

Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT BULLETIN

May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Veterans & Family Support-Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Congratulations to all our new Veterans & Family Support Chairmen for this upcoming year! Like many of you, this is my first time doing this program and I have to say, I am very excited and blessed to be able to chair this program and work with all of you. The real winner through all of this is our beloved veterans, their caregivers, and their families!

As you begin your program year, the first order of business is look over the Guide Sheet for this program. The Guide Sheet consists of information pertaining to this program as well as a list of achievements and awards that you will be working towards earning. You will want to take a good look over the achievements that are listed as they will be the goals you need to achieve and report on this program year. From that list you can get an idea of what you need to do and begin planning your program year during this month. Please take note of the bold print in the various achievements as these are points that you will **NEED** to include in your description when you report.

Another resource you should look at as you begin your program year is the VFW Auxiliary National Program Book. This online book will be available in July at vfwauxiliary.org. The 2023-2024 National Ambassador, Tessa Butcher, will highlight some program goals as well as share valuable information about Veterans & Family Support.

As some of you may know, the Veterans & Family Support Program is the very heart of the Auxiliary's mission: to care and provide support to the nation's heroes and their families. The VFW Auxiliary is founded on veteran family members and we **MUST** keep that in mind as we work and interact with each other. Working together in grace, kindness, humility and with a 'Can Do!' spirit is what is going to be pivotal in achieving our organization's mission!

May is designated as National Military Appreciation Month and Month of the Military Caregiver. I encourage you all to kick-off this month with a small appreciation token to our veterans and their caregiver. A simple Facebook "We Appreciate You!" post on your personal Facebook page or your Auxiliary's page, is a great way to start!



Don't forget to join our Facebook page at Veterans & Family Support-Michigan to stay up-to-date on current happenings! I will be posting ideas, helpful hints, encouraging quotes, sharing ideas, praising Auxiliaries and much more!

If you would like to be on my email list, please email me your email address so I can keep you in the loop on current happenings!

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

June

This year we will be **Banding Together for our Veterans**, the angels among us, to help assist and support our veterans and their families. We all have a part to play in this task. Some may be the feet that goes out to help a veteran run some errands, another may be the cook that helps support a family whose spouse is deployed, or another may offer guidance about acquiring VA benefits. All roles that we play are important, big or small, we all strive to serve them and honor them.

June is PTSD Awareness month. This is a day dedicated to creating awareness regarding PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). It is acknowledged annually on June 27th. Do you know someone suffering from PTSD or a local organization that assists veterans with PTSD. If so, reach out! We lose one too many service members every day to suicide. Get educated on the warning signs, be willing to listen, be understanding, and most of all be prepared to direct them to some support.

What are the warning signs of emotional suffering?

- Not Feeling like themselves
- Agitated
- Withdrawn
- Feeling Hopeless
- Lack of caring for themselves

If you haven't already, get some business cards (make them if you need to) with the Veterans Crisis support line. This support is confidential and available 24/7. You do not have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.

*Dial 988, then Press 1 or Text 838255

This month I want to challenge you to sharing the signs of emotional suffering, share places that they might be able to reach out to in your community (i.e., Vet to Vet peer counseling, Guitars for Vets), and/or share the Veterans Crisis Line number. Use this month as an opportunity to educate your community on this health crisis our veterans and their families may be experiencing. You can be the catalyst to educating someone who can support another! Share on our Facebook page to help other Auxiliaries that might be struggling with ideas to educate their communities.

What are some ways you can support a Veteran this month?

- Offer to mow their grass or do yard work.
- Offer transportation to and from the doctor, grocery store or other errands.
- Offer to be a listening ear and reminisce about the years gone by!

Whatever way you chose to reach out, but sure to report!

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