COMMANDERS
SPECIAL PROJECT
NATIONAL HOME FLORIDA HOUSE #2

The Commanders' Special Project this year will be to raise funds for the National Home, Florida House #2. The goal is to fund the building of the second Florida Home at the National Home.

Special Project Chairperson

Amber Putnam
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Parrish, FL 34219
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Phone: 727-455-5875

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 ensure that you retain your tax-exempt status. Programs are reported electronically through the Department of Florida Website, "**vfwfl.org**, Login, Report Entry." If you need assistance, contact the Department Headquarters or the Programs Director.

Quartermaster Information:

QUARTERMASTER BOND is **$5.00** per $1000
THE MINIMUM BOND REQUIRED IS $3,000. Make sure you are not underbonded.

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

Each Post will receive an invoice at its VFW Post email for these amounts, which must be paid by September 30th to be eligible for All-State Judging.

Each District shall remit $300.00 by September 30th 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. Department Goal 100 + 1
- Post Goal is based on membership
- Retain 80% or higher
- Develop new Posts and revitalize existing Posts.
- Increase Life Membership ..... Goal 5% Gain
- Increase Legacy Life Membership must add bronze or upgrade a member to silver or gold.

Post Responsibilities

- Name a Membership Chairperson by August 31, 2026, 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.
- Hold one Community Service event with the Auxiliary.

District Responsibilities

- Appointing a District Membership Chairperson by August 31, 2026
- Monitor Memstats frequently to monitor & advise Posts in the District as to their progress.
- Attend a minimum of two (2) membership drives with Posts in the District and submit a report form to the Commander.
- 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, 2027, will receive a specially designed commander's challenge coin.

SILVER STARS AWARD:

Any member recruiting 25 new and/or reinstated members by May 31, 2027, will receive a $25.00 gift card.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS AWARD:

The top five recruiters who sign up the most new and/or reinstated members (minimum of 50) by May 31, 2027, will receive $100.00 in gift cards.

LEGION OF MERIT AWARD:

For every new Life Member recruited by May 31, 2027 (minimum of 5) the recruiter will receive a $50.00 gift card.

POST MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

David G. Snyder Plaque

The first Post to achieve 101% membership (Posts that are 101% 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 (Minimum of 50 members per post)

John E. Hamilton Award

The Post with the greatest numerical increase in membership by April 30, 2027

Ira Hopper Award

The Post with 500+ in membership by April 30, 2027, will receive the Ira Hopper Award

Glen F. Tilley Award

The Post with 499 or below in membership by April 30, 2027, will receive the Glen F. Tilley Award

Eugene L. Perrino Sr. Award

A District or Post Adjutant and or Quartermaster going above and beyond to meet the mission goals of the VFW. Nominations will be made by the Post or District Commanders, and the forms will be due to Headquarters by April 1, 2027.

Glenn M. Wright Award

The post with the largest numerical increase in verifiable program reports submitted at vfwfll.org by April 30, 2027.

Department Commander's Centurion Club:

* A Post that reaches 101% will receive a special pin, a quota buster pin, and 101% banner, and will be recognized as a Department Centurion Club Post.

* A post that reaches 101% by December 31, 2026, will receive a special pin, a quota buster pin, a special 101% banner, a $100 gift card, and recognition as a Department Elite Centurion Club Post.

*All posts must fill out an **ALL-STATE ENTRY FORM** and submit it to State Headquarters by April 1, 2027, to qualify for All-State Judging. The form is on the VFW Florida website at **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.

A Captain and a co-captain will be selected by the committee selected by the Commander.

POST DIVISIONS:

Division - 1	750 – UP	102%	Division - 7	88 – 111	106%
Division - 2	356 – 749	102%	Division - 8	68 – 87	107%
Division - 3	246 – 355	102%	Division - 9	51 – 67	107.5%
Division - 4	185 – 245	103%	Division - 10	1 – 50	108%
Division - 5	143 – 184	104%	Retention	ALL Division	80%
Division - 6	112 – 142	105%			

**NOTE: ALL-STATE CUT-OFF RUNS THROUGH COB JUNE 23rd. 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 $225 TO ORDER THEIR OWN CAP.

DIVISIONS ARE BASED ON JUNE 30, 2027, MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS, ADJUSTED PRIOR YEAR TOTAL. CHECK DIVISION # ON MEMSTATS REPORT.

DISTRICT DIVISONS:

Division - 1	5,000 - UP	100 + 1
Division - 2	3,282 - 4,999	100 + 1
Division - 3	2,172 - 3,281	100 + 1
Division - 4	1,447 - 2,171	100 + 1
Division - 5	906 - 1,446	100 + 1
Division - 6	0 - 905	100 + 1

POST AND DISTRICT DIVISIONS ARE BASED ON JUNE 30, 2026, 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 four poppies per member, based on **June 30, 2026,** membership totals by **April 30, 2027.**
- Required Schools attendance.
- DPAA Donation $125 no later than March 1, 2027.

Legislative Reporting: 1 per quarter per district.

The district must make sure 75% of all posts in the District make the following minimum financial contributions:

Department Funds: Minimum $100-300 based on post membership to (Commanders Project, Disaster Relief, VAVS, Village Insurance Donation, and Because We Care.

National VMS and National Home: based on post membership

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, 2027**
**** SECOND ROUND JUDGING ENDS June 23, 2027**

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, including 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 101% membership by April 30, 2027, to receive their award at the Department Convention. Districts can still qualify for All State Awards until June 23rd, 2027, and will receive a check for $100 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.

· DPAA (Defense POW Accounting Agency) – Donate $125 to through the National website no later than March 1st 2027.

- National Military Service — Donate $250 min. to National VFW Un-Met Needs no later than March 1st, 2027.
- National Veterans Service — 100% of all Posts must appoint a Benefits Advisor and **all Benefit Advisors 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 30th.

- Post Visits — All posts within the District must be visited 3 times between August 1, 2026, and April 30, 2027, 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, 2026, and Jan. 1-April 30, 2027) – Form

District Commanders shall ensure at least 3 visits to each post in the District:

1 must be a meeting

1 should be a social visit

1 is a visit by a line officer who is not the District Commander

(Sr. Vice, Jr. Vice, Chief of Staff)

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**

All State Captain will be selected by committees.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

"WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA"

The 2026-2027 Voice of Democracy competition is open to all students in grades 9 through 12.

Student's entry due to Post..... October 31, 2026
Post judging to be completed by.....November 15, 2026
District judging to be completed by.....December 5, 2026
District winning entry due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2026
District participation report due to Department Chairperson .....December 15, 2026

Department winner goes to National by January 15, 2027

For information go to the Department website at **vfwfl.org**, **"Programs"** & **"Voice of Democracy."**

DEPARTMENT VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

FIRST PLACE
$4,000.00

SECOND PLACE
$3,000.00

THIRD PLACE
$2,000.00

FOURTH PLACE
$1,500.00

FIFTH PLACE
$1,00.00

John M. Carney Plaque

The VFW Post sponsoring the State Voice of Democracy Winner

PATRIOT'S PEN

"WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA"

The 2026 -2027 Patriots Pen competition is open to all students in grades 6 through 8.

Student's entry due to Post .....October 31, 2026
Post judging to be completed by .....November 15, 2026
District judging to be completed by.....December 5, 2026
District winning entry due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2026
District participation reports due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2026

Department winners go to National by January 15, 2027

DEPARTMENT PATRIOT'S PEN AWARDS

FIRST PLACE
$1,500.00

SECOND PLACE
$750.00

THIRD PLACE
$500.00

For information go to the Department website at **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 the 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,** 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

March 1, 2027. Post must submit forms to the Department Chairperson by **April 1, 2027.**

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

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

Department winner will receive a citation from National

VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Each year the Department recognizes the State'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 Department 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**, under **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, 2026
Post Winners to District.....November 15, 2026
District winning entry due to Department Chairperson..... December 15, 2026
District participation report due to Department Chairperson.....December 15, 2026

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, 2027**.

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, 2027**.

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