

Membership Program

2025-2026



**William Roland
Commander**

Teach – Coach - Mentorship

Department Headquarters
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When I first became a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, I had no idea where it would take me. As I traveled the chairs at the post, district, and Department level I met so many great Veterans that inspired me to do more than I thought I was capable of doing.

Over the past few years, I learned that recruiting new members can be an adventure. But I also learned that Veterans are capable of doing things non-Veterans do not even attempt.

A few concerns I heard from Veterans have about not joining our great organization.

1. Meetings are too long. (Remember, young Veterans have family and work many shifts).
2. Too much drama at meetings! Talk about Veteran, family, and community)
3. Smoking
4. Do not feel welcome when they enter a post.

We will put emphasis on new members as well as reinstated members.

This year's membership goal is 101%. There is no doubt in my mind that it is a reachable goal.

Reach out with any questions or ideas.

Sincerely,

Bill

Bill Roland
Commander
Dept. of PA

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Message from 2025-26 Department Membership Team

“No one does more for Veterans” is the motto of the VFW, and if everyone lives by this motto, membership will grow as services expand. Yes, membership is the fuel that drives our organization and gives us the strength to push for more legislation, like the PACT Act, but we need to stand strong and fulfill the purpose of why our organization was created. Sometimes, we get lost in the pursuit of acquiring members and lose sight of what our main goal should be. We are an organization in place to help our fellow combat veterans and serve their needs. If we start every conversation asking the veterans we meet how we can help them, membership will automatically fall into place. If we are to expand, we need to adjust to the needs of younger veterans. We need to reach out and provide the new generation of vets with the feeling of purpose and camaraderie that many feel they are missing from their time in the service. Welcome every veteran you meet with a handshake and ask them what we can do for them. We need to let all veterans know that the VFW is here for them, and not that we expect them to serve the VFW. Younger vets are looking for community and want to be a part of something they see as a support network for them. Once their needs are met, they may feel it is their purpose to recruit and help others. Retention of the veterans who are members of our posts is as simple as showing them we care about their needs. Every member should be contacted at least once a year, and the first thing we should ask is, “What can your post do for YOU?” Remember, paying it forward will pay big dividends in the end. Be there for veterans, and they will follow.

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2025-2026

Special Notices and Exceptions

- Membership Divisions for Posts will correspond with National Divisions
- 101% will be District and Post goals
- Membership numbers will be verified by National Headquarters
- Department membership contests end April 30, 2026
- Individuals, Posts, and Districts are limited to one win in each contest category, unless otherwise stated. All checks will be made out to Post or District Quartermasters.
- All requirements must be met by April 30, 2026
- All membership transmittals for All State Status to receive a cap at Department Convention must be recorded at Department Headquarters no later than April 30, 2026.
- All membership transmittal for All American Status must be recorded at National Headquarters no later than June 30, 2026.

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Individual Membership Award

Contest #1 – Lead the Pennsylvania Team

The Post in each division with the highest new, continuous, and reinstated members by August 28, 2025 will receive a Life Membership.

Contest #2 – Upgrade Contest

Any Post who reaches 95% by September 30, 2025 will be entered into a drawing for a Life Membership. If the member is a Life Member, it will upgrade to a Legacy Membership.

Contest- 3 Early Bird

All Posts who reach a 101% membership by December 31, 2025 will receive \$1.00 per member.

Contest #4 – Veterans Day Contest

Every member that recruits two new or reinstated members between July 1, 2025 and November 11, 2025 will be entered for a Life Membership or a legacy Life Membership upgrade. If the member is already a Gold Life Member, they will receive a \$300.00 gift certificate from the VFW store or give a Life Membership to a Veteran of their choice.

Contest #6 OTI Attendance Award

All members that attend an OTI training session will be eligible for a drawing to provide one of four life memberships they can award to members of their Post to include themselves.

Contest #7 – Five Recruits

Every member that recruits five new members or reinstates a VFW member, verified by the National Membership Program, between February 1, 2026 and April 30 2026 will be entered in a drawing for a Life Membership. If the member is already a Life Member, They will be upgraded to Legacy Life Membership. If member is already a Gold Legacy Life Member. They will have a choice between a \$200.00 VFW store gift certificate or \$200.00 cash.

Contest #8 – Continuous to Life Membership

A special monthly drawing for a life membership to be awarded each month from August 2025 through May 2026 for a continuous member to Life Membership.

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2025–2026 Membership Achievement Awards

Post Level Contest (Post Divisions 1–6)

All Posts that properly report 101% in membership including 15 reinstated members, will receive award as listed below.

<i>Contest # 9</i>	December 31, 2025	2 Life Memberships
<i>Contest # 10</i>	February 28, 2026	1 Life Membership
<i>Contest #11</i>	April 30, 2026	\$250 VFW Store Gift Certificate

Post Level Contest (Post Divisions 7–11)

All Posts that properly report 101% in membership including 10 reinstated members, will receive award as listed below.

<i>Contest # 12</i>	December 31, 2025	2 Life Memberships	
<i>Contest # 13</i>	February 28, 2026	1 Life Membership	
<i>Contest #14</i>	April 30, 2026	\$250 VFW Store Gift Certificate	

Contest #15

Every Post who obtains 101% in membership, plus meets all mandatory criteria on page 10 by April 30, 2026, will be entered into a drawing for one (1) of five (5) Life Membership.

Every Post who obtains 101% in membership, plus meets all mandatory criteria on page 10 by June 30, 2026, will be entered into a drawing for one (1) of five (5) Life Membership.

All State Commander and Quartermaster Contest

Contest #16

All-State Commanders and Quartermasters will receive the distinctive VFW Cap, pin and special recognition at the State Convention.

An outstanding Post Commander and Post Quartermaster will be selected Captain of the All-State Team based on the scoring of the All-State worksheet & membership over the goal by **April 30, 2026** and will receive a special gift from State Commander Roland at the State Convention.

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All State Post/District Commanders and Quartermasters Worksheet

**To be considered for All State Status this worksheet must be submitted to
Department Headquarters, 4002 Fenton Avenue. Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943
Postmarked no later than April 30, 2026 to receive Cap at Convention
*ALL STATE WORKSHEET IS MANDATORY***

Name _____ Post # _____ District# _____

Commander's Hat Size; _____ Mandatory Criteria Quartermaster Hat Size: _____

- Membership Properly Reported as attaining percentage goal of 101%
- All Post and Home Association By-Laws (if Applicable) **must** be Current (within 5 years) Date: _____
- Post/Home Association **must** have Articles of Incorporation on file with Department Headquarters. Date: _____
- Purchase Buddy Poppies. (minimum 100 Poppies) Date: _____ Check # _____
- Voice of Democracy Entry. Yes [☐] No [☐] Must have minimum of one (1) entry to District Judging
- Patriot's Pen Entry. Yes [☐] No [☐] Must have minimum of one (1) entry to District Judging
- Donation to Commander's Special Project (at least \$100.00) Must be sent to Department Headquarters **Earmarked Special Project (Pittsburgh Warriors Hockey)**. Date: _____ Check # _____
- All Posts must submit a total of four Community Service reports for 2025-2026: One report each Quarter starting July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 . Filing monthly is an option and preferred.
- Donation to Arthritis (\$50.00) Date: _____ Check #: _____
- Donation to Diabetes (\$50.00) Date: _____ Check #: _____
- Donation to Barger Nursing Scholarship (\$50.00) Date: _____ Check: _____
- Donation for National Home (\$50.00) Date: _____ Check: _____
- Post/District must have submission of one EMT or 911 Dispatcher or Firefighter or Police Officer Candidate for Dept. Safety Award **(Entries must be received in Dept. Headquarters by December 15, 2025)**
- All Post Quarterly Trustee Reports Including June 2025 must be on file.
Dates Trustee Reports sent to Dept. June: _____ September _____ December _____ March _____
- Post must have QM Bonded and on record at Department HQ. **by November 30, 2025** Date: _____ Check # _____
- Post Commander and/or Sr. Vice Commander and/or Jr. Vice Commander and/or Quartermaster **must attend all District Meetings (Post/District CMDR must attend at least attend 50% of ALL District Meetings)**.
- Post/District must not be in arrears for the current or prior year (e.g., dues, audits, Reports, etc.)
- Post Inspection is recorded for 2025-2026 by January 31, 2026. Date Inspected _____ By _____
- All-State requirements must be completed July 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026, to receive cap at Convention.

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*To be considered for All State Status, this worksheet must be submitted to the Department Headquarters, 4002 Fenton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943
Postmarked no later than April 30 2026
ALL STATE WORKSHEET IS REQUIRED*

Point Criteria		Points
Purchase Three (3) Buddy Poppies per member	10	
Membership % December 31, 2025	20	
Or Membership % by February 28, 2026	15	
Or Membership % by April 30, 2026	10	
New or Reinstated Members by December 31, 2025 Max 75 pts.	5 ea.	
Donation Commander's Project	20	
Donation to Barger Scholarship	10	
Voice of Democracy Student (Donations do not qualify)	50	
Patriots Pen Student (Donations do not qualify)	50	
Donation to National Home	10	
Law Enforcement, Fire Fighter, 911 Dispatcher, EMT/Dispatcher (Any one (1) of them)	30	
Post/District Inspections submitted to Department by January 31, 2026.	10	
VFW Member of the Year Nomination	30	
Participate in Smart Maher Teacher Entry	10	
Donation to Homeless Veterans	10	
Department Headquarters will validate		

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District Awards

2025–2026 District Membership Awards

All Districts that properly report their membership goal of 101% will receive an award for the district. Dates and awards are listed below.

<i>Contest # 17</i>	December 31, 2025	3 Life Memberships
<i>Contest # 18</i>	March, 2026	2 Life Memberships
<i>Contest # 19</i>	May 31, 2026	1 Life Membership

2025–2026 District Commander Award

Contest #20

All District Commanders who have attained their membership goal of 101% by April 30, 2026 will receive:

- All-State Commanders Cap at Department Convention
- Jacket (Style to be determined by State Commander)

Contest #21

All District Commanders who have attained their membership goal of 101% by May 1, 2026 and June 30th will receive:

- Outstanding District Commanders Cap
- Jacket (Style to be determined by State Commander)

Contest #22

All District Membership Chairpersons who attain their membership goal of 101% by April 30, 2026 will be entered into a drawing for a Life Membership. If the member is a Life Member they will be upgrade to Legacy Life Membership. If they are a Gold Life Member, they can choice either a \$300 VFW store gift certificate or award a Life Membership to a member of their choosing. Drawing to be held the next business day following April 30, 2026

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Membership Plaques and Awards

Contest #23: Joe Salvo Award for Individual Post Members

The individual member that recruits the most new and reinstated members (Over 25 members) between July 1, 2025 and April 30, 2026 will receive \$250.00. Membership team members and Certified National Recruiters will not be eligible. National Recruiter Report will be used to verify.

Contest #24: Certified National Recruiters

Certified National Recruiters with the most recruited members according to the membership report will receive a gift from Commander Roland and a \$200.00 gift certificate from the VFW Store.

Contest #25: Robert Musser Memorial Plaque

This plaque will be awarded to the post having attained the greatest number increase by April 30, 2026

Contest #26: Van Zandt Award

To be eligible, a post must recruit at least 20 new and reinstated members prior to April 30, 2026. The post recruiting the most new and reinstated members as a number of existing memberships receives a plaque.

Contest #27: Chosnyk Award

A Life Membership or upgrade is awarded to the District having the greatest number increase as of April 30, 2026.

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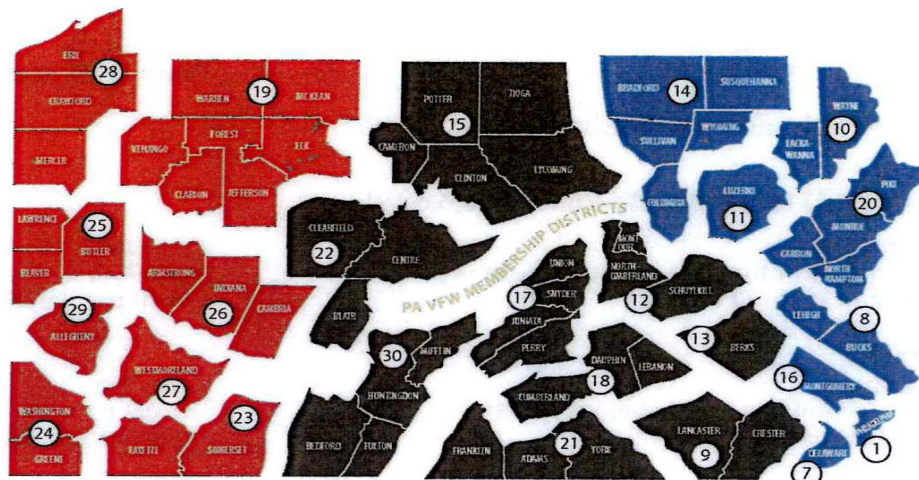
ALL-STATE POST DIVISIONS & QUOTA

Division	Membership	Minimum %
<u>Division 1</u>	<u>951-+</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 2</u>	<u>750-950</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 3</u>	<u>356-749</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 4</u>	<u>246-355</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 5</u>	<u>185-245</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 6</u>	<u>143-184</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 7</u>	<u>112-142</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 8</u>	<u>88-111</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 9</u>	<u>68-87</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 10</u>	<u>51-67</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Division 11</u>	<u>1-50</u>	<u>101</u>

WEST:
19, 23, 24, 25,
26, 27, 28, 29

CENTRAL:
9, 12, 13, 15,
17, 18, 21, 22, 30

EAST:
1, 7, 8, 10,
11, 14, 16, 20



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2025-2026 Department Membership Team

Department Membership Chairman

Thomas A. Sally
2638 Geryville Pike,
Pennsburg PA 18073
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Membership Team

Henry Mannella
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John Walker
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Cell Phone: (610-220-5053)
Post 928 District 7
Email: fstsgtwalker@comcast.net

Craig Fisher
51 North Wolf Street, Manheim, PA 17545
Cell (717) 405-0980)
District 9
Email: cofish17@windstream.net

Joseph Magnotta
657 Jefferson Ave, Jermyn, PA 18433
Cell Phone: (570) 991-7010)
Post 4712 District 16
Email: jmatcret@gmail.com

Walt Hartnett
349 Spring Mill Avenue Conshohocken, PA 19428
Cell Phone: (484) 362-3957)
Post 1074 District 16
Email: walt.hartnett4@gmail.com

VFW Certified National Recruiters (CNR)

Henry Mannella Phone: 412-500-3501

Earl Stump Phone: 760-443-6811

Dave W. Gyger Phone: 717-991-1473

Email: h.mannella72@yahoo.com

Email: gstump.90@gmail.com

Email: dje57@verizon.net

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2025-2026 Planning Calendar

2025

June 19	Juneteenth (Department HQ Closed)
June 28	VFW National Home 100th Anniversary Celebration Eaton Rapids, MI
July 4	Independence Day (Department HQ Closed)
July 11	Barger Scholarship Golf Scramble, The Bridges Golf club 6729 York Rd., Abbottstown, PA 17301 717-624-9551
July 11 -12	Department Flying Squadron, Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111 (Invitation Only)
July 13	Central PTI - Captain Phillips VFW Post #4129 District 30 (8:00 AM) 603 Lower Main St, Saxton, PA 16678 (814) 635-3079
July 14	Central PTI – Millersville Manor VFW Post #7294 District 9 (6:00 PM) 219 Walnut Hill Rd, Millersville, PA 17551 (717) 872-2177
July 19	Eastern PTI – Abington Memorial VFW Post #7069 District 10 (8:00 AM) 402 Winola Road, Clarks Summit, PA 18411 (570) 586-9821
July 20	Eastern PTI - Douglas A Post- Harry C Wilson II Memorial VFW Post #6493 District 8 645 Louis Drive, Warminster, PA 18974 (215) 773-0693 (8:00 AM)
July 26	Western PTI – SSG Albert E Moss, Jr. Memorial VFW Post #7842 District 28 6913 Gehrton Road, Linesville, PA 16424 (814) 683-5404 (8:00 AM)
July 27	Western PTI – Natrona Heights VFW Post #894 District 29 (8:00 AM) 894 Veterans Lane, Natrona Heights, PA 15065 (724) 904-7649
August 9-13	National Convention Columbus, OH
September 1:	Labor Day (Department HQ Closed)
September 11	Patriot's Day
September 19	POW-MIA Day
September 25-28	Commander-in-Chief's Homecoming, De Moines, IA
September 28	Gold Star Mother's Day

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October 13	Columbus Day (Department HQ (Closed)
October 24-25	Eastern States Conference – Wilmington, DE
October 31-Nov 1	Commander’s Testimonial – DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh Cranberry
November 4	Election Day
November 11	Veterans Day (Department HQ Closed)
November 27 -28	Thanksgiving Holiday (Department HQ Closed)
December 24 -26	Christmas Holiday (Department HQ Closed)
December 31-Jan 2	New Year’s Holiday (Department HQ Closed)

2026

January 1	New Year’s Day (Department HQ Closed)
January 15-18	Mid-Winter Conference: Eisenhower Hotel, Gettysburg, PA
January 19	Martin Luther King Jr (Department HQ Closed)
February 16	President’s Day (Department HQ Closed)
Feb 28-March 5	Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.
March 27-29	Women Veterans Conference– Pittsburgh Marriott North
April 3-6	Good Friday & Easter Holiday Weekend (Department HQ Closed)
May 1:	Loyalty Day
May 25:	Memorial Day (Department HQ Closed)
June 17-20	Department Convention: DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh Cranberry
June 22:	Juneteenth Observed (Department HQ Closed)

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Recruiting Tips

1. **KNOW THE VFW:** As a recruiter, be aware of the VFW programs.
2. **NETWORK FOR MEMBERS:** As coworkers, friends, and family if they know Veterans. Follow up on leads as quickly as you can.
3. **MAKE PERSONAL CONTACT:** Try to meet prospective members face to face when possible.
4. **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK:** Many of our fellow Veterans have never been asked to join the VFW. When you ask, you may be pleasantly surprised.
5. **BE PERSISTENT< NOT PESTERING:** If they decline, respect their decision.
6. **LOOK FOR COMMON EXPERIENCES:** Ask questions to learn about their military experiences, family, and daily life. Describe the benefits of membership in a way that relates to the potential member.
7. **LISTEN CAREFULLY:** Be a good sales person by being an active listener. Listen for excuses and objections and be prepared to overcome them.
8. **BE PREPARED TO SHARE YOUR STORY:** Consider why you are a member of the VFW and tell others why you are so committed to our organization. Your experiences with the VFW is a great recruiting tool.
9. **BE PREPARED:** You may meet potential members anywhere so be sure to keep an application with you at all times. If you use a smartphone, learn about the VFW app and how you can use it to recruit. Stay current as VFW National Membership provides updates and assistance.
10. **ENJOY YOURSELF:** If you are enjoying yourself, potential members will feel your enthusiasm and be more likely to join.

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Successful Membership Booths

Start Early

- This will work best as a joint VFW and Auxiliary operation. Cooperation is key.
- Contact the manager of a shopping mall, trade show, state or county fair, or any place there is a large public gathering. Ask for permission (or pay) for a space to set up a membership booth.
- Give advance news releases to your local newspaper and radio stations regarding your membership booth.
- Place recruiting posters and signs in store windows, post signs at the entrances to your city and along major thoroughfares or any place the public will notice them.
- Obtain an adequate supply of recruiting and informational materials. Some material is available from Department and National Headquarters. Other material can be obtained from the VFW store.

The Operation

- Decorate your booth with recruiting posters. Display informational material on the table. At least one VFW member and one Auxiliary member, wearing VFW caps with Post or VFW logo, should be in the booth at all times. Display a sign large enough to let everyone know you are there.
- If local and state laws allow a drawing, get a member or merchant to donate a gift. Prepare tickets with stubs that request name address and phone number. Hold the drawing for the prize and save the stubs for later contact.
- As eligible Veterans visit the booth, inform them of the VFW programs and pass out informational material.
- As eligible Veterans visit the booth, have them fill out a form giving information on their military service and whether they are interested in joining the VFW. If they wish to join, SIGN THEM UP. If they don't wish to join at this time, don't be discouraged. Make sure you get their name, address, and phone number and contact them at a later date.

The Follow Up

- Within a few days, have your membership team contact the eligible Veterans and talk to them about joining the VFW. This is the time to verify their eligibility and collect their dues.
- Be sure membership teams are prepared to answer questions about the various programs the VFW sponsors.
- When a Veterans joins, make them feel welcomed. Ask them to take an active part in the Post and to help recruit others.

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It is not the responsibility of the post membership team to do all the work. Every member should be involved and made to feel a part of the membership program. Post activities attract members. A strong, active Post helps promote membership. Some membership builders are:

- Activities in community service, Americanism and youth programs.
- Capable service officer to assist veterans in the community.
- Dances, dinners and other social functions for VFW members and their guests.
- Publicize all Post events.
- Maintain a clean, well-managed Post and Canteen.
- Hold interesting and informative Post meetings.
- Have active cooperation between your Post and Auxiliary.

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A Piece of History

What does Gold, Blue, White and Silver Represent?

During World War I, an Army officer of the 5th Ohio Infantry, Captain Robert L. Queissner who had two sons serving on the front line, designed and patented the Blue Star Service Banner. This service flag/banner quickly became the unofficial symbol of a mother and/or father who had a child in military service.

Throughout WWI, American women who had family members serving their country wore a Blue Star around their left arm. As the war progressed and the number of dead escalated, mothers wanted to express their loss as well as the pride and honor they felt for their country. Those mothers of the fallen began sewing a Gold Star over the blue star and began calling themselves Gold Star Mothers.

If the family member symbolized is killed in action or dies while serving in the military, the blue star representing that individual will be superimposed on it a gold star of smaller size so that the blue forms a border. The traditional Gold Star Mothers and Families Day is the fourth Sunday in September.

A White Star Family is one who had a close relative that served in the military and lost them to suicide. The purpose of the White Star Family program is to honor those service members and provide proper care and support to the families.

The Silver Star Families are those who's loved ones has been wounded, contracted a serious illness or injury in a war zone. On Silver Star Service Banner Day, traditionally May 1, we recommit to caring for those who return to us wounded or ill.

Many Gold, Blue, White, and Silver Star Families reside within our community. Their sacrifice has been great and may their courage and patriotism inspire us to greater service for our country.

As members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, we ask you to remember the sacrifices of these Families as their loved ones gave their "last full measure of devotion" to preserve the ideals of a free America.

May we, in grateful remembrance never forget Freedom is Not Free and that much has been sacrificed for our freedoms.

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Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.