

Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Veterans & Family Support Bulletin May 2022

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Veterans and Family Support-Michigan

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 to all Veterans & Family Support Chairmen for their 2022-2023 appointed position. Thank you to all Chairmen and members who support our Veterans and their families. I look forward to working with everyone in supporting our programs and themes.

As you plan your year you can find many resources at your disposal; www.vfwauxmi.org and www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Review the Guide Sheet to provide ample time to be ready for your District/Post/Auxiliary planning meetings.

May is designated as National Military Appreciation Month and Month of the Military Caregiver. We all know someone who is caring for or has cared for a veteran. Caregivers do not have time to recharge batteries without a good support system. How can we support and honor these selfless people? Ask the caregiver if you may offer assistance, an ear to listen, a few minutes to talk, a walk, help grocery shopping, laundry, or a home cooked meal. Many times, caregivers do not know there is help for them through the VA. Caregivers can find many resources at www.caregiver.va.gov.

We all support our veterans without asking for recognition or reward. Even so, I would like to challenge each Auxiliary to post on social media of how you helped a caregiver. Caregivers, how did someone help you recharge your battery? Let's show the world how Michigan takes care of our veterans and their families.

Veterans & Family Support sounds simple enough, right? There are numerous ways to help both locally and globally. They can be small to extravagant.

- Offer to mow grass each week or provide transportation to church
- Create fundraisers for Military Assistance Program (MAP), Unmet Needs, and Sport Clips
 - **MAP** provides financial assistance for Posts, Districts, and Departments to sponsor morale-boosting send-offs, homecomings, and casual get-togethers
 - **Unmet Needs** provides grants up to \$1,500 to active-duty service members and their families to assist with basic life needs
 - **Sport Clips** awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 to qualifying veterans and service members to help them complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt
- Promote Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness
 - Educate yourself about the warning signs of suicide
 - Learn about local support elements (i.e. Vet to Vet peer counseling, Guitars for Vets)
 - Always keep the Veterans Crisis Line with you 800-273-8255 (press 1)
 - Support families who have lost their veteran to suicide with hugs, an ear, house cleaning, or sitting with the family

- National Veterans Service (NVS) helps veterans, service members, and their families obtain the benefits they deserve – at no cost. Nearly 300 VFW Service Officers help veterans navigate the Veterans Affairs system. They assist all veterans, whether they are VFW members or not in filing claims for:
 - Disability compensation
 - Rehabilitation and educational programs
 - Pension and death benefits
 - Employment and training programs
- NVS also works to ensure veterans receive quality, timely, and accessible VA health care, including:
 - Hospital care
 - Outpatient care
 - Specialized health care for female veterans
 - Alcohol and drug dependency treatment
 - Medical evaluation for disorders associated with military service, exposure to Agent Orange, radiation, or other environmental hazards
- You can donate to NVS online at www.vfw.org/ways-to-help or by mail earmarked for NVS to VFW National Headquarters
Attn: NVS
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