

**COMMANDERS  
SPECIAL PROJECT  
FREEDOM RIDE**

Freedom Ride was established as a 501c 3 in 1988 with just one horse and one rider. Within four years they became the first Premier Accredited PATH (Premier Accredited Therapeutic Horsemanship) facility in Central Florida. Currently, Freedom Ride provides therapeutic horseback riding and related activities for over 80 children and adults with disabilities.

**Special Project Chairperson**

John Coleman  
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**Program Reporting:**

Remember that Programs keep your Post viable in the community and play a big part in keeping your Post, District and Department strong and a part of our great National Organization. Programs also assure that you retain your tax-exempt status. Programs are reported electronically through the Department of Florida Website "[vfwfl.org](http://vfwfl.org), Login, Report Entry" If you need assistance contact Rosalie Bice at Department Headquarters or the Programs Director.

**Quartermaster Information:**

**QUARTERMASTER BOND** is \$4.00 per \$1000  
**THE MINIMUM BOND REQUIRED IS \$3,000.** Make sure you are not under bonded.

**Each Post** shall remit \$1.25 for each member of record as of July 1<sup>st</sup> (minimum \$125.00), payable by September 30<sup>th</sup> each year. All assessment proceeds will be used to operate the Department Service Office and Veterans Village.

**Each Post** will receive an invoice in their VFW Post E-mail for these amounts that must be paid by September 30<sup>th</sup> to be eligible for All State Judging.

**Each District** shall remit \$300.00 by September 30<sup>th</sup> each year. All proceeds will be used to assist in the operations of the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen Program.

## **Membership Mission**

To recruit, retain, and mentor a stable membership base, including all generations of veterans. To cultivate a membership that is well versed in institutional knowledge and actively involved at all levels of the organization and in the local community. To establish Posts with a strong tradition of service, leadership, and community outreach.

- Build a strong organization for the future through growth and retention.
- Work together to achieve the VFW's goals. The VFW State Headquarters staff is here to assist in coordinating programs, developing new membership initiatives, and building awareness among our membership and the entire veteran community.

## **Membership Objectives & Goals**

- Recruit new and recover unpaid members Goal 102%
- Develop new Posts and revitalize existing Posts.
- Increase Life Membership Goal 5% Gain
- Increase Legacy Life Membership Goal 5% Gain

## **Post Responsibilities**

- Name a Membership Chairperson by August 31, 2024, and report that name to the District Membership Chairperson
- Hold at least two (2) membership drives during the year.
- Report to the District Membership Chairperson monthly on your progress
- Hold at least two (2) Community Service events with other organizations.

## District Responsibilities

- **Appoint a District Membership Chairperson by August 31, 2024**
- **Monitor Memstats frequently to monitor & advise Posts in the District as to their progress.**
- **Hold a minimum of two (2) membership drives with Posts in the District.**
- **Report to the Department Membership Chairperson monthly on the progress of the District.**
- **Ensure that all Posts have promotional material and applications for membership drives.**

### **MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM DETAILS & INCENTIVES** **INDIVIDUAL VFW RECRUITER AWARDS**

#### **BRONZE STAR AWARD:**

Any member recruiting 15 new and/or reinstated members by May 31, 2025, will receive a specially designed commander's challenge coin.

#### **SILVER STAR AWARD:**

Any member recruiting 25 new and/or reinstated members by May 31, 2025, will receive a specially designed commander's challenge coin and a \$25.00 Gift Card.

#### **LEGION OF MERIT AWARD:**

For every new Life Member recruited by May 31, 2025 (minimum of 5) the recruiter will receive a specially designed commander's challenge coin and \$50.00 gift card.

#### **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS AWARD:**

The top five recruiters, signing up the most- new and/or reinstated members (minimum of 50) by May 31, 2025, will receive a specially designed commander's challenge coin, and a \$100.00 in gift cards.

## **POST MEMBERSHIP AWARDS**

### **David G. Snyder Plaque**

The first Post to achieve 102% membership by September 30, 2024 (Posts that are 102% life membership must obtain 15 new members to qualify) Post mergers do not qualify for this award.

### **Emerson Lee Plaque**

The first Post to achieve 105% membership by November 30, 2024 (Minimum of 50 members per post)

### **John E. Hamilton Award**

The Post with the greatest numerical increase in membership by April 30, 2025

### **Ira Hopper/Glen F. Tilley Award**

The Post with 500+ in membership by April 30, 2025 will receive the Ira Hopper Award

**90% Membership** — Commander and Quartermaster receive a Silver Star.

**102% Banner** — All Posts achieving 102% membership.

**102% Membership** — Post Banner, Commander and Quartermaster receive a Gold Star

**102% + Quota Buster** — Post Date Plate, Commander and Quartermaster receive a Q Pin.

\*All posts must fill out an **ALL-STATE ENTRY FORM** and submit it to State Headquarters by April 1, 2025, to qualify for All State Judging. The form is on the VFW Florida website at [vfwfl.org](http://vfwfl.org), resources, reports, and forms.

**NOTE:** If Post Commander or Quartermaster changes during the year, a new All State Entry Form must be submitted immediately.

## **ALL STATE POST COMMANDERS**

**ALL STATE POST COMMANDERS AND QUARTERMASTERS WILL BE JUDGED BY THE AWARDS COMMITTEE AND SELECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

**Meet the following percentages according to division, and requirements in the Department Dashboard plus program reporting, donations, meetings/school attendance and accounting deadlines met. All State will be awarded to all posts that earn the honor, by accomplishing all requirements, regardless of division or number of posts in a division.**

### POST DIVISIONS:

Division - 1	951-UP	102%	Division - 7	112 – 142	104%
Division - 2	750 – 950	102%	Division - 8	88 – 111	104%
Division - 3	356 – 749	102%	Division - 9	68 – 87	105%
Division - 4	246 – 355	103%	Division - 10	51 – 67	105%
Division - 5	185 – 245	103%	Division - 11	1 - 50	105%
Division - 6	143 – 184	103%			

**\*\*NOTE: ALL-STATE CUT-OFF RUNS THROUGH COB JUNE 24th. POSTS REACHING ALL-STATE STATUS BY THE "MAY" ALL-STATE JUDGING DATE WILL BE PRESENTED WITH THEIR ALL-STATE CAPS AT DEPARTMENT CONVENTION. THOSE REACHING ALL-STATE AFTER THE "MAY" JUDGING DATE WILL BE PRESENTED WITH AN ALL-STATE PLAQUE AND A CHECK FOR \$150 TO ORDER THEIR OWN CAP.**

**DIVISIONS ARE BASED ON JUNE 30, 2024, MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS, ADJUSTED PRIOR YEAR TOTAL. CHECK DIVISION # ON MEMSTATS REPORT.**

### DISTRICT DIVISIONS:

Division - 1	5,000 - UP	102%
Division - 2	3,282 - 4,999	102%
Division - 3	2,172 - 3,281	102%
Division - 4	1,447 - 2,171	102%
Division - 5	906 - 1,446	102%
Division - 6	0 - 905	102%

**POST AND DISTRICT DIVISIONS ARE BASED ON JUNE 30, 2024, MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS, ADJUSTED PRIOR YEAR TOTAL. ALL POST AND DISTRICT DIVISION STATUS IS POSTED ON MEMSTATS.**

The Awards Committee **may eliminate** from judging any post:

- That does not meet the requirements delineated on the Department Dashboard under "Members Only Section" - on time and correct.
- Any Post failing to purchase three poppies per member, based on **June 30, 2024**, membership totals by **April 30, 2025**.
- Required Schools attendance.

To attend the Department School of Instruction or have the Quartermaster, Sr. Vice Commander, or Jr. Vice Commander attend. **Must sign in to receive credit.**

To attend the District School of Instruction or have the Quartermaster, Sr. Vice

Commander, or Jr. Vice Commander attend. **Must sign in to receive credit.**

- To file tax reports with the state and federal government, including forms (IRS Form 990) and state sales tax where required.
- A copy of the District or Post 990 must be submitted to Department Headquarters.

**\*\* FIRST ROUND JUDGING ENDS APRIL 30, 2025**  
**\*\* SECOND ROUND JUDGING ENDS June 24, 2025**

### **ALL STATE POST COMMANDER AWARDS**

An "All State Post Commanders Team" will be selected, and each member will receive the following awards:

- **An "All State" Post Commander Shirt**
- **An "All State" Post Commander Cap**
- **An "All State" Plaque for the Post**

### **ALL STATE POST QUARTERMASTERS**

- If the Post Commander qualifies for All State, the Post Quartermaster may also qualify **"IF"** the following Quartermaster requirements are met:
- The Quartermaster must individually see that all reports required of them are correct and submitted on time, to include the Trustees Report of Audit, Tax Reports, and the IRS 990 Form.
- Maintain their records so they may be certified, when inspected, by the Post Trustees per the VFW National guidelines.
- Attend school of instructions for State and retain proof of such attendance.
- Must be the Post Quartermaster for a minimum of 90 days prior to judging unless the prior Quartermaster was relieved by the Department Commander within this 90-day period.

**Other Considerations:** Regardless of whether the requirements above are fulfilled, the Awards Committee may also consider personal conduct and attendance at District and Dept. Meetings.

## ALL STATE POST QUARTERMASTER AWARDS

An "All State Post Quartermasters Team" will be selected, and each member will receive the following awards:

- An "All State" Post Quartermaster Shirt
- An "All State" Post Quartermaster Cap

## ALL STATE DISTRICT COMMANDER REQUIREMENTS

**District Commanders must achieve 102% membership by April 30, 2025, to receive their award at the Department Convention. Districts can still qualify for All State Awards until June 24th, 2025, and will receive a check for \$75 to purchase their own hat.**

District Commanders will achieve "All State" if they complete the following requirements.

- Programs
  - Voice of Democracy — an entry advanced to Department Judging
  - Patriots Pen — an entry advanced to Department judging.
  - Teacher Award — an entry **in 1 category** advanced to Department judging.
- National Military Service — Donate \$250 min. to National VFW Un-Met Needs no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
- National Veterans Service — 100% of all Posts must appoint a Service Officer and **all Service Officers must be on file at the VFW Department Service Office.**
- School of Instruction — Districts must conduct a School of Instruction and proof of such school must be submitted to Department Headquarters no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Post Visits — All posts within the District must be visited 3 times between August 1, 2024, and April 30, 2025, by the Commander, the Sr. Vice Commander, or the Jr. Vice Commander.
- District 990 District must have their IRS Form 990 submitted to IRS with copy sent to Department Headquarters to be awarded "All State" District

District Commanders must attend one post meeting plus one other visit. Visitation Reports must be submitted to the Department within 30 days of each visit.

District Commanders are directed to hold a minimum of two District Membership Drives during the year and report the results to the Membership Director and the Dept. ADJ/QM. (July 1-Dec. 31, 2024, and Jan. 1-April 30, 2025)

## ALL STATE DISTRICT COMMANDER AWARDS

- An "All State District Commanders Team" will be selected, and each will receive:
- An "All State" District Commander Shirt
- An "All State" District Commander Cap

### VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

**"IS AMERICA TODAY OUR FOREFATHERS' VISION?"**

**The 2024-2025 Voice of Democracy competition is open to all students in grades 9 through 12.**

Student's entry due to Post..... October 31, 2024  
Post judging to be completed by .....November 15, 2024  
District judging to be completed by.....December 5, 2024  
District winning entry due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2024  
District participation report due to Department Chairperson .....December 15, 2024

**Department winner goes to National by January 15, 2025**

For information go to the Department website at [vfwfl.org](http://vfwfl.org), "Programs" & "Voice of Democracy."

### DEPARTMENT VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

**FIRST PLACE**

**\$2,500.00**

**SECOND PLACE**

**\$2,000.00**

**THIRD PLACE**

**\$1,500.00**

**FOURTH PLACE**

**\$1,000.00**

**FIFTH PLACE**

**\$500.00**

**John M. Carney Plaque**

The VFW Post sponsoring the State Voice of Democracy Winner

**PATRIOT’S PEN**

**“MY VOICE IN AMERICA’S DEMOCRACY?”**

**The 2024 -2025 Patriots Pen competition is open to all students in grades 6 through 8.**

Student’s entry due to Post .....October 31, 2024  
Post judging to be completed by .....November 15, 2024  
District judging to be completed by.....December 5, 2024  
District winning entry due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2024  
District participation report due to Department Chairperson .....December 15, 2024

**Department winner goes to National by January 15, 2025**

**DEPARTMENT PATRIOT’S PEN AWARDS**

**FIRST PLACE  
\$600.00**

**SECOND PLACE  
\$400.00**

**THIRD PLACE  
\$200.00**

For information go to the Department website at [vfwfl.org](http://vfwfl.org), “Programs” & “Patriots Pen.”

**C. Milton Davis Plaque**

The VFW Post sponsoring the State Patriots Pen Essay Winner

**SCOUT OF THE YEAR**

All Posts are encouraged to select and recognize a Scout of the Year, submit the winner to District level for judging, and forward those winners to the Department judging. The application for Scout of the Year can be found online at the Department Website [vfwfl.org](http://vfwfl.org) go to “Programs” and “Scout of the Year.”

Nominees for the Department Scout of the Year Award are to be submitted to a Post by **February 28, 2025**. Post must submit forms to the Department Chairperson by **March 15, 2025**.

The Nominees from Posts are to be sent to the Department Scouting Team Chairperson.

The winning entry will receive a **\$250.00 check and plaque**.

**Department winner will receive a citation from National.**

## **VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION**

### **TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

Each year the VFW recognizes the nation's top elementary, junior high and high school teachers. This contest is for teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America's history, traditions, and institutions effectively through the VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards. Outstanding teachers in the categories of grades K through 5, grades 6 through 8, and grades 9 through 12 will be recognized. For information go to Department **Website [vfwfl.org](http://vfwfl.org), "Programs" & "Teacher of the Year."**

#### **Nominations**

Nominations may be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors, or other interested individuals. Self-nominees are not eligible.

Nominees submitted to Posts..... October 31, 2024  
Post Winners to District.....November 15, 2024  
District winning entry due to Department Chairperson..... December 15, 2024  
District participation report due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2024

**Department Winners will receive a citation from National.**

### **VFW DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA CITIZENSHIP TEACHER AWARD**

- A \$500.00 check to the winning teacher in each of the three categories as selected by the Department Committee
- A Plaque for each winning teacher

### **PUBLIC SERVANT GOLD MEDAL AWARDS**

Each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars selects an emergency service person, a law enforcement officer, and a fire fighter to receive the VFW Gold Medal Awards. The presentation of these awards will be made at the post in an awards ceremony. Post Safety Chairpersons are encouraged to submit a candidate for this award to the appropriate Department Public Servant Award Chairpersons by **January 1, 2025**.

**Eligible candidates for each award will receive:**

- A Certificate from VFW National
- A Plaque from VFW Department of Florida

## **Emergency Medical Technician Gold Medal**

Any individual, who actively gives emergency medical treatment, provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care, provide rescue and civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

## **Firefighters Gold Medal**

Any individual who actively fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and give assistance to our nation's citizens.

## **Law Enforcement Gold Medal**

Any individual who serves in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with enforcement of the laws pertaining to their area of responsibility. This award does not apply to individuals employed by private companies or security services.

## **Dispatcher Gold Medal**

Any individual who works for an organization such as the police or fire department and whose job it is to send members of the organization to the place where they are needed to give assistance to our nation's citizens.

## **Criteria for all Gold Medal Awards:**

Candidates must have demonstrated:

- Recognition by their colleagues for those they serve.
- Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties
- Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities over a period of years and continuous growth in responsibilities and skills in their profession.

## **Documentation required of each candidate:**

- A nomination letter containing the candidate's name, title, address, telephone, e-mail and identifying the award which the individual should be considered.
- A one-page resume of the candidate's overall background
- A one-page resume of the candidate's background in the field
- A photograph "preferably head shot" of the candidate.

## **Nominations**

Post Safety Chairpersons are encouraged to submit a candidate for these awards to the Law Enforcement, Fire Prevention & EMT Chairperson by **January 1, 2025**.

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