



VFW State of West Virginia
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**GENERAL ORDERS NO. 10
 SERIES 2024-2025, APRIL 2025**

1. **MEMBERSHIP:** Outstanding job working membership in March. We are at 98.84%. We need 120 members to achieve 100% by the end of April, and 328 members to reach 102% by June 30th. For assistance with membership, contact Junior Vice Commander Link at 304-703-2771.

Congratulations to the following Posts and District for achieving 100%:

*4469 Beckley	118.44%	*8364 Oceana	106.15%	9097 Hurricane	101.17%
*6723 Alderson	116.92%	*4768 Alum Creek	106.06%	1589 Masontown	101.04%
*6106 Summersville	115.78%	*1976 Weston	105.71%	9916 Westover	100.81%
*3757 Burnsville	114.28%	*9926 Mason	104.73%	629 Fairmont	100.00%
*6418 St Albans	113.20%	*3522 Charles Town	104.65%	345 Tunnelton	100.00%
*3466 Charleston	109.35%	*9666 Sugar Grove	103.40%	3008 Rowlesburg	100.00%
*3466 Buckhannon	109.24%	*8516 Elkview	103.33%	3526 New Cumberland	100.00%
*6327 Sistersville	108.49%	*4019 Berkeley Springs	103.25%	3554 Hairrisville	100.00%
*6454 Petersburg	107.61%	*District 2	102.69%	6737 Renick	100.10%
*5269 Belle	107.01%	*1212 Parkersburg	102.43%	8614 Craigsville	100.00%
*578 Tera Alta	106.25%	*6450 Chester	102.38%	5583 Coalton	100.00%
*5501 Ripley	106.25%	7695 Ansted	101.63%	7780 Mathias	100.00%

*Meet All-American membership requirement. Additional All-American requirements may need to be met.

2. **DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP:** *Each District that has achieved 100% in membership by their District Convention date will receive \$200.*

3. **2024-2025 DISTRICT CONVENTIONS:**

Per Section 218(a)(1)k. of the National Manual of Procedure, the Post Commander is to assure the Commander or their representative attends all properly called District Conventions or meetings

Districts serve lunch before meetings. Time listed is lunch time. Schedule subject to change.

	Host Post	Date	Time	State Reps	
District 1	629 Fairmont	April 13	12 PM	Link	Bise
District 2	<i>Elkview</i>	April 12	12 PM	Ogden	Crum
District 3	Buckhannon	April 19	12 PM	Ogden	Kennedy
District 4	Fort Ashby	April 27	1 PM	Ogden	Crum
District 5	Huntington	April 12	12 PM	<i>Moske</i>	Kennedy

4. **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

April 30	<i>Quarterly Trustees Report of Audit due HQS</i>
May 1	Proof of 2023 tax filings on file at State HQS
May 1	Robert and Rosa Kusterer JROTC Scholarship entries to State HQS
May 1	Cutoff for Post and District requirements for All-State
May 15	Rich Homan submissions to State HQS
May 15	Chaplain of the Year entries to State HQS

5. **RESOLUTIONS AND BYLAWS CHANGES**: Posts must submit any resolutions and proposed changes to the State and National Bylaws, National Manual of Procedure and Ritual to State HQS by June 1st for consolidation to provide to the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. How to properly submit a resolution can be found at <https://vfwwv.com/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=60863>.
6. **ALL-STATE AND ALL-AMERICAN REQUIREMENTS**: Now is the time to review and finalize the All-State and All-American requirements. A lot of Posts have worked hard this year and don't want anyone to miss out due to an oversight.
7. **2026 VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN CONTEST**: The 2026 Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Entry forms are now available online at <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education>.
8. **2025 NATIONAL CONVENTION**: Information on the 2025 National Convention in Columbus, OH August 9-13 is available at <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/126th-vfw-national-convention>.
9. **VFW DAY OF SERVICE**: May 3, 2025 is the VFW Day of Service. Don't forget to sign up for this event at <https://todaysvfw.org/vfw-day-of-service/>. The Day of Service must be completed in the month of May. **The following 17 Posts are listed as registering to participate: 629, 3663, 4469, 4768, 5269, 5501, 5578, 6106, 6327, 6450, 6454, 6667, 6723, 8363, 8364, 8516, 9926**
10. **RICH HOMAN MEMORIAL AWARD**: This award will be presented to an outstanding VFW Member who is a member in good standing with a Post in West Virginia. The award is based on a comrade's community service, promoting the objectives and values of the VFW throughout the community, and VFW achievements such as membership, community activities, youth activities, project chairman and the leadership they have demonstrated at their Post that has brought prestige to the VFW. All nominations must be submitted in writing to State Headquarters no later than May 15th. The award will be presented at the State Convention banquet.
11. **2025 CONVENTION SHIRTS**: See the enclosed order form to order your 2025 Convention shirt.
12. **CHAPLAIN OF THE YEAR**. Posts and Districts are encouraged to recognize their Chaplains. The Chaplain of the Year program information can be found at <https://vfwwv.com/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=146660>. Submissions are due to State HQS by May 15.
13. **CHAPLAINS CORNER**: April 5th we remember and Honor Gold Star Spouses Day. We Pray Strength and Healing for these Families. The Celebration of Easter is on Sunday April the 20th. Let it be a reminder of love and promises fulfilled.
Bible Verse: 1 Peter 1:3 “ *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* ”
Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for dying as a sacrifice on the cross. You have risen from the grave so that we may find everlasting life. Let us have eyes that search for you and give us the courage to love and believe. Help us walk with a thankful heart and rejoice in your salvation. For it was you that loved us first. All the praise to the Father in Heaven. Amen
Assistant State Chaplain Maria Saunders

OFFICIAL: BY ORDER OF:
 S. KEVIN LIGHT, ADJUTANT
 VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
 STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

RICHARD E. OGDEN, COMMANDER
 VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
 STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

VFW State of West Virginia

Memstats as of 032625

City	Post	Dst	Difference	Annual New	Annual Cont	Annual Reinst	Life New	Life Cont	Life Reinst	Life Upgrade	Current	Prior	%	Div
MOUNDSVILLE	437	1	-8	0	36	0	0	93	0	1	129	137	94.16%	7
MORGANTOWN	548	1	-23	1	11	0	0	87	0	0	99	122	81.14%	7
TERRA ALTA	578	1	+6	4	24	0	0	74	0	1	102	96	106.25%	8
FAIRMONT	629	1	0	3	2	0	4	339	1	11	349	349	100.00%	4
KINGWOOD	826	1	-7	1	5	0	0	45	0	1	51	58	87.93%	10
MASONTOWN	1589	1	+1	1	5	0	0	90	1	3	97	96	101.04%	8
TUNNELTON	2345	1	0	0	10	0	0	35	0	0	45	45	100.00%	11
BRUCETON MILLS	2523	1	-7	3	9	2	0	42	0	1	56	63	88.88%	10
WEIRTON	2716	1	-5	9	37	2	0	146	0	1	194	199	97.48%	5
ROWLESBURG	3008	1	0	0	1	0	0	29	0	0	30	30	100.00%	11
NEW CUMBERLAND	3526	1	0	0	47	0	0	37	0	0	84	84	100.00%	9
ELM GROVE	4442	1	-21	3	57	2	0	77	0	3	139	160	86.87%	6
SISTERSVILLE	6327	1	+13	4	31	2	5	122	2	16	166	153	108.49%	6
CHESTER	6450	1	+19	17	177	3	1	617	0	3	815	796	102.38%	2
EAST FAIRMONT	7048	1	-21	7	12	2	5	221	0	5	247	268	92.16%	4
WESTOVER	9916	1	+1	1	12	1	1	108	0	2	123	122	100.81%	7
District 1 Total		1	-52	54	476	14	16	2162	4	48	2726	2778	98.12%	3

PARKERSBURG	1212	2	+10	9	87	2	1	320	1	8	420	410	102.43%	3
WEST UNION	3408	2	-5	0	5	0	0	39	0	0	44	49	89.79%	11
CHARLESTON	3466	2	+16	2	27	0	10	144	4	24	187	171	109.35%	6
HARRISVILLE	3554	2	0	0	17	1	2	66	1	3	87	87	100.00%	9
CLAY	4419	2	-4	0	4	0	0	44	0	4	48	52	92.30%	10
BELLE	5269	2	+4	2	25	0	0	34	0	1	61	57	107.01%	10
GLENVILLE	5469	2	-2	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	40	42	95.23%	11
RIPLEY	5501	2	+8	3	26	3	2	102	0	6	136	128	106.25%	7
SAINT ALBANS	6418	2	+7	4	9	3	0	44	0	0	60	53	113.20%	10
RAVENSWOOD	6669	2	-8	0	12	1	0	78	0	1	91	99	91.91%	8
CHESAPEAKE	8363	2	-4	7	20	2	0	84	0	2	113	117	96.58%	7
ELKVIEW	8516	2	+2	1	16	1	1	43	0	2	62	60	103.33%	10
MASON	9926	2	+27	9	109	13	5	461	0	8	597	570	104.73%	3
District 2 Total		2	+51	37	357	26	21	1499	6	59	1946	1895	102.69%	4

BELINGTON	410	3	-10	0	6	0	0	163	0	0	169	179	94.41%	6
CLARKSBURG	573	3	-28	12	78	8	3	321	1	5	423	451	93.79%	3
WESTON	1976	3	+2	0	11	2	0	24	0	0	37	35	105.71%	11
GRAFTON	3081	3	-9	3	28	0	0	94	1	3	126	135	93.33%	7
BUCKHANNON	3663	3	+16	12	47	6	0	124	0	2	189	173	109.24%	6
WEBSTER SPRINGS	3738	3	-5	0	10	0	0	22	0	0	32	37	86.48%	11
BURNSVILLE	3757	3	+2	0	0	0	0	15	1	0	16	14	114.28%	11
MARLINTON	4595	3	-3	0	11	0	0	33	0	0	44	47	93.61%	11
SUMMERSVILLE	6106	3	+12	7	31	1	1	48	0	5	88	76	115.78%	9
ALDERSON	6723	3	+11	14	9	1	2	49	1	4	76	65	116.92%	10
RENICK	6737	3	0	1	7	0	0	10	0	0	18	18	100.00%	11
CRAIGSVILLE	8614	3	0	0	6	4	0	19	0	0	29	29	100.00%	11
SALEM	9151	3	-3	0	3	0	0	54	0	0	57	60	95.00%	10
District 3 Total		3	-15	49	247	22	6	976	4	19	1304	1319	98.86%	5

VFW State of West Virginia

Memstats as of 032625

City	Post	Dst	Difference	Annual New	Annual Cont	Annual Reinst	Life New	Life Cont	Life Reinst	Life Upgrade	Current	Prior	%	Div
MARTINSBURG	896	4	-3	7	32	0	1	193	1	5	234	237	98.73%	5
ROMNEY	1101	4	-10	0	21	0	0	56	0	0	77	87	88.50%	9
WARDENSVILLE	2102	4	-7	1	24	1	5	109	0	23	140	147	95.23%	6
KEYSER	3518	4	-4	5	22	0	0	102	0	0	129	133	96.99%	7
CHARLES TOWN	3522	4	+30	21	2	4	8	638	2	49	675	645	104.65%	3
ELKINS	3647	4	-6	2	23	0	0	90	0	0	115	121	95.04%	7
BERKELEY SPRINGS	4019	4	+4	1	32	2	0	92	0	5	127	123	103.25%	7
COALTON	5583	4	0	0	3	0	0	14	0	1	17	17	100.00%	11
HARMAN	5781	4	-3	0	6	0	0	8	0	0	14	17	82.35%	11
RIDGELEY	6452	4	-15	1	8	0	0	48	0	0	57	72	79.16%	9
PETERSBURG	6454	4	+8	6	6	2	0	99	0	2	113	105	107.61%	8
FORT ASHBY	6667	4	-2	5	32	2	1	116	1	3	157	159	98.74%	6
MATHIAS	7780	4	0	0	2	0	0	15	0	0	17	17	100.00%	11
MOOREFIELD	9606	4	-6	1	28	1	0	65	0	1	95	101	94.05%	8
SUGAR GROVE	9666	4	+3	1	0	2	2	86	0	3	91	88	103.40%	8
District 4 Total		4	-11	51	241	14	17	1731	4	92	2058	2069	99.46%	4

HUNTINGTON	1064	5	-21	2	50	1	0	308	0	6	361	382	94.50%	3
IAEGER	1144	5	-1	0	8	0	0	43	0	0	51	52	98.07%	10
SOPHIA	4326	5	-17	0	19	0	0	77	0	0	96	113	84.95%	7
BECKLEY	4469	5	+19	5	20	1	2	94	0	4	122	103	118.44%	8
HINTON	4500	5	-1	2	2	0	0	19	0	1	23	24	95.83%	11
ALUM CREEK	4768	5	+4	1	14	6	0	49	0	0	70	66	106.06%	10
MADISON	5578	5	-4	0	65	0	1	146	0	3	212	216	98.14%	5
CHAPMANVILLE	6153	5	-20	0	6	0	1	69	0	1	76	96	79.16%	8
ANSTED	7695	5	+1	2	14	1	0	45	0	1	62	61	101.63%	10
OCEANA	8364	5	+4	1	4	1	0	63	0	7	69	65	106.15%	10
HURRICANE	9097	5	+2	11	35	5	0	121	0	1	172	170	101.17%	6
MILTON	9796	5	-2	0	12	1	0	78	0	1	91	93	97.84%	8
District 5 Total		5	-36	24	249	16	4	1112	0	25	1405	1441	97.50%	5

Members at Large	15050	99	-57	16	124	5	11	678	1	18	835	892	93.60%	2
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State Total		255	-120	231	1694	97	75	8158	19	261	10274	10394	98.84%	
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ALL-STATE POST REQUIREMENTS

1. Post must achieve 100% in membership, plus recruit one additional new or reinstated member above 100%, by May 1, 2025
2. Posts hold two Recruiting Events (Documented in the Dashboard).
3. Post conduct 2 Nursing Home Visits. Any Nursing Home/Assisted Living facility (documented in OMS as community service).
4. Post Commander, Quartermaster and Adjutant will attend School of Instruction at Mid-Winter.
5. Post Commander, or their representative (if Post Commander is unavailable), will attend all District meetings and conventions.
6. Post submits to the Program Chairman, one entry for Teacher of the Year from one of the three categories (Elementary, Middle School, and High School).
7. Post shall purchase 500 Poppies by May 1, 2025.
8. Post makes a \$275.00 donation to State HQS for VFW Programs no later than May 1, 2025.
9. Post donates \$100 to National Home (West Virginia House) no later than May 1, 2025.
10. Post Submits Monthly Community Service reported in OMS (late submissions not accepted).
11. Post will submit all required documents to State HQs by the required date.
12. Post will stay off the delinquency list throughout the year.

ALL-AMERICAN POST CRITERIA

- Membership must be at least 102%
- Post-Election Report must be submitted to National Headquarters
- Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria by January 31st, 2025:
 - Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$125 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$125 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Donate to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$125
- A Post must submit a community service report quarterly to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard. The quarters are July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March, and April-June. One of these community service activities must be for the VFW Day of Service. Learn more at <https://todaysvfw.org/vfw-day-of-service/>
- Must purchase a minimum of 500 Buddy Poppies

The State Commander completed the following visits / Tasks for the month of March 2025

2-6 Mar: Legislative Conference and Parade of Winners, Washington DC

13 Mar: Appeared before the WV Senate to support the Claim Shark Bill

15 Mar: Bud Casto celebration of life, Charles Town WV

18 Mar: VA Nursing Home Visit

21 Mar: Setup for the Testimonial

22 Mar: Testimonial, Buckhannon, WV

27 Mar: Memorial Reef laying for the Vietnam veterans.

Commander's Comments

I want to thank the VFW Auxiliary and especially the 3663 Auxiliary for their hard work on the Testimonial, everything they touched was perfect. Thank You so much

Membership currently at 98.84% we have to achieve 102%, we still need 328 members to pay their dues or join. I'm asking each of you to give that extra push to achieve the membership goal, I want to see WV stay in the Top percentage.

This year the VFW National Convention is in Columbus OH, 9-13 August, everyone is invited to attend.

District Commanders, with the recommendation from AQ Light and my approval. Every District that makes the 100% membership by their District Convention date will receive \$200. This is for District only.

Remember for All American, a Post must participate in the Day of Service, during the month of May.

"LET US TRY"

2025-2026 Theme

“How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2025

Patriotic Written Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$5,000 Award

What is the Patriot's Pen Program?

Conducted nationwide, this VFW-sponsored youth essay competition gives students an opportunity to write essays expressing their views on an annual patriotic theme.

We invite you to join the more than 60,000 students who participated last year in this contest.

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. Department (state) winners receive a portion of \$55,000 in national awards. National winners will receive at least \$500. **The first place national award is currently \$5,000.**

The Internal Revenue Service requires a recipient awarded more than \$599 be given Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable income. This may require the winner to provide their social security number.

How Does the Contest Work?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post.

The contest consists of four levels. The first level (entry) is sponsored by VFW Posts. Post winners advance, one for every 15 entries, to the VFW District (regional) level where the one first place winner is advanced to the VFW Department (state) level. The first place winner at the Department level is then advanced into the VFW national competition.

Who Can Enter?

Patriot's Pen is open to 6th, 7th and 8th-grade students enrolled by the Oct. 31 deadline in public, private or parochial schools in the U.S., its territories or its possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Homeschooled students also are eligible. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application which has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students are ineligible.)

How Do I Get Started?

- Ask a teacher or youth group/club adult leader to supervise the Patriot's Pen writing contest.
- Contact a participating VFW Post and indicate your interest in participating.

- Establish a contact person who is a member of that VFW Post or its VFW Auxiliary.

- Make sure that your essay is submitted to the VFW Post before the contest deadline of Oct. 31, 2025. You can submit your essay and entry form by email upon the Post's approval. Entries sent to the VFW National Headquarters directly will be returned.

How Am I Judged?

Knowledge of the theme is worth 30 points:

You must show a thorough knowledge of the theme in your work. Demonstrate you have researched the issue extensively.

Theme development is worth 35 points:

Answer all relevant facts about the theme such as the who, what, where, when and why. Relate the theme to your own experiences.

Clarity of ideas is worth 35 points:

Write your essay in an easy-to-understand format. Leave your reader with a clear understanding of your explanation of the theme.

What Is the Theme?

The VFW Commander-in-Chief chooses the year's theme.

The 2025-2026 theme is:

“How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?”

Deadline Information.

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by midnight Oct. 31, 2025.

Note:

If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions:

First, visit vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find a VFW Post.”

If you don't have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble contacting them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) headquarters office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit vfw.org/ContactUs to look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and email.

**For assistance contact
the VFW National Headquarters
at 816.968.2787
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org**

2025-2026 Official Entry Form Patriot's Pen Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Phone

Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Essay Word Count

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

()

Parent/Guardian's Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian's Email

What Are the Rules?

• You must write your own essay.

• All essays should be typed in English with no color or graphics. 300 - 400 words in length (+ or - 5 word max). Every word is counted regardless of length. The essay title (theme) or added footnotes do not contribute to the word count.

• In no way may contestants identify themselves within their essay (including, but not limited to, your name, school, city, state, race or national origin.) Do not put your name on the essay. The entry form is your essays cover sheet. Secure the Official Student Entry Form with a staple or other fastener on top of your essay. Contestants are allowed to enter only once each year if otherwise eligible (one Post competition).

• The essay must be contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. Inappropriate use of ChatGPT or other AI tools is not allowed. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. A contestant's teacher, counselor or parent may check the essay for punctuation, grammar and/or spelling, but the content must remain the contestant's. Contestants will be judged on the basis of their essay alone and are not required to present the essay orally. All essays become the property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW retains non-exclusive rights to the use of your essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

• At any time during the contest additional participant personal information (i.e. SSN, photo, etc.) could be requested by the VFW.

• ***I Have Read and Understand the Contest Rules***

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Patriot's Pen Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature

Post#

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (If applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of participants

No. of winners

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarships awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (Banquet, Pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Patriot's Pen Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Department.

District Chairperson Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Phone

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first place winner of the Patriot's Pen Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature

()

Daytime Phone

Email

The winner has been will be (check one) notified that they are the first place Department winner on _____.

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____



Twisted X Brands
A Proud Sponsor

2025-2026 Theme

“How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?”

Student Entry Deadline: Oct. 31, 2025

Patriotic Audio Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$35,000 Award

What is the Voice of Democracy Program?

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW's) premier scholarship program. Each year, nearly 26,000 high school students compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme is, “**How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?**”

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. National winners will be notified of their scholarship & placement.

The Rules

Who can enter?

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

What do I need to enter?

Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or - 5 second max.) audio essay on a flash drive, or other electronic device. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form. Provide these items to your school/group competition or VFW Post for judging. In addition you can submit your emailed entry form, essay, and audio file to the VFW Post upon approval. You must be the sole author of your essay. Inappropriate use of ChatGPT or other AI tools is not allowed. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. Hearing/speech impaired students should email the Voice of Democracy National Office at youthscholarships@vfw.org for special instructions. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race or national origin) although the recording and typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership.

Where Do I Submit My Entry?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One winner for every 15 entries from each Post advances to District and one District winner advances to the state (Department) competition. If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions: First, visit this website vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find A VFW Post.” If you do not have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit this link vfw.org/ContactUs and look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and email. If you still need assistance, please email us at VFW National Headquarters at youthscholarships@vfw.org

What Is the Deadline for My Entry?

All entries competing at the Post level must be in the hands of that VFW Post by midnight, Oct. 31, 2025. It is the responsibility of the student to meet this deadline by submitting their entry to the proper location by ensuring it is a participating Post.

What Are the Judging Criteria?

Originality is worth 30 points:

Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points:

Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to another.

Delivery is worth 35 points:

Speak in a clear and credible manner.

2025-2026 Official Entry Form Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Age

Jacket Size

School Name, City, State

Teacher's Name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

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Parent/Guardian Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian Email

Participant Agreement for Students Advancing to National Level

If selected as a first-place state winner, I have the consent of my parent/guardian and school to attend the Founding Forward Spirit of America Leadership trip to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania as a guest of the VFW National Organization. In consideration for permission to participate in the National Voice of Democracy Competition ("Competition") I do hereby, for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the Competition and/or arising out of any travel related to the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my audio file, essay, name and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

I Have Read and Understand the Rules and Participant Agreement

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have not inappropriately used any AI tools or Chat GPT. I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature

Post #

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating

No. of winners advanced to District

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairperson Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature

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Daytime Phone

Email

The winner has been will be (check one) notified that they are the first place Department winner on _____.

For assistance contact:

816.968.2787

Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____



Deceased Members 022725-032625

Post	First	MI	Last	Date
437	Mike	A	Falova	3/4/2025
548	August	J	Lucci	3/25/2025
573	Joseph		Devono, Jr	3/2/2025
578	John	N	Langshaw	3/18/2025
629	Albert	G	Tharp	3/25/2025
629	Ronald	J	Welty	3/11/2025
826	Lyle	E	Maxwell	3/25/2025
896	Paul	J	Rutherford, Jr	3/14/2025
1064	Kenneth	E	Purlee	3/25/2025
1101	Anne	M	Peterie	3/19/2025
2345	Arnold	O	Bolyard	3/11/2025
3081	Joseph	P	Poppalardo	3/18/2025
3466	Raymond	M	Jaynes	3/18/2025
3522	William	C	Geary	3/17/2025
3554	David	L	Cox	3/3/2025
3663	Huelin	C	Linger	3/23/2025
4442	Dwayne	M	Koringer	3/11/2025
4469	Alfred	M	Skaggs	3/18/2025
5578	Billie	E	Griffith	3/17/2025
6327	George	A	Heinzman	3/20/2025
6454	James	P	Geary	3/25/2025
9097	Andrew	J	Adkins	3/11/2025
9666	Thomas	R	De Byl	3/11/2025
9916	Eugene	W	Aitken	3/18/2025
15050	Johnnie	C	Cozart, Sr	3/25/2025
15050	William		Yourkovich, Jr	3/25/2025