



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

Michigan Connection

May 2023

(To be read on the Auxiliary Floor)

www.vfwauxmi.org

Department of Michigan Auxiliary

Department of Michigan Auxiliary Programs

#12

ational Theme: Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care

Department Theme: *Be the Anchor for Our Veterans, Hold them Steady and Safe*

resident Diana Ward

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Hello Sisters and Brothers,

It's hard to believe that a year has come and gone, and this will be my final Michigan Connection article. Thank you all for all your hard work and dedication to our veterans. The Department of Michigan has done so much for our veterans, their families, and the communities around our state. I look forward to seeing all of you at the Department Convention in Kalamazoo. Don't forget that May 12, 2023, is the deadline for Convention and Testimonial Ad Book submissions.

I would like to announce the Institution of our newest Auxiliary, VFW Auxiliary #1075 in Harrison, Michigan. I had the great privilege of Instituting this Auxiliary on April 30, 2023. Let's all give them a warm welcome to our organization. We have instituted two Auxiliaries this year – we brought in Auxiliary 6132 in Lansing several months ago. Unfortunately, we will also be losing two Auxiliaries – Houghton Lake and Adrian. We are making every effort to transfer all those members to another Auxiliary, so we don't lose the members.

It is with great pleasure that I inform you that the IRS has completed their investigation into our tax situation, and they have finally found in our favor. All the charges and penalties have been reversed. In fact, they have now found that we had an overpayment, and they owe us \$71.15.

Please make sure that all your audits are completed on time and forwarded to the Department office before May 31, 2023. Any Auxiliaries and/or Districts who are late will lose your Delegate votes at the Department Convention. Likewise, all lists of Delegates along with your delegate fees must be paid prior to Convention so your Delegates have their votes at the Convention.

We still have a few of my Casper pins left. If your Auxiliary or District would like to get some pins to take donations for, please contact Ruth Barnhill, myself or the Department office and we will make sure that you get them. Remember, all proceeds go to Camp Trotter. Thank you also for your support of my joint project with Commander John Griffith – the Oscar Mike Foundation. I'm so happy that we will be able to assist with this amazing project for our disabled veterans and those suffering with PTSD through our donations.

I would like to thank all of you for putting your faith in me six years ago when you elected me to the office of Department Guard to eventually lead the Department of Michigan as your Department President. It has been my greatest honor to have served our Department and our veterans in this capacity! I have truly enjoyed fulfilling all my obligations, serving our veterans and their families, and supporting all our members. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for having given me this opportunity and privilege to

have served you as your Department President. I hope you all feel that I have brought honor to the Department Presidency and served you well.

In Service to our Veterans

Diana Ward
Dept President

National Delegates

Your Auxiliary Secretary has until May 31, 2023, to enter your delegates into MALTA. If they are unable to do so themselves the Department Secretary would be happy to assist and get them into the system.

Department Delegates

May 10, 2023 is the final day to have your Department Delegates into the office. Thirty days prior to the election of Department officers.

Your Auxiliary has until June 30, 2023, to get your lapsed annual members to pay their membership dues before they will be dropped from the rolls. Make the calls or visits to ask them to stay active.

Reminder: Auxiliary and District bonds may not be paid until after July 1, 2023.

An election will be held to elect a National District Council Member Area B and a Big 10 Guard at our June Convention along with all Department Officer positions.

Passing of Past Department President

Please Drape Your Charter for Ivy Shaffer, Past Department President 2003-2004, who passed away on Saturday April 15, 2023. Ivy led the Department under the theme: "Unity with Caring for Our Veterans". She was a wonderful leader and dedicated member. She will be missed.

Friendly Reminder:

IMPORTANT FYI- The VFW Auxiliary 96th Department Convention will be **held at the Kalamazoo Radisson Hotel June 8-10, 2023**. You can find housing information on our Department website.

Diana Ward- Department President

Sandi Onstwedder- Department Secretary

**Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
Americanism Bulletin
May 2023**

www.vfwauxmi.com

Facebook page: Americanism-Michigan

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

The ideas for the Americanism/Patriotic Instructor Program are:

- Flag Education – Respect for the flag – engaging the community.
- Promote Patriotism – Celebrating Patriotic Holidays
- POW/MIA Recognition
- Promoting Americanism and Connecting with the Community
- Recognizing our Blue, White, Silver, and Gold Star Families

Our National Ambassador for the Americanism program is Linda Roloff. What a powerful year we will have as she leads and inspires us to proudly display Americanism in our Auxiliaries and communities. This year a topic to openly discuss and plan for is Patriotic Holidays. It will take each one of us to educate fellow community members on the importance of recognizing these dates.

Patriotic Holidays

Patriotic holidays are a great way for Auxiliaries to involve communities in spreading patriotism. Let's show our support for veterans and their families. Mark these patriotic holidays on your calendar.

May 8th is V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day), marks the formal acceptance by the Allies of World War II of Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces, therefore marking the end of WWII.

Third Saturday in May is Armed Forces Day, it is a day to honor Americans currently serving in the five branches of the U.S. military as well the National Guard and Reserve units.

The last Monday of May is Memorial Day. It is a day to honor the men and women who died while serving in America's Armed Forces.

Please take the time to report your Auxiliaries Americanism promotions!

Americanism June 2023

Make it a priority to refer to your Guide Sheet for Americanism monthly. Then, be sure to mark all Patriotic Holidays on your calendar. Have a discussion ahead of time to see if there is anything your Auxiliary can do to publicly promote that holiday. In the month of June, it can be as simple as joining in with your VFW to collect tattered or worn American Flags and hosting a flag retirement ceremony.

Promoting Patriotism, Flag Education and Patriotic Holidays

June 6th is D-Day Invasion Anniversary

June 13th is Bunker Hill Day

June 14th is Flag Day

June 14th is also Pause for the Pledge Day

June 14th is the U.S. Army's Birthday

June 23rd is the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday

June 27th is PTSD Awareness Day

Remember as the Auxiliary chairperson it will rest on your shoulders to inspire involvement and participation from your members. Set a good example and watch your program become an amazing way for all members to join in each activity.

Is your Post/Auxiliary holding a Flag Day (June 14) Ceremony? If so, let your local paper know. Then report it after the event.

Are you having a July 4th parade in your community? It's a great time to pass out 3x5" or larger flags. Are you walking in a Parade? Remember to report.

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY AUXILIARY OUTREACH BULLETIN May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Auxiliary Outreach Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Welcome to the 2023-2024 VFW Auxiliary, Department of Michigan year!

My name is Jared and I have been given the privilege to serve as the Chairman of Auxiliary Outreach for the 2023-2024 auxiliary year. I look forward to working with all of you and encouraging each of you to on have a successful year in this chairmanship.

The Auxiliary Outreach program is to assist our other community organizations. As an Auxiliary we can work together to help other organizations fill the gaps for their events and fundraisers when they are shorthanded of their own volunteers.

Some ideas for volunteer opportunities during the month of May could include:

- May 4 - International Firefighters' Day
- May 15 - National Peace Officers Memorial Day
- Week of May 14 - National Police Week
- Week of May 21 - National EMS Week

Possible volunteer opportunities include:

- Volunteer at a Safety Fair
- Project Blue Light - educate the public on the importance of our supporting this project.

Look into your communities for organizations that are hosting events for these potential opportunities or others! Look for inner creativity and connect and communicate to expand your auxiliaries volunteer possibilities.

Remember it's not donating items or money. It is about giving your time to serve others while showing your appreciation to the community. Be proud of your Auxiliary and always wear your apparel when volunteering.

AUXILIARY OUTREACH JUNE 2023

As a reminder you must approve all volunteer hours at an Auxiliary meeting prior to any events worked. Once the event is completed the information needs to be reported, such as how many hours worked and how many Auxiliary members volunteered. If you have a recurring volunteer opportunity with an organization, you only need one motion for the entire opportunity.

Reaching out into your community to assess the needs of others is key to launching your successful Auxiliary Outreach program. Many organizations are not speaking up and asking for help. Take the initiative and seek them out and offer help. Your Auxiliary has lots to offer, lead your assistance and show the community organizations the Auxiliary is here to help.

- Seek local organizations and groups in need of help.
- Ask what your Auxiliary can do to partner with them.
- Vote on your Auxiliary floor to accept the opportunity to volunteer.
- Record and details and report your success.

With summer upon us there are many great opportunities to explore.

- Youth sports and recreation
- Parent/teacher conferences/meetings
- Community beautification events

Remember who we are; we are members of an organization that takes pride and pleasure assisting our Veterans, their families, and our communities. Volunteering makes a difference in our communities to enrich our lives and the people who receive our help.

Loyally yours,

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Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
BUDDY® POPPY & VFW NATIONAL HOME BULLETIN

May/June 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Buddy® Poppy/VFW National Home-Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us



The Buddy® Poppy is a powerful flower that disabled Veterans put together. We as VFW and Auxiliary members distribute them to the public.

Any funds that come from the distribution of our Buddy® Poppy is placed into your Relief Fund. That helps our local Veterans in our own communities.

Hello Michigan, how many Buddy® Poppies can we use this year?

I would like to see us use and display many, many, more!
We need to report how many we display and distribute.

The month of May has been traditionally the time of year that Posts and Auxiliaries across the country go out to distribute our Poppy's. Has your Auxiliary participated in a Buddy® Poppy Drive yet? How many did you hand out? Buddy® Poppies can and should be promoted year around. On street corners, in parking lots, at businesses and within our Post Homes.

When we distribute Buddy® Poppy's It shows that we as Auxiliary members are out promoting and delivering a message into our communities by showing that we are continuously volunteering to help Veterans, their families, and donating to programs in our communities.

Use your Poppies to hold a contest using Buddy Poppies! Put out large jar, count how many in there sell tickets for a guess.

We all should be using them in centerpieces and floral displays every time there is a funeral dinner or banquet. Or, if you have some very artistic people in all your Auxiliary, turn them loose and wait to see what they can create. The more we display them, the more opportunities we have to engage in conversations and talk about the Buddy® Poppy and what they mean to us as members of our organization.

Facebook page is Buddy® Poppy/National Home-Michigan join it I will put thing on it for your Information.

The National Web Site has great resources and tools for Buddy® Poppy let's use them.

"BUDDY"® POPPY/VFW NATIONAL HOME

June 2023



V F W
N A T I O N A L H O M E

VFW National Home new LOGO. They also dropped the (For Children) in their name.

A new program at the National Home is If you know a Veteran with a family that lives in another state, and they don't want to move to Michigan they will still try to reach out and help. The VFW National Home now has a program that will pay the rent and utilities outside the home for an amount of time determined by the VFW National Home.

The VFW National Home Has a Help line please put this in number into your phone 1-800-383-4200. This could be very important to our Veterans when they need our help. Michigan should be very proud. We are fortunate to be in the state where the VFW National Home is actually located.

Personally, as an Alumni from the VFW National Home, I am so proud to be serving as the Department of Michigan Buddy®Poppy/National Home Chairman.



Yes, I am in this Picture can you find me.

Offering the Healing power of Music

Guitars for vet's chapter opened at the VFW National Home.

The VFW National also has a VA rep 2 days a week that come out. to help our Veterans.

Ideas on how your Auxiliary can help the VFW National Home:

1. The VFW National Home is looking to get High Speed internet, the cost will be high, but they need it.
2. Your Auxiliary can purchase a Memorial Brick with your Post and your Auxiliary number on it. The Cost is \$100.00.

Also, VFW National Home Life Membership each year your Buddy Poppy/National Home should purchase one. The cost is \$50.00.

Just a Heads-up August 6,2023 is Michigan Day. I would like to see more VFW Post and Auxiliary members attend this year as in the past several years our support and participation has dwindled. Bring your friends and neighbors. Show them the gem we have in the countryside that has continued for almost 100 years to meet the needs of Americas valiant heroes, our Veterans, and their families.

Patrick Rich "Buddy"® Poppy/VFW National Home Chairman
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**Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary
Extension and Revitalization Bulletin
May 2023**

www.vfwauxmi.org



National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans
Department Theme: Our Veterans, The Angels Among Us

Elections were held in April. If you did not elect, call me today! Installations are usually done this month. The By-Laws state Installations are held not more than 60 days prior to the convening of the Department Convention.

There are a few things to remember to be a Healthy Auxiliary

- **All officers must be installed to hold office.** If someone misses the actual installation, have them installed at the next regular meeting or take the oath at your District or the Department Convention. A past president can install also.
- **Look for a notice in the next weeks from your District President** of his/her official visit. They are there to assure you are on track as a healthy auxiliary. If you need extra assistance, tell this to the District President.
- **The audit from January-March 2023 was to be conducted in April,** approved, and forwarded to the Department office. It is to be approved by the membership and in the office no later than May 31, 2023. If an extension is needed, they can assist you in obtaining this from the Department President.
- **Installation reports are to be sent ASAP to the office,** along with lists of officers and chairman on the forms sent out in March (and a copy to the District Secretary). These are also inputted into MALTA only by the Secretary. If you cannot do this, contact the office for assistance.
- **Department Delegate forms and fees are to be in the office** also and must be received prior to the Department Convention.
- **National Delegates are put into MALTA by the Secretary** between April 1 and May 31, 2023. Again, if you need assistance contact the Department office.
- **Reporting for the 2022-23 year ended on April 20th** and for the 2023-24 year begins on May 1, 2023.

Remember that new officers take over at noon on June 10, 2023, when the new Department President is installed. Within 30 days of that date a report is due to your Commander on the financial status and membership status of your respective Auxiliary or District

EXTENSION AND REVITALIZATION BULLETIN

June 2023

We are now about to start our new administrative year with the Installation of Sara Manke as our next Department President on June 10, 2023.

You should have accomplished the following by now:

- All officers must be installed to hold office.
- Look for a notice in the next weeks from your District President of his/her official visit. They are there to assure you are on track as a healthy Auxiliary. If you feel the need for assistance, make this known to the District President. As soon as possible let us know. Early in the new Auxiliary year is the best time to get help to get on back track.
- The audit from January-March 2022 should be in the Department office. It was due on May 31, 2023.
- Installation reports are to be entered into Malta and sent to the Department Office.
- Within the next 30 days a copy of your financial and membership status is to be given to your commander. By July 10th.

Healthy Auxiliaries have things in common:

- They hold a minimum of 10 meetings with a quorum per year
- They perform and mail in quarterly audits on time
- Officers are elected, installed and reported
- They are always working to recruit new members and retain current members.



The following deadlines will be coming up quickly so get prepared:

- Looking ahead, the bond will be due soon. Any time after July 1st your Treasurer can take care of this through MALTA.
- Official visits by District Presidents will be scheduled soon.
- The first District meetings of the new year will begin in August and September so plan to have representation at those meetings. It is now a By-Law requirement.

Let's all work to have every Auxiliary healthy and thriving this next year. If you have concerns, need help, or know of a post without an Auxiliary that would like one, please call my cell listed below.

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY HISTORIAN-MEDIA RELATIONS BULLETIN

May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Historian-Media Relations Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

It's the beginning of a new Program Year and a time for us to think about why we joined and how we, as members and as an Auxiliary, make a difference.

There is a popular saying, "In order to know where we're going, you need to know where we've been."

Things change all the time, and I find it interesting to look at scrapbooks, or pictures on the wall to see how things have changed through the years. If we don't have someone taking pictures or writing down what has taken place, how can we show our children how things used to be? The change could be how the VFW Auxiliary looked 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 or 75 years ago compared to now. That is why it's so important to document the history of your Auxiliary through both written and photographic methods.

Traditional Media

- * Newspapers
- * Television
- * Radio
- * Magazines
- * Door Hangers
- * Flyers

Digital Media

- * Emails
- * Website
- * Social Media
 - * Facebook
 - * YouTube
 - * Twitter
 - * Snapchat
 - * TikTok

Traditional Memory Keeping

- * Scrapbooks
- * Journals

As you can see there are many different types of ways to communicate with people. These will help you keep track of things that are happening in your Auxiliary. Even though you might not have heard of all these, they are still ways others might communicate with one another. I completely understand if you do not know how each one works. To be honest - I don't use several of these methods, but my kids do!

A picture is worth a thousand words...make sure your photos is newsworthy when submitting them to local media, sharing them on social media or putting them in a scrapbook. You don't want to embarrass anyone at any time. If it is newsworthy, you will capture the person's attention. If it's not, then the person will move on to a photo or story that does.

HISTORIAN-MEDIA RELATIONS BULLETIN

June 2023

New- for this Program

This year, the President's Special project is Planting trees in the name of someone or in general of Suicide. When you plant a tree, she would like you to hold a sign stating a name or in memory of all those that have committed suicide. Once you have done a small ceremony then we are asking that you please send those pictures to me as she would like me to take all the pictures of the trees that you're standing in front of and make a book for her for the end of the year. As most of you know, it is best to plant trees in August, September and October so please start planning your event now so you can decide where you will be planting your tree. Besides honoring those we have lost we are giving back to the earth. You have the opportunity to plant one tree or many trees, it is up to your auxiliary. You might be able to get a tree company to donate the trees and even come and plant the tree, so it is properly done. This is a great opportunity to bring in your media and do a story on why you are planting a tree and what else you do as an Auxiliary. Have a like luncheon or snack and have a meet and greet with community to come into the post and see what you have to offer. Have a table for each of our programs with someone there that can explain what is on the table. Maybe a silent auction or do a raffle during that time and draw that day. There are so many different opportunities that you can do with this project.

New- for this Program

At the State Convention we will be having a contest for a physical book of pictures. Diana's year is the first in a long time to do this and National is requesting it again this year. It doesn't have to be a handmade scrape book; it can be digital. There will be one winner for each type of book.

Requirements:

Handmade Scrape Book

At least 20 pages
President Official Visit to District
At least 1 tree planting picture
Creativity
Design
At least 1 picture of Conference

Digital

At least 20 pages
President Official Visit to District
At least 1 tree planting picture
Creativity
Design
At least 1 picture of Conference

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY
HOSPITAL BULLETIN
May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Hospital Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Congratulations on being appointed as Hospital Chairman. Valuable hospital volunteer information is located on the National and Department websites. You now have an opportunity to bless many hospitalized Veterans along with those in nursing homes and Veterans homes.

The Hospital program includes VA Medical Centers, Community-based Outpatient Clinics, local hospitals, and nursing homes along with Veterans Homes. The Auxiliary can take credit for volunteering at any of these and donating toiletries, clothing, lap robes, snacks, etc. Monetary donations to VA Medical Facilities and Veterans homes should be made through the Department office and can be earmarked for a particular facility.

Read the guide sheet and let's start working on those goals. The goals are simple. This year, Department President Sara Manke has decided the goals won't include attending a district meeting or school of instruction.

Where can we volunteer?

Members, non-members, and youth can volunteer in many different types of facilities under this program:

- Local hospitals
- Veterans' homes
- Nursing homes
- Domiciliaries
- VA medical facilities and VA clinics

What can we do?

Volunteer opportunities are based on the facility where you are volunteering. Some facilities will have a volunteer program in place with specific jobs, events and needs. Many facilities will have varying types of opportunities to suit different ages and abilities. Be sure you follow all the guidelines given by the facility.

Don't forget the Star Raffle at the Department Convention. Donate gift cards \$5-\$25.

Hospital Bulletin

June 2023

New volunteers are needed every day across the country. Volunteers offset millions of dollars in expenses in health care. They help create a friendly and caring atmosphere no matter where they volunteer. For more information about being a volunteer, how to handle a Department Hospital Fund and other topics about this program, download the Hospital Program Guide and VAVS guide in MALTA Member Resources.

Consider doing a Hospital Volunteer sign up at your next Auxiliary Business meeting. You may have a member just sitting there waiting to be asked.

VFW Auxiliary members can participate in projects voted on and accepted by the Auxiliary. Members can make items such as lap robes, hats, quilts, cards, etc. Auxiliaries can donate items or money to hospitals and homes. Do a fundraiser for the Department Hospital program or pay your suggested hospital donations. Suggested donation sheets will be loaded on the Department website.

Women Veterans Health Care

Women have served the U.S. military since the American Revolution. They served in combat, disguised as men during the American Revolution and Civil Wars. They served on the front lines during the World Wars. In 1919 hospitalization and medical care for women who served as Army or Navy nurses during World War I was first authorized. The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, the predecessor to Veterans Health Administration, approved the first hospital spaces in 1923. In 2023, VA is celebrating 100 years of providing health care for women Veterans.

Today, more than 1.9 million women Veterans live in America, and more than 600,000 women Veterans receive health care at VA each year. At VA, women Veterans now have access to a full spectrum of comprehensive health and gender-specific care, including fertility services, mental health care, and maternity care and more. Veterans do not have to be disabled or have a service-connected injury to be eligible for care.

Together in Service,

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY
LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN
May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Legislative Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Welcome to the wonderful world of legislation in the VFW Auxiliary. This world is one that either you love it or you despise. If you despise it, is it because you do not fully understand the process? Or do you feel it is too much of them versus us?

The legislative process is basically the same between the federal government and the states. Under the founding fathers, in their desire to have equal representation, they adopted a two-tier structure – the upper house (Senate) gives each state an equal number of votes. Currently the Senate has 100 members. The lower house (Representatives) is based upon the population within each state and has been limited to a total of 435 members.

Michigan's two Senators to Congress are Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters. Both are supporters of veteran issues. Debbie was a member of Auxiliary 701 when I first met her as a state senator. Gary was a reservist in the US Navy when I first met him with the PTA back in the 90's. This is what I mean when I say, "get to know your representatives". They are people the same as you and I. They put their pants on, one leg at a time. They have families. They make mistakes. They are human.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on your thinking, this past November found new lines drawn for representatives and many of us have new representatives both at the state and federal level.

So, my charge is, if this is the case for you, for you to get to meet this person(s) and talk with them about the problems you or your veteran experience trying to navigate your way through the VA system. Yes, many veterans have a service officer to help guide the way – but with state term limits and a shift in Congressional members, one- on-one discussions are the best method of swinging votes favorable to the VFW legislative priority goals.

Invite the state representative or senator, or your congressperson of your post home district to your annual picnic, bar-b-que, golf outing, steak out, car show, or something. Ask if you can have an hour of their time during the day to talk with members about their experiences navigating red tape. Tell them to bring their family if it is a family picnic. They need to meet their constituents to better understand what is the prevailing opinion within the populace they represent.

Legislative Bulletin

June 2023

I am sure there are many of you who think “Oh No! Not Legislative! I can’t do it.” Well, I am here to tell you that this chairmanship is not writing the actual bills to go before the State and Federal Legislative Branches.

This chairmanship is more about how to influence people to support the many bills that are written in support of the military and the veterans of our country.

It is important to remember that the first step is to vote for representatives who have a like mind when it comes to our veterans. This makes it easier to get them to support our cause – the GI Bill of Rights. But if your candidate did not win the election or has retired from public service the work begins. You need to invite the new representative to a meet and greet at your post home to hear firsthand the issues veterans and families incur on a daily, weekly, monthly basis.

The state of Michigan Legislature is in session on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. So, I suggest inviting your local state representative or senator to your local post picnic or bar-b-que. Ask them for special recognition for your WWII veterans. (Some of them like doing this.)

Reach out and touch them. Get to know them on a personal basis; maybe that individual is eligible for the VFW Auxiliary. You will never know until you talk with them.

It is very important that you familiarize yourself with the Legislative Guide Sheet. By doing so, you will always have your end goal in sight.

Loyally

Aileen Adragna

2023-2024 Legislative Chairperson

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY
MEMBERSHIP BULLETIN
May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Membership Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

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Even though it is the new year for bulletins, we are still in Diana's year for Membership until June 30th. It is important that we continue to work on our members that still haven't paid their annual membership. It would be a shame if we lost those that we have already recruited into our Auxiliaries. Check with the lapsed member and establish why their dues aren't up to date. There is still plenty of time to get them paid. So, please take the time and call, write, or even visit them. Invite them to an event that is taking place at your Post home. Remind them they matter as members of the Auxiliary, and they are equally as valuable and important as every other member.

Members might not be in good standing, but they still have 2 months to get their dues paid before they must start all over with a new app and show their DD214 paperwork all over again. We must remind them of this. We must remind them of WHY they joined. The purpose of helping our Veterans and their families, we can't do that unless we have volunteers to help with our projects that we do to promote our programs.

I would like to say, welcome to a new membership year, but our quest for membership should never really stop so there should not really be a start and stop but for argument's sake welcome to the auxiliary business year where this year we are going to be an "Incredible team" working for membership within our state and our Big Ten Conference. This year National has given an extra fun little challenge by giving each of the four conferences a different movie theme for an extra fun way we all work our respective membership programs. Please refer to the guide sheet for specifics.

Meanwhile from time to time there will be a "Superhero" reference based on our theme of the Incredibles which is a cartoon family with undercover superhero parents.

For our part here in Michigan I want us to focus on getting back to basics. The basics of why each of us are part of the VFW Auxiliary. What we can do to help serve this organization on any level and in any capacity. What each of us has to offer in the manner of a particular skill. "We must Band together for our Veterans" is a good National theme as I will lay out over the next few months how we really need to work together for our Veterans. After all, "Our Veterans are the Angels Among Us" and need and deserve to be honored and respected for everything that they have done and sacrificed for all our well beings so that we can have a safer and brighter future.

MEMBERSHIP BULLETIN

June 2023

The foundation or building blocks of this organization has been based on gathering likeminded people who care about veterans. We are a service group and there are many programs available to us to participate in. I fully believe in cross promoting all of the different programs that we have and feel this should be done as often as possible.

For example: Many posts have a Friday night dinner, ask your post if you can set up a small table with some literature on a couple of our programs or better yet work with them and both put out information on Membership, Buddy Poppies, Youth Scholarships and or art and singing contests. If your post/aux has multiple dinners, you could pick just one dinner a month to put this information on display and or change it up every time. The point is to get information out into the communities and to get people talking.

Well, here we are getting ready to Jump into Summer and all that entails. It is time to take advantage of all the upcoming summer type events held throughout your community and your own post homes. Take every opportunity you can and turn that into an advantage. Use these opportunities for auxiliary to get the word out that you are looking for new members. You should also be looking to reconnect with former or "forgotten" members. Reach out to them. Maybe plan a membership tea or "summer picnic". Make it a time of talk and discussion on what these missing members might be needing to bring them back to meetings or getting them back on the rotation list for baked items for funerals or bake sales for dinners.

Maybe there were some hard feelings at one point and that person that has stepped back just needs to be asked back. The point is to find out what is going on in that member's life and see if there is anything the Auxiliary can do and possibly what they can do for the Auxiliary and get back involved. We need members to be involved and active, not just on the roster. Everyone has something at some time that they can contribute to, we just need to be conscious of what those abilities might be and to fully use them. We have to respect each other's differences and opinions, but we can and should all work together for the greater benefit of all Veterans.

With our Charter members or most senior members we should be reaching out and touching base with them just to let them know we are thinking of them and see if there is anything we could do for them. Most times this happens at Thanksgiving or Christmas but what about those unexpected times. Maybe on the 4th of July, Mother's or Father's Day, Halloween, or Easter? Form an "outreach membership group," that sends out cards or makes phone calls and just says hello. Talking to these members is important and we need to show them that they are still important to your auxiliary.

Wendi Hall-Membership Chairman

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Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP BULLETIN May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Mentoring for Leadership- Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Program Goals

- Create a Welcoming Environment at your Auxiliary.
- Recognize individual members' strengths and weaknesses.
- Train when the opportunity presents itself.

May 2023 Auxiliary Meeting:

I am so excited to work alongside valued Auxiliary members who understand the importance of sharing the knowledge of our organization with all members of their own Auxiliary.

Often you will catch yourself thinking, oh yeah, not everyone is aware that our organization (Auxiliary) does that. That becomes the ahh ha moment for you. When hopefully you will step up and follow through by filling in the blank spaces of information. Thus, assuring all members the ability to move forward with the same basic program or project criteria in mind.

In our organization mentoring means being prepared to give accurate information, direction, and guidance on our actions and procedures, based upon our Bylaws and Ritual. As Mentoring for Leadership Chairman in your Auxiliary you are encouraged to take on the role of a gentle educator of the Auxiliary Traditions and Bylaws.

This can be the most rewarding experience an active member can have in their Auxiliary. Watching the growth of a new member or renewing a spirit of commitment and understanding in a member who may have forgotten about some things within our organization.

Mentoring + Leadership = Happy – Healthy Auxiliaries

At your first business meeting in June, you could unveil a helpful Auxiliary kit. Work hand in hand with the Extension & Revitalization Chairman in your Auxiliary to prepare a "Welcome to the Auxiliary Kit" for new members. Be prepared to share it with those members that may not have attended meetings for a few years also. A refresher course in our Auxiliary and our traditions is always a positive to present. The aim is to keep knowledge in the hands of all members. Share a list of Officers with phone numbers, their job descriptions within the Auxiliary, and the part they play in the monthly meeting.

There is wealth in the statement, "The more in the know, the better it all will go."

MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP BULLETIN

June 2023

The new Auxiliary year is beginning. Now is a great time to get your objectives together for your Chairmanship. You can assemble items that you will need to refer to as Mentor in your Auxiliary.

Prepare a bag with the following items in it to carry with you to all your Auxiliary meetings:

1. Current Bylaws
2. Building on the Auxiliary Foundation Book
3. List of Auxiliary Traditions
4. List of Auxiliary members, their phone numbers, and addresses
5. Program Guide Sheets
6. Current Bulletins
7. Auxiliary Acronyms list
8. Sample Motions

Prior to the June business meeting prepare a form. Ask a few simple questions of every member present such as:

1. Would you like a mentor to help explain what is occurring in the meeting?
2. Would you be willing to mentor a new member, or a returning member who hasn't attended Auxiliary meetings in a while?
3. Would you like to discuss Auxiliary Traditions between meeting dates?
4. What do you feel your best contribution to the Auxiliary would be? (Being a Line Officer, Treasurer, Secretary, Chairman, Trustee, etc.)

I believe that if we C.A.R.E. our Auxiliaries will excel!

C= Catch the member when they first join.

A= ask them to join in and participate

R= Remember what it felt like when you were brand new to the auxiliary.

E= Engage them to join in and participate in a program or project that fits them.

Every member of an Auxiliary is a Mentor and should be respected, accepted, and treated as one.

Loyally yours,

Sandra Onstwedder

Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman

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**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY
PROGRAM PIN BULLETIN
May 2023**



National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

GOOD MORNING, GOOD AFTERNOON OR POSSIBLY GOOD EVENING! I am still delighted to let you all know that I am your Dept. Auxiliary Program Pin Chairman for President Sara Manke – 2023-24 Year. Thank you, Sara, for putting your faith in me to handle your program pins this year.

I'm pretty sure you are going to love the Flag Pins this year. I will start selling them at our Convention in June in Kalamazoo. I will have a table near the Registration table, and I will be there Friday and Saturday until the elections start in the afternoon. I will be at the hotel on Thursday and stay till Sunday morning, so if you can't get to my table, you can call me, and I will meet with you so you can get pins to take back with you.

Cost of the Program Pin remains at \$2.00 ea. Pin. That is a real bargain since everything else we purchase seems to have gone up in price. For \$50.00 you can get 25 pins, for \$100.00 you can get 50 pins. There is no actual mandatory limit of what you can purchase, but we are asking that each Auxiliary try to get at least 25 pins. Now don't forget to bring your check for whatever amount your auxiliary has planned on purchasing. We're asking that you pay when you pick them up, but if you forget or can't connect with your Treasurer to obtain a check, I will put you on the honor system to send ME the check when you get back to your auxiliary. See how easy it will be to purchase pins.

Please keep in mind, that although you pay \$2.00 per pin, you will get that \$2.00 back when you sell the pin, so your Auxiliary isn't out that money. I really think that once your members see the beautiful, folded flag pin, they are all going to want at least One.

Again, this year, I will be mailing pins to you quickly if you need to order them after convention. We will be adding on a \$5.00 charge for mailing because of the postage that just seems to be going up and up, so try to pick them up at Convention if possible.

You can call me: 734-233-8121 anytime and I will take your request and mail you the pins...PLEASE send all Checks to me. RUTH BARNHILL – 49403 Linden St. Plymouth, MI 48170 **PLEASE, make your checks PAYABLE TO: MI DEPT. VFW AUXILIARY**

I'm looking so forward to working with all of you and seeing all your smiling faces gathering around my table in the Registration area.

RUTH BARNHILL (A.K.A. RAFFLE RUTHIE) – DEPT. PROGRAM PIN CHAIR
49403 Linden Street
Plymouth, MI 48170
734-233-8121 Ruthbarnhill@ att.net

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIPS BULLETIN May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Scholarships Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Participation Recognition Program Awareness Scholarship Fund Building

Welcome to the 2023-2024 scholarship programs. I am very excited to have been chosen as this year's Department Scholarship Chairman. I have some very big shoes to fill with my predecessors, with your help we can help Michigan and President Sara shine this year. Please review your guide sheets. Promotion of all the programs is your first task at hand. Helping our posts with Scholarship Programs will add to both the VFW and Auxiliary having a successful year. When you present and provide information to your own members as well as those in your community you will promote awareness of the wonderful things, we as an Auxiliary do. When all is said and done, recognition of all participants, the actual winners, school personnel, each judge, and Post and Auxiliary members who were involved in the execution and completion of your scholarships project and program, when completed. Please help to support the funding of the awards by holding events earmarked Scholarships and/or making donations. TOGETHER we can provide an awesome opportunity for our youth.

This month I am promotion the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Essay Contests. because the timing is right. Get out to the Schools, Home Schoolers, Community Youth Groups, Church Youth Groups, etc. Go with a positive attitude and supply the Post, Department and National Scholarship amounts. Mostly encourage participation!

Voice of Democracy theme: "What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?"

Patriot Pen theme: "How Are You Inspired by America?"

1. Voice of Democracy (audio essay) & Patriot's Pen (written essay) VOD is 9th-12th grades. When promoting these programs, make sure you include all guidelines & forms needed – found at Department websites: www.vfwmi.org, www.vfwauxmi.org or National websites: www.vfw.org, www.vfwauxiliary.org. **These are VFW Programs that we help support.**
2. **Important dates:** October 31, 2023 (Entries at Post level), November 15, 2023 (Entries at District level), December 15, 2023 (Entries at Department level).
3. Department VOD top prize \$6,000 and PP \$1,000. National VOD top prize \$35,000 and PP \$5,000. District and Local awards vary.

Scholarships Bulletin

June 2023

This month is all about the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest and the Continuing Education Scholarship.

Patriotic Art

March 31, 2024, Entries at Local Level: The Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship is open to students in grades 9th-12th grades (including Home schooled network). Students must be residents of Michigan and be sponsored by a Michigan Auxiliary.

1. Two dimensional - *Must be on canvas or paper *Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker, or other media may be used *Do not frame two-dimensional pieces *submit canvas entries on a stretcher frame or canvas board *Other entries must be matted in white *Do not use color mats. Reinforce the back with heavy paper * Mounted and floating mats may also be used *The art should be no smaller than 8"x10" but no larger than 18"x24", not including the mat. ***13 National Prizes Range from \$15,000 to \$500.00
2. Three dimensional - Can be paper, papier-mâché, pottery, sculpture, fabric, wood, metalwork, etc. *Entries may not be larger than 18" in any direction or more than 5 lbs. in weight – jewelry, digital art and photography are not acceptable. ***National Prizes: First place is \$2500.00, Second Place is \$1,000.00, Third Place is \$500.00

Scholarships place our Auxiliary directly into our communities.

Continuing Education

February 15, 2024: Continuing Education Scholarship is open to members, their spouses, or children over the age of 18 providing financial assistance to further their education.

1. The application includes an essay of no more than 300 words and is sent to National Headquarters. Four \$1,000.00 are awarded each year, in each of the four VFW Auxiliary Conferences. Get the word out early to Posts and Auxiliaries by using posters, newsletters, websites, social media, and meeting announcements. Application can be found at www.vfwmi.org & www.vfwauxiliary.org

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Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT BULLETIN

May 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Veterans & Family Support-Michigan



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

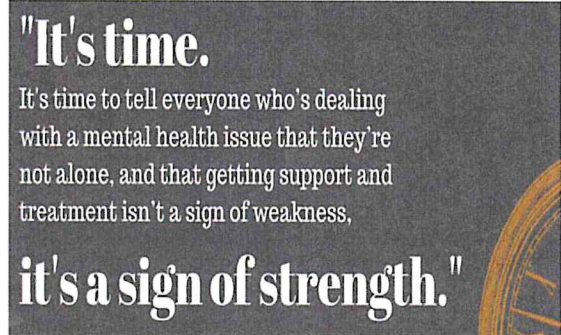
This month I want to challenge you to sharing the signs of emotional suffering, share places that they might be able to reach out to in your community (i.e., Vet to Vet peer counseling, Guitars for Vets), and/or share the Veterans Crisis Line number. Use this month as an opportunity to educate your community 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!

Christine LeBrun, Veterans & Family Support Chairman
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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT VFW AUXILIARY
YOUTH ACTIVITIES BULLETIN
MAY 2023

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Youth Activities Michigan

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

National Theme: Banding Together for Our Veterans

Department Theme: Our Veterans the Angels Among Us

Welcome to Youth Activities! Get ready for a jam - packed year of exciting experiences and projects to educate the Youth of our Nation in what Patriotism means and how they can remember and show respect for our Veterans. In the coming months I will highlight the Youth Activity Programs and give suggestions on how to present them. Previews to coming attractions & completing goals include:

- Patriotism through Literacy (“Reading is FUNdamental” and can be an interactive way to learn about our history – search for ways to educate through stories, etc.)
- Creating, Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups – engage youth groups in Auxiliary programs and involve service to our Veterans.
- Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations – award what groups do for our Veterans.
- Giving Patriotic Youth Awards – a way to reward participation and recognize individuals.
- R.A.P. Cards – Random Acts of Patriotism
- “Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue! A singing contest for singing the National Anthem
- Illustrating America – An art contest to build Patriotism for K-8th grade.
- Involving the Youth in ALL VFW Auxiliary Programs – building responsibility in our youth and educating the community on VFW Auxiliary Youth Programs

Camp Trotter: VFW Department of Michigan is still the only state in the nation with their own camp for children 7 through 12. The website for Camp Trotter is: www.camptrrotter.org It’s located in Newaygo, MI on Bills Lake. The new online registration started in February and can be completed on-line, or you can print the form and paperwork from the site and send it to the VFW Department of Michigan Office 924 N. Washington Ave. Lansing MI 48906. PLEASE DO NOT MAIL REGISTRATION TO THE CAMP.



CAMPER WEEKS are:

July 9-15	July 16-22
July 23-29	July 30-Aug 5
Aug. 6-12	COST: \$320

FAMILY DAY IS August 19

The 17th Annual Charity Golf outing will take place on June 16th, 2023, at the Village Green Golf Course in Newaygo. If you need more information call Ricky Young (810) 569-2193.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

JUNE 2023

June is the start of warm months and school isn't in session, so how do you reach the Young People in your community? It's the perfect time to visit the library and start a couple of the Youth Activity Goals: *Patriotism through Literacy *Educating the Community on VFW Auxiliary Youth Programs * Distributing R.A.P. cards.

Most libraries have summer programs to keep children occupied, call and see if your auxiliary can be a presenter for a Patriotism program this summer. Ask the Librarian if she will help find books in the library for youth on patriotism – some examples are:

- * America the Beautiful by Cholena Rose Dare (ages 3-6).
- *Fourth of July (Holidays in Rhythm and Rhyme) by Emma Calson Berne (ages 5-7).
- *The Fourth of July Story by Alice Dalgleish (4-8).
- *Fireworks, Picnics, and Flags by James Cross Giblin (10-12).
- *What Does it Mean to be an American by Rana DiOrio (4-8)

I'm sure the library has other books too – ask if you can make a display of them or maybe read a story about Patriotism at “story time” if they have one.

Offer to teach flag etiquette (also includes Americanism chairmanship) at the library or visit a Girl or Boy Scout meeting. County Fairs happen in the summer, ask if you can set up a booth all about patriotism. Hand out information about the upcoming “Illustrating America Art Program” and the “Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue Program”. Have flag coloring sheets available for children to stop by and color and give out flag etiquette sheets. Give out R.A.P. cards if they can say the Pledge of Alliance or have materials for them to make a card for a veteran in the Hospital.

Have a “Summer Fun Day” at the Auxiliary Post Home and have stations to do all the activities in your chairmanship and invite other chairman to join the fun. Play games, have races, treats, and “sneak” a few educational projects in the mix. Invite the Police Dept. and Fire Dept. to participate.

Make plans now for the 4th of July and all the youth-oriented projects you can do with Youth Groups in your area. Involve them in any celebration you are having. Make sure you let the youth and your community know they are an important part of “Banding Together for Our Veterans” because we consider “Our Veterans the Angels Among Us.”

Loyally,

Evelyn Avery, Youth Activities Chairman

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