



Membership

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*"It is up to us if we are a prisoner of our past or a guardian of our future.
It is our bridge to cross"* Author Unknown

Membership is the STRENGTH of our organization. The ability of our Auxiliaries to fulfill our mission to serve Veterans and their families depends on the helping hands of our members. We've all heard the adage "Many hands make light work."

We need to be "guardians of our future" and recruit and retain the members that will keep this organization strong and relevant. We need to collectively ask ourselves if we are prisoners of our past.

- * *Does my Auxiliary willingly recruit new members and embrace their ideas, or do we say, "we've always done it this way?"*
- * *Does my Auxiliary meet on a day or at a time that considers the working member or parent?*
- * *When a new member attends a meeting for the first time, do we explain the terminology we are using so they understand?*
- * *Do we give a new member a folder explaining the basics of our Auxiliary including the projects we do every year to encourage their engagement?*
- * *When a new member volunteers for a project we do every year, do we say, "we've done this so long, we've got it covered?" or do we FIND something for them to do?*

This year we are going to make MEMBERSHIP, not just joining, key.

M-Mentor members. Prepare them for the day they become a leader in your Auxiliary

E- Engage members

M-Make new attendees feel welcome and at ease. Greet them, sit with them, answer questions

B-Bravely embrace change

E-Encourage new ideas

R-Retain the members we have

S-Support each other

H-Have fun

I-Invest in your members. OTI, Welcome folders, early payment incentives

P-Potential members are everywhere. Ask them and carry an application

RECRUIT: New members are wonderful. They are necessary for our Auxiliaries to continue. Otherwise, as we age, our numbers diminish until we no longer exist. Always carry an application. Don't be shy, be PROUD to ask someone to join our Organization.

RETAIN: We need to seriously work to **keep the members we already have**, not just replace them with new blood. When annual members don't renew, we need to ask why. Their membership honors a brave war veteran in their family, and we need to know **why they no longer choose to be part of us**. Is it no longer important to them or did we not meet the standard of service they expected?

This year we will look to “bridge” the gap between Recruitment and Retention/ Joining and Membership.

We will make a journey across the Department crossing “Bridges” and earning awards along the way.

Department Awards:

1. Cross the **Peace Bridge** as you enter New York State from the west. If your Auxiliary crosses with at least 50% its **annual** members processed by **August 31, 2025**, it will be entered in a drawing to receive \$50.
 2. Reach the **Mario Cuomo Memorial Bridge** in the East. If your Auxiliary crosses this Bridge by **October 31, 2025**, with **85% PAID** membership, it will be entered into a drawing for \$50. If the winning Auxiliary has also **retained** at least **75%** of its **annual** members, it will receive an additional \$50. **Total possible award is \$100.00**
 3. When your Auxiliary crosses the **George Washington Bridge** with **100% PAID** membership on **December 31, 2025**, it will be entered into a drawing for \$50. If the winning Auxiliary has also processed at least **90%** of its **annual** members it will receive an additional \$50. **Total possible award is \$100.00.**
 4. Your Auxiliary will cross the **Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge** on **February 28, 2026**, with **100%+1 PAID membership** and be entered in a drawing for \$100. If the winning Auxiliary has also retained at least **98%** of its **annual** members it will receive an additional \$50. **Total possible award is \$150.00**
 5. Your Auxiliary will cross its final bridge when it reaches President Justine's **Brooklyn Bridge** on May 31, 2026, with the **Greatest Numerical Increase in CURRENT** membership. The winning Auxiliary will receive \$150. Drawing if there is a tie.
- Note Auxiliaries can track their PAID Membership with the CMR Report in MALTA. The monthly Department Membership Report is CURRENT membership totals.

To ensure you **“Always Stay True to Our Red, White, and Blue”** there are three other awards:

Red Award: Awarded to the Auxiliary that reports the **BEST MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM** by **September 1, 2025**. This will be your plan for the year- how will you retain members, incentivize members to pay dues before December 31, 2025, encourage conversion to Life Membership, and recruit new members? The form will be available on the Department website www.vfwauxny.org.. The winning Auxiliary will receive a Life membership to award one of its members. All information must be sent to the Department Treasurer by May 1, 2026.

White Award: Every Auxiliary that has the **President, Sr & Jr Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees dues paid by December 31, 2025**, will be entered into a drawing to receive \$50.

Blue Award: The Auxiliary in each membership group with the **highest percentage in PAID** membership on **June 1, 2026**, will receive \$50. There will be a drawing if there is a tie.

Awards from National

Awards for Members:

1. **5 Member Recruiter Pin.** Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will receive a **5 Member Recruiter Pin**. Pin mailed directly to the recruiter
2. **5 Member Recruiter Drawing.** Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will be entered into the **5 Member Recruiter Drawing** to receive a \$100 Visa Gift Card.
3. **“National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Award.** Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will receive a **“National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Award**. VFW Auxiliary Treasurers on all levels are not eligible for this award.
4. **“National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Drawing.** Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will be entered into the **“National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Drawing** to receive a \$400 Visa Gift Card. VFW Auxiliary Treasurers on all levels are not eligible for this award.

New and/or rejoined members must be recruited between July 1, 2025, and May 31, 2026, and entered into MALTA with credit given to the recruiter by the Department Treasurer by June 10, 2026.

VFW recruiters must complete the VFW Members Only recruiter form to be received at National headquarters by June 10, 2026.

Membership Award winners **#2,3, and 4** will be announced and awards presented at the 2026 National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Awards for Auxiliaries:

1. \$50 to each Auxiliary that reaches 100% Plus in Membership by June 30, 2026

Awards for Department Chairmen:

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Membership Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding activity and/or event training and promoting the Membership Program.
2. The Outstanding Performance Award and Second-Place Outstanding Performance Award will be awarded in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria and Program goals in the National Program Book.

Awards for Departments:

1. Bronze Award #1: \$200 to each Department that reaches 95% Plus in paid membership by November 30, 2025.
2. Silver Award #2: \$250 to each Department that reaches 98% Plus in paid membership by February 28, 2026.
3. Gold Award #3: \$300 to each Department that reaches 100% Plus in paid membership by April 30, 2026.
4. Platinum Award #4: \$400 to each Department that reaches 102% Plus in paid membership by May 31, 2026.

For more information
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