

**Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
HOSPITAL BULLETIN
October & November 2026
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UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Serving America's Heroes

Department Theme: Leading with a Patriot's Heart

Let's continue our travels to Ann Arbor "Go Blue" to the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center. The Construction of the Ann Arbor Veterans Hospital began on September 30, 1949 on a 16-acre site near the city of Ann Arbor. The hospital was authorized following a series of federal approvals, including President Truman's 1945 agreement to construct a tuberculosis hospital and the subsequent 1946 approval for a 500-bed general medical and surgical hospital for Veterans'. The hospital officially on October 12, 1953 admitted its first patients and dedicated on October 18, 1953.



Over the years the Ann Arbor VA has evolved into a major healthcare center serving Veterans across southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio providing both general and specialized medical services. It supports the activities of more than 150 researchers working in Ann Arbor, Saginaw, and Battle Creek. The facilities include 40,000 square feet of laboratory space and updated office space with a sample processing lab for

clinical research staff. Research and Development program increases advanced medical therapies and treatments to Veterans. Major research areas include Cardiology, Pulmonary diseases and disorders, Infectious disease, Hematology and Oncology. Health Care services at locations in Michigan and Northwest Ohio. Outpatient clinics in Adrian, Ann Arbor, Canton, Howell, Flint, Jackson and Toledo.

In January 2019, a bill to rename the medical center was passed in Congress.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles VA Medical Center, after the late Medal of Honor recipient Lt. Charles Kettles who was awarded the Medal of Honor in 2016 for leading a rescue mission that saved the lives of 44 soldiers that would become a legendary tale of bravery in the Vietnam War. Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles was from Ypsilanti.

In October consider making Halloween bags for the Veterans filled with candy or other snacks.

October 13th – US Navy Birthday

Don't forget about the Hospital table at the Fall Conference. We need as many gift cards as possible \$5-\$25. You can mail them to me, Department Treasurer Cathy or have your District President bring them to the conference, if you are unable to attend.

November: Happy Thanksgiving

Our next stop is Saginaw. The Saginaw VA Medical Center, now known as the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center, was established in September 1950 and dedicated on September 3, 1950. It was originally a 217-bed general medical and surgical hospital equipped with three major operating rooms, bacteriology and x-ray laboratories, dental services, and physical medicine facilities to provide comprehensive care for hospitalized veterans. The facility was named in honor of Lt. Aleda E. Lutz, a U.S. Army Nurse Corps officer and Michigan native who served during World War II. She was the first American woman to die in combat during the war and is among the most decorated women in U.S. military history. The name was formally designated by Congress in 1989.



The Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center is an 81-bed skilled nursing/rehabilitation community living center. Offering mental health, social work and primary care. The Saginaw VA North Clinic for optometry, ophthalmology, and blind rehabilitation Veterans Affairs. The system serves over 40,000 veterans in central and northern Michigan's lower peninsula, with more than 1,500 employees. It is a teaching hospital affiliated with multiple universities including Michigan State University, Central Michigan University, and Wayne State University, offering residencies, fellowships, and training in numerous medical and allied health fields. Outpatient locations include Alpena, Bad Axe, Cadillac, Clare, Gaylord, Grayling, Indian River, Oscoda and Traverse City.

We have completed our travels to the (5) five VA Medical Centers. This shows how Michigan is a big part of helping serve our Veteran's needs.

November 10th – US Marine Birthday

November 11th – Veterans Day – Thank you for your service

Next trip is the State Homes for Veterans.

Things we can do in November: Host a Thanksgiving Dinner for the Veterans in your area, invite them to your VFW Post from the VA Medical Centers. Or take turkey dinners to the VA Centers.

It's not too early to print your award forms from MALTA under member resources. You can keep up to date on what you will need to report, and those forms must be sent to me before March 31, 2027.

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