

SUNSHINE

E-NEWS LETTER



December 2024 - ISSUE NO 7

From Team Florida

FROM THE DESK OF THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT

Membership Updates.

Attention all Officers and Members. Well, we have reached that time of year when the membership Push needs to be on. So as your last friendly reminder, you all need to look and be sure that all of your Officers' Dues have been paid.

We currently have approximately 75 Officers throughout the state that have not paid their membership. As you all know if they are not into National no later than the 31st of December 2024 these officers will be removed from your Auxiliaries and Districts. Please do not let this happen.

Here is a little something from our wonderful Membership Ambassador, the Lovely Linda Roloff. Remember, it costs less than a Starbucks gift card to give somebody you love a gift that actually matters. A(Linda-ism) I love this idea and had to share it.

WE ARE NOW 2% behind the Western Conference with Florida being the closest to making 100%. We are so very close, and I want you all to know how very Proud I am of all of you and the amazing work that you do for Our Veterans! Today we are 94.26% and rising. Florida you rock!

Please remember that kindness goes a long way. This is the time of year that so many of our Veterans have so little, and your support may be all that they need to give them a smile of their very own.

Remember to work with your Post and as Auxiliaries we should be asking them what we can do for you, not what can they do for us!

Garnett Ann Schultz

Let us keep Christmas beautiful, without a thought of greed, that it might live forevermore, to fill our every need.

Laura Ingalls Wilder

Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime.

'The Paper Bag Christmas'

Christmas magic is silent. You don't hear it — you feel it, you know it, you believe it.

Merry Christmas

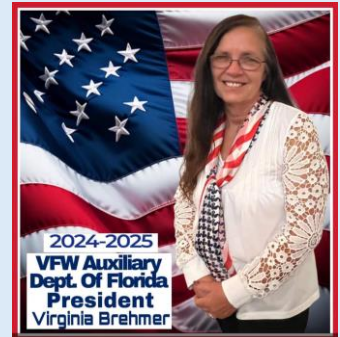
Department of Florida

Where "Unity" Means!

One Family

One Voice

One Team



Membership Extra!

'Tis the season for giving...

This year, share the gift of service and comradery.

Instead of a gift that will soon be placed aside, give the ones you love a membership in this nation's oldest and largest Veteran's Service Organization.

Send out a card to one person on your gift list (who you KNOW qualifies for membership) with a filled-out VFW Auxiliary Membership Application and ask the receiver to return it to you signed. Then take that to your next meeting along with payment (your gift to them) and done!



Auxiliary 7909 Wesconnett, Jacksonville District 6 honored veterans at a local nursing home on Veterans Day. At the ceremony each veteran's name and branch of service was announced and was presented with a coin, a pin, a bag of gifts, a thank you card, and a star with the veteran's name was placed on the banner pictured. Then everyone had cake and soda.



VFW Post 4287 Auxiliary honored their past Auxiliary President, Marlene Marlow. Marlene has served faithfully as Auxiliary 4287 President in District 18, for 10 years and decided this year to pass the baton. Although she stepped down from her leadership role, she continues to serve as Auxiliary 4287 Senior Vice to impart wisdom to the new president and support all programs and projects. A beautiful President's Pin was presented by the Auxiliary and the Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Marlene by the Post at our monthly joint meeting this fall, along with a cake for all to take part in honoring a good and faithful member. Story submitted by: Cathy Rivera, VFW Post 4287 Auxiliary President



Veterans Day Week, Auxiliary & Post 8189 performed flag education for Crystal River Primary school. The kids were told about the origins of our flag, how to fold it and the meaning of each fold. The kids were also instructed on the POW MIA flag. The safety patrol helped fold a large 12 ft x 20 ft flag.



Congratulations, Department of Florida, VFW Auxiliaries for your diligence in Youth Program Activities and Reporting. The September Youth Promotion listed the Criteria to Place, in the Fall Youth Activity Program Sunflower Contest. The following, VFW Auxiliaries placed #1 in the following 3 categories, reported by Oct 18th, 2024, given at Fall Convention.

#1 for Most Hours, Sponsoring/Working w/ Youth Groups was awarded a Certificate of Merit, Sunflower Shirt, Tote, Necklace & Key Chain, to the Byron W. Catherwood Memorial VFW Auxiliary 4174 of District 13.

#1 for the Most Patriotic Youth Awards given was the Silver Springs Shores, 4493 Auxiliary of District 22, who also received the same prizes and award.

#1 for the Most Creative Patriotism through Literacy Activity was the Harold E Walker 1590 VFW Auxiliary of District 19, where they also received the same!

Thank Department of Florida Auxiliaries for caring about our Youth Program Activities
Sincerely,
Amy DiMauro
VFW Auxiliary Department of Florida
Youth Activities Program Chairman

Send your Pictures and Story's for the Sunshine E-Newsletter to: Roger Ingall Shanily.04@gmail.com

Legislative priority goal

National Security, Foreign Affairs, POW/MIA

To fully support the all-volunteer force, protect our nation's citizens, and defend American interests around the world, Congress and DOD must:

- Ensure DPAA is fully funded to perform its personnel recovery mission.
- Expand partnerships with host nations and private/public organizations to achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
- Deter threats to our national security by supporting our allies in Ukraine, Israel, Korea, and Taiwan.
- Ensure all service members who served in harm's way, to include foreign nationals, receive the recognition, care, and benefits they have earned.
- Provide recognition and support for Afghan and Iraqi translators and allies.
- Award the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for operations in Eastern Europe.



Vfw Auxiliary
Department
Of Florida
Legislative
Chairman
Melissa McKeon

<https://www.vfw.org/actioncorpsweekly>

"Sign up today"



Join us

SUPPORT
VETERANS
and their families

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES



Monthly Program Focus: Legislative

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

Things you can do:

- Keep learning the priority goals
- Keep encouraging people to sign up for Action Corps
- Keep reading pending legislation and acting on them If you are writing BILLS to your representatives, please communicate with our VFW Legislative advocates. They will help you in the process. Communication is essential for successfully completing our goals.
- We can educate our local leaders by writing letters, making phone calls and sending emails. You can invite them to your Post for special events or patriotic celebrations. Let your members tell their experiences, frustrations and triumphs.
- Auxiliaries must remain impartial. When seeking support to pass upcoming legislation or for a special project, you can invite your current representative, regardless of party. However, when hosting events for election purposes, you should invite candidates from all the parties. Either way, collaborating with your VFW on these events that connects members to local lawmakers will qualify Auxiliaries for the National award.

Are you having a Freedom Festival?

Create legislative games, have a skit, design an age appropriate coloring or activity book. Have a table set up to sign people up for Action Corps. Teach priority goals and hand out the Action Corps brochure to your guest.

[PriorityGoalsBrochure.pdf \(vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net\)](https://www.vfw.org/actioncorpsweekly)



Chairperson: Melissa McKeon
melissamckeon6767@gmail.com

Poker Run Benefits Veterans Shelter

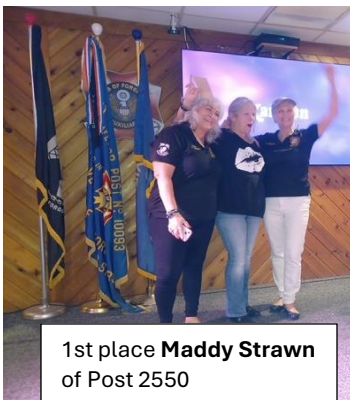
On November 16, 2024, VFW Post 4864 Auxiliary President Marilyn Hunter, Secretary Pam Bolinda, Trustee Dennis Bungo, and Chief of Staff/Mentoring Dale Lange volunteered their time and services to help set up and register participants for The Bridge 4 Veterans poker run. Auxiliary volunteers delivered food that and a “basket” that was donated by both the Post and Auxiliary. Riders from all over the county came out to support this worthy cause. Participants were treated to a biscuit and gravy breakfast and coffee. Numbering 68, they took off at 10 am to head to their first stop on the run. Ultimately the event raised \$3,515 for The Bridge 4 Veteran’s Shelter, with their “basket” being \$360 of the funds raised. A great time was had by all.



All Competitors 2473, 2550, 7987, & 10093

District 21 Posts hold Karaoke Contest

District 21 VFW POST 2473, 2550, 7987, 10093 and 10167 recently held a karaoke contest competing against each other for the "**District 21 Karaoke Idol Finale**". This being the first of its kind they only invited the closest ones in mileage to Post 10093 to participate to see how it would go. Well, It turned out to be a huge success! Ten fantastic singers from all the posts and five outstanding judges. The judges did not know any singers, so the judging was fair and partial. The winners are listed below.



1st place **Maddy Strawn** of Post 2550



2nd place **Michelle Alcorns** Post 10093



3rd place to **Alice Ballmer** of Post 2550

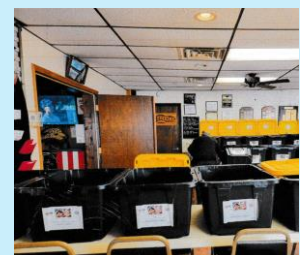


Auxiliary Girls 10093

Auxiliary 8696 comes together to make 38 Thanksgiving Baskets for Veterans!



VFW Auxiliary #5968 put together 11 Thanksgiving Day Baskets for military families. Then did an additional 11 for the families in their town that needed them. The post supplied the turkeys. We had donations from members, then the USO also made a big donation.



Beverly Hills Auxiliary 10087 in cooperation with VFW Post 10087 is running a FEED THE HUNGRY food drive. Our goal is to have 1500 pounds of a variety of items donated. The food will go to Veterans and their families in need.



On Thanksgiving Day, VFW 7721 Auxiliary partnered with St Matthew's House (recovery program) to provide Thanksgiving meals to Veterans and Auxiliary members, and they were distributed that morning.



On November 12, Collier County Commissioners made a special proclamation to declare the month of December VFW Post 7721 Auxiliary, Appreciation Month. This was done to recognize the efforts of all auxiliary projects done in Collier County for Veterans, Youth and community education. Accepting the proclamation was Betty A. Bailey, President, and auxiliary member Lois Bolin



On Veterans Day the students at the Basilica of St. Paul school honored the Veterans of Post 1590 by giving them handmade cards carefully crafted by 8 grades of students. The students then watched the Post's veterans, both VFW & Auxiliary raise a new flag during a Veterans Day ceremony which included flag folding, prayer, the pledge and a song.



VAVS Auxiliary Decorate

Auxiliary Hospital volunteers decorated 2 gazebos for the CLC residents at Lake Nona. Afterwards, Auxiliary members from several Posts joined together to play bingo with the residents, serving them ice cream & cookies.



VAVS & Auxiliaries Bring Cheer

VAVS and Auxiliaries in Districts 8, 18, and 19 hosted “Christmas Cheer” comfort tables at Lake Nona VA Hospital, Lake Baldwin, Lake Viera, and Daytona VA Clinics. This year’s Hospital Program included “themed events that make our Veterans happy”.



Remembering and Honoring Our Members

Over the last few months, we have lost members both Auxiliary and Post who have held positions in the Districts and the Department, however no one has told the Department President or Secretary.

Please keep in mind that not everyone monitors all Facebook pages or Post websites, and it is very important that we be made aware of these members passing so that we can have the opportunity to honor these members for all that they have done in service for our Veterans and Members.

Please consider sending information to the Dept. Secretary when a member or their spouse passes that you feel we should know about.

Dates to Remember for 2024-2025

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Department Mid-Winter Conference | January 24 - 26, 2025 | Westgate Resorts, Orlando |
| • National Mid-Year Conference | February 1 – 6, 2025 | Hideaway at Royalton Riviera, Cancun |
| • Dept. Presidents Homecoming | March 14 – 15 2025 | Crown Plaza – Indialantic Beach |
| • National President's Visit | February 16 – 19, 2025 | |
| • Veterans Village Picnic | March 22, 2025 | |
| • Planning Meeting for Mike Yates | April 5, 2025 | |
| • Dept. Commanders Homecoming | April 12, 2025 | |
| • Department Judging | April 25 – 26, 2025 | |
| • Department Convention | June 12- 15, 2025 | Renaissance Orlando, FL |
| • National Convention | August 9-14, 2025 | Columbus, OH |

Know your Department Chairmen:

- Americanism – Carol Franker Qcarol4u@gmail.com
- Auxiliary Outreach – Sandi Hendriks sandihendriks@yahoo.com
- Buddy Poppy / VFW National Home – Kelly Barr buddypoppy2425@gmail.com
- Extension Revitalization & Mentoring – Debbie McCollum Ucfnole21@yahoo.com
- Historian / Media Relations – Jeanne F. Laurine Jeannelaurine5@gmail.com
- Hospital – Karen Heikkila Hospitalauxfl@yahoo.com
- Legislative – Melissa McKeon melissamckeon6767@gmail.com
- Membership – Betty Bailey bann652@aol.com
- Scholarships – Ann Batson annbatson@att.net
- Dept. President's Special Project – Pauline Riddle fireballs44@hotmail.com
- Veterans & Family Support – Bob Kabala rkabala@tampabay.rr.com
- Youth Program – Amy DiMauro stavamy@aol.com

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

Send your Pictures and Story's for the Sunshine E-Newsletter to: Roger Ingall Shanily.04@gmail.com