



Patriot's Pen

"My Voice in America's Democracy?"

Voice of Democracy

"Is America Today Our Forefather's Vision?"

Deadlines:

Student to Post – October 31st

Post to District – November 15th

District to Department – December 15th

Department to National – January 10th

Winter Conference

Awards Banquet Voice of Democracy Patriot's Pen



Embassy Suites
4400 S Rural Rd, Tempe
Rooms: \$169 + tax

includes Free Breakfast and Evening Cocktail Hour
By Phone: 800-774-1500 [Group Code CES924](#)

Jan 10 Aux Council of Administration
Jan 11 Conference & Banquet
Jan 12 VFW Council of Administration

Room Reservation Deadline: **December 18, 2024**
Banquet: \$45 before Nov 1, monthly increases after
Banquet deadline: January 2, 2025



For more information, booking link, online order
link or download order form scan code or visit
VFWAZ.COM >> Resources >> Convention
Information

DEPT OF ARIZONA VFW & AUXILIARY
WINTER CONFERENCE
VOICE OF DEMOCRACY & PATRIOTS PEN
Awards Banquet

Pay by Check

Complete this form and return entire page
with payment to:

VFW Dept of Arizona
Quartermaster
6423 S Ash Ave
Tempe, AZ 85283

How many?

Chicken _____ Pork _____ Vegetarian _____

Special Diet? _____

Who is paying? _____

Who is picking up? _____

Check # _____

Post/Auxiliary # _____

Order and Pay Online
No upcharge for online orders

Visit Convention Page on Department
website or scan QR code below



Reception & Banquet
Saturday, January 11, 2025

**Save money and purchase
sooner than later.**
Until Nov 1: \$45
Nov 2-30: \$50
Dec 1-19: \$60
Dec 20-Jan 2: \$65
Jan 3-10: Wait List Only

Reminder

Department covers the cost of
the banquet for all students
and 1 escort per student. Ad-
ditional family members and
guests will be \$50 until
December 19 and \$65 from
December 20 to January 2.

Deadline to submit the
District's complimentary
meal selection is **January 2.**

PATRIOT'S PEN



2024-2025 Theme

“My Voice in America’s Democracy?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2024

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 73,000 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. Home-schooled 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 intends 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 October 31, 2024. 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?

VFW’s Commander-in-Chief annually chooses the year’s theme. The 2024-2025 theme is:

“My Voice in America’s Democracy?”

Deadline Information.

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by midnight October 31, 2024.

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 816.968.1155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org**



**Patriot's Pen
Scoresheet**

Program Year

2024

Theme Knowledge: Shows knowledge of the theme and use of research.

Theme Development: Answers relevant facts - who, what, where, when, and why. Relates to the writer's own experiences.

Clarity of Ideas: Provides a clear explanation of the writer's interpretation of the theme.

Contestant Code Number:																				
Theme Knowledge (0 to 30 points):																				
Theme Development (0 to 35 points):																				
Clarity of Ideas (0 to 35 points):																				
Total (0 to 100 points):																				

Contestant Code Number:																				
Theme Knowledge (0 to 30 points):																				
Theme Development (0 to 35 points):																				
Clarity of Ideas (0 to 35 points):																				
Total (0 to 100 points):																				

Contestant Code Number:																				
Theme Knowledge (0 to 30 points):																				
Theme Development (0 to 35 points):																				
Clarity of Ideas (0 to 35 points):																				
Total (0 to 100 points):																				

Judge's Signature

Date and location of judging

2024-2025 Theme

“Is America Today Our Forefathers’ Vision?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2024

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 27,000 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, “Is America Today Our Forefathers’ Vision?”

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. Department (State) winners receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington DC, to tour the city, be honored by the VFW and its Auxiliary and receive their portion of \$171,000 in national awards, the top scholarship being \$35,000.

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 intends 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 & 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 <https://www.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, 2024**. 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.



**Voice of Democracy
Scoresheet**

Program Year

2024

Originality: Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content: Ideas are expressed clearly and in an organized manner.

Delivery: Speaking voice is clear and credible.

Contestant Code Number:																					
Originality (0 to 30 points):																					
Content (0 to 35 points):																					
Delivery (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Contestant Code Number:																					
Originality (0 to 30 points):																					
Content (0 to 35 points):																					
Delivery (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Contestant Code Number:																					
Originality (0 to 30 points):																					
Content (0 to 35 points):																					
Delivery (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Date and location of judging

Judge's Signature