

SEPTEMBER 2023

VFW Auxiliary

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY MAGAZINE

2023-2024
NATIONAL PRESIDENT
CARLA MARTINEZ

PATRIOTIC ART
CONTEST WINNERS

ILLUSTRATING
AMERICA
WINNERS





HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT MALTA MEMBER RESOURCES RECENTLY?

[Resources](#) are up to date to help members dive into the 2023–2024 Program Year! Find the *2023–2024 National Program Book*, Member/Auxiliary Spotlight and My Veteran nomination forms, scholarships and contests information, sample speeches, award forms, Program guides, links to informational videos and more!

We hope to post the updated *2023 Podium Edition: Bylaws & Ritual* in Member Resources in October.

DATES & DEADLINES

September

National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

- SEPTEMBER 4 Labor Day
- SEPTEMBER 11 Patriot Day
- SEPTEMBER 14 Auxiliary Birthday
- SEPTEMBER 15 National Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Recognition Day
- SEPTEMBER 17 Constitution Day
- SEPTEMBER 18 Celebrating America's Freedom Event
- SEPTEMBER 24 Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day
- SEPTEMBER 29 VFW Birthday

October

- OCTOBER 9 Columbus Day
- OCTOBER 31 Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy Scholarship contest entries due to VFW Post

For more information on awards and deadlines, see the [2023–2024 National Program Book](#).

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FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®



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*Our National President is the first dual member to hold the Auxiliary's highest National office. She leads the Auxiliary with her theme of **Banding Together for Our Veterans**.*



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11 Young American Creative Patriotic Art & 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest Winners

Art was judged at National Headquarters; we displayed art from the top-12 National winners of the two-dimensional contest and the top three of the three-dimensional contest at Convention. See their patriotic expressions.



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20 Illustrating America

This art contest showcases the talent of younger students in grades K-8.



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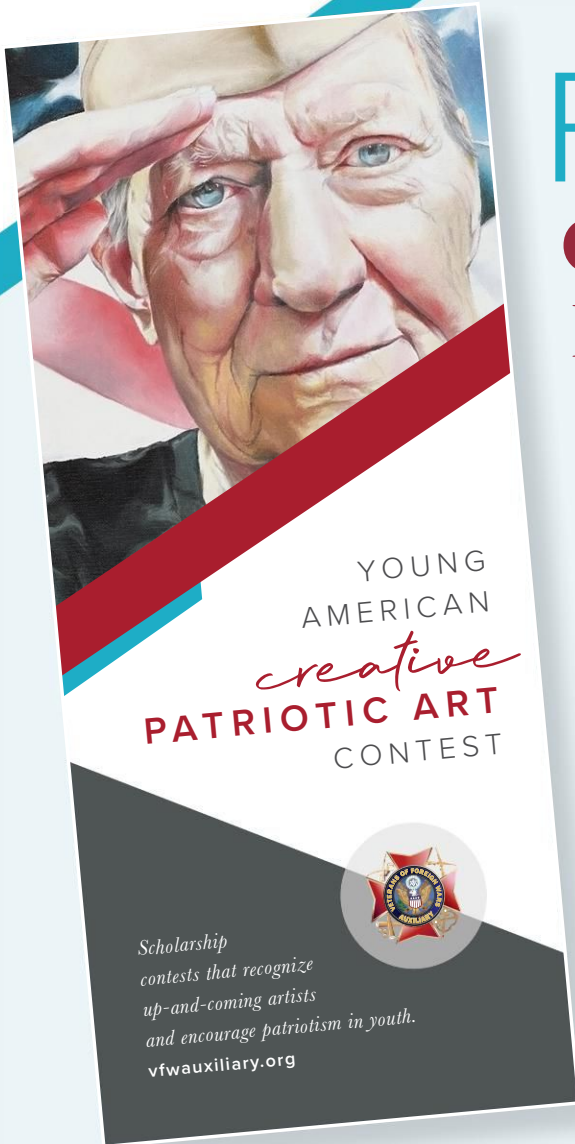
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About the Cover

About the Cover: High school junior Kayla Neale's found object eagle sculpture took first place at the National level and a \$2,500 scholarship for the Auxiliary's inaugural year of the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest. Her fabric and paper piece represents one of America's most iconic symbols, according to her essay/artist's statement, "a sizeable and majestic being similar to America..."

GET DIGITAL



REFERENCE


ONLY THE LATEST BROCHURES & FORMS

The art brochure and its accompanying forms contain changes that are new this Program Year. It is important to refer to and use only the newest forms and brochures for our scholarships and contests.

Find the scholarship and contest entry forms, brochures and brochure order forms under the [Scholarships & Contests](#) tab on our home page at vfwauxiliary.org or in MALTA Member [Resources](#). The Young American Creative Patriotic Art Brochure that also includes the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest contains many important updates, among them, new prize amounts.

You can find our new Fact Sheet that details how we contributed to our communities through our National Programs under the Join Us tab on our home page and in MALTA.


get SOCIAL

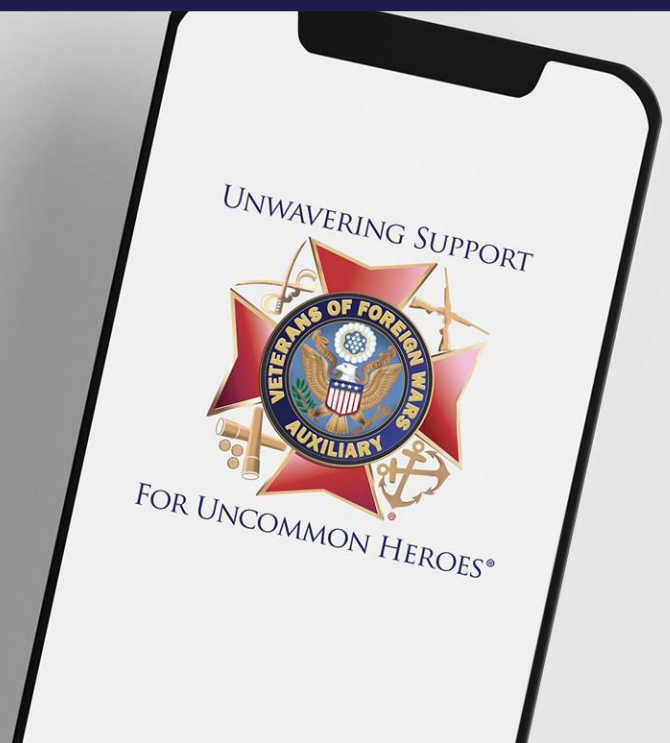
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 **Facebook**
[vfwauxiliary](#)

 **Pinterest**
[vfwauxiliary](#)

 **YouTube**
[VFW Auxiliary National Organization](#)





I feel if we band together, we can help promote suicide awareness, because one is too many.

Sisters and Brothers—

You are all so amazing. In the past five years as I have traveled around the country to your various states, I could never have imagined how many new friends I would make along the way. Your out-of-the-box thinking about how to support and honor our veterans, their families, our service members and communities make me so proud and humbled to be your National President for the 2023-2024 Program Year.

My theme is: ***Banding Together for Our Veterans***. I used this theme when I was campaigning in 2018, but it has been with me for a long time. I feel if we band together, we can help promote suicide awareness, because one is too many. There is a new three-digit suicide hotline number, 988, that anyone in need can call to get the help they need. Suicide is not only happening to our veterans who come home, but to their children as well. Sometimes our children feel they cannot cope with their parent or parents being deployed and they ultimately take their life by suicide. We need to reach out to the entire family. Let's keep this in mind every day and as we head into National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

This year, VFW National Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento and I have a joint project together to put a convenience store inside the Welcome Center at the VFW National Home. Instead of residents and visitors needing to drive 60 minutes round trip for bread, cereal, milk or just a snack at the nearest store, they will have it right there on campus. This will save them gas, money and time.

Department Presidents and Commanders, I have had the privilege of getting to know most of you over the past few years and you are all rock stars. You hit the ground running and have not looked back. When asked to work together as a team, you have done so and continue to do so. In order to be successful, you cannot do the work alone. Excited is an understatement of how I feel about getting to work alongside of you all each and every day. I, along with everyone else in our organization, are members first, and the members are the ones who will take the greatest veterans' organization into the 22nd century.

Thank you for having confidence in me by electing me as your National President. With your help we can all ***Band Together for Our Veterans*** while being ***Humble and Kind*** (our Department Presidents' motto this year.)

Respectfully and with much admiration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carla J. Martinez". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

CARLA J. MARTINEZ
National President



*It is important
that you have the
latest resources,
as scholarships
and contests
change year
to year.*

Dear members—

It was great to see many of you at National Convention in blazing-hot Phoenix! While we endured some record-breaking temps outside, it was wonderful to see business as usual inside the Convention halls: a full five days of training, celebrating achievements, goal setting, welcoming esteemed guests and more to support our mission.

You probably noticed a few firsts this year. We shared the top three National winners of the Auxiliary's newest scholarship contest, 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art, established as a special project by 2022-2023 National President Jane Reape. Look for a fourth National prize amount this Program Year.

We hope you enjoyed seeing these talented students' art in person at our Patriotic Art gallery in the exhibit hall along with top National entries from Young American Creative Patriotic Art and Illustrating America. Look for this story beginning on page 11. Now is the time to start promoting these and other Auxiliary scholarships in your communities. Be sure to do so with the latest entry forms, info. sheets and brochures, available on our website and in MALTA Member Resources. It is important that you have the latest resources, as scholarships and contests change year to year.

We had a combined VFW and Auxiliary Convention app with all the latest Convention information for both VFW and Auxiliary attendees, right in the palm of your hand. Thank you to the VFW for sharing this platform with us.

We elected our very first dual member veteran as VFW Auxiliary National President. Read about Carla Martinez's journey to our highest National office on page 9.

We look forward to seeing what you do in your communities in 2023-2024, whether it's supporting the new joint special project that will benefit the VFW National Home or the unique ways you work our National Programs. Keep us in mind and send pictures and caption information our way at info@vfwauxiliary.org to be considered for Auxiliaries in Action social media posts.

Next up will be our 11th-annual Celebrating America's Freedom Event at Golden Spike National Memorial Park where many veteran workers united the nation with the first transcontinental railroad.

This month is also National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. For us, every day is Veterans Day and we know even one death by suicide is too many. Focus on ways you can promote suicide prevention and share the VA's 988 suicide crisis line emergency number.

AMANDA COOK
Editor-In-Chief

VOLUME 87 NUMBER 1

Editor-In-Chief
Amanda Cook

Contributing Writers
Nicole Panteleakos &
Skye Melcher

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www.vfwauxiliary.org

READER'S VOICE



This is the space for comments regarding your *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*. Mail your submissions to National Headquarters or email them to info@vfwauxiliary.org, marked "Letter to the Editor." We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. The opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor should not be interpreted as the opinion of the National Organization.

Love this (cover of the May 2023 edition) picture; says so much.

WILMA BOYD VAN ORMER

*Rising Sun, Md.
District 10*

You guys never cease to amaze me with your wonderful work!

MARLENE JONES

*Dupo, Ill.
Auxiliary 7980
Millstadt*

I enjoy reading about what Auxiliaries around the country are doing for our veterans and their communities!

DENISE BECKLER

*Stratford, N.J.
Auxiliary 3020
Riverside*

I like (that you) share the artwork, tips about benefits, etc. and community and veterans activities from Auxiliaries around the country.

HARRIET FIGG

*Ellettsville, Ind.
Auxiliary 7850
Gosport*

Always informative and well-written!

BONNIE FELLAND

*Moorhead, Minn.
Auxiliary 1223
Dilworth*

I enjoy seeing what Auxiliaries and Posts are doing – ideas to help promote Programs.

BETH SANFORD

*Alvin, Texas
Auxiliary 6378
Dickinson*

I am particularly interested in exciting Program activities from around the country. I want to know what everyone else is doing!

LI'EL A. COHEN

*Toccoa, Ga.
Auxiliary 4346
Toccoa*

MEMBER

SPOTLIGHT

Mary Kay LeBourdais



Mary Kay LeBourdais, of VFW Auxiliary 1518, Gaylord, Michigan realized that Auxiliary members attend multiple military funerals throughout the year but have no active role in the

service. She then decided to make bags comprised of earthly tributes as featured in the 2023 Podium Edition for the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Polly Buchanan, another member of VFW Auxiliary 1518, said the tributes consist of a laurel wreath, a white flower, a blue flower, a small evergreen branch, a small American Flag, and a small black bag (made by the Auxiliary) with nine polished spent cartridges from the honorary gun salute.

“The small, handled paper bags are always red, white or blue,” Buchanan added. “A ribbon of the same color is tied to one handle. A VFW decal is put on the front of the bag. A typed-up notecard is included in the bag that defines each tribute as recited during the ceremony and includes the Post Commander’s name and contact information.”

After the Post Commander gives a personalized eulogy for the deceased veterans, Post members recite the Ritual script and place one of the tributes on the casket or beside the cremated remains. The blue flower is placed by an Auxiliary representative.

At the close of the ceremony, a representative collects all the tribute elements and places them in a tribute bag before presenting them to the spouse or family. A rifle team member will also present a small black bag with spent shells.

Each item in the tribute bag has symbolism, but four of them are most focused on during funeral services and Memorial Day services.

According to the 2023 Podium Edition, the American Flag represents a bond and is an emblem of liberty. White flowers are placed as a token of the purity of affection others have for their departed comrades.

Blue flowers from nature's bosom symbolize a sincere respect for all departed comrades. The wreath is placed as a token for eternity.

“Its color bespeaks life everlasting,” the Ritual states. “Thus, do we say that the deeds of military service members on land, on sea and in the air are immortalized in the hearts of a grateful people.”

“The tribute bag is a wonderful way to end our impressive memorial funeral service for our local veterans,” Buchanan said.

Outside of the tribute bags, LeBourdais does more to support veterans in their families in Gaylord.

“Mary Kay got the idea for our Post to join this national program (Wreaths Across America) of putting a wreath on veterans’ graves every December,” Buchanan added.

LeBourdais also plans free lunches for veterans on Veterans Day, gets involved with local Eagle Scout projects, walks in almost every parade, arranges Poppy distributions, rings a bell for the Salvation Army and plans free movie nights for veterans and their families.

★ SM



ABOVE: LeBourdais wears Minnie Mouse ears as she makes popcorn during one of the family movie nights she planned for veterans and their families

LEFT: In 2015, a Michigan Auxiliary Life Member wanted to give departed service members a lasting remembrance of the ceremony outside of the traditional American Flag laid across their casket. Thus began the earthly tribute bags that are used at the conclusion of dozens of military funerals hosted by the VFW Post.

SPECIAL JOINT PROJECT UPDATE



At the VFW National Home campus, the Welcome Center is the first stop along the way to new beginnings.

“We want residents, guests and visitors to feel welcome when they arrive and while they’re on our campus,” said Mike Wilson, VFW National Home Executive Director.

Members’ donations to a combined special project of VFW Auxiliary National President Carla Martinez and VFW Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento this Program Year will help transform the space.

“By converting the current administration lobby into the Welcome Center, we will be able to bring more support to the families on campus,” Wilson said. “Because we are miles from town, there is little support when it comes to basic food and beverage needs. The retail space in the welcome center will be a space where residents can get simple things like bread, milk and microwavable dinner choices that are conducive to feeding a family on a limited budget and time constraint. In the meantime, our clothing and souvenir space in the Welcome Center will be more convenient for our visitors and guests, and more accessible for all visitors.”

For nearly 100 years, the National Home has helped military and veteran families who need a fresh start. Families can live there rent-free for up to four years and

have access to professional case management services, on-site licensed child care, life skills training, tutoring and other educational services as well as recreational and community service opportunities. Families find healing in a safe and peaceful environment of tree-lined streets, 42 single-family homes, facilities such as a gym, library, computer and science labs, day care center, playgrounds, fishing pond, hiking trails and more.

“We are thankful for the VFW Auxiliary and Carla for supporting us throughout the years,” Wilson said. “This new Welcome Center will be a game changer in how we support the families within our community. This project is part of our mission to provide a positive, safe and healthy environment for our residents to achieve their personal and family goals.”

Members may donate to this project in [MALTA](#) by selecting Make a Gift, National President’s Special Project.

Checks can be made payable/sent to:

VFW National Home
3573 S. Waverly Rd. Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Reference “Welcome Center Renovation Project”

Or go to: vfnationalhome.org/donate. In comments section type: “Welcome Center Renovation Project” 🌟 AC

ABOVE: Families from the National Home enjoy an Easter Treat event sponsored by the Military Order of the Cootie.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

CARLA MARTINEZ

Banding Together

FOR OUR VETERANS



U.S. Navy
veteran
Carla Martinez
brings an
unprecedented facet
to new her role as VFW
Auxiliary National President.

She is the organization's very first dual member to hold this position as of July 27 when members elected her at its 110th National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

Martinez, who was born in South Carolina and moved with her family where her father's U.S. Air Force career led them, calls Utah home. A VFW Gold Legacy Life Member, she served in the military for 13 months in Korea as a cryptologist, and is surrounded by a family of veterans and service members; her father-in-law, husband/"submarine hero" Stan and son have all served their country.

Growing up, she said, her father, Harry Creel, was her hero and she credits him with inspiring her Auxiliary journey.

"I wanted to make him proud of me," she said. "I loved seeing the comradery between everyone and even though the children had extracurricular activities, we still managed to go to the Post home and do family events with the VFW and Auxiliary."

She fondly recalls joining Post and Auxiliary members in parades, on long weekends and at the lake for family fishing trips filled with fun, music and togetherness.

"We would fish, swim, play games and dance to music; we would all play together and meet new kids instead of sitting at home watching television. We helped with breakfast on Sundays. This was very much a second family to everyone."

Martinez, a Life Member of Lt. Clarence E. Allen Auxiliary 409 in Salt Lake City, joined the Auxiliary in 1982.

"At that time, I was like others working but my job was in the military and I had to travel a lot around the world. I started a family which made my life even busier. Like a lot of young people, I used to say I don't have the time, but as the years went by, I realized what was important is family and the VFW and Auxiliary are family."

Another chapter in Martinez' professional life was helping those with catastrophic work-related injuries; she retired from WFC Insurance after more than two decades with them.

As VFW Auxiliary National President, Martinez hopes to bring more attention to suicide prevention awareness and the latest Veterans Crisis Line three-digit number 988 (then press 1) as she traverses the nation. This new number, launched in the summer of 2022, is easier to remember and share and easier for those in need to access. While she requests no monetary support of suicide prevention, one of her projects, she does ask that members support awareness via the Auxiliary's Veterans & Family Support National Program.



“The thing I am looking forward to the most is bringing more attention to suicide awareness and the new 988 number that individuals can use instead of having to remember a long number and then wait on hold to get help. Because I get the opportunity to go to each state, I can personally thank everyone for everything they do. I want to encourage, along with our VFW Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento, teamwork between the VFW and Auxiliary, as we are a team.”

That sense of VFW and Auxiliary teamwork lends itself to her theme of *Banding Together for Our Veterans*.

“If we virtually link our arms together across the world we can be united for our veterans,” she said.

Beyond suicide prevention awareness, Martinez and Sarmiento have a joint special project to raise funds for a VFW National Home Welcome Center renovation project that will include an on-campus (rather than a store that takes 30 minutes each way to reach) retail space that will save residents time and money when it comes to purchasing essentials like bread and milk. Read more about this on page 9.

Additionally, Martinez said, “I truly feel the Auxiliary is the backbone of the VFW. We get to work some wonderful Programs that help our veterans and their families. We go out in our communities and work with the VFW to help the homeless. We help to beautify our



neighborhoods and cities. I get to go to the VA hospital and work bingo... and in the dental clinic to get the patients the care they need.”

On a personal note, Martinez is the first in her family to attend college and she has a master’s degree in criminal law. She and Stan are proud grandparents; her son and daughter-in-law have four children ages 5-15. When not tasked with the responsibilities of taking the helm as the Auxiliary’s top National Officer, you’ll find her doing some of the things she loves, like volunteering at her area VA hospital, recruiting and mentoring members or bowling or swimming. ✨ AC

TOP: Martinez with Post 8307 and 1695 members gather for the Veterans Day parade in Layton, Utah. **BELOW:** Martinez, pictured at Commander Naval Security Group in Virginia, is awarded a Good Conduct Medal and Letter of Commendation in 1985, five weeks before the birth of her son.

YOUNG AMERICAN *creative*
2022-2023 PATRIOTIC ART CONTEST WINNERS



FIRST PLACE
\$15,000 Scholarship

Department of Virginia

*Raising Future Leaders Through
the Eyes of a Warrior*

Medium: Pencil

Artist: **ALICE BARRON**

11th Grade | Homeschool

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 1503 | Dale City, Virginia

SECOND PLACE

\$7,500 Scholarship

Department of Missouri

My Brother's Honor

Medium: Coffee

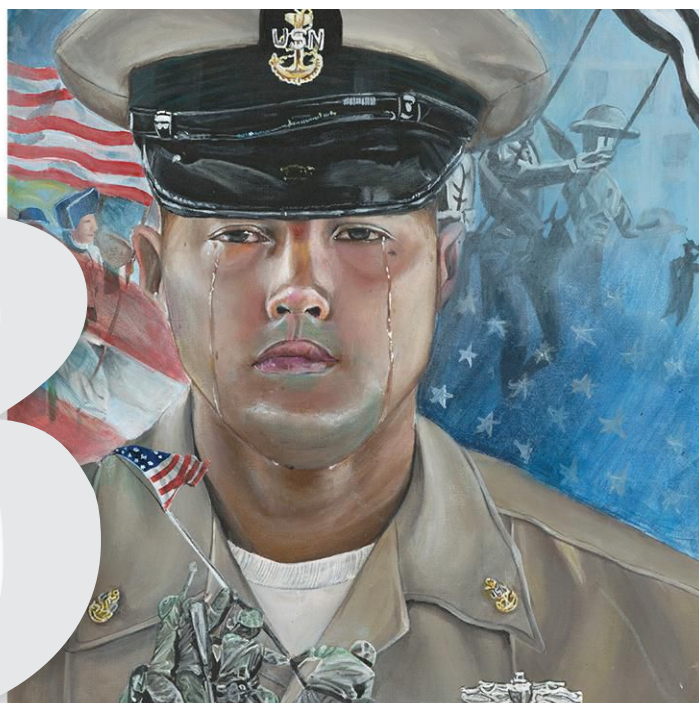
Artist: **LILLY BONE**

12th Grade | Sikeston High School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 3174 | Sikeston, Missouri





THIRD PLACE

\$3,500 Scholarship

Department of Arizona

Victory

Medium: Acrylic

Artist: **SARA ZHENG**

9th Grade | Gilbert Classical Academy

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 1433 | Glendale, Arizona

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FOURTH PLACE

\$1,500

Jane Reape Department of
New York Scholarship

Department of California

Solemn Loss

Medium: Acrylic

Artist: **GENEVA DAGNALL**

12th Grade | Hemet High School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 2266 | San Jacinto, California



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FIFTH PLACE

\$1,500

Sandy Germany Department
of Alabama Scholarship

Department of Georgia

Williams' Girl

Medium: Acrylic

Artist: **SOPHIA SUN**

12th Grade | Johns Creek
High School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 9143 | Cumming,
Georgia

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SIXTH PLACE

\$1,000

Evelyn McCune Department
of Kansas Scholarship

Department of Florida

Duty, Loyalty and Honor

Medium: Colored Pencil

Artist: **KATHIA FRATICELLI**

12th Grade | Harrison School
for the Arts

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 4289 | Winter Haven, Florida



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SEVENTH PLACE

\$1,000 M. Blanche Child
Department of Kansas Auxiliary
1650 Scholarship

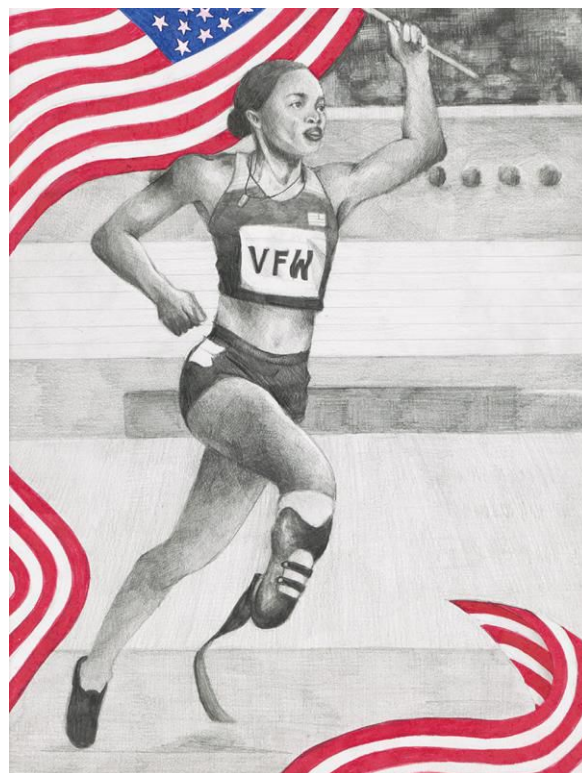
Department of Iowa
Powerful Patriotism

Media: Pencil, Colored Pencil
and Acrylic

Artist: ELIZABETH JORDAN

12th Grade | Sioux City North
High School

Sponsored by
VFW Auxiliary 9127 | Des Moines, Iowa



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EIGHTH PLACE

\$500 Jean Hamil Department
of Florida Scholarship

Department of Indiana
Look Up to Your Heroes

Medium: Acrylic

Artist: SHELIA HERNÁNDEZ

12th Grade | Lawrence Central High School

Sponsored by
VFW Auxiliary 261 | Lawrence, Indiana

NINTH PLACE
\$500

**Department of Florida VFW Auxiliary
Scholarship**

**Department of
Pennsylvania**

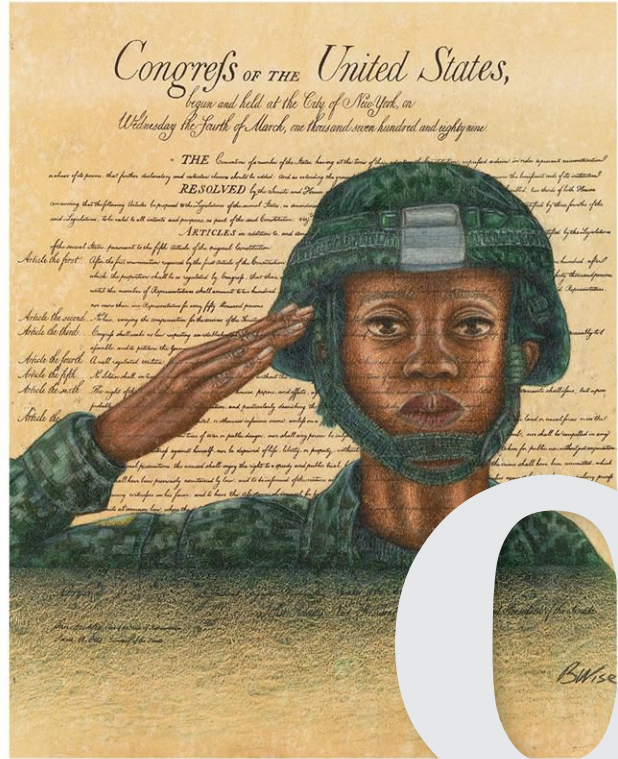
The Power of One

Medium: Colored Pencil

Artist: BROOKE WISE

12th Grade | Conneaut Area Senior High

Sponsored by
VFW Auxiliary 7842 | Linesville,
Pennsylvania



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TENTH PLACE
\$500 Betty Morris
**Department of Maryland
Scholarship**

Department of Massachusetts

Thank You

Medium: Pen

Artist: MARIELLE BARRIOS

12th Grade | North Andover High School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 8164 | Tewksbury,
Massachusetts

ELEVENTH PLACE

\$500 Juanita Crowe-Durbino
Department of Tennessee
Scholarship

Department of Maryland

The Storyteller

Medium: Acrylic

Artist: **PIPER
STANKIEWICZ**

12th Grade | South Carroll
High School

Sponsored by
VFW Auxiliary 10076 | Mount Airy,
Maryland



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TWELFTH PLACE

\$500

Lorraine Frier Department
of North Dakota
Scholarship

Department of West Virginia

Life, Liberty, Prosperity

Medium: Oil Paint

Artist: **CAPRI HARMON**

12th Grade | Fairmont Senior High School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 629 | Fairmont, West Virginia

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congratulations

to 13th-place National winner **KADY TOOLE** of Kansas for her work, *Welcome Home*, created with marker and colored pencil. Auxiliary 7515 in Clyde, Kansas sponsored her.

Note: As we increase the number of scholarships, we are limited to featuring the top 12 in the magazine. To see current and past National winners, [click here](#).

3-DIMENSIONAL PATRIOTIC ART WINNERS



FIRST PLACE

\$2,500 Scholarship

Found Object Eagle Sculpture

Department of New York

Media: Fabric and Paper

Artist: **KAYLA NEALE**

11th Grade

Holley Central School District

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 202 | Holley, New York



SECOND PLACE

\$1,000 Scholarship

Winds of War

Department of Iowa

Media: Book Art and Cardboard

Artist: **WESLEE BARNETT**

12th Grade | Storm Lake High School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 6172 | Alta, Iowa

3



THIRD PLACE

\$500 Scholarship

Breaking Through

Department of Louisiana

Medium: Glass

Artist: **EMMA JORDEN**

11th Grade | Northlake Christian School

Sponsored by

VFW Auxiliary 8720 | Abita Springs, Louisiana



V F W

NATIONAL HOME
FOR CHILDREN

**ANNUAL LIFE MEMBER MEETING, OCTOBER 28, 2023
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS NATIONAL HOME
EATON RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**

The VFW National Home's Annual Meeting of the Corporation will be held in Eaton Rapids, Michigan at 9 a.m. (EDT), on October 28, 2023 in accordance with the VFW National Home Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, Bylaw Article 1, Section 5.

PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to certify the election of two trustees elected by the membership. Elections will take place for open positions in National Home District 9 and National Home District 12 for six-year terms, both ending October 2029.

ELECTION BALLOTS

District 9 includes Minnesota, Nebraska, North and South Dakota
District 12 includes California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

For more information, contact: Lynn Bloomer, Chief of Staff
3573 South Waverly Rd. Eaton Rapids, MI 48827
(517) 663-7023 or lbloomer@vfnationalhome.org

THANK YOU

We'd like to extend a huge thank you to artists who generously donated their time and expertise to help us recognize so many talented students this year! Our judges for Young American Creative Patriotic Art, 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art and Illustrating America contests include:

• **ANITA EASTERWOOD,**

a nationally-recognized visual artist based in Kansas City whose work has been featured in "The New York Times." She's currently completing her artist in residency at InterUrban ArtHouse in Overland Park, Kansas. Find her work [here](#).

• **MARY WILKENS AND SANDRA**

SANCHEZ of the KC Northland Art League. Wilkens is an artist and spent two decades teaching art to elementary students; one of her current areas of focus is film. Sanchez has experience with a variety of media including drawing and painting, stained glass, face painting and more. She's currently working on a pastel portal. Find more about KC Northland Art League [here](#).

• **MAREK GLINIECKI** is involved with Roeland Park Arts Advisory Committee. Read about them [here](#).

• **MARISSA SHELL** teaches at the University of Kansas and Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design. She, too, is affiliated with InterUrban ArtHouse and has a gallery in Overland Park, Kansas. See more about this mixed media/3-D artist [here](#).

• We'd also like to thank our VFW partners

LYNN W. ROLF III AND NICK LOPEZ with VFW Programs.

TO LEARN MORE

about VFW Auxiliary scholarships and contests, including new prize amounts, and to find our new Patriotic Art brochure, visit our National website or see Scholarships and Youth Activities in [MALTA Member Resources](#).

2022-2023 ILLUSTRATING AMERICA ART CONTEST NATIONAL WINNERS

GRADES K-2



FIRST PLACE
NICHOLAS F.
1st Grade
Department of Indiana
Medium: Acrylic Paint
Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 1282
New Castle, Indiana

GRADES 3-5



FIRST PLACE
DELIA J.
5th Grade
Department of Minnesota
Medium: Acrylic Paint
Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 1782
White Bear Lake, Minnesota



SECOND PLACE
CARTER W.
1st Grade
Department of Wisconsin
Medium: Acrylic Paint
Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 1038
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin



SECOND PLACE
LILA B.
5th Grade
Department of Texas
Medium: Acrylic Paint
Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 8560
Sulphur Springs, Texas



THIRD PLACE
AVERY K.
1st Grade
Department of Minnesota
Medium: Colored Pencil
Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 7902
Osakis, Minnesota



THIRD PLACE
CADE W.
4th Grade
Department of Georgia
Medium: Colored Pencil
Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 2667
Newnan, Georgia

GRADES 6-8



FIRST PLACE
AILIS Z.
6th Grade

Department of Arizona
Medium: Acrylic Paint

Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 7968
Apache Junction, Arizona



SECOND PLACE
ADIN H.
8th Grade

Department of Montana
Medium: Paint

Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 5652
Ronan, Montana



THIRD PLACE
CALI ANN F.
7th Grade

Department of Indiana
Medium: Charcoal

Sponsored by: VFW Auxiliary 1925
Seymour, Indiana

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



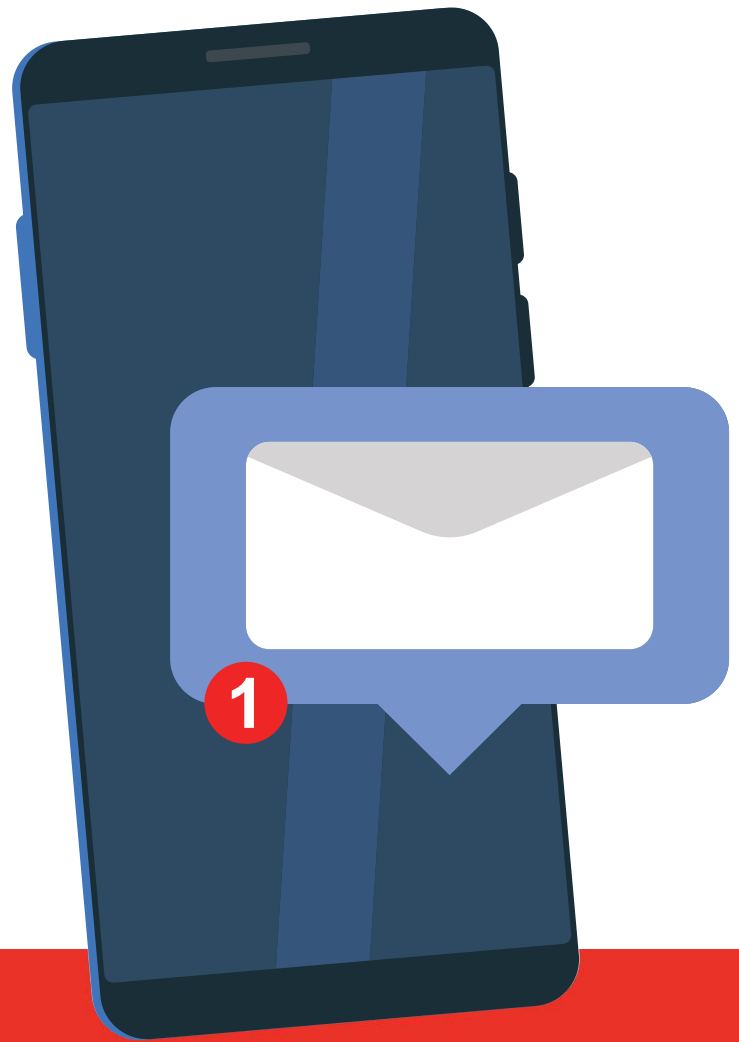
What is your Auxiliary doing that is truly changing the lives of veterans, service members, their families and communities for the better? Are you working on something that you haven't heard of another Auxiliary doing?

We're also always looking for Member Spotlight and My Veteran content as well as great vintage photos (2000 and earlier) for Our History. Note: See [MALTA Member Resources](#), Miscellaneous for nomination forms for Member/Auxiliary Spotlights and My Veterans. We need submissions accompanied by these forms. That way, we have the information we need to see if we can develop your idea into a story.

If you believe your idea could touch the lives of others and improve our organization, we may want to share it with more than 450,000 of your fellow members in an upcoming issue of *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*.

Don't feel like you have to handle the writing; share your thoughts with us and if it is something we can pursue, we'll turn it into a story. Some ideas are best-suited for the magazine, while others work better for our other communications outlets, like Facebook or the E-Newsletter.

Send ideas to info@vfwauxiliary.org with "Magazine idea" in the subject line or address mail to "Letter to the Editor – Magazine Idea" at 406 W. 34th St., 10th Fl., Kansas City, MO 64111.



PLEASE NOTE: We do not publish articles/photos featuring routine business (installations, for example), nor can we print milestone anniversaries or birthdays (with so many members, if we published one, we would have to publish all, and there is not room for this content in our 24-page publication.) Creative writing and poetry submissions will not be considered.

Our HISTORY

PROTECTING VETERANS' BENEFITS FOR MORE THAN 80 YEARS

In the early-to-mid 1940s, coverage of the war dominated the airwaves and newspapers not only across the country, but across the world, including in the pages of the *VFW Auxiliary Bulletin*.

This publication was a precursor to *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*, a periodical with few photos or ads and an abundance of information for members of what was then the Ladies Auxiliary to the VFW. It included prewritten speeches to be given at public events, updates about Programs and ideas for how to honor veterans on holidays, what sort of care packages to send those fighting overseas and suggestions of ways to help the families of currently serving soldiers.

One of these was to get involved in Legislation.

"Women Must Aid Fight to Protect Veteran Benefits," reads one headline in the November, 1942 issue. "One of the most important bills concerning veterans' welfare is... the War Widows' and Orphans' Pensions Bill." The bill, which was sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, had recently been passed by the House of Representatives and was headed to the Senate Finance Committee; its success was crucial to the well-being of Gold Star families, some of whom had lost their spouses or parents recently, and others who had been struggling since World War I, which ended only 14 years prior. *"Letters to your Senators and Representatives will hasten action upon this bill. Unless it is acted upon before the close of this session, the bill will expire, and this will necessitate introduction of further legislation with subsequent loss of time."* For those widows and children suffering financial damage in addition to grieving their loved one, there was no time to lose.

Additionally, the article urged Auxiliary members to fight for the rights of members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, as members were able to be deployed to war zones

at risk of their lives, but were not eligible to purchase the National Service Life Insurance available to Army soldiers, and were turned down for private life insurance policies because of their likely future deployment. This was in reference to a bill sponsored by Congresswoman Edith Norse Rogers, who was instrumental in the creation of the Women's Army Corps. The intention was to ensure equality, care and consideration for these brave women and their families.



"Write to your Congressmen," the unnamed writer of the article urged.

Eighty years later, the VFW, with considerable support from the VFW Auxiliary, was instrumental in the passing of the PACT Act, drafted to protect and aide veterans and families affected by toxins during training and service, including, but not limited to, those who suffered from cancers, respiratory illnesses, birth defects and even death as a result of burn pits in Iraq, poisoned water at Camp Lejeune and more.

Legislative involvement is just as important for VFW Auxiliary members in 2023 as it was in 1942, as we help ensure that our service members, veterans and their families get the help and

benefits they deserve. We amplify and uplift their voices, and make sure they are heard by our representatives both local and on a national level, as we "honor the dead by helping the living." ✨ NP

To get involved, reach out to your Legislative Chairmen at all levels and sign up for [VFW Action Corps Weekly](#).

ABOVE: Petitions pour in to National Headquarters during the 1970s to request the humane treatment and release of U.S. Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia. **Source:** *75 Years of Our History*.



NEW

NEW

Ladies'

Men's

NEW! BLUE/WHITE AUXILIARY POLOS

- 88/12 polyester/elastane
- UPF 50 sun protection
- Four-way stretch
- Moisture wicking
- Side vents
- Men's three-button placket
- Ladies' V-neck placket
- VFW Auxiliary embroidered in white on left chest
- **No additional embroidery available**
- **Ladies' runs small**
- Imported; decorated in the USA

7923 Ladies' S-3XL \$55.00 (runs small)
7924 Men's S-4XL \$55.00



NEW! PONYTAIL CAP 100% cotton. Unstructured, six-panel, low profile. Makeup resistant, breathable wicking sweatband. Antique brass tri-glide buckle closure. Concealed ponytail opening. 7156 \$20.00



NEW

NEW! PATRIOTIC LUGGAGE TAG

Includes clear plastic sheet, address card, and strap. 4½" x 2½" x ¼". 1074 \$8.00



NEW



NEW! SUNSHADE Blue with silver lettering. Twists into carry pouch. Polyester. 60" x 28". Made in USA. 1234 \$12.95

NEW



NEW! PONYTAIL CAP Elastic criss-cross ponytail opening. 100% polyester with leather US Flag patch. With "Est. 1899" on red tag. Adjustable hook-and-loop back strap. Imported. 7154 \$16.95



NEW! RED AND BLACK CAP Cotton twill, structured, medium profile, six-panel cap with white sandwich bill. Embroidered with VFW Auxiliary. Hook-and-loop back strap. Imported. 7197 \$16.95



NEW

NEW



NEW! AUXILIARY MEMBER AND MILITARY VETERAN PIN 7/8". Rubber back. 1709 \$6.00