

Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary HOSPITAL BULLETIN May 2022

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UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

National Theme: Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care

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

Congratulations on being appointed as Hospital Chairman for your Auxiliary! Your responsibilities are outlined in the Hospital Guide found on the Department and National websites. You now have an opportunity to bless many hospitalized Veterans along with those in nursing homes and Veterans homes.

My name is Mariann Hamann. It is my privilege to serve as Michigan's Hospital Chairman for this year. I am the oldest of three generations of VFW Auxiliary members. Two of my most rewarding VFW Auxiliary experiences are becoming a Hospital Volunteer in 2011 and serving as 2011-2012 Department President.

The Hospital program includes VA Medical Facilities and 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 donations like toiletries, clothing, lap robes, snacks, etc. Monetary donations to VA Medical Facilities and Veterans homes should be made through the Michigan VFW Auxiliary office and can be earmarked for a particular facility.

This year's guide sheet shows five key goals: 1) Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Support; 2) Valentines for Veterans; 3) Women Veterans Health Care; 4) Honors Escort Program; and 5) Innovation in Serving Veterans.

Women Veterans Health Care

Women Veterans Day will be next observed on **June 12, 2022**. However, because that is a Sunday, each facility may schedule events prior to or soon after that day. It was established to commemorate the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, Women Veterans Day has not yet been recognized as a national holiday but each year more states are participating.

How can your Auxiliary join in paying tribute to Women Veteran patients? Contact a Medical facility in your area to determine what can be done.

While all Veterans are due our respect and gratitude, Women Veterans have special needs that go beyond gynecological services. Many military women suffered sexual harassment and even sexual assault during their tour of duty. The VA is working hard to eliminate future happenings of such trauma and to help women who have experienced it.

You can help educate Women Veterans and military Women on their VA benefits by

being informed yourselves. The VA has established the Center for Women Veterans which has a website and a weekly newsletter. Visit <https://www.va.gov/womenvet> for more information. Also, the VA has benefit brochures available for you to distribute.

Innovation in Serving Veterans (new this year)

According to the dictionary, **Innovation** means "something newly introduced, such as a new method or device". National is awarding a citation to any Auxiliary who demonstrates innovation in the way they serve our hospitalized Veterans and submits the required entry form. Be creative and have fun! Then, report the activity.

Honors Escort Program

The purpose of this program is to honor a Veteran who passes away while in a medical facility, nursing home or Veterans Home. Please contact a local facility to see if they have an Honors Escort Program or what could be done to start one. Perhaps they need a flag-like drape or a CD to play Taps.

Some facilities use their verbal announcement system to call for a moment of silence in tribute. Some lead a procession where the gurney carrying the deceased is covered with a flag-like drape while enroute to the Chapel or holding area. Others play Taps while the deceased Veteran is transported. Along with the Escort, some have a Fallen Comrade Table set up in an atrium, public dining area or entry way which can be personalized by the family of the deceased Veteran.

Reporting

Reporting any activities related to the Hospital or any VFW Auxiliary program is critical to your non-profit status. In Michigan, we ask that you report all your activities at least once per quarter. To this end, an online, Department reporting system is available. Report the District and Auxiliary Number, a description, the number of hours, members, and miles driven along with monetary value for each activity. Be sure to include the Chairman's name in case I have questions.

If you are unsure how to use the system, I am available to help you. If you do not have access to a computer, perhaps someone in your Auxiliary could report for you. You may also send me a paper activity report that includes all the information sited above.

Together in Service,

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