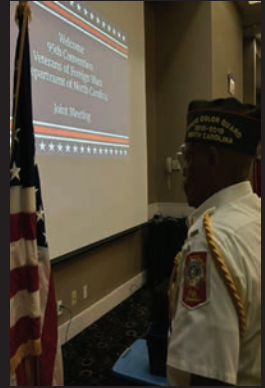


LEADER MAGAZINE



EDWARD BEARD

LESS TALK

2025

N C

2026

MORE ACTION

STATE COMMANDER



HELPING YOU NAVIGATE A SEA OF INFORMATION



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Aug. 9 – 13, 2025
126th VFW National
Convention, Columbus, OH

Aug. – Sept., 2025
Fall District Meetings

Sept. 8 – 11, 2025
Fall Legislative Conference,
Washington, DC

Oct. 3 – 5, 2025
Fall Council of Administration,
Greensboro, NC

Nov. 7 – 10, 2025
Southern Conference,
Conrow, TX

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CONTRIBUTIONS:

We would love to share your stories, pictures and events, at post and district level, for comrades & auxiliary.
Send correspondence to leaderinfo@vfwnc.com



Submission of articles and photos implies the right to edit and publish all or in part.

Deadlines are 15th of June, September, December & March.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S CORNER



Greetings! I want to start by expressing my heartfelt appreciation and congratulations to our 2024/25 Department Commander, Annie Cummings, for an absolutely incredible year. Annie and her team faced many challenges head-on and not only overcame them but also achieved All American status for the Department of North Carolina! A huge congratulations to Annie on earning her Triple Crown—well done!

It's truly an honor to have been elected as your new Department Commander for the 2025/26 year. My focus for the year is simple: "Less Talk, More Action." I'm excited to lead us by emphasizing the importance of turning our words into actions, focusing on getting things done, and prioritizing results. I believe that our actions speak louder than words and are a true measure of our character and success. I encourage each of you to lead your Districts and Posts with this same spirit.

As we move forward, it's important that we honor the legacy of those who came before us while also embracing positive change. Open communication and mutual support are essential for building trust, fostering collaboration, and achieving our shared goals. Let's make sure we're all actively listening to each other's ideas and being open to constructive feedback. This will create an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns, allowing us to grow both individually and as a Department. By doing this, we'll naturally see increased interest and, in turn, increased membership. Aiming for at least 101% membership is our goal!

Our new Commander-in-Chief, Carol Whitmore, expresses the same sentiments when she shared her motto of "For Veterans By Veterans" and emphasized how we must "Implement constructive changes where possible, maintain ethical practices, and refrain from dwelling on matters outside of your control. Prioritize tasks and maintain organizational efficiency."

We are eagerly anticipating our Fall Council of Administration in Greensboro, North Carolina. This is a fantastic time to boost our VFW programs, such as Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, and Teacher of the Year to even greater heights. We're planning an exciting Fall Council of Administration meeting at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Greensboro, NC, from October 3rd to 5th. Our agenda includes meetings and an afternoon dedicated to training, all with a fun "Back to the 80's" banquet theme!

Remember, there are many helpful resources available to support us throughout the year, including our Department website, the VFW website, and the new Department VFW App. The Department is always here to assist all our posts and members to ensure everyone's success. We welcome your ideas and suggestions to improve our Department and make it the best it can be!

In closing, I wish all Posts and Districts the very best for the rest of the year. The Department is ready to help and partner with your auxiliaries at the post and district levels on recruiting, buddy poppy drives, and supporting veterans in your areas. The Auxiliary is such a valuable part of our organization, and we're stronger when we work together.

Let's make 2025-2026 the most successful year yet for the Department of North Carolina!

Edward Beard 2025-2026 Dept. Cdr

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE HARD CHARGERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF NORTH CAROLINA!



You accepted the challenge to be ACCOUNTABLE, to take the necessary ACTION, and to do it with a great ATTITUDE! A-TEAM rules for 2024/2025! Thank you!

You have achieved the All-American Status you are so deserving of. You tuned out the negative naysayers and focused on the positive outcomes of the missions, making it happen! You are the elite; you are Still Serving, and you are deserving of this recognition! Job well done!

As of the date of this writing, only 23 Departments nationwide had achieved the goal. Less than 50%! With only 3 days to go, there may be a couple more, but you achieve it early and with complete legitimacy. No buy-ins, no favors, no waivers, just hard, fun work! There is a lot to be said for this, and you are applauded and respected.

We've certainly encountered our share of bumps and challenges along the way. One might almost say apocalyptic in some sense -- famine, flood, fire, wind, homelessness, power outages, loss of life, and yet you still rose to the call of duty and commitment. You came to the aid of others without being asked, making memories for children and their families, and helping communities throughout the state with smiles. No Commander could be prouder of the accomplishments.

You have stood tall with your head high and made uncomfortable methods reap the comfortable results required to stand among the elite. In our journeys, we will always come across those who do not subscribe to the mission, who put personal interests above the good of the order, and forget or simply just do not know why this amazing organization has existed for 125 Years, with the recognition and achievements it has attained. Your mission now is to teach THEM! Inspire THEM! Help THEM! I've always said that many hands make light work, and when opposing forces deter the mission, it takes time, manpower, and valuable resources to resolve the issues and correct course. Just imagine if we could actually all travel in the same direction, with the same drive and passion, what possibilities could be achieved! So do just that drive forward, believe in what can be, not wallow in what is, and pull the rest behind you until they come willingly! WE ARE THEY and they are us.

Now get out there and look for a few good men and women, be strong, find an adventure, aim high, be always ready in your commitment to our new Commander, Edward Beard, for his missions in 2025/2026 and beyond!

**Semper Fi!
Annie Cummings**

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS



Commander
Edward Beard



Sr. Vice Commander
Mickey Biggs



Jr. Vice Commander
Chris Brown



Quartermaster
Jenn Hutt



Adjutant
Alecia Judd



Asst. Quartermaster
Charlie Cable



Chaplain
Dolphus Troy



Judge Advocate
Josh Holt



Surgeon
Graham Leaver



Chief of Staff
Thomas Person



Aide De Camp
Perry Saunders Jr



Asst. Judge
Winston McMillan

Not Pictured: Greg Stafford, Inspector; Angela Russ, Asst. Adjutant

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICERS



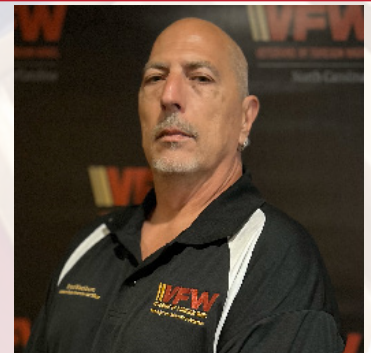
Tab Brown
252-933-2040



Michisa Zahorski
919-616-1223



Cindy Hathaway
336-631-5457



Brad Blackburn
910-740-2285

DISTRICT COMMANDERS



1. Scott Seddon
6060



2. Robert Brock
7032



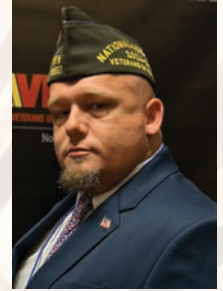
3. Jimmy Baugham
3702



4. Mike Durbin
8986



5. Jeremy Schwanz
9983



6. Doug Fricker
1920



7. Robert Kennedy
9103



8. Jerry Moser
670



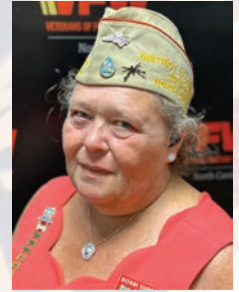
9. Craig Armstrong
7318



10. John Marion
2972



11. Eric Brown
5352



12. Bobbi Sheets
6365



13. Jake Drisker
1160



14. Art Gordon
4066



15. Bill Carter
7946



16. David Collins
9116



17. Robert Morrow
7339



1- Currituck,
Pasquotank,
Chowan, Gates,
Hertford, Bertie,
Martin, Washington,
Tyrel, Dare,
Perquimans and
Camden

2-Hyde, Beaufort, Pitt, Greene, Lenoir and Wayne 3 - Northampton,
Halifax, Warren, Franklin, Nash, Edgecombe and Wilson
4 - Pamlico, Craven, Carteret, Jones, Onslow, Pender, Duplin and
Sampson

5- Bladen, Columbus, Brunswick, New Hanover and Topsail Island 6- Caswel, Person, Granville, Vance, Durham,
Alamance and Orange 7- Chatham, Wake, Johnston and Harnett. 8- Cumberland, Robeson and Hoke. 9- Montgomery,
Moore, Lee, Anson, Richmond and Scotland. 10 - Rockingham, Guilford, Davidson, and Randolph. 11 - Surry,
Yadkin, Stokes, Forsyth and Davie. 12 -Rowan, Cabarrus and Stanly. 13 - Gaston, Mecklenburg, Union, and
the Kings Mountain 9811 14 - Burke, Lincoln, Catawba, Alexander, Iredel, Cleveland and Rutherford,
except Kings Mtn Post 9811. 15 - Avery, Watauga, Ashe, Alleghany, Wilkes, Caldwell and Mitchell. District
16 - Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Polk, Yancey and McDowell. 17 - Haywood, Transylvania, Cherokee,
Graham, Clay, Macon, Jackson and Swain.

A Message From The Incoming & Outgoing Department Auxiliary Presidents



25-26
Department President
Anna Holm

“Serving Our Toto-ly Oz-some Veterans”

I'm honored to be the 2025-2026 Department of North Carolina Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary President. I joined the Auxiliary when I was 18 under the eligibility of my father, John Backlund, a World War II veteran who served in North Africa, Italy, and France. My family has always been involved in the VFW and Auxiliary and continuing that tradition of service is important to me. My brother, John Jr., was also a VFW member. I have a sister, brother, 3 nieces, 4 nephews, and 2 great-nephews who are Auxiliary members.

Commander Beard and I have a joint special project, veterans' mental health issues. Between the two organizations we hope to raise \$40,000. All money will be split equally between the four VA Medical Centers in North Carolina earmarked only for mental health. If our efforts save just one person, the money is well spent. Please make fundraising plans for your Post and Auxiliary. Donations from the Auxiliary should be sent to Sandra Johnson-Leu, Department Treasurer.

One of my mail focuses for the year is working together with the VFW to foster a better understanding of their legislative goals. I'd like to see more Auxiliary members involved in letting our

elected officials know how important our veterans' rights are. I also want to promote harmony between the VFW and Auxiliary. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I'm a good listener.

Anna Holm
Department of NC President
2025-2026



24-25
Department President
Sandra Jeffries

Hello Comrades, Sisters and Brothers,

Wow can you believe it the Department of NC has completed year 2024-2025? It has been an honor serving as the president. What a year it was. This year started out rough with the disaster in Western NC but the troops of NC and our friends around the nation rallied together by providing resources, administering aid to families and communities affected and pushing legislation for future improvements. Even though there is still work to be done we are excited about the work that has been completed.

Commander Annie, thank you and your team for the love that was shown to the Auxiliary this year. Yes, your "A Team" included the Auxiliary and we were very proud of all the collaboration between both sides of the house. It can truly be said that when you saw the Department of NC VFW you saw a few of us in the crowd too. Personally, I am able to say that I not only had a relationship with Commander Annie and her team, but we had a partnership.

We have shared hotel rooms, any VFW Auxiliary guests to our state and I were escorted in the command vehicle, if the VFW had guests to NC my staff and I were always invited to attend their receptions,

she personally cooked for me and I love that beautiful office and all the equipment given to the Auxiliary at our new headquarters. This year as Department President I was spoiled rotten! While traveling around our state, I felt the love that we have for this organization and for each other.

Commander Annie and I may not have done things like it has always been done or like members felt that it should have been done but I want you to know that we always remembered to do things for the good of our organization. It was never personal.

Members thank you again for all the gifts, donations given to my Special Project, your words of encouragement and for your support.

It is not over for NC, and we hope to have your support as we take on responsibilities of serving on a national level for incoming President, Lois Callahan. These new positions are as follows: I am your 2025-2026 National Ambassador for Buddy Poppy/National Home, PDP Sandra Johnson-Leu has been elected as National Council Member #9 and 2025-2026 National Banner Barrier and PDP Deborah Crowder as 2025-2026 POW/MIA Flag Barrier. NC is great and will continue to be a big part of this organization helping our veterans and their families.

Congratulations Commander Beard and President Anna and to all the new officers for 2025-2026, I wish you much success.

“Serving Those Who Have Served With Love”
Sandra Jeffries
Department of NC President 2024-2025

Grand Opening at HQ



The new VFW headquarters held an open house on 29 May. Located at 4310 Cumberland Road in Fayetteville, it boast a large meeting room, training rooms, dedicated Auxiliary room, besides offices for the Commander, Quartermaster, & Adjutant. Pictured above, Commander, Annie Cummings, & Sr. Vice, Ed Beard, prepare to cut the ribbon. Also pictured is Kurt Deviere, Past State Senator.

Top left: The command car in front of the new HQ. L-R: Cdr Cummings salutes Nat'l Quartermaster General, Marc Garduno; He presented her with a VFW coin; Dept. Judge Advocate, Josh Holt, 1st Sgt, US Army; Dept. Chaplain, Dolphus Troy prays after Dept. Chief of Staff, Tab Brown welcomed the crowd. Below L-R; Auxiliary Department Historian, Barbara Beard, in the foyer. Department representatives celebrate as the ribbon is cut. Also pictured is Nicki Fryar, Exec. Dir. of NC VA Coastal Healthcare System, & Tammy Williamson, (GySgt, USMC (Ret)) Commander of NC Veterans Council.

Pictures by Barbara Beard. Cutlines by Heather Dean-Woods



VFW DAY OF SERVICE



Members from VFW Post 1920 in Mebane, Post 10607 in Burlington and Post 1077 in Butner, were featured on the National VFW website for their day of service.

An article in the Caswell Messenger newspaper reads in part : On Saturday May 3, members of VFW Post 7316 and American Legion Post 89 in Yanceyville built the 99th and 100th ramps in our county.

Veterans from VFW Post 1920 in Mebane, Post 10607 in Burlington and Post 1077 in Butner, joined the Caswell County Veterans to provide assistance in building these two ramps. There were 32 veterans, family members, and Boy Scouts working together that day, along with assistance from District Commander Chris Brown and his wife Richelle."



VFW Post 2087 and Auxiliary in Greensboro at Maplewood Cemetery clean up



Post 12196 participated in the Town of Belville Founder's Day Celebration.



"Baby and new mom collection for ANG lower ranking families who are expecting." Bobbi Sheets VFW Post 6365 Commander



Above: Post 7383 in Cary held a Touch-a-Truck event. Cary PD also did identification kits for kids.

Below: Post 1142, in Wilkes held a food drive



Post 9134, Rockwell, did a Road clean up.



VFW 10346, at Yadkin County Memorial Park. D Eddie Vogler, Stephen Mosteller, James F. Cline III and Tim Weatherford from Yadkin Co Parks/Yadkin Co School board.

VFW DAY OF SERVICE



Left:
Post 6018,
Fayetteville,
visited the VA
Hospital.
Right:
Post 2972
trimmed
overgrown
bushes and trees
at Gibsonville
Public Library.



Below:
Post 8466 Day of Service has
actually become several days of
service as we had decided to
volunteer at the recent showing of
The Wall That Heals being held in
Roxboro, NC. This event was held
from April 30, 2025 through May
04, 2025 with 8 post members
participating with 959 miles driven
during that interval and providing
199 hours of volunteer time.



VFW Post 7794 was proud to partner with the Elkin Elementary Beta Club for a
community cleanup at Hollywood Cemetery in Elkin, NC.

Local woodworker group builds bench for Hendersonville Post 5206



This bench was given to Hedrick-Rhodes Post 5206 from the local woodworking group, Apple Country Woodcrafters. This bench was modeled after a George Nakashima-style bench created by Thomas Loeser and displayed in the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. Robert Sebbby, a craftsman with Apple Country Woodcrafters (ACW), a Henderson County non-profit, built this bench using handles of shovels from individual entrenching tools and D-handled shovels likethose installed on the sides of military Jeeps. The seat is fashioned from Manitoba Maple. ACW donated this bench to honor veterans who come to the Hedrick-Rhodes Veterans Center and VFW Post 5206 left L-R: Brett Embry, Veteran Service Officer for Henderson County, Robert Sebbby, Ed Skrivaneck, Commander, Post 5206, and Gary Mach, President of Apple Country Woodcrafters.

Post 10950 Kill Devil Hills

Student of
the Month,
Mia O'Sullivan
is a
Kindergartner
who loves
spending time
doing
Buddy Poppy
Drives with her
grandfather,
Tony Imperiale



Around your State



District 11 awarded Duane Smith as Teacher of the Year, (Pictured with Daughter, Noelle, & Fiancee Holly) and to Joshua Couch, the Voice of Democracy first place winner. Both were submitted by Post 7794 in Elkin. Josh is shown with Department Cdr., Annie Cummings, Post 7794 Cdr., Derick Cordova, & Dist. 11 Cdr., Eric Brown.

Submitted by Post 7794



3974 Lexington VFW Post holding a Buddy Poppy Drive at The Classic Restaurant in Denton, NC. Shown is Post Jr Vice, Joe Bailey, Ret 1st Sgt, with his daughter, Danyella Harrison.

Photo by Heather Dean-Woods



VFW Post 2087 honoring North Carolina's Past Commander-in-Chief Otis Brown.



NC VFW Department Chief of Staff, State Service Officer and VFW Post 2771 member Tab Brown delivered 100 signed postcards to the residents at NC Veterans Home.



Post 12196 was awarded the 2025 Non Profit of the Year by the North Brunswick Chamber of Commerce. L-R Chris Mattiace, Jim Koslosky, Gerald Decker, and John Marone.

Photos submitted

Around your State



On May 8, 2025 Continental Tire invited the local Honor Guard from VFW Post 12136 Indian Land, SC to come and kickoff the awareness of Military month. Ceremoniously the Honor Guard took down the flag, folded it, and placed it at our Missing Man table. Continental Tire recently started up a Veterans Employee Resource Group by veterans Steven Marcello, Delancy McCrorey, and John Cox and our very own NC State Membership Chairman and Auxiliary President, Lyndsey Bowlus (Post 2423, Indian Trail, NC). Continental has about 40 or more veterans that proudly served our country located at the Fort Mill headquarter building.

Submitted by Post 2243



Happy Birthday to Auxiliary member Brandon Judd from Rockwell. Brandon was with our comrades at Charlotte Motor Speedway recruitment setup by membership team lead by Mike Baker.

Dept of NC VFW Donates Toward Statue for National Home

2024/25 Class of Commanders and Presidents for Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Department of North Carolina donated towards this beautiful monument at the VFW National Home for their 100th anniversary. A lasting tribute to this great year, which was led Department Commander Annie Cummings and President Sandra Jeffries. Way to go, "A" Team!





**MONEY BACK TOWARD YOUR
PART B MONTHLY PREMIUM**

**VISION ALLOWANCE FOR
GLASSES OR CONTACTS**

**DENTAL ALLOWANCE FOR
MOST DENTAL TREATMENTS**

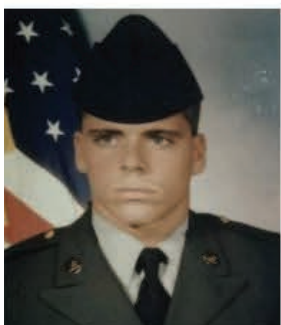
**GYM MEMBERSHIP
(YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD
FOR PT)**



**ENROLLEES IN VA HEALTHCARE, TRICARE, OR CHAMPVA AND HAVE
MEDICARE PART A & PART B SHOULD CONTACT ME TO SCHEDULE A
BRIEFING. LET ME KNOW WHAT TIME FORMATION WILL BE.**

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Military Order of the Cootie

Greetings from MOC Grand of NC Commander:

Not only will we continue to "Keep them smiling in beds of white" this year as hospital work is important to keep those Veterans spirits high. We will take a look around us and ask "How can I help a Veteran or a Veteran's family today?" It could be as simple as hello or have a nice day, to make someone's day better. But for some it will be "What can I help you with?" This is how we plan to have the louisest year possible as we increase and multiply. I would like to thank all the Cooties of North Carolina as we look forward to a productive year. And remember "We want you, to help a Veteran today."

LOTCS,
Barbara Chance, Grand Commander
NC Grand



Pictures submitted by
Barbara Chance &
Annie Cummings, from
the Grand held in
Havelock, NC

To join: <https://www.lotcs.org/join-us.html>

Outgoing Message from Jeff Friar, 2024-2025 Grand Commander

Following the great recruiting machine known as past Grand Commander Woods..I failed to make All-Star because we fell about 5 Cooties short of the goal. That cemented a truly lousy year. I'm happy that I lived through this past year. My health issues have been significant, and I truly appreciate all the prayers and concerns you've shared with me this past year. I continue to press on in the face of uncertainty, but the promise is bright. Many of our Cooties faced hardship this past year, but your prayers and concerns lifted them up and buoyed

I encourage you to press forward into recruiting and do it early so that Barb has a great year. The hospital work is outstanding, and I also encourage you to keep pace with it in the new year. I hope to see you all at our Fall Scratch in Fayetteville.

LOTCS,
Jeff Friar,



NCVFW IN DARLINGTON

NASCAR Cup Series Goodyear 400 at Darlington Raceway, 6 April

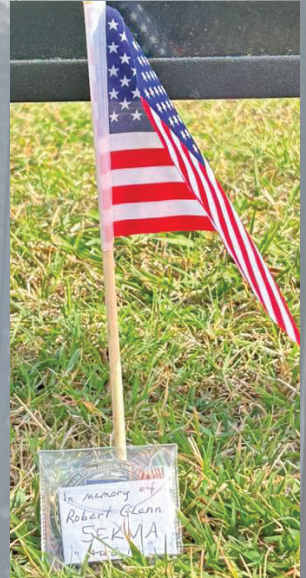


Above Right: Grand Marshall for the NASCAR Sport Clips 200 in Darlington, was National Sr. Vice Cdr., Carol Whitmore. She is shown with her NC Counterpart, Sr. Vice Cdr., Edward Beard.



Photos Submitted

The Wall That Heals, Roxboro NC



IN MEMORY
OF THE MEN AND WOMEN
WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR
AND LATER DIED AS A RESULT
OF THEIR SERVICE
WE HONOR AND REMEMBER
THEIR SACRIFICE



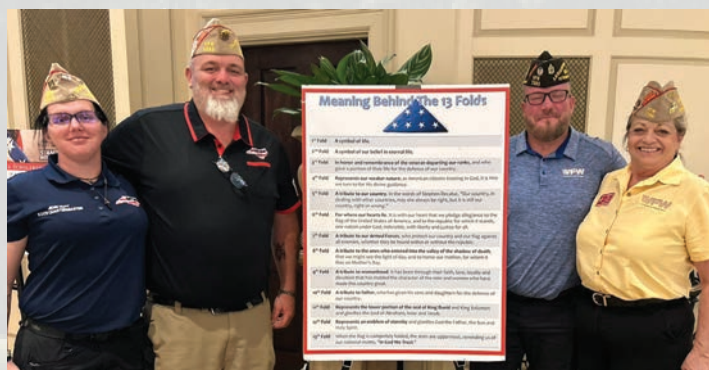
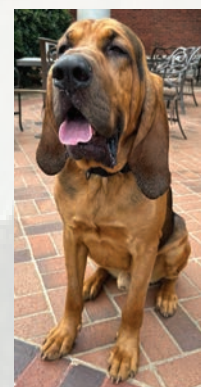
Pictures by Publisher Heather Dean-Woods



Folds Of Honor Golf Tourney Scholarship Fundraiser

-Prestonwood Country Club,Cary 21 April

Folds of Honor is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides educational scholarships to the spouses and children of military members who have fallen or been disabled while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Our educational scholarships support private school tuition or tutoring in grades K-12, tuition for college, technical or trade school and post-graduate work, including a master's degree, doctorate, or professional program. Funds for a second bachelor's degree or trade/technical program certification are also available. Since its inception in 2007, Folds of Honor has awarded nearly 62,000 scholarships totaling over \$290 million in all 50 states. Among the students served, 45 percent are minorities. It is rated a four-star charity by Charity Navigator and Platinum on GuideStar. It was founded by Lt Col Dan Rooney, the only-ever F-16 fighter pilot (with three combat tours in Iraq) and PGA Professional. For more information or to donate in support of a Folds of Honor scholarship visit foldsofhonor.org. Pictures by Heather Dean-Woods





ANNIVERSARY PIN Enamel with gold plating. Rubber pin back. 1½ x 7⁄8".
1795 \$3.00



ANNIVERSARY LIFE MEMBER CARD Include your name, Life Member number and date, Post number, city and state. Aluminum. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.
1125 \$12.00

VFW

VFWSTORE.ORG



ANNIVERSARY ORNAMENT
125th Anniversary logo on one side, VFW Emblem on the reverse. Handcrafted, etched from solid brass. 24k gold finish. Made in the USA.
1025 \$29.95



VFW K-9 LEASH Polyester with Combat Tested logo. 1 x 60". Made in the USA. 1613 \$11.95



ANNIVERSARY COMPUTER BAG
Padded pockets for small electronics. Rear compartment for files. Strap to fit over most luggage trolley handles. Embroidered. Unzips to expand to 12¼ x 16¾ x 7½". 3 lbs. Imported; decorated in the USA.
1696 \$120.00



ANNIVERSARY EMBROIDERED PATCH
Sew-on. Golden thread on white. Imported.
8179 4½ x 3" \$5.00
8185 9½ x 6¼" \$10.00



COLLAPSIBLE DOG BOWL Red with VFW Logo screened in white. Silicone. 5 x 2". Imported. 1090 \$4.95



ANNIVERSARY DEBOSSED PADFOLIO
Soft brushed twill with full-grain leather trim and screened logo. Inside organizer has a full size open pocket, zippered pocket, mesh pocket, pen loop, card pocket and a flap pocket. Open pocket outside. Includes writing pad. 13 x 11 x 2". Imported.
1237 \$58.00



VFW K-9 PATCHES Sew-on patch is sealed on back. Tactical patch has hook-and-loop back to attach to tactical gear. 3 x 3.5". Imported.
8167 Sew-on \$7.00
8199 Tactical \$8.00

Prices valid through 8/31/2025

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2024-2025 Department of NC Commander Annie Cummings, & Triple Crown Winner

How it started...



Thank you for a wonderful, heartfelt, & entertaining year. From membership drives at Speedways, VFW visibility at Summer Festivals, to navigating the uncharted Hurricane Helene ravaged mountain areas, & giving a last salute for returned NC MIA/KIA, you tirelessly showed up. You not only led us with strength and grace, you taught us how to carry it on.



How it ended...

Veterans deserve a Medicare plan that delivers more

You proudly served our country. We're proud to serve you.

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Call me today to find out if you qualify.

I can help review your current benefits to see if UnitedHealthcare has a plan that could complement the coverage you already have.



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