



V. F. W. POST 4495 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

515 N. WEST AVENUE
TAYLORVILLE, ILLINOIS 62568
(217)824-2115



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Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy Essay Contests Winners



VFW Post 4495 and VFW 4495 Auxiliary proudly announced their essay contest winners at the annual VFW Christmas Party on December 12th.

Post 4495 Patriot's Pen Winners were: 1st place-Kendall Ramsey, 2nd place-Opal Ryan; 3rd place-Joslyn Stephens, and 4th place-Dominic Corso. Post 4495 Voice of Democracy winners were Ella Hohenstein-1st place and Julie Wayman-2nd place. Based on the number of contest entries the post was allowed to move our top three Patriots Pen winners and our top Voice of Democracy winner to District 11 Competition.



Pictured on the left: (L to R) Post 4495 Patriots Pen Winners Kendall Ramsey-1st; Opal Ryan-2nd; Joslyn Stephens-3rd; & Dominic Corso-4th and Post 4495 Voice of Democracy Winner Ella Hohenstein-1st .



Pictured on the right: Julie Wayman-2nd place Post 4495 Voice of Democracy Winner.

District 11 Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen

Post 4495 was truly honored to have all of our Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy Contest winners that moved forward to place at the District Level! Patriots Pen District 11 Winners were: 1st place-Opal Ryan, 2nd place-Joslyn Stephens, and 3rd place-Kendall Ramsey. Ella Hohenstein placed 3rd in the District 11 Voice of Democracy. We have some AMAZING, PATRIOTIC young adults in our area. We thank them for their commitment to our Veterans and wish them much luck in their bright futures! We can't wait to see them shine in next year's competitions.

Pictured on the right District 11 Awardees:

(L to R) Donna Brown-District 11 Auxiliary President, Melissa Alberssen-TJHS 8th grade faculty, Ella Hohenstein-VOD 3rd place, Opal Ryan-PP 1st place, Joslyn Stephens-PP 2nd place, Kendall Ramsey-PP 3rd, Shelley Graves-TJHS 8th grade faculty, Rick Hobbs-District 11 Commander.



District 11 Voice of Democracy & Patriots Pen Winners

VFW Post 4495 Teacher of the Year



Congratulations to Shannan Wintermeyer-Hobbs on receiving the Teacher of the Year Award from Post 4495. Shannan is a member of our local auxiliary. She is currently a CNA instructor for Petersburg-Porta High School for the past 12 years and previously taught for Lincoln Land Community College. She was recognized for promoting citizenship education in both her classroom and school. Shannan a Navy Veteran focuses on compassion not only to elderly, but also to coworkers and peers.

The COMMANDER'S CORNER

Greetings everyone.

As many of you noticed, we were closed for the month of January and recently re-opened on February 6th . We cleaned, painted, and updated many features in the Memorial Home just in time for Fish Fry's. I want to thank everyone who was a part of this effort. They give so much year in and year out selflessly. We have come a long way but still have a climb ahead of us. The only way forward is to keep improving as we go. That improvement process also comes with change.

As we move forward it is also a time to reflect on the past. I reflected on the people we have lost, the people we met over the last year, and the memories that have been made.

We are working with Christian County to get our very own Veteran's Assistance Commission up and running. Details need to be worked out with the county, but we are optimistic about the future. This should include a VA accredited Veteran's Service Officer to assist veterans with their VA Benefits. This does not take the place of the Veteran's Services Officer that the State of Illinois has in Taylorville but will work with that office and its staff for the benefit of local veterans. More to come on this as we progress.

With that, stay warm and get ready for spring!
Sincerely,

Rob Mathews, Post #4495 Commander



QUARTERMASTER REPORT

As Quartermaster, I'd like to take a moment to thank all our members for their continued support and dedication to our Post. Because of you, our organization remains strong and active in supporting veterans and our local community.

Right now, we are proud to have **215 members** in our Post. Each one of you plays an important role in keeping our traditions alive and ensuring that we continue to fulfill the mission of helping veterans and their families.

Membership is the backbone of the VFW, and we are always looking to grow. If you know a veteran who is not currently a member of the VFW, please encourage them to join and send them our way. Many veterans don't realize they are eligible or don't know what the VFW has to offer, and sometimes all it takes is conversation and an invitation.

By growing our membership, we strengthen our voice for veterans' issues and ensure that we can continue our programs and support for years to come.

Thank you again for being a part of our Post and for everything you do for our fellow veterans and our community. Semper Fi!!!!

Darrell DeVore, Quartermaster



Events Committee

Hello everyone! I hope this newsletter finds you all doing well.

We completed our first week of Fish Fry dinners and it was a HUGE success. We have a few things coming

up and hope everyone is able to come and enjoy themselves. Fish fries will continue every Friday until April 3rd. The Auxiliary will be holding their semiannual Pancake Sausage Breakfast on Saturday, April 18th. Following, we have our Memorial Home Glo Bingo scheduled for May 30th. Make sure to get your tickets in advance so you can spend the rest on the yummy Margaritas! We welcome any and all volunteers for these events and any events that we hold at the hall. We are always welcoming ideas that anyone would like to see happen at the Memorial Home. Thank you all for your support and we hope to see everyone soon!

Kari Scott, Events Committee Chair



From the Editor

WOW,... what a whirlwind of a few months we have had here at our Taylorville VFW! It takes all of us working together to accomplish what we do here for our Veterans and our community. The excitement is buzzing around the hall. The renovations have lifted the spirits of so many. The anticipation of some awesome upcoming events is bringing a reenergized enthusiasm to **YOUR HOME!** Be sure to share your ideas and suggestions with a VFW or Auxiliary Board Member. I hope you enjoy all of the articles and watch for some AMAZING upcoming events.

We look forward to seeing you at YOUR VFW!

*Marcy Koches, Editor - (217) 820-9524
Vfwpost4495newsletter@gmail.com*

Chaplain's Corner

Greetings from your Chaplin.

As I sit here with a lot on mind; the Lincoln pilgrimage last week, hearing tonight of the passing of a 'sister', I'm reminded of how important it is to not only reach out to our brothers and sisters but to continue the buddy checks, even if they are long distance. On a personal note, a lot has happened since our last check in, besides the pilgrimage and the news of a fallen sister, I buried an uncle who was also a 'brother'. The gathering of family and friends from long ago to present, I'm reminded that even over the years; however long they may be; it is important to keep in touch. As I close this letter I reflect on how fragile and short life can be, please keep in touch with family, friends, and fellow veterans. We need to stay connected, even if it is across the seas.

Please go with God and praise his name.

Yours with Christ, Beverly Walker, Chaplain



News from the Auxiliary

Dear Members,
As we move into spring, I want to take a moment to remind everyone about a few important items for our Auxiliary.

Membership Dues:

If you haven't yet paid your membership dues, please do so as soon as possible. Staying current helps keep our Auxiliary strong and allows us to continue the important work we do for our veterans, their families, and our community. If you are experiencing any financial difficulties or hardships, please don't hesitate to reach out. We do have ways to assist under certain circumstances, and we're here to help one another.

Leadership Announcement:

After much thought, I have decided not to seek a second term as President. Personal matters now require my full attention, and I feel it is time to pass the torch. If you are interested in taking on a leadership role and continuing to help guide our Auxiliary forward, please plan to attend our April meeting. Nominations and elections will take place then. Your participation is essential — we are always in need of dedicated volunteers to help keep our organization strong and thriving.

Upcoming Event:

Don't forget our Pancake and Sausage Breakfast on April 18th! This is always a wonderful time to gather, share good food, and support our ongoing programs. We hope to see everyone there — bring your family and friends!

Thank you all for your continued support, hard work, and dedication. Serving alongside you has been an honor, and I'm so proud of everything we've accomplished together.

Yours in service,

Francesca Collebrusco

President VFW Auxiliary #4495



2nd Kids Old Fashion Christmas ~ HUGE SUCCESS!!!

Sunday, December 7th the VFW Hall was bursting at the seams with excitement and the Christmas Spirit! Over 300 kids and parents enjoyed this **FREE EVENT** complete with cookie decorating, crafts, games, snacks, prizes, and pictures with Santa himself! The event is sponsored by ABATE and VFW Riders, but it would not be possible without all of the wonderful volunteers and generous donations. Thank you and here is to an even BIGGER and BETTER third year!

Mark your calendars ~ December 5, 2026

VFW Auxiliary 4495 Scholarship

VFW Auxiliary 4495 is still accepting applications for their annual scholarships through **March 15, 2026**. Thanks to the generosity of Salvage Dawgs and a memorial for Norma Durbin the auxiliary will award a total of three \$500 continuing education scholarships to an accredited college or trade school.

This year's essay theme is:

"Explain How the Service of a Veteran Has Impacted Your Life"

Applicants must be a member, spouse, child, or grandchild of a Post 4495 VFW or VFW Auxiliary member in good standing for one year. Previous applicants may reapply. Applications are still available for pickup at the VFW Memorial Home.

VFW Auxiliary sadly draped our charter with the passing of the following beloved auxiliary members.

Sonja Gilmore - 04/17/2025

Jerry Ridgley - 11/26/2025

Betty Pallai - 01/28/2026



MEMORIAL HOME RENOVATIONS

Great thanks and appreciation to all of those who have gone above and beyond to make these renovations come together so quickly.



Although we were so focused on the tasks at hand and forgot to photograph the whole process, we wanted to share a few snapshots from along the way and the new look in the banquet hall. There was a LOT of elbow grease and deep cleaning throughout the entire building! Ceiling tiles and lights were updated in the bar area and bathrooms. The banquet hall had the old paneling removed and an updated color palette brings a fresh new feeling to the room. Lighting, switches, and thermostats were replaced. Honor photos were moved to the front of the hall as to highlight those that GAVE ALL for our country. The other display cases will be relocated to a place of honor in the near future. New registers were installed and we are now able to accept debit and credit cards at the bar. A digital message board shares information on upcoming events to our members and patrons. There are MANY projects on our TO DO LIST so if you want to help either by volunteering or by donating, please reach out to one of the Memorial Home Board Members.

TOGETHER WE CAN DO GREAT THINGS!

Wreaths Across America - Camp Butler



Over 10,000 Wreaths were laid on December 13th 2025 to honor those who have served our country with pride and honor. It takes a small army of volunteers to complete this mission. We are already working towards December 19th 2026. There are 33,000+ graves of honorable soldiers at Camp Butler and as of February 1st there are 1,542 wreaths already purchased.

For information in how you can be a part of honoring their service visit: wreathscrossamerica.org/IL0295 or email: bethkuntzman@gmail.com

TAYLORVILLE VFW AUXILIARY #4495 PRESENTS:

PANCAKE & SAUSAGE OR BISCUITS & GRAVY BREAKFAST



SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026

7:00 - 11:00 A.M.

TAYLORVILLE VFW POST

515 N. WEST AVE., TAYLORVILLE, IL



COST: \$12 ADULTS

KIDS UNDER 7: \$6.00

CARRY OUTS AVAILABLE!



MIDSTATE ABATE

AND

TAYLORVILLE

VFW RIDERS



DOUBLE GUN RAFFLE

Raffle Tickets ~ \$10 each
Drawing September 26, 2026



Hellcat Pro OSP 9mm 15+1
with 5 magazines
& 250 rounds of ammo



CVA Scout V3 Legend Blue/Grey Synthetic

1st draw receives choice ~ 2nd draw receives remaining gun
Need not be present to win

Winner MUST have valid FOID card

Gun must be claimed within 30 days

Tickets available through any ABATE members or VFW Riders.

Contact Greg Toberman-217.561.6138 or DJ DeVore-217.820.5619 for additional information

GLOBINGO

Not Your Grandma's Bingo!

VETERANS MEMORIAL HOME TO BENEFIT VETERAN OF FOREIGN WARS

Saturday, May 30, 2026

Doors @ 5:30pm Bingo @ 7:00pm

VFW

515 N West Ave, Taylorville, IL

OVER \$1000 IN CASH PRIZES!

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:

KARI SCOTT 217-820-7690

ADVANCE TICKETS THRU 5/27 ONLY

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MUST BE 18 OR OLDER TO ATTEND

Includes 6 bingo cards for 10 games

Also includes Glow hat & Dauber

(\$5 per additional 6 cards)

FOOD AND BEVERAGES FOR PURCHASE

NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINK

Lest we forget

They gave their today for your tomorrow

Before Memorial Day in 1922, VFWs conducted their first poppy distribution, becoming the first veterans' organization to organize a nationwide distribution. The poppy soon was adopted as the official memorial flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, as it remains today.

During the 1923 encampment, it was decided that VFW "Buddy"® Poppies would be assembled by disabled and needy veterans who would be paid for their work to provide them with financial assistance. The next year, disabled veterans at the Buddy Poppy factory in Pittsburgh assembled VFW Buddy Poppies. The designation "Buddy Poppy" was adopted at that time.

In February 1924, the VFW registered the name Buddy Poppy with the U.S. Patent Office. A certificate was issued on May 20, 1924, granting our organization all trademark rights in the name of Buddy under the classification of artificial flowers.

The VFW Buddy Poppy program provides compensation to those who assemble the poppies, provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the VFW National Home.

**Please consider volunteering a couple hours for our local
VFW Buddy Poppy Drive on May 8th and 9th .**

Sign up sheet at the VMH Bar.



POST 4495 BENEFITS ADVISOR

On my tours thru the VFW Dept, Districts ,and American Legion Posts all are suffering 3 major things some more than others. Memberships are getting smaller every year and their

leadership is declining. Some posts can't fill all their officer positions making it harder to keep the posts and halls running and doing the much needed care our Veterans needs. The larger posts with canteens and employees need a lot more help and it takes a lot of events to keep them going. Smaller posts that meet in a library or public space do a little better but don't have the membership or officers to do all the things that need to do for their local Veterans. Please look at your neighbors and fellow vets that don't belong to a hall or post and ask they to join or come out to one of our events and support us. Also, please bring us your new ideas to bring more people in to get involved. You can do this by sharing your newsletter with your friends and let them see what we as a Post are doing. Believe me; we are not too big to fail.

So to recap; WE NEED MEMBERSHIP, LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, AND MONEY to operate and help our Vets and their families in need.

VFW Department convention is June 11 thru 14 at the Crown Plaza Springfield Illinois. Sadly, it GETS SMALLER EVERY YEAR. It is close enough that everyone could stop by for a few hours and be part of it.

All of the Departments can create poppy displays that won in their District's judging. OUR Post 4495 could enter up to 3 entries: one for the POST, one for the AUXILIARY, and one for the RIDERS! We have plenty of poppies to make the displays. If you have any questions, you can call me and I will be happy to give you more details.

Deadline for judging at our post level is May 3rd at noon. Let's see how CREATIVE you can get!

Spring and warmer weather is around the corner. Enjoy it while you can!

**Your Post Benefits Advisor
Glen Goodrich ~ 217 820 2038
navy5858@hotmail.com**



TAYLORVILLE VFW RIDERS

As we start looking ahead to spring, the VFW Riders are geared up for another great year of motorcycle rides, events, and supporting our fellow veterans and community.

With warmer weather just around the corner, we're excited to get the bikes back on the road and put some miles on together. We're planning plenty of rides this season and always welcome anyone who would like to come along and join us.

This year, the VFW Riders are proud to be teaming up with Midstate ABATE for a Double Gun Raffle. This joint effort helps support our organizations and the work we do throughout the year. Raffle tickets are \$10 each, and the drawing will be held on September 26, 2026. First draw gets their choice of firearm, and second draw receives the remaining one. The winner does not need to be present but must have a valid FOID card, and the firearm must be claimed within 30 days.

If you're interested in purchasing a raffle ticket, please get ahold of one of the VFW Riders and we will be happy to help you out. Your support goes a long way in helping us continue our activities and events.

As always, we appreciate the support from our Post and community. Keep an eye out for upcoming ride announcements, and we hope to see you on the road with us soon as riding season gets underway.

To our members, supporters, families, and fellow veterans: Thank you.

**Together, we ride.
Together, we remember.
Together, we serve.**



**Semper Fi!!!!!!
Darrell DeVore
VFW Riders President**



SHE'S STILL HIDING!

Queen of Hearts every Wednesday
until she is found
Doors open at 6:00
Meal served 6:00-7:30 PM
Drawing at 8:00 PM

Queen of Hearts Pot is over \$3400.
Will you be the lucky one to find her?

**VFW POST 4495 ROLL CALL
OF FALLEN COMRADES**

*"Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky,
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.*

*Thanks and praise, for our days
Neath the sun, 'neath the stars, 'neath the sky,
As we go, this we know, God is nigh."*



John Mentz
04/18/1941 - 06/12/2024
US Army-Vietnam

In Loving Memory



- Dayne Ray**
- Earl Acup**
by Dayna Acup
- Herman Altman, Sr**
by Rita Altman
- "Beans" Mammen**
- Darriel Mammen**
by Tracy Carls
- Reilo "Red" Cambruzzi**
by Mike Cambruzzi & family
- Jesse Thomas Franklin**
by Lucille Franklin
- Eugene Hoffman**
- James Nagle**
- Robert Opolka**
by Rick & Gail Hoffman
- Jay Huggins**
by Cheryl Huggins
- Lawrence "Pop" Impastato**
by Bruce Impastato
- Lester "Bud" Kuntzman**
by Kathy Kuntzman & family

- Bill Marshall**
by Ronnie Marshall & family
- Harry "Red" McKinnie**
by McKinnie family
- John B Perona**
by Ron Perona & family
- Byron Peters**
by Nora Peters
- Larry "Doc" Prose**
by Sharon Prose & family
- Owen H Harper, Jr**
by Kathy Richards
- Ed F Voggetzer**
by Marilyn Voggetzer
- George R Weddle**
by Enes Anne Weddle
- Howard "Hack" Wilson**
by Willie Wilson & family
- John C Young**
by Barb Young
- Reno Yattoni**
by Marcia & Doug McKinnie

Sponsoring Past Commanders

- Scott Campbell**
- Fred Campogni**
- David Collier**
- DJ DeVore**
- Glen Goodrich, Jr**
- Micah Hankla**
- Charles Schneider**
- Roy Sherman**



**UNITED
WE
STAND!**

Sponsoring Members

- Rick "Lurch" Hobbs and "Stitch"**
District 11 Commander

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Email - Inspectordad.LLC@gmail.com
www.inspectordadhomeinspections.com

**Veterans Strengthening America
Still Serving ~ Always Honoring**

Honor Guard Chaplain—Ricky Reed
American Legion Commander and
VFW Adjutant—Gwen Diehl-Reed

Honoring Past Commanders

- The late Herman Altman *by Jim Altman & family*
- The late Loren Arkebauer *by Norvella Arkebauer*
- The late Kenneth Backus *by Suzy Schneider*
- The late Jack Beaman *by Barry Jones & family*
- The late Dave Brasche *by Sheryl Brasche*
- The late Joe Rodden *by Judy Rodden*
- The late Ed F Voggetzer *by Marilyn Voggetzer*

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT THE VETERANS MEMORIAL HOME

(Scheduled Events as of 3/1/26) (All Events Subject to Change)



MARCH

- 6 Lenten Fish Fry-#3 - 5:30-7 PM
- 8 VFW Riders Meeting
Officers-4 PM/Mtg-4:30 PM
- 9 VFW Post 4495 Meeting-7 PM
- 10 ABATE Meeting-7 PM
- 11 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 13 Lenten Fish Fry-#4 - 5:30-7 PM
- 15 VFW Auxiliary Scholarship Due
- 15 ABATE Chili Cook Off - Noon
- 18 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 19 VFW Auxiliary Meeting-7 PM
- 20 Lenten Fish Fry-#5 - 5:30-7 PM
- 25 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 27 Lenten Fish Fry-#6 - 5:30-7 PM

APRIL

- 1 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM



APRIL-(cont.)

- 3 Lenten Fish Fry-#7 - 5:30-7 PM
- 5 **Happy Easter-VFW Closed**
- 6 Members Steak Night-6 PM
- 8 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 12 VFW Riders Meeting
Officers-5 PM/Mtg-5:30 PM
- 13 VFW Post 4495 Meeting-7 PM
- 14 ABATE Meeting-7 PM
- 15 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 16 VFW Auxiliary Meeting-7 PM
- 18 Auxiliary Pancake-7:00-11 AM
- 18 Midnight Revival - TBA
- 22 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 25 Veterans Point Memorial
Fundraiser Dinner-6:00 PM
- 29 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM

MAY

- 4 Members Steak Night-6 PM
- 6 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 8 Buddy Poppy Days-9 AM - 5 PM
- 9 Buddy Poppy Days-9 AM - 5 PM
- 10 **Happy Mothers Day!**
- 11 VFW Post 4495 Meeting-7 PM
- 12 ABATE Meeting-7 PM
- 13 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 17 VFW Riders Meeting
Officers-5 PM/Mtg-5:30 PM
- 20 Queen of Hearts
Doors Open-6:00 PM
Drawing-8:00 PM
- 21 VFW Auxiliary Meeting-7 PM
- 25 Memorial Day Ceremony
Oak Hill Cemetery-10 AM
- 30 Glo Bingo
Doors Open-5:30 PM
Bingo Starts-7:00 PM

