

Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary
Department of New Jersey

Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to thank the members of this Department for their confidence and me in running this Department of New Jersey I'm looking forward in serving with all of you and helping me with my dreams and vision that I believe in this organization. My vision is to reach out to all members and thank them and let them know how you are highly appreciated for all the work you have done for this organization.

Congratulations to all our outgoing officers for their dedicated service. Also I would like to congratulate all newly elected and appointed officers as they take on the new leadership roles.

On July 4 2026, our nation commemorates and celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence their journey towards this historical milestone is an opportunity to pause and reflect on our nations pass by honoring the contribution of all Americans as we look ahead to the future, we want to create for the next generation challenge yourself by volunteering in your communities join us to help make this ensuing 2026-2027 in setting records in volunteering for our veterans and community

My theme " is Rocking For Our Veterans and his Family

Let's Rock the membership together

Camilla Albano
Department President
2026-2027

"BUDDY" POPPY PROGRAM

Sandy Reed
11 Darwin Road
Old Bridge, NJ 08857

san728@gmail.com

The Buddy Poppy is more than just a flower—it is a symbol of sacrifice, service, and remembrance. Worn proudly by Americans for more than a century, the Buddy Poppy honors the men and women who have served our nation in uniform and remembers those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.

Every Buddy Poppy distributed by the VFW and VFW Auxiliary represents an opportunity to educate our communities about the true cost of freedom. The funds received from Buddy Poppy donations remain dedicated to supporting veterans, active-duty service members, and their families through relief programs, veteran assistance, and patriotic initiatives.

As members of the VFW Auxiliary, we play a vital role in promoting Buddy Poppy and sharing its story. Whether staffing a distribution table, speaking at a school, participating in community events, or simply wearing a Buddy Poppy ourselves, we help keep alive the memory of those who served before us.

I encourage every Auxiliary member to embrace this program, seek new opportunities for distribution, and educate others about the significance of this iconic red flower. Together, we can ensure that the legacy of the Buddy Poppy continues to bloom in the hearts of Americans for generations to come.

- Remind volunteers that they are not "selling" Poppies but distributing them with the hope of getting donations.
- Donations collected during the "Buddy" Poppy distribution will be allocated to the Relief Fund per our Bylaws.
- "Buddy" Poppy Display Contest will take place at our State Convention in Wildwood 2027.
- To order Poppies,
<https://checkout.square.site/buy/UQRPIDCPOW7SXGGFS5K5KKVM>
Poppies will be sent to the post Quartermaster.



NATIONAL HOME

Sandy Reed
11 Darwin Road
Old Bridge, NJ 08857
San728@gmail.com

The VFW National Home is one of the most meaningful programs supported by the VFW Auxiliary. For over 100 years, it has provided help, hope, and opportunity to military and veteran families facing life's challenges.

VFW National Home Facts

- The VFW National Home was founded in 1925 by the VFW as a place of care and support for the families of veterans.
- The National Home is in Eaton Rapids, on a campus of approximately 629 acres.
- The original mission was to provide a home for the widows and children of veterans who had lost a parent through war or service-related circumstances.
- Today, the National Home's mission has expanded to assist military and veteran families facing a variety of challenges, including financial hardship, family crises, and transitions to civilian life.
- Families who qualify can receive assistance through both on-campus residency programs and nationwide support services.
- The National Home provides resources such as:
 - Housing assistance
 - Educational support
 - Childcare assistance
 - Life-skills training
 - Case management services
 - Financial planning assistance
- The campus includes family homes, recreational facilities, a community center, playgrounds, and educational resources designed to create a supportive environment for families.
- One of the best-known symbols is the Lighthouse, which represents guidance, safety, and hope for military and veteran families.
- Every VFW Auxiliary member contributes to the National Home through annual program support and fundraising efforts.
- The National Home's Helpline connects military and veteran families with resources and support, even if they never live on the campus.

Special Project

July 2026

Alice Sandman

176 Patty Bowker Rd.

Tabernacle, NJ 08088

(609) 268-1556 (home) (609) 456 - 1774

amsandman0204@gmail.com

Department of New Jersey

Rocking For Our Veterans and Their Families

New Jersey Special Projects

Vet Haven South

Department President Camilla Albano has chosen Vet Haven South as one of her Special Projects. As many of you know, Vet Haven South has no cook in the kitchen. The hospital supplies its meals on the same property.

We are working hard to purchase a food truck kitchen and equip it with the supplies needed for cooking, etc.

Please send donations to Department Treasurer Paula Pinto, earmarked for Veterans Haven South.

New Jersey Veterans Assistance Program

The second project, the New Jersey Veterans Assistance Program, will be a Joint Project with the VFW. The Veterans Assistance Program was established to help Veterans with unexpected expenses that may come up in their lives, such as a car payment, utility bills, etc. Monies will be paid directly to the company requesting payment up to \$599.

Donations should be sent to Department Treasurer Paula Pinto, earmarked Veterans Assistance Program.

Pin money should be sent to the Department Treasurer for the Special Projects. The Rocking Horse pin will be collected and split between Department President Camilla Albano's two Special Projects.

Cancer

July 2026

Alice Sandman

176 Patty Bowker Rd

Tabernacle, NJ 08088

(609) 268 – 1556

(609) 456 – 1775

amsandman0204@gmail.com

MD Anderson Cooper Cancer Center is the elite Cancer Center in South Jersey.

They use a multi-disciplinary team approach in treating all kinds of Cancers.

Cancer Awareness for July is Leiomyosarcoma (Uterine Cancer)

Sarcoma; Sarcoma/Bone Cancer and Blood Cancer. It is also Ultra Violet Safety Awareness.

Department President Camilla Albano has chosen for her Cancer Project: Prostate Cancer and Colon Cancer.

Cancer pins are the blue ribbon pins.

Donations may be sent to Department Treasurer Paula Pinto, earmarked Cancer Project.

As the year continues, I will be informing you on the different warning signs and awareness of many Cancer types.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY
Department Chief of Staff

Extension & Revitalization
2026-2027

Cecelia Watkins
118 Ivy Lane
Pine Hill, NJ 08021

856-343-8193
cece51@comcast.net

July Promotion 2026

As the new year and new officers about to take their places in working together to continue to work for our veterans and the great service organization, Joining the ranks as your new Department Chief of Staff as your extension and Revitalization chairman is an honor. As you know we have inherited our freedom from those who were willing to make the greatest sacrifices for all of us. When our veterans signed on the dotted line as our auxiliary members sign on the dotted line to provide assistance to our veterans and his family, along with the community help. Being choose to be your Department Chief of Staff I will do what I can do to assist your auxiliary to make sure that each and every auxiliary stay in the Green Zone and use as many tools resources tp help keep each auxiliary running and in good working order.

- Mentoring is building for the future. By doing mentoring for your auxiliary is important part in maintaning a healthy auxiliary. Being a mentor of your auxiliary didn't come easy. Somewhere in joining you were taken under the wings of an member to show you the ins and out. Now its time to guide new members by mentoring them so they won't disappeared and keep them coming back for wonderful things the auxiliary has to offer. The guide is to maintain members and encourage younger members to join, and the important part of Extension is making sure we

help ailing Auxiliaries solve their problems and restore them back in good working order.

Our biggest Teams are our VETERANS. Let's make a Touchdown and making our goal is to keep Auxiliaries out the Red Zone.



VFW Auxiliary Legislative Department Promotion

Victoria L. Hendrix, Legislative Chairperson

Phone: 856-577-1314.....**Email:** legal.vhendrix@gmail.com

Standing Strong for Veterans Through Legislation

Our Legislative Program is the heartbeat of advocacy within the VFW Auxiliary. Legislation is more than policy — it is the **active defense of veterans' rights**, the **protection of earned benefits**, and the **continued fight for those who fought for us**. As members, we carry the responsibility of ensuring lawmakers hear the voices of our veterans, caregivers, and military families.

Each year, our Auxiliaries proudly represent the VFW during **two major visits to our State Capitol**, in Washington, DC, where we speak directly with Legislators about:

- **Veterans' compensation**
- **Healthcare access**
- **Mental health support**
- **Benefits modernization**
- **Recognition of service and sacrifice**

These visits are powerful reminders that our advocacy matters — and that our veterans depend on us to champion their needs with strength, dignity, and persistence. We also represent them by encouraging members to contact legislators, submit testimonies, and participate in action alerts.

An Exciting Legislative Year Ahead

This year promises to be one of the most engaging and impactful yet. Our department will highlight and celebrate key **Legislative and Patriotic Holidays**, including:

- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- **Presidents' Day**
- **Vietnam Veterans Day**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Flag Day**
- **Independence Day**
- **Patriot Day**
- **Veterans Day**
- **Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**

Each observance is an opportunity to educate, advocate, and inspire our communities to stand united behind those who served.

Why Legislative Participation Matters

Every Auxiliary member has the power to influence change. Whether you:

- Contact your representatives,
- Share legislative alerts,
- Attend Capitol visits,
- Or help educate your community...

...you are strengthening the foundation of veterans' advocacy.

Your voice is a force multiplier — and together, we ensure no veteran is ever forgotten.

Legislative Participation Contest

To encourage engagement, all Auxiliaries are invited to participate in this year's Legislative Contest. Members should answer the following questions based on their involvement:

1. **Which current legislative issue** do you believe most impacts veterans today, and why?
2. **Did you contact your legislator** this year regarding a veterans' bill or policy?
3. **Which legislative holiday(s)** did your Auxiliary recognize, and how did you participate?
4. **What action did you take** to support the VFW's national or state legislative priorities?
5. **Why is legislative advocacy** essential to the mission of the VFW Auxiliary?
6. **Did your Auxiliary attend either of the Legislative visits to Washington, DC?**

Contest Prizes

Prizes will be awarded for **1st, 2nd, and 3rd place**, based on:

- Quality and completeness of contest question responses
- Proof of legislative participation
- Presentation and organization of the submission folder

Submission Requirements

All entries **must be submitted in a two-pocket folder** and include:

- A printed copy of the contest questions
- Your written answers
- Proof of participation (photos, letters, emails, event flyers, meeting notes, etc.)
- **Only two pages (front and back)** of supporting documentation — no more than **four printed sides total**

This ensures fairness, consistency, and clarity in judging.

Legislative Quote

"The price of freedom is eternal vigilance."

This quote reminds us that freedom is not self-sustaining — it requires constant guardianship, and we proudly accept that duty on behalf of our veterans.

♥ **Together, We Advocate. Together, We Serve.**

Thank you for your dedication to the Legislative Program. With your participation, this year will be one of progress, purpose, and powerful advocacy for those who have sacrificed so much for our continued freedom.

Don't forget to take action, take pictures, and take time to document what your Auxiliaries are doing, and make your voices heard.

With sincere love & dedication,
Victoria L Hendrix
Legislative Chairperson



DEPARTMENT OF NEW JERSEY AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

\$35 for Auxiliaries that reach 80% by August 31, 2026

\$50 for Auxiliaries that reach 95% by October 30, 2026

\$100 for Auxiliaries that reach 100% by December 31, 2026

\$150 for Auxiliaries that reach 104% by March 31, 2027

DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR DISTRICTS

\$75 for Districts that reach 100% by December 31, 2026

One drawing of \$100 for Districts that reach 100% by April 30, 2027

Fall and Spring Conference Auxiliary Drawings:

Three (3) \$50 drawings for Auxiliaries that reach 90% in membership by the week before Fall Conference 2026!

Three (3) \$50 drawings for Auxiliaries that reach 100% in membership by the week before Spring Conference 2027!

Individual Member Awards:

Just One Card Drawings

One (1) \$25 drawing to the recruiter who threw a new member into the Team: Fall Conference

One (1) \$25 drawing to the recruiter who threw a new member into the Team: Spring Conference

One (1) \$25 drawing to the individual who threw a new member into the Team: Dept. Convention

Scholarships 2026 - 2027

JULY 2026

Chairman - Diane Merfert

732-616-1813 dianemerf@aol.com

The time is NOW to start planning for your Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen programs. You PLAN for success... if NOT... you planned to FAIL. You are all winners... so start your planning right now.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY and PATRIOT'S PEN

I will focus on VOD and Patriot's Pen first, since they have the earliest deadlines of October 31, 2026 for judging in your Auxiliary.

There are many tools at your disposal for these programs through the VFW Store. Did you know that there are pamphlets with application forms and posters available for a nominal fee (50 for \$7.00) for both the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen programs.

There are also Citations available for Winners and participants. What kid doesn't like to get a Citation, and they are low cost.

Explorer the VFW Store site and check out the many gift items that are also available for your winners and participants. Did you know they even have Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals for your winners.. Check it out..

Order your supplies NOW. And SUCCESS will follow.

This year's Theme for both programs is: What a Veteran taught me about America.

VFW Patriot's Pen – This program is open to students grade 6 – 8, consisting of an essay of 300 to 400 words on a patriotic theme.

VFW Voice of Democracy – This program is open to students grade 9 – 12 consisting of an audio essay regarding a democratic patriotic theme.

Carolyn Rovito
251 Church Street, Apt 1
Lodi, NJ 07644
Crovito.2@gmail.com

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Supporting Veterans, Service Members & Their Families

This year we will work together with our Auxiliaries and communities to explore all the different aspects of this program focused on connecting veterans and families to critical resources, strengthening community support systems, and promoting suicide prevention and mental health awareness.

Our Mission

- Assist veterans, service members, and their families at every stage of service and transition.
- Promote veteran and military suicide prevention and mental health awareness.
- Create safe, supportive spaces for both veterans and their families.

Key Programs & Services

- National Veterans Service (NVS): FREE expert assistance with VA claims and benefits through accredited service officers.
- Pre-Discharge Program: Helps active-duty service members secure benefits before separation.
- Military Appreciation Program (MAP): Connects VFW Posts with military communities worldwide.
- Adopt-A-Unit: Builds ongoing support relationships with military units before, during, and after deployments.
- Student Veteran Support Grant: Provides funding for programs supporting student veterans on campuses.

Grants & Financial Support

- #StillServing Grant: Supports community service projects by Auxiliaries and Posts.
- Uniting for Veterans Grant: Provides resources for food insecurity and homelessness initiatives.
- Post Assistance Grant: Helps maintain facilities serving veterans.
- Disaster Relief Fund: Offers immediate assistance to veterans and families impacted by disasters.

Mental Wellness & Family Support

- Suicide Prevention & Crisis Support: Promotes the Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, press 1).
- Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) & Secondary PTS Awareness: Recognizes the impact on both veterans and their families.
- Mental Wellness Campaign: Provides education, tools, and partnerships to support veterans in crisis.
- Family Support Focus: Encourages Auxiliaries to serve as safe, supportive environments for family members.

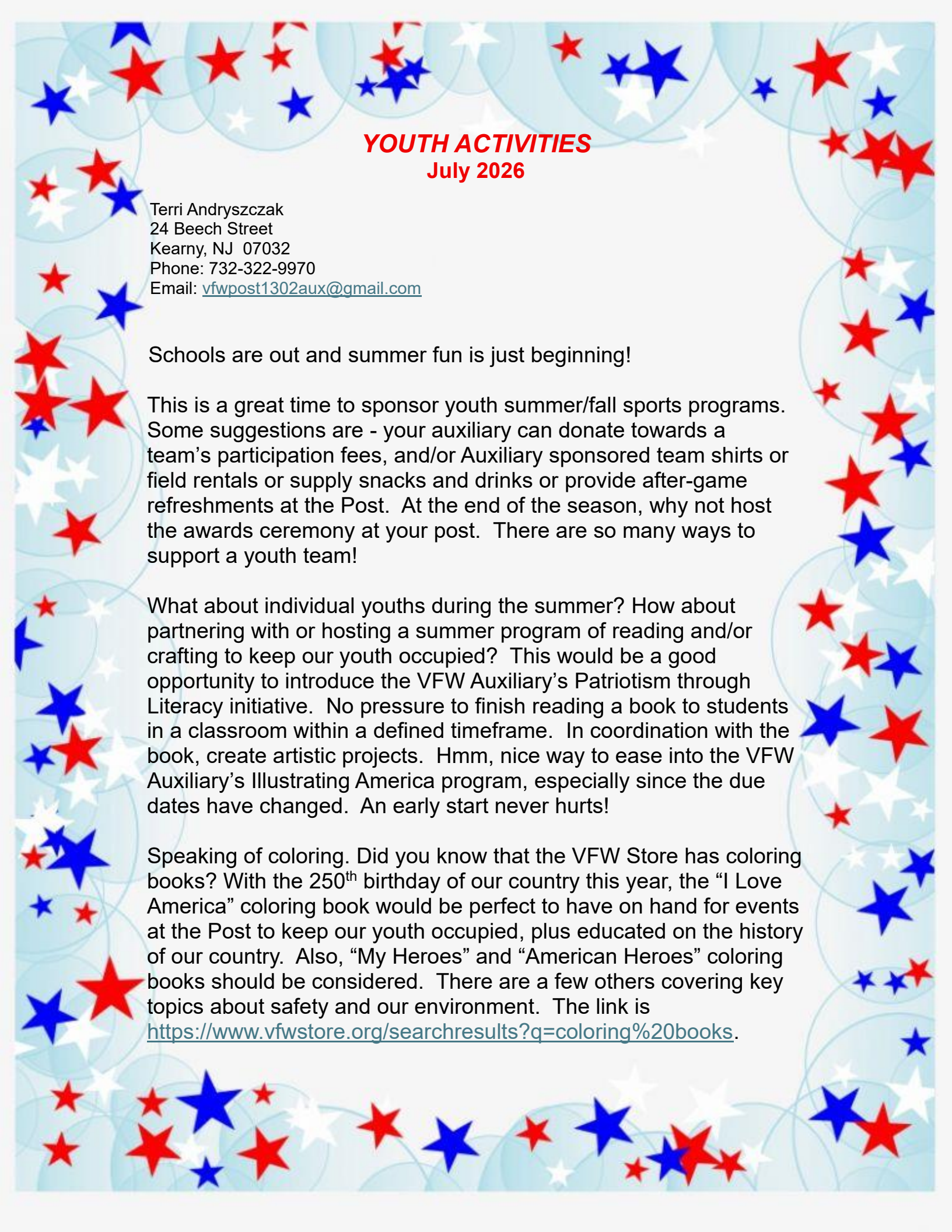
Community Engagement

- Host resource fairs and invite qualified speakers on mental health and suicide prevention.
- Promote available resources and educate the community.
- Actively connect veterans and families with the support they need when they need it.

Additional Initiatives

- Women Veterans Call Center: Call or text 855-829-6636.
- Expanded healthcare programs and advocacy for women veterans.

Be more than a supporter—be a resource. Raise awareness, promote these programs, and ensure every veteran and family member can access support, care, and hope. Continue “Serving America’s Heros” and “Rocking for our Veterans and their families.”



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

July 2026

Terri Andryszczak
24 Beech Street
Kearny, NJ 07032
Phone: 732-322-9970
Email: vfwpost1302aux@gmail.com

Schools are out and summer fun is just beginning!

This is a great time to sponsor youth summer/fall sports programs. Some suggestions are - your auxiliary can donate towards a team's participation fees, and/or Auxiliary sponsored team shirts or field rentals or supply snacks and drinks or provide after-game refreshments at the Post. At the end of the season, why not host the awards ceremony at your post. There are so many ways to support a youth team!

What about individual youths during the summer? How about partnering with or hosting a summer program of reading and/or crafting to keep our youth occupied? This would be a good opportunity to introduce the VFW Auxiliary's Patriotism through Literacy initiative. No pressure to finish reading a book to students in a classroom within a defined timeframe. In coordination with the book, create artistic projects. Hmm, nice way to ease into the VFW Auxiliary's Illustrating America program, especially since the due dates have changed. An early start never hurts!

Speaking of coloring. Did you know that the VFW Store has coloring books? With the 250th birthday of our country this year, the "I Love America" coloring book would be perfect to have on hand for events at the Post to keep our youth occupied, plus educated on the history of our country. Also, "My Heroes" and "American Heroes" coloring books should be considered. There are a few others covering key topics about safety and our environment. The link is <https://www.vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=coloring%20books>.

School of Instructions

Schools of Instructions are for Auxiliary Presidents, Secretary's, Treasurers and Trustees as well as District Presidents, Secretary's, Treasurers and Trustees. Also any member of an Auxiliary wishing to learn more about the workings of the Auxiliary is welcome to attend.

The cost of the School of Instructions is \$5.00 per participant. This will include light refreshments as well as any necessary paperwork for each section.

Dates for School of Instructions are as follows:

Saturday, August 15, 2026 - Brick VFW Post 8867 @ 10am Deadline August 8
Saturday, August 29, 2026 - Berlin VFW Post 6253 @ 10 am Deadline August 22

Please remit payment along with a list of those attending, date they are attending and which class they are attending. All this info is necessary to ensure we have sufficient handouts for all those in attendance. All checks should be made payable to Department of NJ VFW Auxiliary and sent to me at the address below. Registration not received by the deadline will not be guaranteed a seat at the School.

Kathy Marshall, Chairman
183 Westbrook Drive
Toms River, NJ 08757

SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION

_____ AUGUST 15TH BRICK TOWNSHIP VFW 8867 10AM

PAYMENT DUE BY AUGUST 7TH

_____ AUGUST 29TH BERLIN VFW POST 6253 10AM

PAYMENT DUE AUGUST 22ND

COST OF SCHOOL IS \$5 PER PARTICIPANT.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO DEPARTMENT OF NJ VFW AUXILIARY.

NAME	AUX. #	AUXILIARY PRESIDENT	DISTRICT PRESIDENT	DISTRICT/ AUXILIARY SECRETARY	DISTRICT/ AUXILIARY TREASURER	DISTRICT/ AUXILIARY TRUSTEE



TROOP SUPPORT

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SERVE

UPCOMING TROOP SUPPORT EVENTS



**JULY 12,
2026**

- Lawrenceville – 44th HHC IBCT
- Approximately 75 Soldiers



**JULY 22,
2026**

- 250th
- Support requested: Bottled water and bagged snacks prior to Annual Training
- Approximately 250 water bottles and snacks needed
- Delivery date pending



**AUGUST 8,
2026**

- CPT & DCOE – Fort Dix
- Hosted at VFW Post 6590
- Approximately 60 personnel



**AUGUST 9,
2026**

- NWS Earle – Finance Battalion
- Approximately 200 personnel



**AUGUST 13 OR 14,
2026**

- C Company, 104th
- Lawrenceville
- Attendance estimate pending



**SEPTEMBER 12,
2026**

- RSG Yellow Ribbon Event
- Location TBD



**SEPTEMBER 13,
2026**

- Governor's Review and RSG Welcome Home Ceremony
- Sea Girt
- Possible hospitality area for families



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**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING
OUR SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES!**

