

SUNSHINE

E-NEWS LETTER



February 2025 - ISSUE NO 9

From Team Florida

FROM THE DESK OF THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



Greetings Members,

Well as we begin to enter into the last phase of our terms for 2024-2025, I would like to thank all of you for the hard work, efforts and support that you have shown this year. You truly know how to make Florida shine. The Department is currently at over 100% and extremely close to our final goal. I am proud to say that approximately 2/3s of you are also at or over 100% and that most Districts are as well. So now is the time for you all to be making that final push to reach your goals. Many are within a mere few members of being there. So here are a few questions that may help you reach those goals.

1. What is your plan for your membership going forward this year?
2. Have you sent out more than one renewal letter for your members?
3. Do you have members in your Auxiliary that have been effected by the Hurricanes that your Auxiliary could pay the peridium for which is \$17.00?
4. Do you have members that are in need you can help by paying their dues, such as serious health issues?
5. Did you know that you can use funds from your relief fund to pay for these with as it is a member in need?
6. And does your Auxiliary Pay for dues for any members that are 75 and over?

I hope to see many of you during the National Presidents visit as she loves talking and visiting with our members. Please remember that we have the Department Commanders and Presidents Homecoming coming up soon. We would all love to see you there.

As June convention fast approaches, I cannot wait to see all of the awards that many will be taking home to their Auxiliaries. And let's see how great we will look on the National Floor as we receive awards to show just how much the members of our Auxiliaries and Post work hard together as one Team to make Florida shine. I can tell you that our Commander and I are both Proud of you and of our Department for the hard work you do.

Never forget what we are here for and continue to find your Why!

Now I would Like to Congratulate Our New Auxiliaries and welcome them to the Department of Florida Team! We have Marianna, Belleview, and our newest baby in Perry Florida. As you have the chance to meet them, please take the time to welcome them in.

Keep pushing hard towards your final goals and working on our Programs.

Just as a little reminder please remember that there is no room for Bullying and Dictatorship in the VFW or their Auxiliaries. And I hope that this next few Statements will help you to understand the absolute importance of "KINDNESS," within our organization.

Here are some quotes about kindness and encouragement:

- **Kindness is a language:** "Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see" (Mark Twain).
- **Kindness is contagious:** "Kindness is spreading sunshine into other people's lives, regardless of the weather" (Kahlil Gibran).
- **Kindness is a strength:** "Kindness is the only strength there is" (Gregory Boyle).
- **Kindness is universal:** "A warm smile is the universal language of kindness".
- **Kindness is an impact:** "Kindness has a direct effect on others, but it has a positive impact on yourself as well".
- **Kindness is helping others:** "Kindness is helping the world, one person at a time".
- **Kindness is sharing:** "Kindness is sharing the best parts of our hearts with those around us".
- **Kindness is reaching out:** "Kindness is going outside of your comfort zone to let people know that they are important and loved".
- **Kindness is never too late:** "It is never too late to be kind, polite, and a loving human being".
- **Kindness is for everyone:** "People shouldn't have to earn kindness".
- **Kindness can improve your well-being and the well-being of others.**
- **Kindness helps us all to build strong, confident and effective leaders!**

The Only Dumb question , is the one unasked!

**I am not Perfect!
Neither are you!
I am Proud!
So are you!
I can be Defensive!
So can you!
I can Apologize!
So should YOU!**

We are and will always be Team Florida.

1 Family 1 Voice 1 Team1

National Presidents Visit

St. Augustine Hotel Info:

Hampton Inn - 1302 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd - (904) 494-2100

Itinerary

Feb. 16th

2:56 p.m. National President arrives in Jacksonville
Dinner TBA



Feb. 17th

10 a.m. Freedom Ride
11:30 a.m. Post 2093 - Lunch
3 p.m. Sanford Memorial Veterans Park
4:30 p.m. Post 8093 - Isle of Flags/Dinner/Show

Feb. 18th

St. Augustine Day of Adventure
will include touring the Fort, Trolley Ride, Fountain of Youth
11:30 a.m. Post 2391 - Lunch
5 p.m. Dinner at Mexican Restaurant
following dinner will be a
Trolley Ghost Tour



If you are planning to attend any of the luncheons or dinners please contact the following people:

Post 2093 - Jani Ramsey - janimom@aol.com

Post 8093 - Jeanne Laurine - jeannelaurine8@gmail.com

Post 2391 - Dan Weir - dtweir60@gmail.com

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

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](#)



Auxiliary 7909 & Youths Make Valentines for Veterans.

Youth and VFW Auxiliary members teamed up to make valentines for veterans in hospitals and nursing homes. All this creativity occurred at VFW post 7909, Jacksonville, Florida on January 20, 2025. The 2 youths pictured were super enthusiastic crafters and didn't want to quit.

#vfwauxiliary

#vfwvalentinesforveterans



VFW Post 1590 in Daytona Beach Hosts Military Ball on January 11

One of the ways we honor our Veterans is by hosting a Military Ball, where we toasted each branch of the military with champagne, one at a time. The R.O.T.C. from Emory Riddle Aeronautical University performed a "Missing Man Table" ceremony after presenting colors. Many veterans came in uniform, making the evening special.

Guest speakers included: PD Commander Dani Hernandez, PDP Linda Burnette, Dept. Commander Glen Wright, Dept President Virginia Brehmer, Dept Sr. Vice President Mike Yates, and Dept Jr Vice President Kathy Wright.

Officers in attendance:

Dept Chairmen; Jeanne Lauraine, Sandy Hendriks, Amy DiMauro, and Karen Heikkila

District 19 Commander Mike Syfert and President Ce Bennet.

Auxiliary Presidents of District 19; Eileen Welch, Christine Shaw, Jeanne Laurine, and Karen Heikkila

District 18 Jr Vice Pres, and VAVS Volunteer, Ashley Orf.

After a delicious dinner, there were soloists performing and a traditional cake cutting (VFW, oldest and youngest guest).



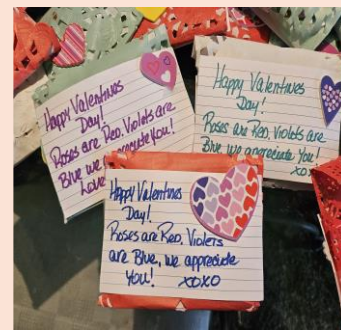
Sunshine Post 3233 Organizes 2nd Annual Cruise

Sarasota Sunshine Post 3233 organized their second annual VFW cruise for their Post and now District. After last year's success many Post and Auxiliary members around our area from Bradenton, Venice and North Port wanted to go. They scheduled their cruise for the second week of January and our seven-day Itinerary included Dominican Republic, St. Thomas, British Tortola and NCL's private Island on Stirrup Cay Bahamas. There was a total of sixty traveling within the group. It was a fun filled week of fine dining, sunbathing, gambling, relaxing, sightseeing and a lot of laughter. All wore marching red tee shirts on embarkation day and were quite a sight boarding the ship. They have already begun organizing next year's cruise, for the second week of March.



VFW Auxiliary 7721 Valentines for Veterans

Auxiliary 7721 made Valentines for Veterans in nursing homes and will also pass them out at their Valentines Day dinner.



2024-2025 Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen Winners
On Saturday, January 25, 2025 at the West Gate Lakes Resort, Orlando , FL
the Department of Florida and the VFW Auxiliary awarded the following awards at the
Youth Achievement Banquet

Monetary awards were also given by the Department of Florida VFW Auxiliary

Patriot's Pen Winners

1st Place – received a plaque and a \$600.00 check – Torin Kelly, Sponsored by District 13 Post 7721 Naples

2nd Place – received a plaque and a \$400.00 check – Logan Lord, Sposored by District 3 Post 1966 Ft. Lauderdale

3rd Place – received a plaque and a \$200.00 check – Joshua Hogrefe, Sponsored by District 6 Post 2391 St. Augustine

Voice of Democracy Winners

1st Place – received a plaque and a \$2,500.00 Scholarship – Jackson Settle, Sponsored by District 21 Post 12186 Oldsmar

2nd Place – received a plaque and a \$2,000.00 Scholarship – Kailyn Dekker, Sponsored by District 13 Post 7721 Naples

3rd Place - received a plaque and a \$1,500.00 Scholarship – Logan Waddell, Sponsored by District 18 Post 4287 Orlando

4th Place - received a plaque and a \$1,000.00 Scholarship – Mikaela Zentz, Sponsored by District 8 Post 4643 Satellite Beach

5th Place - received a plaque and a \$500.00 Scholarship – Alexandra LaCiuga, Sponsored by District 22 Post 4781 Ocala

Patriot Pen & Voice of Democracy Superstars

***Photos not in any particular order.**



Patriot Pen & Voice of Democracy Superstars

*Photos not in any particular order.



Monthly Program Focus: Scholarship

National Continuing Education Scholarship

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 packed so that no damage is done.

SCHOLARSHIP DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES:

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary.
- Special Award to one (1) Auxiliary in each of the membership classes for Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary. Entry form required and available on Dept. Website and in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Scholarships Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging.
2. Certificate to all Auxiliaries who have promoted the following:
 - Voice of Democracy Audio-Essay Contest and Patriots Pen Essay Contest. Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest

NATIONAL AWARDS

Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about the scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary.
 - Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary.

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



**VFW Auxiliary
Department of
Florida
2024-2025
Scholarships
Ann Batson**

Join us
SUPPORT
VETERANS
and their families

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



Scholarships



**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

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!



Monthly Program Focus: Youth Program

YOUTH PROGRAM DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about Patriotism through Literacy and utilizing the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.)
- Special award to one Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community about Patriotism through Literacy and utilizes the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.) Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging.
- Certificate Awarded to each Auxiliary for using the Random Acts of Patriotism Cards DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR YOUTH: 1. Illustrating America – 3 categories – K-2, 3-5, and 6-8.
- 1st place in each category \$50 and certificate
- 2nd place in each category \$25 and certificate
- 3rd Place in each category \$15 and certificate

NATIONAL AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event of youth reading to veterans and/or veterans reading to youth.
- Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding activity and/or event of youth reading to veterans and/or veterans reading to youth.

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

Chairperson: Amy DiMauro stavamy@aol.com



**VFW Auxiliary
Department
of Florida
2024-2025
Youth
Chairman
Amy DiMauro**

Join us

SUPPORT
VETERANS
and their families

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



**Literacy for our Youth
Illustrating America
Art Contest**



Auxiliary 10087 Works Hard for Veterans



Post Auxiliary 10087 worked hard on making up 42 Chemo bags for the Veterans in Gainesville.

Veterans Village Picnic

March 22, 2025

No Admission Fee

Tickets Available for meal - \$12.00

Gate Opens at 10:00 AM

Meal will be from 11:30 to 2:00

Hamburgers, Hotdogs, BBQ Chicken,
Coleslaw, Baked Beans, Chips & Cookies
Raffle baskets, outside vendors and a 50/50
Music provided by: Dept. Sr. Vice Scott Hice
No outside coolers. Alcohol or other
beverages allowed.

Dates to Remember for 2024-2025

- National President's Visit February 16 – 19, 2025
- Dept. Presidents Homecoming March 14 – 15 2025 Crown Plaza – Indialantic Beach
- 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