Lifetime membership is \$161, with the discount it's just \$120.75. This is a great way to help retain your members. Run this from July 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>.

If a member converts using a credit card - they will be charged the full amount and the Auxiliary will need to issue a check for the 25% discount back to the member.

Holly Evans  
Membership/Mentoring Chairman  
Approved by Kathy Wright, Dept. Senior Vice  
for 2026-2027 year



### VFW Auxiliary 10167 Celebrates 50 Years of Service

VFW Auxiliary 10167 proudly celebrated its 50th anniversary, marking five decades of service, fellowship, and dedication to Veterans and the community. The milestone event was honored by the presence of Florida Department Auxiliary President Michael Yates, who presented a commemorative certificate from the 2026 VFW National President.

The celebration also recognized the 2025–2026 District 21 Voice of Democracy winner, Paxton Dulski. Paxton and his family were welcomed warmly as he received a \$250 check from District 21 Auxiliary President Stoney Lawrentz-Edwards, with additional support generously contributed by both VFW Post 10167 and Auxiliary 10167.

A special moment came when Commander Terry Stevens expressed heartfelt appreciation for the Auxiliary's service and recognized President Sarah Roth for her continued dedication. With an excellent turnout and uplifting spirit, it was truly a memorable day for Post 10167.



### Post 10148 Supports City of Cocoa Beach Memorial Day Ceremony

May 22, 2026 — The City of Cocoa Beach invited VFW Post 10148 to lead a Memorial Day ceremony at City Hall during the community's popular Friday Fest event. Post members proudly conducted the ceremony, honoring the sacrifices of America's fallen service members.

Auxiliary members volunteered alongside the Post, helping set up a tent to sell merchandise and share information about the VFW and Auxiliary's mission. They also encouraged Poppy donations, taking to the streets to engage with attendees and educate them on the history and significance of the Poppy as a symbol of remembrance.

The event provided a meaningful opportunity to connect with the community, raise awareness, and ensure that the true purpose of Memorial Day was honored and remembered.



### Glenn Wright Memorial Post 7909 celebrates Flag Day with Young Marines

The VFW Auxiliary of Glenn Wright Memorial Post 7909 celebrated Flag Day with the Black Creek Young Marines. Betsy Ross, portrayed by Kathy Wright, and the Statue of Liberty, portrayed by Kathy Danahoo, helped the Young Marines with a state identification game using a USA map. The youth also created Buddy Poppy Crowns, honoring the tradition of remembrance and patriotism.



## Department Officers 2025 – 2026

### President

Kathy Wright  
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### Junior Vice President

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### Secretary

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### Treasurer

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(407) 682-2452  
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### Conductor

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### Chief of Staff

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5137 Scarsdale Manor Lane  
Orlando, Fl 32818  
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[Ucfnole21@yahoo.com](mailto:Ucfnole21@yahoo.com)

### Know your Department Chairmen:

- Americanism – Lenea Reed [Amerianismfl@gmail.com](mailto:Amerianismfl@gmail.com)
- Buddy Poppy – Mary Conkle [mmac2123@comcast.net](mailto:mmac2123@comcast.net)
- VFW National Home – Jeanne Laurine [Jeannelaurine8@gmail.com](mailto:Jeannelaurine8@gmail.com)
- Extension Revitalization – Debbie McCollum [Ucfnole21@yahoo.com](mailto:Ucfnole21@yahoo.com)
- Historian / Media Relations – Kathy Ingall [vfwauxhistorian25.26@gmail.com](mailto:vfwauxhistorian25.26@gmail.com)
- Hospital – Karen Heikkila [hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com](mailto:hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com)
- Legislative – Betty Bailey [Bann652@aol.com](mailto:Bann652@aol.com)
- Membership & Mentoring – Holly Evans [hadams1221@hotmail.com](mailto:hadams1221@hotmail.com)
- Scholarships – Stoney Lawrentz-Edwards [stoneylawrentz@gmail.com](mailto:stoneylawrentz@gmail.com)
- Dept. President’s Special Project – Becky Kieffer [bkiso2012@gmail.com](mailto:bkiso2012@gmail.com)
- Veterans & Family Support – Jean Lockwood [jeanciolaalockwood52@gmail.com](mailto:jeanciolaalockwood52@gmail.com)
- Youth Program – Sherri Golder [flyouth2627@gmail.com](mailto:flyouth2627@gmail.com)
- Program Advisor - Debbie Tilley [dktilley@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto:dktilley@comcast.net) or call 904-495-3622**

**DO NOT USE THE CONTACT US BUTTON!”**



## SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION



Friday - Saturday August 14-15, 2026  
Florida Hotel & Conference Center

1500 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, Florida 32809  
Phone: 800-588-4656

Room Rate: \$125 plus tax (**Mention VFW School of Instruction**)

Complimentary Self-Parking

Deadline for Reservations - July 27, 2026

### **Friday August 14, 2026 - Red Shirt Friday**

8:30 AM District President's Meeting (Closed Meeting)  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM - Dept. Chairmens Meeting (Closed Meeting)

11:00 AM - Council Meeting  
1 - 2 PM Secretary School  
2- 3:30 PM - Treasurer/Trustee School  
3:30 - 5:00 PM - Membership Application School  
5 - 7 PM Program Fair

### **Saturday August 15, 2026 - Kathy's Shirt**

8:30 AM - Welcome  
8:40 - Mike - National Convention report  
9:00 AM - Program Chairmen  
9:45 AM President's Leadership School  
11:00 AM - Noon - Program Advisor - Reporting  
1:00 PM VFW training  
2:30 PM - Questions & Answers  
3:30 PM - Sunshine E-Newsletter

District President's & Commanders dinner Saturday night 6 pm

**NOTICE: ALL TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

**Please check website often for updated information**

# IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2026-2027



**SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION**  
FLORIDA HOTEL

**AUGUST**  
**14-15,**  
2026



**DEPARTMENT FALL CONFERENCE**  
FLORIDA HOTEL  
ORLANDO, FL

**OCTOBER**  
**30-31,**  
2026



**DEPARTMENT MID-WINTER CONFERENCE**  
FLORIDA HOTEL  
ORLANDO, FL

**FEBRUARY**  
**4-7,**  
2027



**VETERANS VILLAGE PICNIC**  
FORT McCOY, FL

**MARCH**  
**20,**  
2027



**DEPARTMENT CONVENTION**  
RENAISSANCE  
ORLANDO, FL

**JUNE**  
**17-20,**  
2027

## 2026-2027 Department Chairman Growing Stronger for Our Veterans!



## Dates to Remember for 2025 – 2026

• National Convention	Reno, Nevada	July 24 - 30, 2026
• School of Instruction	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	August 14 -15, 2026
• Department Fall Conference	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	October 30 – 31, 2026
• Southern Conference	Montgomery, Texas	October 22 – 25, 2026
• National Mid-Year Conference	Cruise – Majestic Mirage D.R.	February 2 – 7, 2027
• Department Mid-Winter Conference	Florida Hotel, Orlando FL	February 4 – 7, 2027
• C.A.F.E National	Washington D.C.	February 28 – March 4, 2027
• National Sr. Vice Conference	TBD	March 18-21, 2027
• National Presidents Visit		TBD
• Auxiliary Presidents Homecoming		April 10, 2027
• Department Commander Homecoming		April 17, 2027
• Veterans Village Picnic	Fort McCoy, Florida	March 20, 2027
• Planning Meeting for Margaret Rementer		April 4, 2027
• Department Judging		April 29-30, 2027
• National Jr. Vice Conference	TBD	May 13-17, 2027
• Department Convention	Renaissance Orlando, FL	June 17-20, 2027
• National Convention	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	July 31- August 4, 2027

### Attention!

The Sunshine E. Newsletter has a new Email Address. Please submit your pictures and stories to the link below or click on the QR Code for a direct link.

[vfwauxflssenl@gmail.com](mailto:vfwauxflssenl@gmail.com)



**Adopt A Veteran**

Veterans Village Resident Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Room # \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Month of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Adopting Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_

This program is to give extra attention to those residents at Veterans Village. Please DO NOT send them money, instead - send cards on the Holidays, remember them on their Birthday & at Christmas with a special gift.

Contact Kelly Barr for information on who you can Adopt:  
719-963-3370