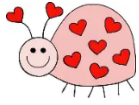


Serving Our To-toly Oz-some Veterans



February 2026

Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters,

Across our Department, I am continually encouraged by the dedication of our VFW Auxiliary members and the pride you take in our mission.

February is a special time of recognition as we observe Salute to Veterans Week at VA medical centers throughout North Carolina. This special week provides opportunities to uplift hospitalized veterans through visits, cards, donations, and thoughtful acts of kindness. Your participation- whether individually or as an Auxiliary- helps remind our veterans that they are honored and not forgotten.

We are honored to welcome our VFW Auxiliary National President Lois Callahan to North Carolina on February 25-27. Member participation is important, as it demonstrates unity, support, and pride in the work being done across the Department. I encourage members to participate in the visit in whatever way you are able. Let's show National President Lois the strength and hospitality of the Department of North Carolina! (Flyer is in the Department mail.)

Please make sure that your Auxiliary is reporting on our programs. These reports document our work, ensure proper recognition, and allow our Department to meet National requirements. Your reports should be accurate and submitted by the **April 15th** deadline.

With service to our organization comes responsibility. Accepting a leadership role within the VFW Auxiliary is a commitment, not an honor alone. Every officer and chairman at every level- appointed or elected- is expected to carry out the responsibilities of their position, meet all deadlines, and maintain regular, reliable communication. When duties are not completed or communication breaks down, it affects the entire organization. Clear, timely communication at all levels- Auxiliary, District, Department, and with our VFW Post partners- is essential to maintaining trust, coordination, and effectiveness as we work together to serve veterans and their families.

Membership remains the foundation of our strength. As discussed at District meetings, I encourage Auxiliaries to take part in the membership challenge to personally call unpaid members and members-at-large. A friendly phone call can make a powerful difference- reminding members that they are valued, missed, and needed.

All Auxiliaries have been issued Department raffle tickets, and every Auxiliary is expected to actively sell the tickets they have received. Raffle ticket sales support Department programs, leadership training, awards, and assistance that directly benefit Auxiliaries across North Carolina.

The work you do matters. Every responsibility fulfilled, deadline met, report submitted, phone call made, and ticket sold strengthens our Department and advances our mission. Together through accountability, communication, and teamwork, we continue to build a stronger VFW Auxiliary Department of North Carolina.

Thank you for your dedication, your leadership, and your continued service to our veterans, their families, our communities, and to one another.

In Auxiliary service,

Lin



March 26 @ 7 PM
Topic: Elections,
Installation Report,
Delegates



A Message from the Department Treasurer
February 2026
Vfwauxnc.org



Brothers and Sisters,

February is supposed to be the month of love. Why does it have to be just one month? Let's show our love for each other and especially our Veterans every day. I love and appreciate each of you for all of your hard work and dedication.

CONGRATULATIONS to Cheryl Jones and Auxiliary 1706 Lincolnton for being the first Auxiliary to submit new member applications on the new form, properly completed. Great job, Cheryl. And to LeeAnn Bisesi of Auxiliary 7315 Havelock for submitting the first credit card application. The member responded to the link immediately and was shown in her Auxiliary roster in less than 24 hours!!! This is the way it needs to be done.

Also, **CONGRATULATIONS** to Auxiliary 2615 in Goldsboro for being the first Auxiliary to return all of their Department fundraiser raffle tickets and money. Thank you so much.

We have been talking quite a lot about the new applications, the processing procedures and payment. What we haven't discussed is yet another new way to pay dues. Dues can now be paid **ON THE PHONE!** Yep. I said it. Pay the dues by phone. For those who do not have a MALTA account (but everyone should), there is a phone number to call in and pay the annual dues over the phone by credit or debit card. National is doing everything possible to make it easier for every member to pay their dues in a timelier manner. There really is no excuse for not getting your dues paid. **Simply dial 866-299-1286 and follow the prompts for this new, safe, easy way to pay.**

This information comes straight from National. "If you have not yet paid your dues, you are not a member in good standing. If you are not a member in good standing, you cannot attend meetings, hold office or vote. But do not fear - this is fixable! All you have to do is pay your dues ASAP and we offer a number of ways to do so. (Keep in mind, if you still have not paid by June 30, you will lose your membership and have to rejoin, which means re-applying, being voted in again and restarting your years of continuing membership, which impacts your ability to apply for a Continuing Education Scholarship, to receive a Cancer Grant and to be invited to the 45+year members celebration at National Convention.)"

Reminders for this month:

- The audits for the quarter ending 12.31.25 are due no later than 2.28.26
- All District audits are due within 30 days of your meeting, which means I should have all District audits no later than 2.25.26
- If your Auxiliary has not made your annual contributions, please do that now.
- If your Auxiliary has not paid your District dues, please send these to your **DISTRICT TREASURER** immediately. These must be paid before the Spring District conventions for your Auxiliary to participate in the elections. Your Auxiliary must be in good standing to participate in voting and elections.

As always, if you have any questions or need any assistance, please reach out. I am here to help.

Sandra Johnson-Leu,
VFWA Department Treasurer Department of NC
919-906-7592
ctrysun@embargmail.com
103 Covered Bridge Rd., Clayton, NC 27520



'Sometimes the strength within isn't a big fiery flame for all to see. Sometimes, it's just a tiny spark that whispers ever so softly,.' Keep going. You've got this. Never give up on yourself.



VFW AUXILIARY
Department of North Carolina
Deborah Crowder, Secretary

910-622-6749
sec4vfwauxnc@gmail.com
4717 Ilex Drive
Wilmington, NC 28412

FEBRUARY NOTES

With most of the District Meetings behind us, I hope everyone is preparing for the National President's visit February 25 – 27. I'll include the flyer with this mail, and send it out a few more times in a Bulletin Board. Don't forget to share it with your VFW members as they are welcome to attend this event with us.

I want to talk about some of the feedback I'm getting about the Bulletin Board messages. Almost all of the comments are positive. Everyone seems to like to get reminders and notifications between editions of the monthly mail.

♦ One complaint is that some people are not getting the monthly mail or the Bulletin Boards. I can think of a couple of reasons why that could be the case. **1)** The information in MALTA is not correct. I got all of the email addresses from MALTA. It is each member's responsibility to update their profile information in MALTA. If a member's office changes, the Auxiliary Secretary is supposed to send a Change of Officer Form to me. **2)** Not all members are included in the email group. It is the responsibility of the President or Secretary to see to it that they have a method of sharing the Monthly Mail and Bulletin Boards with ALL of their members. Establishing an email group consisting of as many of your members as possible is a good start. An old fashioned phone tree would be an alternate way to contact members without email addresses.

♦ Another complaint is that some people are not happy about getting a message that says, "I got it" because someone clicked on **RESPOND ALL** to let me know they got their mail. If you want to let me know that you received a message from me, that is OK; although not necessary. Just click on the left pointing arrow at the top of the message and your response will only come to me. When you click on the kebab (3 vertical dots) it causes a dropdown menu allowing you to respond, respond all, forward, delete, etc. So, accessing the dropdown menu requires more keystrokes than just clicking on the left pointing arrow if you only want to respond to me. **Please DO NOT click on RESPOND ALL** unless it is something you really want to share with over 200 members.

REMINDERS:

- 1) Council of Administration is February 6-8, 2026. Embassy Suites in Greensboro is sold out, but there are other hotels nearby. Check online for locations near 204 Centreport Dr. Banquet and Hospitality Room tickets are available **ONLY** on the Department VFW website ncvfw.org and when you see Winter Council of Administration, click on "Banquet & Hospitality Tickets. Remember, this is the VOD/PP banquet to honor each District winner. The Auxiliary Tentative Agenda/Schedule is included in this mailing.
- 2) **SAVE THE DATE:** National President Lois Callahan will make her official visit to NC **February 25 through 27, 2026** in the Raleigh/Cary area. Watch for a Bulletin Board announcing more details for her visit.

VFW Auxiliary

Council of Administration Meeting

February 6 - 8, 2026

Date/Time	Event	Location	Attire
<u>Friday, February 6</u>			
9:00 - 10:00	Audit Committee	TBA	Casual
10:00 - 11:00	Budget Committee	TBA	Casual
11:00 - 1:30	Officer's Meeting & Lunch	TBA	Casual
2:00 - 3:00	District President's Meeting	ABC	Casual
3:00 - 4:00	Women Veterans	TBA	
	Program Chairs Meeting	ABC	Causal
3:30 - 6:30	Buddy Poppy Display Set-up	Lobby (lower)	
4:00 - 6:00	New Member Introduction & Orientation	Room 225	Casual
	Officers Coaching Session with Q & A	ABC	
7:00 - 9:00	Boot Scootin' Fundraiser - Special Project	ABC	Western
9:00 - 12:00	Hospitality Room	Timberlake	Western

Date/Time	Event	Location	Attire
<u>Saturday, February 7</u>			
7:30	Breakfast	first Floor	Casual
9:00 - 11:30	Joint Meeting	CD	Bus/Casual
11:30 - 1:00	Lunch	Timeberlake	
1:00 - 2:00	Joint Legislative Training	ABC	Bus/Casual
2:00 - 4:00	Auxiliary Opening	"	"
	Special Guest Speaker	"	"
	Program Training	"	"
	Rollcall	"	"
4:00 - 5:00	MOCA	Room 224	
7:00 - 9:00	VOD/Patriot's Pen Banquet	DEFG	Formal
9:00 - 12:00	Hospitality Room	Timberlake	

Date/Time	Event	Location	Attire
<u>Sunday, February 7</u>			
7:30	Breakfast	first floor	
8:00 - 8:45	Worship	E	Bus/Casual
9:00 - 10:30	Council of Administration Meeting	ABC	Bus/Casual



National President's Visit

2025-26 National President Lois Callahan
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary
will make her visit to
North Carolina on February 25-27, 2026



Where to Stay

Make your Hotel reservations at the Hampton Inn and Suites Raleigh, 111 Hampton Woods Ln. Raleigh, NC 27607, (919) 233-1798. Room rate is \$129/night with no parking fee.

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/rooms/>

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

- President arrives at RDU Airport – 11:36am.
- Lunch
- Hotel - Isle of Honor and casual social until dinner **ATTIRE: Casual**
NOTE: Isle of Honor participants - White button-down blouse or shirt, patriotic scarf of tie, black slacks, black shoes. (AKA: the North Carolina Official look)
- 6:00 ^{PM} Dutch treat Baked Potato Bar, Music Bingo, Casual Meet and Greet at Cary VFW Post 7383, 522 Reedy Creek Road, Cary, NC - \$12 per person **ATTIRE: CASUAL**

Thursday, February 26, 2026

- Breakfast at hotel (included in room rate)
- Wreath at Garner Memorial Park - **ATTIRE: Official Auxiliary blue shirt (available from National)**
- Visit Garner VA Clinic
- Lunch at the Raleigh VFW Post 10999, 1120 Sawmill Road, Raleigh
- 6:00 ^{PM} Banquet at Cary VFW Post catered by Butchers Market, Backyard BBQ, \$30.00 per person
ATTIRE: CASUAL – WESTERN THEME)

PRE RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

<https://givebutter.com/7383AuxBanquet>

Friday, February 27, 2026

- Breakfast at hotel (included in room rate)
- National President departs North Carolina at 10:13 AM

The banquet dress is business casual/western. All other events are comfortable and casual.

In lieu of gifts donations can be made to her special project, or gift cards can be provided so that she can purchase incidentals during her travels.

Direct any inquiries to the Cary Auxiliary President Donna Wright, email: donna1023m@aol.com



Reservations for the banquet may be made by check using the form below or online

Must be received no later than February 18, 2026

Mail to: Donna Wright, President Auxiliary 7383
437 Center Pointe Dr., Cary, NC 27513

Make checks payable to VFW Auxiliary 7383

Name: _____ Aux No. _____

Banquet: No. of Tickets _____ at \$30.00 _____ Check No. _____



Americanism

February 2026

“Americanism is a question of spirit, of conviction and purpose, not creed or birthplaces. The test of our worth is the service we render.”

President Roosevelt

February Patriotic Days

National Freedom Day 1st, National Boy Scouts Day 8th

Abraham Lincoln's Birthday 12th, President's Day is on the 16th this year.

It's February.

First and foremost, I hope to see you at the COA in Greensboro on February 5th to the 8th. As Americanism chair there are a few things for the month of February.

Our National President is visiting NC on the 25th to the 27th. Please check your email or the bulletin board for more information from State if you wish to meet with her in the Cary/Raleigh area.

The Patriotic Days are listed above.

With February being National Boy Scouts Day on the 8th of February and it being a colder winter, team up with your local troop and have a flag retirement ceremony and roast some marshmallows afterwards. That is always a good way to interact with our youth but instill the importance of what we do and how to treat our flag.

As always coordinate with your VFW so that we can honor our veterans and continue to complete our programs. My information is at the bottom if you ever need to reach out to me.

If you need ideas or more information on Flag etiquette, history of the flag or the U.S Flag code you can visit [VFW.org/community/flag-etiquette](https://www.vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette)

Jeanette (Jeannie) Platt

Americanism Program Chairman

phone number (910) 599-8044 email j.m.platt83@gmail.com

Auxiliary Outreach February



February is the month that we celebrate Valentine's Day. Candy, cards, and flowers are important to everyone. We must remember our veterans this month with special items.



Winter is a time that volunteers are needed more than ever. People have extra expenses such as heating so they often need extra help. Food pantries and food drives are set up often. Many volunteers are needed to help with these events.

Household items are offered at many stores. Volunteers are run these shops and getting items ready takes a helping hands. Money collected by these donations necessary causes.

either free or at reduced prices



needed to lot of help many

The list for needed volunteers is endless if you just look.

Remember to follow all the guidelines and report.

If you have questions or concerns, I will be glad to h



Patty Harris
Auxiliary Outreach Program Chairman

1565 Spicer Mtn Road Sparta, N.C.28675

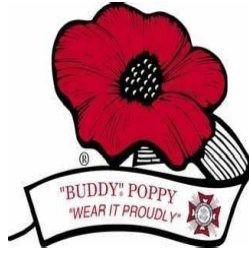
pattyharris@skybest.com Phone:336-657-1770

February

“Buddy” ® Poppy



Donna Wright
Donna1023m@aol.com



Did you know Auxiliaries may apply for National Awards? Have you held an outstanding Buddy® Poppy activity and/or event? Let's submit an application!

National Awards for Auxiliaries:

Most outstanding activity and/or event with their VFW Post to educate their community about the VFW “Buddy”® Poppy.

- Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding activity and/or event with their VFW Post to educate their community about the VFW “Buddy”® Poppy.

Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.

VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging.

The Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2026 for judging.



V F W
N A T I O N A L H O M E



An application may be submitted for an outstanding activity and/or event held to create awareness of the VFW National Home. The application deadline is fast approaching!

National Awards for Auxiliaries:

Most outstanding activity and/or event that creates awareness and education of eligibility and who qualifies for help from the VFW National Home and promoting it within their Department to help veterans and their families.

- Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding activity and/or event that creates awareness and education of eligibility and who qualifies for help from the VFW National Home and promoting it within their Department to help veterans and their families. Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging. The Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2026 for judging.

Award applications may be found in Malta
<https://malta.vfwauxiliary.org/MemberResources>

“Serving our Toto-ly Oz-Some Veterans”
NC Department President's Theme
2025-2026



**CHIEF OF STAFF
EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION**

DEBORAH CROWDER

FEBRUARY 2026

910-622-6749
crowder84hd@gmail.com
4717 Ilex Drive
Wilmington, NC 28412

Welcome to February! We are now over the half-way point in our program year. Before I talk about Healthy Auxiliaries, I want to congratulate the following Auxiliaries on their anniversary dates.

Institution Date	Post/Auxiliary Number/Name	Post/Auxiliary Location
02/07/1946 (80)	2057 Joseph C. Pisarik Memorial	Rocky Mount
02/22/1951 (75)	4066 Loris Dover	Shelby
02/24/1951 (75)	8989 Kannapolis	Kannapolis
02/07/1963 (63)	5202 Waynesville	Waynesville
02/09/1969 (57)	9960 W.E Briggs, Sr.	Cedar Point
02/09/1970 (56)	9959 Mt. Olive	Mt. Olive
02/21/1978 (48)	2423 James B. Crump	Indian Trail
02/25/1979 (47)	8297 Midway-Monroeton	Midway-Monroeton
02/18/2017 (9)	5305 Donald Lanford Drum	Conover

As you can see, we have some Auxiliaries with a lot of history. I hope as you continue to do the work of our organization that you document your efforts. I would like to suggest a history project for each Auxiliary in our Department. Many years ago, when some of these Auxiliaries were young, we had history books or scrapbooks. If your auxiliary still has some of those hard copy books at your Post home, please make some digital copies of them. As your Auxiliary moves forward, continue to add to the digital files to preserve the next 50, 75, and even 100 years of service to our veterans.

Your District Presidents should have passed on to each Auxiliary a spreadsheet showing contact information of Members at Large in your area. You are encouraged to contact these members and invite them to become active again by transferring from Member at Large to your Auxiliary. It could be that some of them really miss the opportunity to be an active member. Let them know that they are not forgotten. Invite them to your next meeting or an event. Members of *Healthy Auxiliaries* work together and encourage others to join them in serving veterans and their families.

Again, congratulations to the Auxiliaries with February anniversaries. Your years of service portray the traits of a *Healthy Auxiliary*. May you continue to grow and carry on the work of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary.



Jaclyn Jones
Fundraising Chairman
772.302.6099
Jaclynjones06@gmail.com

Fundraising



It's that time...we are preparing for the Winter C of A and the Basket Silent Auction.

We are ready to decorate the atrium of the hotel with all your wonderful & beautiful baskets. Please be sure to find me or text me so I can meet you to check your basket it.

Reminder that all the funds raised go towards the Ways & Means fund to offset the operational cost of the auxiliary.

BASKET IDEAS:

Americana Basket: Flags, Red-White-Blue blankets, garden signs

Book Lovers Basket: Best Seller Book, Bookmark, Book Light, Tasty snacks to enjoy while reading

Art Lovers Basket: Canvas, Markers, Paint, Apron, Frames

Sports Basket: Sports cards, jerseys, sweatshirts, hats, book on sports

VFW Basket: Local VFW Shirt, Gift Card to VFW Store, Hat, bumper sticker

Bird Watching Basket: Book on Birds, binoculars, bird house, bird seed, local bird watching spot map



Let's have some fun while supporting our Auxiliary

VFW Auxiliary Dept of NC President Historian/ Media Relations

February 2026



Barbara Beard
198 Oakridge Dr
Raeford, NC 28376
barbeard@roadrunner.com
(910) 565-2351 hm
(910) 624-4357 cell



How's Your Attitude?

If a person is not happy, it seriously affects their attitude.

Looking at your attitude may let you learn something about yourself. When you study yourself, you may find the answer to a problem and realize that you should do something about it. How you feel about yourself is very important, both to other people and, more importantly, to you. If you don't feel good about yourself, it's hard for you to feel good about other people and to work with them. That may be the root of the problem in a conflict between people.

Your thoughts determine what you are. When you feel good about yourself, you have a good attitude. Successful people have good attitudes.

Below are some advantages to having a good attitude.....

- A good attitude is being anxious to do better. It is having an optimistic, hopeful, and cheerful outlook.
- A good attitude means using one's ability to the utmost.
- A good attitude means being cooperative and helpful. It also means **WORKING TOGETHER** with others.
- A good attitude means filling your thinking time with pleasant thoughts without worries.
- A good attitude is to feel that most people will like you unless you give them a good reason not to. To try to make everybody like you is just about impossible. *Accept this.*

VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters is looking to expand their circle on Instagram!

While hashtags are helpful, they are still sometimes missing the wonderful posts and stories members share of their Auxiliaries in Action. They have therefore decided to start FOLLOWING VFW Posts and Auxiliaries and Department accounts. The best way to ensure they are able to find yours is to "follow for a follow." (In other words, you follow them and they follow you back.) They are excited to extend their reach, are developing new Insta-specific content and can't wait to start better connecting with you.

Please note: They are not following individual members at this time, just Posts, Auxiliaries, Departments and other VSOs, so if posting pictures from a personal account please continue to **#hashtag** and tag accordingly, and be sure to follow them so you don't miss anything.



Great Auxiliary Fundraising Ideals

Silent Auction	Mom to Mom Sale	Bazaar
Yard Sale	Plate Sales	BINGO
Car Wash	Bakeless Bake Sale	Raffles
Casino Bus Trips	Double good Popcorn Drive	Dinners

HOSPITAL

February 2026

REMINDER, week of February 14th. is “SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS” week. Recognize and honor hospitalized Veterans in all Medical facilities.

To put a smile on their face, show we appreciate their many sacrifices:

Volunteer your time to assist with planned events.

Take time to visit, an American Flag would be appreciated.

Make **Valentine** treats, cards, and assist with decorating their rooms.

Encourage the community, such as school and church groups to participate in this remembrance.

Volunteers are needed in all medical facilities. When recruiting volunteers, remember our youth. No matter where you volunteer, you create a friendly and caring atmosphere for those you serve. In hospitals, clinics and nursing homes.

Remember our Women Veterans. The VA has comprehensive health care services to meet the unique needs of women Veterans.

AWARDS

AWARDS FOR MEMBERS

AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

Information pertaining to the above awards, may be found on MALTA, including entry forms.

OUTSTANDING HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Eligibility:

- Volunteer may be any VFW Auxiliary member who serves as a VFW Auxiliary Hospital Volunteer in any medical facility in our department. (VAMC), military, community, children’s hospital, nursing home, therapy center or clinic.
- Volunteer must have served from July1, 2025, through March 31, 2026.
- Volunteer hours at VA and non-VA facilities may be combined for award purposes.
- VAVS Representatives and Deputies are also eligible to be considered for this award.

Loyally,

Farres Upton, Hospital Chairman



Durham VA Medical Center
508 Fulton St
Durham, NC 27705
919-286-0411 ext. 177810
December 2025



Durham VA Supporters:

The week of February 9 is Salute to Veterans week at the Durham VA. There will be activities throughout the week to show care and support for our Veterans.

Right now, I am hoping to be there on Thursday, February 12 to hand out donuts, coffee and juice to veterans arriving at the VA for appointments or leaving the VA after an appointment. (If this date changes, I will send out an email to each Auxiliary President to share with their members of the new date.) But I will need some volunteers for this. Normally, there are 2 stations set up: one in the main lobby and one at the patient entrance. If you are willing to send a couple of members to help with this, please let me know as soon as possible. I need to let the VA know if we need more than one table, more than one chair, and how much coffee we will need.

If your Auxiliary would like to provide gift/goodie bags for the veterans during this week, these are always appreciated. Goodie bags with small Valentine cards, sugar-free candies and gum (no Hard candy, please, as this can be a choking hazard), ChapStick are always a big hit with the veterans. If you would like to just sign a bunch of Valentine Cards, or work with a school to have students sign the cards, the cards will be placed on the meal trays for the Veterans who are currently patients at the VA. These always bring a smile to their faces.

Please do not forget about the P.A.R.C unit on the 9th floor. These veterans get very few visitors. And they enjoy everything that is provided for them. Ice cream socials, Provided by gift cards, Bingo games, which only take 2-3 members, and small gifts as prizes. These veterans get very little stimulation and are offered very few activities, which is so important in their continued care.

Your support of our Veterans is greatly appreciated.

Sandra Johnson-Leu,
Durham VAVS Representative
919-906-7592
ctrysun@embargmail.com

**SALISBURY VA MEDICAL CENTER
1601 Brenner Avenue, SALISBURY, NC 28144**

February, 2026

Brothers and Sisters,

REMINDER:

Week of February 14th. is **“SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS”**, week. Plan events to honor and pay tribute to our VETERANS. Show we appreciate the sacrifices they made, which enables us to enjoy our freedom daily.

Preparations for the 2026 National games are already underway.

Wheelchair Games will be held in Detroit, Michigan, July 9th----14th.

Golden Age Games will be held in Tampa, Florida, June 27th----July 2nd.

These events empower Veterans living with spinal cord injuries, amputations, multiple sclerosis or other physical disabilities to live more healthy and dependent lives through adaptive sports.

Your support of the Wheelchair and Golden Age games, will be much appreciated. Checks may be sent to our Department Treasurer, Sandra Johnson-Leu, earmarked Wheelchair or Golden Age games.

VETERANS NEEDS LIST:

Thermal Under Garments (long john's and bottoms, (all sizes)
Men's sweatpants & sweatshirts, (all sizes)
Body wash and lotions (regular)
Dr. Teal Body Wash (Hospice)
Dr. Teal Oatmeal/lavender lotion (Hospice)
Dr. Teal foot cream (Hospice)

Thank you for supporting the needs of our Veterans at the Salisbury VA Medical Center, who bravely served our Country.

Loyally,
Farres Upton
Salisbury VAVS Representative
336-889-4133
farreshupton@aol.com



LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM—FEBRUARY 2026

Legislative News and Updates

The Question on everyone's mind at the end of January---
Did Congress make the funding deadline at the end of
January? Or did we have another Government Shutdown?



Amplify the VFW's message to "Honor the Contract"

The VFW Auxiliary plays a vital role in supporting the VFW's legislative priorities. While the VFW leads national advocacy efforts, the **Auxiliary serves as the Informed Amplifier**, the trusted messenger who expands reach and helps energize communities to take action. As real-time legislative toolkits are released, and we prepare for the Washington, D.C. Legislative Conference, each Auxiliary must understand how to **communicate effectively and express gratitude** while amplifying the VFW's message to "Honor the Contract."

The Auxiliaries role as the Informed Amplifier

The Auxiliary is not simply a messenger, it is an Informed Amplifier, meaning:

- We Amplify **ONLY** what is accurate and approved.
- Share messaging exactly as provided by the VFW Washington office.
- Do not rewrite, interpret or summarize the bill in your own words.
- Maintain the approved tone and position.
- Help members understand how their voice contributes to the legislative process.
- **The Auxiliary reaches people the VFW may not, like families, caregivers, educators, youth and community partners.**
- Amplification is not just about volume, it's about heart. Your voice can add emotion and connection to personal stories that highlight why these issues matter to veterans' families.
- The Auxiliary can also add a tone of appreciation and respect that strengthens relationships with lawmakers and communities.

Show of Gratitude

Each Auxiliary is encouraged to prepare its own expression of gratitude to accompany legislative efforts. Ideas include:

- Posting a thank-you message to lawmakers who support veteran issues.
- Sharing a spotlight story from a veteran or family connected to the legislation and thank a legislator that is actively supporting that piece of legislation.
- Sending handwritten or digital thank-you notes to Congressional offices.

This gratitude-forward approach strengthens relationships and reinforces the Auxiliary's unique voice in legislative advocacy.

You + Two = Amplified Advocacy: This action challenge asks you to find two new people to act and help. Go find your two and together, we amplify, we educate and we ensure legislators "Honor the Contract!"

"Veterans injured in service should
not be forced to choose which part
of their service counts.
All of it counts."

-Austin, Army Combat Medic
Afghanistan



Take action on the Major Richard Star Act and tell Congress to do right by severely injured veterans. Veterans had our backs when it mattered most. Now Congress needs to hear from us. Take action on the Major Richard Star Act and help move this bill forward.

ACTION MOVES LEGISLATION

Pass the
Major Richard Star Act



VFW TO TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS! The 2026 VFW Washington Conference will be March 1-5, 2026, in Washington, D.C. For nearly 75 years, *VFW's annual Washington Conference* has provided an opportunity for VFW Department representatives from each state to personally lobby their respective lawmakers and watch as the VFW's current Commander-in-Chief testifies on Capitol Hill before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Committees on behalf of veterans.

2026 Mid-Term Elections: Absentee voting has already begun. In-Person Early Voting Period for the March 2026 Primary Election runs Thurs., Feb. 12, 2026, 8am - Sat, Feb 28, 2026, 3pm.

You may find lists of **all** candidates running in the Primary at [Candidate lists for Primary 2026](#). Election Day is November 3, 2025. To get info and your **ballot** go to: <https://www.ncsbe.gov/> and click **Voter Search**, enter your name and info. Click on your name. In the **Primary, you must vote in your registered party's Primary**. Unaffiliated Voters may choose either Republican or Democrat Ballot.

Remember!! Report your Election activities in MALTA! That includes voting, working the polls, working as a greeter, attending Candidate Forums and Candidate events.

- How to Look Up a Bill on Congress.gov (Tip: Bookmark the page so you can check back on progress anytime!)
- Go to **www.congress.gov**. In the search bar, type the bill number or a keyword. Click on the bill title in the results list.
- Review details: Bill text and summary; Sponsor, co-sponsors and committees assigned.
- Status (Introduced, In Committee, Passed House/Senate, etc.)
- Use this info in your advocacy. Cite the bill by number in your letters and calls. Connect your personal story to the bill's purpose.
- Share updates with your Auxiliary.



Visit our Facebook Page, Dept of NC VFW Auxiliary Legislative Program to keep up with Legislative News and Action Alerts!

Contact info: Lynn Childs, 252-528-0500. Email:

lynn.ccta@gmail.com,

1476A Northside Rd, Elizabeth City, NC 27909

"In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution." —Thomas Jefferson (1798)



Membership 2025-2026

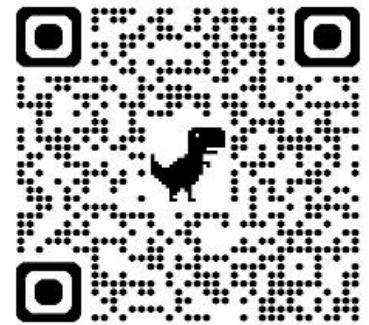
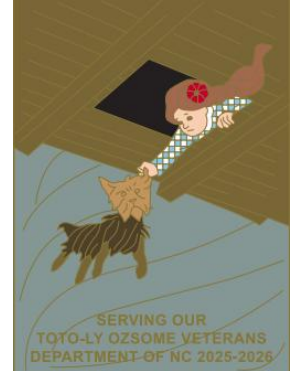
Angi Hardy 52 Monarch Ct. Cameron, NC 28326 910-322-6478

National President Lois Callahan's Theme: From Sea to Shining Sea-Honoring
Veterans Who Keep Us Free

Department Theme: Serving Our Toto-ly Oz-Some Veterans

As of January 20, 2026, the Department is at 96.08%, we need 175 members to reach 100%.

We have a responsibility to retain our current membership. Each member we have has something to contribute to our existence. Sometimes our members may experience a time in their lives where they face financial concern. When this occurs, our seasoned members may delay paying their dues or even forget. We get it, but we do not want to lose these valuable members. We can assist these members. Consider adopting this member and paying their dues.



Remember we are “The lighthouse in someone’s Storm.” Together we are the ocean, recruiting, retaining, reinstating and navigating current and future members.

Membership resources can be found on:

National Website (<https://vfwauxiliary.org>)

Department of NC Auxiliary (<https://vfwauxnc.org>)

Malta Webpage (<https://malta.vfwauxiliary.org/MemberResources>)

Angi Hardy

National Membership Ambassador Mike Maruszak

Michael-j-maruszak@outlook.com

“I Am The Ocean”

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS 2025 - 2026

National Auxiliary President Lois Callahan's theme: "From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Our Veterans Who Keep Us Free"

Department Auxiliary President Anna Holm's theme: "Serving Our Toto-ly Oz-Some Veterans"



Scholarship Chairperson: Frances Perini
106 White Cedar Ln
Hendersonville, NC 28791
feperini@prodigy.net - 401-652-0315

FEBRUARY 2026

Hi EVERYONE: Now that the holiday season has come to an end Auxiliaries need to be thinking about three things, really promoting the scholarship programs that are left (which end shortly), reporting and recognizing students that have participated in the scholarship programs. There are only a few more months before final reports have to be submitted to the chairmans. I would like to see all Auxiliaries receive all the credit that they deserve, and the only way you can receive it is if you report. **There is a National award for Auxiliaries which is a citation and \$25 to one 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 VFW Auxiliary. Entry form is required and is available in Malta member resources. Auxiliaries must send there completed entry form to Department Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging.**

REMAINING AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS:

CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP: This scholarship is available to Auxiliary members, their spouses and children. This is the only scholarship limited by membership. This is National President Lois Callahan's special project for the year. I hope that most Auxiliaries will hold a fund raiser to help support this wonderful scholarship. All monies raised will help to increase the amount of awards available. Application submission deadline is February 15, 2026. **For information, contest rules and contest entry forms go to vfw.org/scholarships/continuing-education, or to donate go to Malta member login then go to Make Gift, then press Make a Gift tab and select Continuing Education or mail a check to VFW Auxiliary National. Continuing Education Fund, 406West 34th Street, 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO. 64111, earmarked National "President's 2025-2026 Special Project."**

YOUNG AMERICAN CREATIVE PATRIOTIC ART CONTEST: This scholarship is to assist students who wish to further their education. This scholarship contest recognizes young artists and encourages patriotism in youth. Entries will be judged on the originality of concept, presentation and patriotism expressed, content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas, design technique and total impact of work. **First place- \$15,000, Second place- \$7,500, Third place- \$3,500, Fourth and Fifth place- \$1,500, Sixth and Seventh place- \$1,000, Eighth thru Nineteenth place- \$500. This contest is for students in 9 thru 12th grades. Deadline for the artwork to the Auxiliaries is March 31, 2026. For contest eligibility, contest rules and contest entry forms go to www.vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships**

3-DIMENSIONAL PATRIOTIC ART CONTEST: This scholarship is also to assist students who wish to further their education. This scholarship contest recognizes young artists and encourages patriotism in youth. Entries will be judged on the originality of concept, presentation and patriotism expressed, content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas, design technique and total impact of work. **First place- \$2,500, Second place- \$1,500, Third place-\$1,000, Fourth place- \$500. This contest is for students 9 thru 12th grades. Deadline for entries to the Auxiliaries is March 31, 2026. For contest eligibility, contest rules and contest entry forms go to www.vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships**

VFW NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

VFW'S "SPORT CLIPS HELP A HERO SCHOLARSHIP: Introduced in 2013, this VFW program awards scholarships to qualifying service members and veterans with financial assistance they need to complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt It's just another way to say "thank you" to those who fought for our freedom. **Scholarships are awarded each semester in the fall and spring. Awarded scholarships can be up to \$5000 to qualified applicants. For information visit vfw.org/assistance then press assistance at the top of the page, then press students veterans support and this will give you all information needed and how to obtain the application. Applications for the fall semester will be accepted Jan 1 through April 30. Applications for the spring semester will be accepted Aug. 1 through Nov. 15.**

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REPORT

Department of NC Special Project February 2026



President Special Project Chairman Becky Rowe
4869 Pennington Meadows Circle, Rock Hill, SC 29732
ba.rowe@sbcglobal.net 314-393-5377



Somewhere Over the Rainbow...

A Veteran is hurting...

A Veteran is confused...

A Veteran needs help...

Department of NC Special Project will help those Veterans.

Veterans Mental Health

**All funds raised will be divided between
the 4 VA Hospital's Mental Health Dept. that service North Carolina.
This means; Veterans that you know who suffers from; anxiety, depression, PTSD, and
substance use, will benefit from your donations.**

Each Auxiliary can have their own Special Project Fundraiser

Whether your Auxiliary has 20 members or 100 members, there are ways to raise money

Any size Auxiliary:

- Can ask people they know for a donation. They may know a Veteran that may benefit.
- Talk with your Commander, about passing a hat during the VFW Post Meeting.
- Make a static display for patrons of Canteen to donate.

Medium to Large Auxiliary

- During a Monthly event at your Post/Canteen, have a 50/50 raffle.
- Raffle a donated item. (quilt, gift cards, BBQ Grill etc.)

Large Auxiliary

- Host an Event to spotlight the Special Project. (Murder Mystery, Dance, Spaghetti Dinner, 5K run/walk, etc.)

"Serving our TOTO-ly OZsome Veterans"

Follow the Yellow Brick Road to the Goal!

Time to Promote and Conduct the Illustrating America Art Contest

Illustrating America Art Contest is our patriotic art contest for elementary and middle/junior high school students that encourages students' artistic abilities and rewards their hard work. It's fun to see how our youth see the world through their drawings and paintings.

IT'S TIME

to reach out to those contacts in your schools and
get the ball rolling.....

Just click [Illustrating America Art Contest](#) and print out a copy of the Contest Eligibility, Rules and Entry Form. But before you print, enter your Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary contact information, then print.

MAKE SURE YOU ARE USING THE 2025-2026 FORM!!!

The deadlines are as follows:

March 31: Student entries due to the **participating/sponsoring VFW Auxiliary** for judging.

April 15: First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary due to the **VFW Auxiliary Department** for judging. Winning entries shall be sent to:
Marge Gray - Youth Activities
419 Scenic Mountain Dr.
Sparta, NC 28675
704.902.8720

May 5: First place winner from each VFW Auxiliary Department must be received at **VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters** for judging.

REMINDER - Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed on the application if not advancing to the next level.

There are three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8, and National awards for first, second and third place in each grade division.

Veterans and Family Support

February 2026



Hello sisters and brothers of the Auxiliary. Let's talk about the VFW Pre-Discharge program and how it provides information for separating and retiring service members with expert assistance in filing for their VA benefits while they are still on active duty. Eligible service members can begin the process up to 180 days before discharge, which helps ensure a smoother transition into civilian life. VFW Pre-Discharge representatives—located on or near major military installations—guide service members through preparing and submitting claims, including disability compensation, education benefits, healthcare enrollment, and more.

This program often works hand-in-hand with the VA's Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) initiative, which is designed to speed up claims decisions for those who file before leaving active duty. All services provided by VFW representatives are offered at no cost, helping service members avoid predatory "claim sharks" and ensuring they receive the benefits they have earned. The Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Fort Bragg, NC (formerly Fort Liberty)

Rick Jones, National Pre-Discharge Claims Representative
Soldier Support Center
Wing A, Suite 100, Rm 101-B
4-2843 Normandy Dr
Fort Bragg, NC 28310
Phone: 910.990.0048
Email: richardjones@vfw.org

Camp Lejeune, NC

Dustin Watts, National Pre-Discharge Claims
Building 316 "G" Street
Camp Lejeune, NC 28547
Phone: 910.465.1314
Email: dwyatt@vfw.org

How can auxiliary members help?

- Share flyers and information at Post events.
- Post reminders on social media and in newsletters.
- Encourage families to pass the information to their loved ones still serving.

Loyally Serving,

Joe Nelson
Veterans and Family Support Chairman
(252)626-4888
Jnelson_nc@yahoo.com
#WE CAN AND WE WILL

VFW Auxiliary Dept. of NC Membership Report
 President Lin Moore 2025-26 Chairman- Angi Hardy

Date: 1.22.26

East-Wendy Doubles

District 1 Pres Mary Coatney					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
6060	Elizabeth City	255	232	175	90.98%
7312	Sunbury	23	22	17	95.65%
10950	Outer Banks	38	40	38	105.26%
TOTALS		316	294	230	93.04%

District 4 Pre.Jaymie Hayes					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
2514	New Bern	22	17	10	77.27%
7315	Havelock	205	204	184	100.98%
7547	Clinton	54	207	53	100.00%
8986	Newport	70	68	54	97.14%
9133	Jacksonville	198	191	160	96.46%
9810	Warsaw	29	25	25	86.21%
9960	Swansboro	287	285	237	99.30%
11119	West Craven	29	28	28	96.55%
TOTALS		894	875	751	97.87%

District 2 Pres. Violet Saviak					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
2615	Goldsboro	46	46	30	100.00%
2771	Kinston	18	16	10	88.89%
7032	Greenville	39	35	23	89.74%
9959	Mount Olive	51	46	33	90.20%
TOTALS		154	143	96	92.86%

District 5 Pres Deborah Crowder					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
7288	Calabash	328	325	241	99.09%
8866	Holden Beach	111	112	111	100.90%
9983	Holly Ridge	184	194	160	105.43%
10226	Oak Island	99	105	95	106.06%
10400	B Spring Lakes	81	77	48	95.06%
121966	Leland	18	19	13	105.56%
TOTALS		821	832	668	101.34%

District 3 Pres Yvonne McLeod					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
2057	Rocky Mount	70	66	54	94.29%
TOTALS		70	66	54	94.29%

District 7 Pres Wanda McCall					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
6722	Lillington	27	26	24	96.30%
7383	Cary	151	147	132	97.35%
9103	Spring Lake	106	102	94	96.23%
10225	Garner	112	109	92	97.32%
10999	Raleigh	37	37	31	100.00%
TOTALS		433	421	373	97.23%

EASTERN	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
TOTALS	2688	2631	2172	97.87%

President: Lin Moore

Chairman: Angi Hardy

Date: 1.22.26

Central - Johnnie Cox

District 6 Pres Emily Ball					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
1920	Mebane	50	49	31	98.00%
10607	Burlington	39	42	28	107.69%
TOTALS		89	91	59	102.25%

District 10 Pres Carsonia Whitmore					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
2087	Greensboro	20	20	6	100.00%
2972	Gibsonville	36	36	32	100.00%
3074	Lexington	39	39	14	100.00%
8297	Mway Monroeton	55	56	48	101.82%
TOTALS		150	151	100	100.67%

District 8 Pres Mary Zanders					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
670	Fayetteville	198	207	151	104.55%
6,018	Fayetteville	201	194	167	96.52%
10,630	Hope Mills	34	32	28	94.12%
TOTALS		433	433	346	100.00%

District 12 Pres Theresa Billips					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
3006	Salisbury	98	94	62	95.92%
6365	Locust	22	22	7	100.00%
8989	Kannapolis	120	110	62	91.67%
9134	Rockwell	22	15	12	68.18%
TOTALS		262	241	143	91.98%

District 9 Pres Angi Hardy					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
4203	Rockingham	56	60	38	98.36%
5631	Sanford	123	121	110	98.37%
7318	Southern Pines	365	359	340	98.36%
10,403	Wadesboro	43	41	27	95.35%
TOTALS		587	581	515	98.98%

CENTRAL	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
TOTALS	1521	1497	1163	98.42%

VFW Auxiliary Dept. of NC Membership Report
2025-26

President: Lin Moore

Chairman: Angi Hardy

Date: 1.22.26

Western: Becky Rowe

District 11 Pres Farres Upton					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
1119	Cooleemee	30	32	11	106.67%
5352	Kernersville	141	139	81	98.58%
7794	Elkin	34	31	15	91.18%
9010	Clemmons	57	50	46	87.72%
9436	Pilot Mountain	62	61	26	98.39%
TOTALS		324	313	179	96.60%

District 15 Pres Sherry Brooks					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
1142	N. Wilkesboro	86	83	74	96.51%
4286	Newland	37	37	24	100.00%
7031	Boone	50	39	24	78.00%
7034	Sparta	66	64	50	96.97%
7946	Jefferson	31	31	13	100.00%
TOTALS		270	254	185	94.07%

District 13 Pres Lyndsey Bowlus					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
1160	Charlotte	139	131	123	94.24%
2423	Indian Trail	111	106	101	95.50%
5464	Monroe	47	37	31	78.72%
6724	Paw Creek	40	41	31	102.50%
7775	Charlotte	21	21	20	100.00%
9337	Gastonia	68	62	29	91.18%
9736	Croft	16	13	5	81.25%
TOTALS		442	411	340	92.99%

District 16 Pres Joyce Preston					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
891	Asheville	79	77	68	97.47%
5206	Hendersonville	75	67	61	89.33%
9116	Columbus	26	26	19	100.00%
TOTALS		180	170	148	94.44%

District 14 Pres Linda Owens					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
1706	Lincolnton	86	67	48	77.91%
2031	Statesville	62	68	58	104.62%
4066	Shelby	16	16	16	100.00%
5305	Newton	32	28	16	87.50%
5362	Morganton	0	15	0	
TOTALS		196	194	138	97.49%

District 17 Pres Jan Strough					
Aux. No.	Aux. Name	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
4309	Brevard	175	154	117	88.00%
5202	Waynesville	221	160	116	72.40%
6812	Hayesville	56	55	43	98.21%
7339	Franklin	72	70	33	97.20%
TOTALS		524	439	309	83.78%

WESTERN	2024 Mbrs.	2025 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
TOTALS	1936	1781	1299	91.99%

DEPT	2025 Mbrs.	2026 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
TOTALS	6964	6802	5394	96.27%

NC At-Large	2024 Mbrs.	2025 Mbrs.	Life Mbrs.	Percent
TOTALS	816	795	760	97.43%

Needed to Reach 100 %

162