

Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary

MICHIGAN CONNECTION #5

April/May, 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Auxiliary VFW – Michigan

517-487-3715 (Office); 517-420-9342 (Department Treasurer)

517-485-6432 (FAX)

National Theme: From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free

Department Theme: We Don't Know them All, But We Owe Them All

MUST BE READ ON THE FLOOR

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!!

DEPARTMENT DELEGATE FORMS MUST BE TO THE DEPARTMENT TREASURER BY MAY 22, 2026

Cathy Sasse, Treasurer

1117 Michigan Street

Midland, MI 48640

Debbie's Corner

This is my last Michigan Connection to you as your Department President. The year has been filled with excitement, challenges, and moments that take your breath away.

Thank you to each of you that have ensured such a successful year with membership and our programs. You have done a fabulous job, and I couldn't be more proud.

My special project, Blue Star Service Dogs, has been a huge success and we still have time to donate to this very worthy cause that benefits our veterans. **Donations need to be to the Department Office by May 29.** At the Department Convention, I will be presenting a lump sum donation to Blue Star Service Dogs and am excited to do so. You all have been very generous and supportive.

Welcome to our newest Auxiliary! Auxiliary to the VFW Ottawa Post 3134, Iron River, was instituted on April 13, 2026.

Again, thank you for all you do for our nation's heroes and our organization. See you at Department Convention!

Special Orders

Special Order No. 196 – In part, "It is hereby ordered by the National President that Tori Shortridge, Life Membership No 2000440931, be removed from the rolls of VFW Auxiliary 4420 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary permanently."

Special Order No. 197 – In part, "It is hereby ordered by the National President that Shannon Hider, Annual Membership No. 2000440930, be removed from the rolls of VFW Auxiliary 4420 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary permanently."

Special Order No. 207 – In part, "The information received from the Veterans of Foreign Wars indicates that permission was granted for the consolidation of Trenton Post No. 1888, Trenton, Michigan, and Cpl.

Lambert A. Pfeiffer Jr. Post No. 9283, Southgate, Michigan. The consolidated Post shall be known as Southeast Wayne County Post No. 1888, Southgate Michigan, as approved on February 12, 2026.”

Information from Department Secretary

District and National Delegate forms are available on the front page of our website. The Report of Installation is also available and is the only form that needs to be completed, entered into MALTA, and a copy sent to the Department Office. Any questions or need assistance, please contact Department Secretary Cindy at 517 487-3715.

Information from Department Treasurer

Reminder that you MUST use the new membership application dated January 2026. All other applications will be returned and thus delaying the process.

Regarding the new processing of credit cards for Life membership, when a new member (or the person) wants to pay annual or lifetime amounts by credit card, there must be a good phone number and email listed on the new application under section H. The credit card box must be checked on the application. Once the application is entered into Malta the new applicant will receive an email from the department treasurer to request them to enter the credit card for payment. Once it is approved, the email will come back to the department, and the applicant will be completed. During the approval process the auxiliary treasurer and department treasurer will have an applicant pending showing in Malta under payment processing tab. The applicant has 30 days to answer the email and complete. After 30 days, the Department Treasurer returns the application to the auxiliary treasurer to review and update for future processing. **It is important that the auxiliary treasurer shares the credit card processing with the new applicant to make the process go smoothly.** The Department treasurer does send a reminder to the applicants every Monday morning by email until the applicant's nonresponse expires in Malta. Please don't hesitate to contact Cathy if you have any questions.

Dues

We still have around 106 members who have not paid their 2026 dues. Currently they are considered not to be in good standing and are not eligible for cancer grants, voting, and other consequences. Call your delinquent members and see how they are doing, or perhaps be a dues angel, or if they have fallen on hard times, their dues can be paid by the auxiliary with monies from the Relief Fund. Let's not leave any member behind.

Department Fundraiser

To all those who purchased our March Madness Fundraiser tickets, THANK YOU! The fundraiser was a great success and a huge thank you to Past Department President Edna Kiviniemi , the Chairperson.

Districts - if you were unable to do a fundraiser for the Department, please consider making a donation We have traveled a lot this year to help yellow and red flag Auxiliaries and these monies are needed so that we can continue to assist districts and auxiliaries throughout the year.

Deadline Reminders

The 2025-26 reporting year ends on April 20th. Please be sure to get your reports entered by that date. If you need assistance, please call the Department Chairmen or the Department Office. Reminder that every Auxiliary must report at least one project regarding veterans.

The January - March audit is to be completed by April 30 and a copy sent to the Department Office by May 31st.

Department Delegate Forms must be to the Department Treasurer by May 22.

Included in this electronic packet, for your convenience, is the form for the Department President's Love Gift.

By Order of:

Deborah Scheetz

Deborah Scheetz
Department President

Cindy Peto

Cindy Peto
Department Secretary

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY
924 N Washington Ave
Lansing, MI 48906
(517) 487-3715

NOTICE TO: District and Auxiliary Presidents

In keeping with the custom of the past, we will be presenting a LOVE Gift to our Department President, **Debbie Scheetz**, at this year's Department Convention. We invite you to participate in this donation at the time of our Flag Presentation on Saturday morning.

If you wish to donate, you may do one of the following:

1. Bring Love Gift with you to Department Convention and present to her during the Flag Presentation, or
2. You may send your Love Gift to the Department Office and Sr. Vice President Jason Manke will be honored to present it to President Jane on your behalf. **We must receive your Love Gift by Monday, June 1 .**

Let's show our Department President Debbie, that the members of this Department truly appreciate all her hard work and dedication for a year well served.

Sincerely,

Cindy Peto

Department Secretary

*Please tear here and enclose in your envelope and send to the
Department Office at the address listed above.*

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Deborah Scheetz

Auxiliary # _____ District # _____

President's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary

Americanism – April - May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Americanism - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*

Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

WOW! Hard to believe this is my final bulletin. I want to thank Madam President Debbie again for giving me the honor of doing this chairmanship. I would like to thank all the Auxiliaries and members for all they do to promote patriotism within their Auxiliaries and communities. It has been a great pleasure to read your reports and the great work you are doing for Americanism and to promote and build a patriotic environment *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free* because *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*.

I hope you all enjoyed the flag etiquette crossword puzzle in the last bulletin. Here are the answers so you can check if you were correct:

Across

- 3. Heart
- 7. Patriotic Instructor
- 8. Twice
- 9. Yes
- 10. U.S. Flag Code

Down

- 1. Right
- 2. Stand
- 4. Toward members
- 5. Burn to ash
- 6. Ritual
- 8. Two

We may be nearing the end of our program year, but these promotions for Americanism and promoting patriotism are not a once-a-year thing. Work on it every day and every month of every year. Lead by example and what you do will be witnessed and emulated by others.

FROM OUR NATIONAL AMBASSADOR – DIANA RUSSEL-MILTON

Like a Flag, spring is unfolding. With spring comes a season of renewal and rejuvenation, and this offers us a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the principles that define Americanism within the VFW Auxiliary. This is a time to honor those who have served our country and to strengthen the spirit of unity within our communities. Spring invites us outdoors, into our neighborhoods, our schools and our gathering spaces, where we can actively demonstrate our patriotism through service and connection. Whether it's participating in a Flag ceremony, volunteering at a local event, or simply flying the American Flag at home, each act is a powerful expression of gratitude and pride. Americanism is more than a symbol; it is a commitment. It is found in the way we uplift one another, educate future generations and preserve the values of freedom, respect and unity. Teaching children about the history of our Flag, sharing stories of service and engaging in community efforts all help keep these ideals alive. The VFW Auxiliary encourages each of us to take part in this mission. By coming together with purpose and appreciation, we not only honor those who sacrificed for our freedoms, we ensure their legacy continues to inspire.

Flag education – Teach what the folds of the flag represent when a flag is folded for fallen veterans. Did you use the tools provided on MALTA. Even discussion groups are good. Remember proper respect for the flag by saluting in our meetings, parades, and events. Teach people what the proper heart salute is – provide demonstrations. Maybe put an article in the paper about how the flag has developed to the current flag as the states were added. Make flyers for kids teaching them.

POW/MIA – Many people don't know this stands for Prisoners of War/Missing in Action. Promote remembrance of those still missing and to never forget until they are all home. Teach kids what the families of these veterans suffer and have sacrificed. Provide information from the Washington Weekly that tells of those that have been found and brought home.

Patriotic Holidays and branch of service birthdays – Post the information on your Facebook pages, put articles in the newspaper, have an event at the Post or in the community to honor these days. Go a step further and provide information about these days to promote patriotism. How did the observance start? Was it through an act of Congress or just by Executive Order? This is another opportunity to promote Americanism and patriotism by educating our members and communities on the history behind these days. Do something fun to get the kids involved – maybe puzzles or coloring contests.

LOYALTY DAY is May 1, 2026 – This is a day for all Americans to come together and reaffirm their commitment and loyalty as citizens of the United States. Plan an event and publish it in the local paper inviting the community. Have flags and educational information – Flag Etiquette booklets, Respect for the Flag booklets.

MEMORIAL DAY is May 25, 2026 – Most Posts and Auxiliaries have an established program, but if you don't, consider going to a neighboring Post and get involved with their program. This is a hard day for our Gold Star Families. Consider doing some kind of special recognition or have a presentation for them. Maybe a flower or some other token to show them we care and thank them for the sacrifice their family suffered.

Distribution of flags – U.S. and POW/MIA – Always keep flags on hand for distribution whenever you have the opportunity. Are there homes in your community where there's a flagpole but no flag. Give them a flag to fly. Give others a flag house kit. Remember to tell me how many flags you distributed and whether it is U.S. or POW/MIA.

Certificates of Patriotic Appreciation or Respecting the Flag – There are several types of certificates available on MALTA or you can create your own. This is about catching patriotism and Americanism in action. Give them to local businesses or other organizations. Have a few available for when you go to all the sporting events for your kids and/or grandkids and give out to people who are properly respecting the flag by saluting or singing the National Anthem. Give them to people in your neighborhoods who fly the flag.

#AuxiliaryPatriotism and Understanding Auxiliary Traditions – We may be nearing the end of our year, but this is something that is always relevant and continue to develop. Pick a topic each month for your meeting from the Bylaws, Auxiliary resources or Building on the Foundation to discuss and teach at a meeting.

National Anthem and Pledge – These are the very fundamentals of patriotism and American pride. These are part of the Ritual for our meetings. Take the time to do it please! Singing the National Anthem is not about how good or bad we do it, it's the pride of doing it! Take the opportunity to properly respect our flag by not only reciting the Pledge of Allegiance but sing! Show the pride and love you have for our country when you sing the National Anthem. How can we expect others to do it if we don't do it ourselves?

REPORTING

Final day for reporting is April 20, 2026. Look over all your notes and events for the year and be sure to report what you have done if you haven't reported it already. Reporting tells the story of your Auxiliary and all that you do. Tell me about it.

HOLIDAYS & OBSERVANCES

April 1 – U.S. Air Force Academy Day – President Eisenhower established the academy on April 1, 1945, and Congress passed the legislation in 1954. The pioneer class of 1959 was sworn in on July 11, 1955. The day celebrates the achievements of the academy and the significant role it plays in training future Air Force officers.

April 5 – Gold Star Spouse Day – Honors the surviving spouse of service men and women who lost their lives in military service and the sacrifice that their spouses must endure.

April 6 – Army Day – Day to recognize and appreciation soldiers' roles in national security and global operations. Established by Colonel Thatcher Luquer and originally celebrated on May 1, 1928. Changed to April 6th in 1929 to correlate to the U.S. entry into WWI. It was officially recognized by Congress in 1937.

April 9 – National Former POW Recognition Day – solemn reminder of the resilience, bravery and sacrifice of American service members who endured captivity during wartime and what their families went through while awaiting their return. Began by former POWs in 1984 and the date commemorates the Bataan Death March of 1942. Congress recognized this date in 1988.

April 13 – Thomas Jefferson's Birthday – Founding Father and 3rd U.S. President. This day was recognized officially by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1938.

April 14 – Air Force Reserve Birthday – Air Force Reserve was established by President Truman in 1948 as a standby force for emergencies.

April 20 – Patriots' Day – Recognizes the beginning of the Revolutionary War with the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775. Observance began in Massachusetts in 1894.

April 22 – In God We Trust Day – Adopted by Congress as the official U.S. motto in 1956 and signed into law by President Eisenhower to appear on all U.S. currency.

April 23 – Army Reserve Birthday – Formally established in 1908 to provide a trained and ready force to augment active-duty personnel.

April 27 – Morse Code Day – Commemorates the birthdate of Samuel Morse in 1791, the inventor of the Morse Code which provided essential and advanced ability to communicate by telegraph. The first successful message was sent in 1844 which said “What hath God wrought”.

April is National Military Child Month – intended to recognize the unique challenges faced by children with one or both parents serving in the military.

May 1 – Loyalty Day – This is a day to reaffirm our loyalty, allegiance and fidelity to our country and to uphold the vision of our Forefathers. First celebrated in the 1920’s to promote patriotism and combat the rise of Communism. Congress made this an official holiday on July 18, 1958, and the first observance was on May 1, 1959.

May 8 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day – Observed on the Friday before Mother’s Day. This day is to honor the spouses who provide the most basic support for our military which provides immeasurable improvement in morale and the foundation of military communities.

V-E Day – Victory in Europe Day was May 8, 1945, and is celebrated to remember the surrender of the German army and the end of WWII.

May 13 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day – Intended to recognize the challenges faced by children who have lost a parent in military conflict. The date was chosen to commemorate the establishment of Arlington National Cemetery on May 13, 1864.

May 16 – Armed Forces Day – Celebrated on the third Saturday of May. This day to honor and show appreciation to members of all military branches was announced by Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson on August 31, 1949, and the first observance was in 1950.

May 22 – National Maritime Day – Established by Congress in 1933 to recognize the support of the Merchant Marines to the U.S. trade and military in times of both war and peace. During times of war, the Merchant Marines are part of the U.S. military.

May 23 – Memorial Day – Originally called Decoration Day and dates to the end of the Civil War in honor of those men and women who gave their lives for freedom and country. The name was changed in 1882. This holiday was originally celebrated on May 30th, but Congress changed the date to the last Monday of the month in 1971.

Feel free to reach out to me any time if you need assistance, help or have questions about reporting or what goes where. I love hearing from and helping the membership.

Diana Ward, Americanism Chairman
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Fenton, MI 48430
(810) 955-2931
legalblaze@aol.com



Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
Auxiliary Outreach
April/May 2026
www.vfwauxmi.org
Facebook Page: (Program) - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*
Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

It has been an honor to serve the Department as your Auxiliary Outreach Chairman for this Administrative year. Thank you to all the auxiliaries that have worked so hard to make sure this program was successful and that your community is well aware of the VFW Auxiliary and what they do.

We are gearing up for the end of the 25-26 year; here are some ideas to help your Auxiliary reach some community outreach goals:

- Participation in local projects: Habitat for community. Parks and recreations.
- Participating at local schools, libraries, nursing homes or senior centers by volunteering and assisting where needed.
- Partnering with local police training and events.
- Partnering with firefighters training and events.
- Partnering with EMTs to host CPR training.
- Partnering with an animal shelter with events.
- Partnering with a food shelter or food bank to assist with meals.
- Partnering with your community on assisting shut-ins (example: Meals on wheels, transportation or shopping with volunteering time.

When working with these organizations for the Auxiliary Outreach program be sure that the volunteering member is wearing a VFW Auxiliary item. It can be a shirt, hat, jacket or name tag. Smile and be proud to wear them with pride as we may never know who we will run into. Also take pictures of your events I would love to share them on our Facebook page

LAST DATE TO REPORT IS APRIL 20TH. When reporting, please report the number of members, hours and miles used to assist with the event. Please include in the report that the event was *voted, approved and documented in meeting minutes*. Your reports have been fun to read, and some Auxiliaries have shared events on our Facebook page. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Rachel Rhode
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Rogers City, MI 49779
989-745-4966
picklefreak@outlook.com



UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

**Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
"Buddy"® Poppy/National Home
April/May 2026**

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: (Program) - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*
Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

Buddy Poppy

This is it we are almost at the finish line. Thank you to all who sent me your Buddy Poppy & VFW National Home Award #1 and Award #2 the winner was sent on to National. I hope you are working with your Post on your Buddy Poppy displays for June Convention. Remember if you did a display for Mid- Winter, you can bring that display to June's convention.

The rules for this contest are the VFW National Buddy Poppy National contest rules. You can find them on our website. There are three categories and the rules are the same as our contest. The idea behind this is to get the VFW and Auxiliaries working together on these displays. The Winner in each category will then be sent on to National.

We have shared a lot of great ideas on how to use your poppies. Share how you incorporated your poppies into your dinners Center pieces and decorations. I cannot wait to see how you use them. Also do not or get to keep getting out and educating our communities on what the "Buddy"® Poppy is. Make sure you have reported all you have done this year. You still have time. All reports must be in by the end of May to count for this year. Thank you for all you have done in this program this year Can not wait to see everyone at June Convention.

VFW National Home

Spring has sprung and so much is happening at The VFW National Home. There are still open houses available for Veterans and their families. Be sure to promote the Help Line in your communities. There are so many Veteran Families out there that need a fresh start. Talk to your service officers in your area and make sure they are aware of this great place. The VFW National Home has many resources to help Veterans and their families even if the program is not right for them, they may still have resources to help the family.

You can no longer get a Centennial Life membership. Life memberships are still offered and our now \$100. If you have not bought a life membership yet this year it is time to do that now.

Here are some things you still can do. Buy a Brink or Life membership or sent in your Health and Happiness quotas of .10 or .25 cents a member. If you would like to do a special project for the National Home, give them a call and they will find one that will fit you. Thank you for all of your support for this special place.

I will say it one more time if you have not reported this year, yet you still can make sure all reports are in by end of May. So, Report! Report! Report!

Annabelle Furgason
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**Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
Extension & Revitalization/Chief of Staff
April/May 2026**
www.vfwauxmi.org
Facebook Page: Extension & Revitalization-Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*
Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

New Auxiliary

I am pleased to welcome our fifth new Auxiliary to the Department of Michigan — Iron River Auxiliary 3134. We will officially institute them in early April.

A special thank you to Bobbi Williams for organizing this new Auxiliary, and to Ann Backhurst and Scott Collins for serving on the mentoring team. Your dedication and hard work are truly appreciated.

We also have several additional Posts working to recruit enough members to begin forming new Auxiliaries. Thank you to all members who continue to work diligently to build new Auxiliaries and encourage enthusiastic individuals to join this wonderful organization.

2026–2027 Presidents

Congratulations on your election and installation as President for the upcoming year — now what?

First, be sure all appointments are completed, including Secretary and Program Chairmen. Appoint members who are dependable and committed to helping your Auxiliary succeed.

Please note that there will no longer be an Auxiliary Outreach chairmanship. In addition, National Home and Buddy Poppy will be two separate chairmanships in the coming year.

As soon as you assume the role of President, you will gain access to many new features in MALTA. If you have not already done so, be sure to create a MALTA account through the National website at www.vfwauxiliary.org.

The more thoroughly you plan for the year ahead, the smoother it will run — and your Auxiliary will thrive as a Healthy Auxiliary!

R U Healthy Checklist reminders for April:

- ✓ 101% + in membership.
- ✓ Reported in all programs by April 20, 2026.
- ✓ January/February/March Audit is to be completed by April 30, 2026.
- ✓ District Delegates must be elected not less than ten (10) calendar days prior to your District Convention. Send form to your District Secretary.
- ✓ Department Delegates must be elected not less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to

- the Department Convention. Send form and fees to Department Treasurer, Cathy Sasse.
- ✓ National Delegates shall be elected at the last regular meeting in April. Secretary provides the names to the National Secretary via MALTA.
 - ✓ Election of officers takes place at your regular meeting.
 - ✓ Attend your District Convention.



R U Healthy Checklist reminders for May:

- ✓ 101% + in membership.
- ✓ Make sure your delegates' names are sent to the proper place and in a timely manner. National delegates are due on-line by May 31, 2026. If you are having the Department Secretary input your delegates, please get them to her by May 22, 2026.
- ✓ Installation of Officers must take place not more than sixty (60) days prior to the start of the Department Convention.
- ✓ Secretary inputs the Installation Report on MALTA.

This is my final bulletin for the 2025–2026 year. I am truly proud of all we have accomplished together. Thank you to everyone who stepped in to assist Auxiliaries in need—whether you were appointed by the Department or simply offered your support when it was needed. Mentorship is something each of us can provide, and your willingness to serve makes a difference.

If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information below. Let us continue to honor our veterans who keep us free!

Marilyn J. Malick
Department Chief of Staff/Extension & Revitalization Chairman
15903 Venice Ave.
Clinton Township, MI 48035
586-536-6004
MJMalick@msn.com





Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Historian/Media Relations Bulletin April 2026/May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Historian/Media Relations-Michigan

National Theme: From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free
Department Theme: We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All

Capturing the past year for your Auxiliary and President!

We are winding down for the 2025-2026 VFW Department of Michigan Auxiliary year. It is now time to get all your activities reported, final date is April 20, 2026. Collect and organize all your information and photos for your Auxiliary/President Scrapbook. If you are not continuing as the Historian, now is the time to start thinking about the next 2026-2027 Auxiliary and District Historian Chairmen. Hand over any supplies and information that can help the next Historian to continue the memory keeping. My hope for the next Department Historian and their Auxiliary Historians are as helpful as all of you were for me, getting the needed photos for capturing President Deb Scheetz's year. Thank you all for your great work.

I am looking forward to enjoying all the Reels presented for the National Auxiliaries in Action Reels Award. Congratulations to all the hard-working Michigan Auxiliaries!

Remember the Department of Michigan Awards on your Guide Sheet:

1. Best Historian/Media Relations program in each membership category. \$10 and Citation of Merit to Auxiliary.
2. Best Overall Media Relations to educate and train members on how to use Media Sources. \$10 and Citation of Merit to Auxiliary.

For these awards you need to report these items by April 20, 2026, and give details.

Hashtags are important to use when posting on Social Media!

1. Hashtags place your posting into a group of postings of like topics or interest.
2. It allows those who are searching to locate like postings
3. Organizes postings into a group for a collective purpose.

Check out some of the Hashtag groups used this year by VFW National Auxiliary

#AuxliariesinAction

#VFWDC2026

#ShowUsYourSanta25

#loisseatosea

#vfwauxiliary

#ThankYouVFWAux

Just open Facebook, type the Hashtag into the Search Bar and enjoy the scroll. Michigan did a great job using Hashtags, we appear numerous times, they saw us.

VFW Department of Michigan Convention is in Kalamazoo, Michigan at the Radisson, 100 Michigan Ave, June 9-13, 2026. See everyone there!

Blanche Brown

Dept. Historian/Media Relations Chairman

bbrownvfw@gmail.com

517-896-7752

10975 Irish Rd.

Vermontville, Mi. 49096



Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Hospital – April/May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Hospital - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*

Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

HAPPY SPRING! Most of you are enjoying lovely Spring weather, while many of us, especially in the U.P., are still digging out. Many of our auxiliaries are continuing to bring sunshine to our veterans in the VA hospitals, non-affiliated hospitals and state veterans' homes. Remember to post pictures of your activities on the Hospital page so our National Ambassador can see the wonderful work y'all are doing. By posting pictures and descriptions of what your auxiliary has done, it might spur another auxiliary looking for ideas to think "Hey that's an idea! Let's try it." Sharing each other's activities helps us bring smiles to our veterans.

Has your auxiliary reported your hospital work? There are some auxiliaries who have not reported even reading the Hospital Bulletin at their meeting. You can let me know you are reading the Hospital Bulletin when you put the MASH code work in your report. The code word is always highlighted in bold letters and italicized.

You can use spring holidays in your hospital work.

- EASTER – who can dress up like an ***Easter bunny?***
- April 1st: April Fool's Day. A classic!
- April 11: National Grilled Cheese Day
- April 13: National Scrabble Day
- April 17: Haiku Poetry Day
- April 22: Earth Day
- April 24: Arbor Day.
- May 1st – May Day
- May 4 – Star Wars Day
- May 5 – Cinco de Mayo & National Astronaut Day
- May 6 – National Nurses Day
- May 1 – National Frog Jumping Day
- May 6 – National Nurses Day
- May 25 – Memorial Day
- May 26 – National Paper Airplane Day- Make paper airplanes with the veterans.
-

VOUNTEER RECOGNITION: Don't forget to recognize the hospital volunteers in your auxiliary. Go to MALTA where you will find:

- Application for Hospital Service Pins & Bar Guard. Fillable online.
- Hospital Volunteer Appreciation Certificate forms. There are two which are fillable online

Ann Backhurst – Department Hospital Chairman

1106 N. McClellan Ave – Marquette MI Phone 251-604-5998 - vfwaux.annbackhurst@gmail.com

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Legislative – April/May 2025

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Legislative-Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*
Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

It is with a bittersweet heart that I write this my last bulletin. Thank you for reading it. I hope this year I have been able to bring a passion for the endless possibilities engaging in your legislative community can award you. You are making a difference locally in your communities, cities, state, and our country one action at a time.

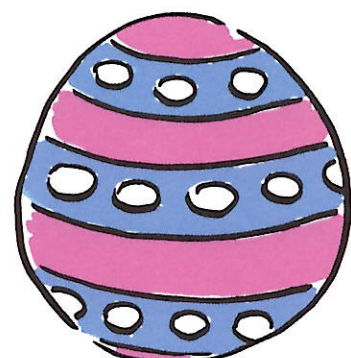
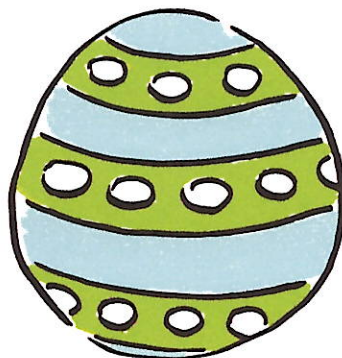
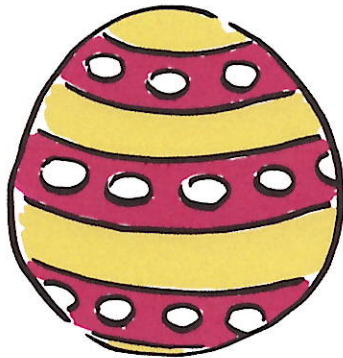
We have not been able to pass the Richard Star Act again. This will not be the end of our trying. It is one close to the heart of the VFW and will remain until we can get justice for the Veterans who signed up to fight for our country with the reassurance that their Country will have their backs. We must keep “Honor the Contract” alive within our hearts so when we speak to our legislators they know we care about this topic.

Here you can watch National VFW Commander Carol Whitmore testify in front of a joint House meeting on this topic: (Also found on VFW website under Media and Events titled : 2026 VFW Washington Conference

https://vfw.org/VFWDC2026?fbclid=IwY2xjawQdEpNleHRuA2FlbQlxMABicmlkETF1NIhpdTJIWjIPSW8zSk5Tc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHrjR5axSxaJuXSqLouXmVPjJ8WbdWwA5w0VB74sxsYkxGskYzLcWUTyqe8y_aem_-pFhL57Nud8x4ITbOym8Sg

Here you can watch more of the #Stillserving Podcast with a deep dive into this subject of the hearing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPggSqP_oOw
Episode 60. Found anywhere you would find podcasts including Youtube.
Episode 51 a highlight on what “Honor the Contract” means.

I highly recommend continuing, if not, starting to watch/listen to this podcast it will you keep you well informed and up to date and in line with what we are advocating for when it comes to our Auxiliary works as it is put on by the VFW.



HQ MEMO

HQ MEMO

THINK

Before electing Delegates and Alternates for your 2026 District, Department and National Conventions, those present at the March, April and May Auxiliary meetings need to consider the following:

- Those members who have stated their interest in attending the upcoming District, Department and National Conventions;
- Those members who have attended these Convention meetings in the recent past;
- Those members who are District and/or Department Officers and/or Chairmen;
- Those members who are the spouses of VFW Officers who will represent the VFW Post at these same Conventions;
- In short, talk with your members and ask them if they are interested in representing the Auxiliary at District, Department or National Conventions.

EXAMPLES:

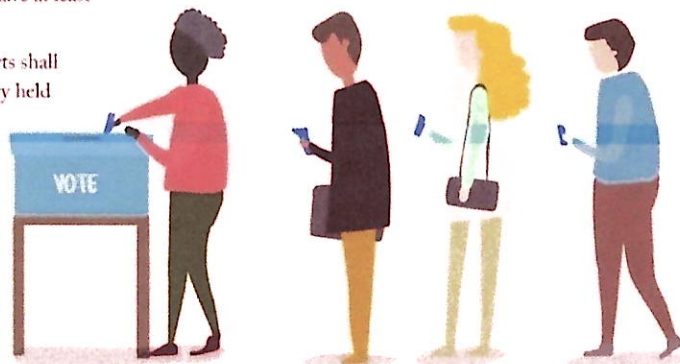
- Your Auxiliary Treasurer is the Department Legislative Chairman, so yes, they would likely attend both the District and the Department Conventions and should be considered to be elected as a Delegate or Alternate to the Convention meetings.
- You know that your Post Commander will be the only member attending the District and Department Conventions; his wife, though she has not attended meetings regularly, has traveled with him around the District and Department and therefore would be present at the Conventions so the Auxiliary would have at least one (1) Representative present.

Note that Delegates and Alternates to Districts shall be elected at a regular meeting of the Auxiliary held not less than 30 days prior to the District Convention at which District Officers are to be elected.

Also, the Auxiliary needs to be familiar with the number of Delegates and Alternates to which it is entitled for District (**Section 302-One (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for each fifteen (15) members in good standing or fraction thereof at the time of election**); Department (**Section 303 Delegate and one (1) Alternate for each thirty (30) members in good standing or fraction thereof at the time of election**) and National (**Section 304-One (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for each thirty-five (35) members in good standing or fraction thereof at the time of election**).

Following the elections of these respective Delegates and Alternates, it is the responsibility of the Auxiliary Secretary to see that the Representatives chosen by the Auxiliary get to their District and Department Secretary prior to those Conventions. The Auxiliary Secretary must input the Delegates and Alternates to National Convention in MALTA no later than May 31 or mail, fax or email to info@vfwauxiliary.org the Delegates' and Alternates' names and membership ID numbers to the National Secretary.

The Auxiliary Secretary is responsible for reporting the Auxiliary's Delegates and Alternates to the District Secretary (District Convention) and to the Department Secretary (Department Convention) by the respective deadlines and National Convention (National Secretary) or input the Delegates and Alternates into MALTA. Auxiliary Secretaries are encouraged to print out the list of Delegates and Alternates to verify that those entered were posted. Once your Secretary enters you as a National Delegate or National Alternate, this will appear in your MALTA profile. Be sure to verify this by May 31 to ensure you have time if any issues need to be corrected.



Thank you again for all you do for our Veterans and even by just clicking on your VFW Action Corp. Weekly email links are making a difference. You are taking the steps to be the voice of the Veterans who need us to advocate for them. We are larger in numbers and numbers are the only things Politicians can understand, so let us show our support and use our voices to advocate for our Veterans.

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Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Membership – April/May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Membership - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*
Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

As difficult it is for me to believe, this is going to be my last bulletin for President Debbie's year. I'm willing to bet that some of you are grateful for that and I don't blame you.



It seems I keep asking you for more and more, right? Well, today isn't any different! Let me first say that Michigan is doing great. I truly appreciate all the hard work you have done and are continuing to do. But we are NOT done yet.

Two districts are not yet at 100%, and forty-two auxiliaries that haven't reached 100%...YET. I say YET because I know with all of us working together, Michigan can be 100% in every district and in every auxiliary.

Please reach out to those annuals that haven't paid their dues yet. Instead of a dues notice, a phone call may be a personal way to reach out to those members who don't regularly attend meetings. Consider using your relief funds or maybe you may want to be a dues angel. We all worked hard to get those members, don't let them slip away.

Let's talk about recruiting. Are you wearing the membership buttons that have our QR code logo on them? It's a great way to start up a conversation, especially when you are volunteering for Community Outreach. I keep a button or two in my jackets.

Have you reached out to the VFW family members who are not members of our Auxiliary yet? Do not hold off "deceasing" your members till the end of the year. Please report immediately. National will be looking at those records and you may incur a penalty for not reporting them in a timely manner. Please remember those deceased members must be replaced.

One more VERY important point. **DO NOT USE OLD APPLICATIONS.** Our Department Treasurer, Cathy Sasse, is STILL getting old applications which must be returned to the auxiliaries. The NEW application has been on the Department website since Dec. 2025. The old one was removed prior to that. The ONLY applications you should be using are dated **Jan 2026**. I am asking you again to go to your post, your membership boards, or go through your auxiliary supplies and remove the old applications. Copy and paste the link, below, into your web browser and it will open the correct application:

<https://vfwauxmi.org/uploads/Documents/2025-26%20Debbie%20Scheetz/FillableMembershipApplication.pdf>

We still have time to reach National President Lois Callahan's goal of 102% by May 31st. As of March 23rd, we were at 101.12%. We are not that far off. It's doable. By the time you read this, I am confident we are sailing our boat across the sea to the lighthouse that is the VFW Auxiliary Organization.



I hope you had a wonderful Easter and your baskets were filled with lots of goodies.

Memorial Day will be here soon. A somber day to reflect, remember, and honor those military personnel who paid the ultimate sacrifice while in service to our country.



Do you have any veterans in your family that are not members of your post? What an amazing gift that would be to offer them a membership, and of course, their family members would be eligible also to join your auxiliary. It's a win-win for everyone.

God Bless you, our Veterans, and the United States of America.

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Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Scholarships – April 2026/May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Scholarships-Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*

Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*



Happy Easter!

Thank you to all the members for spreading the word about the Scholarships we offer. Members have been setting up booths at events, traveling to schools and libraries and posting to social media. The program year is almost over. All reports are due to me by April 20. You can mail or go online and report.

YOUNG AMERICAN PATRIOTIC ART CONTEST

The scholarships are: First place - \$15,000 Second place - \$7,500 Third place - \$3,500 Fourth place and Fifth place - \$1,500 Sixth place and Seventh place - \$1,000 Eighth place through Nineteenth place - \$500

- Students do not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Students in grades 9-12 by March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school 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 resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 20 or older, GED and adult education students are not eligible.
- Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contests are not eligible.

3D DIMENSIONAL ART CONTEST

The scholarships are: First place - \$2,500 Second place - \$1,500 Third place - \$1,000 Fourth place \$500.

- Students do not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Students in grades 9-12 by March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school 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 resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 20 or older, GED and adult education students are not eligible.
- Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contests are not eligible.

Both art contests entries are due to me by April 15. Send the art contest applications to your local schools or drop of at the library. Maybe your community center offers art classes or an art school.

Review the guide sheet to complete the goals.

Achievements	Completed	Reported
Assist the VFW Post in promoting or conducting the Voice of Democracy Audio Essay Contest		
Assist the VFW Post in promoting or conducting the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest		
Assist the VFW Post in promoting VFW's "Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship"		
Host/co-host with the VFW an award ceremony to recognize awardees and participants in any/all contests		
Total dollar amount and/or value of awards presents by Auxiliary in any/all contests		
Promote/participate in the Continuing Education Scholarship Contest		
Donation to the Continuing Education Scholarship		
Promote/participate in the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship		
Number of students submitted 2-Dimensional art entries for judging		
Donation to Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship		
Promote/participate in the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Scholarship		
Number of students submitted 3-Dimensional art entries for judging		
Attend and register at a School of Instruction – District Meeting, Fall Conference or Mid-Winter Conference		
Attend and register at own District Meeting		
Report every quarter		

DeeAnn Miller
 5742 Harrison St.
 Garden City, MI 48135
auxmischolarships@yahoo.com





Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Veterans & Family Support – April/May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Veterans and Family Support-Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*

Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to President Debbie for appointing me as the Veteran and Family Support Chairman this year. I am truly honored by the opportunity to have served in this role and to continue supporting the veterans and families who have sacrificed so much for our nation.

Grants you should be familiar with:

As we move forward, I want to highlight the importance of National Veteran Services and the many resources available to better serve our veterans and communities. Our mission remains clear: to ensure that veterans and their families receive the support, recognition, and assistance they deserve.



Now is the time to begin looking into the Student Veteran Support Grant. This grant provides a meaningful opportunity to assist student veterans as they pursue their educational goals. Whether it's helping with supplies, transportation, or other essential needs, this is a tangible way we can invest in their future success.

The #StillServing Grant supports innovative projects that make a real difference in the lives of veterans and their families. This grant encourages creativity and impactful service initiatives within our communities. With the applications for the 2026-2027 school year this may be the time to bring this grant to the attention of those who qualify.

The Uniting to Combat Hunger Grant is another vital resource. Food insecurity affects many veterans and their families, and this grant allows us to address that need directly. Through food drives, meal programs, and partnerships with local organizations, we can ensure no veteran goes hungry. Do you already participate? This is a great item to report for the National Award!

Additionally, the Post Assistance Grant offers support for posts that need assistance to continue their important work. If your post could benefit from this program, I strongly encourage you to explore the opportunity and submit an application. Your Post must be the one to apply for this grant, but don't hesitate to bring it to their attention if you feel it would be of help!

While the program year is nearing its end, our work is not finished. There is still much we can accomplish in the months ahead. I encourage each of you to continue the outstanding service you have been providing all year. Your dedication, compassion, and commitment truly make a difference in the lives of veterans and their families.



Finally, please remember that the National Award submissions are due to me by March 31. I welcome early submissions, so feel free to send them in as soon as they are ready. All other reporting will end on April 20.

Thank you again for your continued hard work and unwavering support of our veterans. Together, we will finish this year strong and continue making a lasting impact.

Upcoming Patriotic Holidays & Recognition Days (April/May)

Please consider hosting an event, reaching out, or taking a moment to honor these important dates:

- **Month of the Military Child** – Month of April
- **Gold Star Spouses Day** - April 5
- **Air Force Reserves Birthday** – April 14
- **Army Reserve Birthday** – April 23
- **Silver Star Service Banner Day** – April 29
- **Military Spouse Appreciate Day** – May 8
- **Children of Fallen Patriot Days** – May 13
- **Armed Forces Day** – May 16
- **Memorial Day** – May 25

April Lowery
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Lansing, Mi 48917
707-495-2195
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Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Youth/Camp Trotter Bulletin – April/May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Youth Activities/Camp Trotter - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*
Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Own Them All*

Housekeeping:

Spring is here and our year is winding down. April 20th is our last day for accepting reports for 2025-2026, so get those reports in! Even though the year is ending, the work is endless and none of it would get done without volunteers like you. Thank you, everyone, for your all your hard work! I've loved reading your reports! It has truly been an honor to serve as your Youth/Camp Trotter Chairman this past year.



March 31st was the deadline to submit the form for the National Youth Activities award. Thank you for your submissions! The Department of Michigan is quite creative and very hardworking. Department Achievement Awards will be given at our June Convention. You have all done a fantastic job of supporting our Youth and Camp Trotter!

Youth:

All entries to your Auxiliary for Illustrating America should have been received for judging. Please submit your winners to Department no later than April 15th. Don't forget to report (no later than April 20th) the number of entries you received, the dollar value of awards given, and if your Auxiliary hosted a recognition and awards ceremony for those Youth who participated. Continue handing out those citations for Youth that go above and beyond and to those Youth Groups that support our Veterans.

Our Auxiliaries, Veterans, Schools, and Youth have benefitted from our Reading Buddy Programs across the State. Don't forget that choosing books from Patriotism through Literacy gets your Auxiliary credit for both Achievements.

Remember, every way that you interact with the Youth in your community is an opportunity to build relationships with their families and grow your membership! Also, remember that you should have parental consent for all activities, so get those waivers signed!



Camp Trotter Table Fundraiser:

Districts 12, 13, 14, 15 should be putting together their baskets for the Convention. Some theme ideas are Sports, Coffee, Games, Camping, Gardening, and Picnic. Use your creativity! All items should be new or like-new. Districts are welcome to donate multiple baskets and Auxiliaries may donate their own baskets, as well. We will draw half the baskets on **THURSDAY** and half on **FRIDAY**. Please get your baskets to the Auxiliary Camp Trotter table first thing Friday morning.

Convention – Districts 12, 13, 14, 15



Camp Trotter needs help with clean-up. Watch for dates to be posted or put your own group together and contact Department for a day or weekend that works for you. Applications for Camp should be posted on the Camp Trotter website. Applications for staff have been posted, also.

And, as always, please reach out if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or just want to say hi.

Kelly Smyczynski
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Davison, MI 48423
810-441-9996
auxcampchair@gmail.com

