

Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary AMERICANISM BULLETIN

August 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Serving America's Heros

Department Theme: Leading with a Patriot's Heart

Greetings Brothers, Sisters, and Patriotic Instructors,

As summer winds down, a brand-new school year is right around the corner. This gives our Auxiliaries a prime opportunity to plant the seeds of patriotism in our local communities. Back-to-school season is one of the most impactful times of the year to promote Americanism, honor our military history, and celebrate the educators who guide our youth.

Before the school bells ring, we have a major military milestone to celebrate! On August 4, we honor the birthday of the United States Coast Guard, established on this day in 1790. Originally founded by Alexander Hamilton as the *Revenue Marine* (and later the Revenue Cutter Service), it began with just a small fleet of ten cutters tasked with enforcing federal customs and tariff laws. Over the centuries, their mission expanded tremendously. Today, the Coast Guard stands as a vital branch of the Armed Forces, protecting our nation's maritime borders, conducting daring search-and-rescue operations, and saving lives at sea.

To help your Auxiliary plan its youth outreach this fall, focus on these key initiatives:

- Promoting the Pledge of Allegiance: Work with local elementary schools, preschools, and youth groups to teach the history, meaning, and proper posture for the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Provide Patriotic Bookmarks, coloring pages & other resources that promote patriotism, supporting our veterans, Americanism and the importance of our flag.

Don't wait until the first bell rings to connect with your local educators. Reach out to your school administrators, principals, or individual classroom teachers early to complete a classroom flag check:

1. Assess the Need: Ask the schools if their classrooms are missing an American flag, or if their current flags are worn, faded, or damaged. Donate flags if you can. Don't forget to report how many.

Now is the perfect time to get out into your community and spark the conversation for the VFW Smart/Maher Teacher of the Year awards! As schools are preparing for the new year, reach out directly to Superintendents, Principals, and Teachers. Encourage them to nominate an outstanding educator who consistently incorporates patriotism, civic responsibility, and American history into their curriculum. We want to recognize the teachers who go above and beyond to build strong, patriotic citizens. K-5th grade, 6-8th grade and 9-12th grade teachers.

Thank you for everything you do to keep patriotism alive in the hearts of our youth and community!

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As we transition from the excitement of the back-to-school season into September, our focus turns toward one of the most sacred pillars of our organization: remembering those who have borne the ultimate cost of freedom, yet have not returned home, while honoring the deep milestones that changed our nation forever.

This year, the National Commander-in-Chief and National President's Special Project is proudly dedicated to supporting the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). The DPAA uses a combination of archival research, global recovery excavations, and advanced forensic science (including DNA testing) to identify missing service members and bring them home to their families.

To Donate: Contributions can be made quickly and securely online through MALTA.

To Report: Financial contributions and awareness projects for the DPAA are to be **reported under Veterans and Family Support.**

Mark your calendars and start planning your events now! Friday, September 18, 2026, is National POW/MIA Recognition Day. This day is dedicated to ensuring that our nation never forgets the servicemen and women who were taken prisoner of war or remain missing in action.

How your auxiliary can promote this important day:

Host a Missing Man Table Ceremony, set up a Missing Man Table at your post home, hold a POW/MIA ceremony at your post or a local library, a school, or a community center. Hand out brochures explaining the deep symbolism behind each item on the table.

We have a momentous event happening right here in our department! On September 19, 2026, there will be a special ceremony and dedication of a brand-new POW/MIA monument, generously donated by Jane and Ralph Dady.

When: September 19, 2026 at 1pm

Where: Oscoda Veterans Memorial Park (Old Wurtsmith AFB)
4000 N. Skeel Ave. Oscoda, MI 48750

September 11 holds a permanent, sacred place in the hearts of all Americans. As we mark another year since that fateful day, we must ask ourselves: How will we choose to remember?

1. The Lives Lost: Those who went to work or boarded a plane on 9/11 and never came home, as well as the heroic first responders who ran toward danger.
2. Post 9/11 Veterans: The brave soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines we lost in the global war on terrorism that followed, and the families who continue to carry the weight of those sacrifices. Consider hosting a community breakfast, a unified moment of silence at 8:46 AM, or coordinating with local fire and police departments for a joint Patriot Day memorial service.

We want to see the incredible work your post and auxiliaries are doing! Please remember to share your photos, stories, and event flyers on our Facebook page Americanism-Michigan.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our veterans, our missing heroes, and our communities.

Loyally;

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