



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

My travels thus far have provided amazing opportunities to visit with our Auxiliary and VFW members. You have proven that you are willing to “Walk with me” on my journey to serve our Veterans. Our visits to Veteran Hospitals and Homes have been extremely rewarding for Brenda and I as well as Ben when he accompanied me. On one visit we toured a WWII Museum with lots of memorabilia and photos. The Holocaust Room there was very thought provoking.

Not sure how it happened, but the Holiday Season is suddenly upon us ready or not! Today, I spent some time in my home office and when I came out, Ben had the tree in place! Not trimmed but in place. I just was not prepared for this!

Remember those less fortunate than you are. As you share the holiday cheer; please remember to send the moments that you captured helping others or sending packages to our deployed to Department Historian Kristin @ k.digi@pitt.edu.

Special note: All Department, District & Auxiliary Officers (Pres, Sec, Treas) dues **must** be paid by **December 31, 2023**. Anyone not paid will be relieve of their position.

Annual Members: Our paid membership is 85% and that means a few of us have not yet paid our dues. A member who does not pay their dues by December 31 is **not** in good standing and shall **not** be permitted to attend Auxiliary meetings nor hold an office. Don't let this happen to you, pay your dues.

Our **2024 Mid-Winter Conference** will be held January 19-21 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry, 910 Sheraton Drive, Mars, PA 16046. We will have an informative and fun weekend. Looking forward to seeing our Voice of Democracy District winners and the excitement surrounding the announcing of the Department winner! Please make your reservation today.

Is my special project **PA Wounded Warriors** on your Christmas list? Remembering those who served to keep us safe, and now need assistance can warm your heart at this special time of year.

Veterans & Family Support
Buddy Poppy/National Home
Christmas Greeting
Coatesville VA
Extension and Revitalization
Membership
Southeastern Veterans Center
TIPS

IMPORTANT DATES 2023

December * 3 District 21 Meeting @ Spring Grove #5265 – 2:00 P.M.
(Noon Luncheon Honoring President Mastridge)
December * 10 District 28 Meeting @ Venango #169 – 2:00 P.M.
December 10 District 1 Meeting @ Michael J Crescenz #2819 - 1:30 P.M.
December 25-26 Department Headquarters closed - Christmas
January 1-2 Department Headquarters closed – New Years

***Department President Official Visit**

BY ORDER OF:

Mary Jean Mastridge

Mary Jean Mastridge
Department President

ATTEST:

Jodie Hollinger

Jodie Hollinger
Department Secretary/Treasurer

"Let Freedom Ring"

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

GENERAL ORDERS #6 December 2023

HO! HO! HO! 'Tis the Season to Remember Our Veterans!

Holiday Cards - sign holiday cards and send them to the Veterans in the VA Hospitals and your local nursing home. If you don't have a count of how many Veterans are at the facility, send one card to the facility and ask them to hang it on their community bulletin board for all their Veterans to see. There may be Veterans from your Post that are considered shut-in at home and would enjoy receiving a card.

Gift Ideas for the Veterans in Your Family

Subscription - give the gift of reading ... **Veterans' Voices** serves veterans each year with *Writing From the Soul...For the Soul*. **Veterans' Voices** provides writing therapy for Veterans, a place for them to share their poetry and short stories which in turn allows other Veterans to benefit from reading the magazine. Learn more and subscribe: visit: www.veteransvoices.org or print the form https://veteransvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/formidable/2/Subscribe-Donate-form_051216.pdf

Hair Cut Experience - **Sport Clips** is the official haircutter of the VFW. Gift a haircut or the MVP Experience that includes a precision haircut, signature scent on hot steamed towel, 7-point massaging shampoo and neck and shoulder treatment. Visit www.sportclips.com to find a location near you.

Programs - Connect your Veteran with a program that provides an experience with other Veterans. There are many organizations offering fishing or hunting events for Veterans. There are also programs that provide healing therapy for PTSD including music, writing, art, and equine programs.

VFW Apparel & More - visit vfwstore.org for VFW branded items, military & patriotic items, such as hats, shirts, jackets, mugs, flag cases, pens, wallets, bags, totes and more!

Gift Cards - support your Veteran's Post Canteen/Dining Hall by purchasing gift cards.

Life or Legacy Membership - gift a Life membership to your Veteran that is paying annual dues to the VFW. They will appreciate not having to pay dues every year! A Veteran that already is a VFW Life Member is eligible to become a VFW Legacy Life Member. Legacy Life membership enables Life members to leave a lasting impression on the VFW. Three prestigious levels of Legacy are available: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. Each level offers benefits reserved for Legacy Life members, including an annual endowment in their name made to their Post. Learn more at www.vfw.org/join/legacy-life. Upgrade membership at vfw.org or through your Post's Quartermaster.

Keep these ideas in mind, not just for the holidays, but for a birthday or special occasion.

What will you do for our veterans, service members and their families?

We are **Banding Together for Our Veterans to Let Freedom Ring.**

Loyally,

Tina Hinkle

Tina Hinkle,
Veterans & Family Support Chairman,
tina@vfw5265.org

“Buddy” Poppy & VFW National Home”

General Orders #6-- December 2023



“Banding together for our Veterans” & “Let Freedom Ring!”

Can you believe we are halfway through the reporting year????
NOW is the time to get organized and make notes on what you need to report!

Simple Reporting reminders to help you out 😊

Buddy Poppy:

- *Have you ordered the minimum Buddy Poppies for your Auxiliary?*
 - *Fillable order forms are online, a couple clicks, BOOM, you're done!**(I have no further information on the metal poppies from Dept, when I do, you'll know first!)*
- *Have you checked out the resources available on the National VFWA website?*
- *Have you held a Poppy Drive (s)? Keep track of how many poppies distributed.*
- *Are you working on an entry for the Buddy Poppy Display Contest?*
- *Have you used buddy poppies in conjunction with another program?*
- *Have you used **#poppiescount** when using social media?*

VFW National Home:

- *Have you used one or more resources available on National VFWA website?*
 - *Have you promoted this program with a group or within your community?*
 - *VFW National Home & it's mission.*
 - *VFW National Home Helpline*
 - *Has your Auxiliary or your members purchased any of the following?*
 - *Life Memberships for National Home*
 - *National Home Tribute Bricks*
 - *Has your Auxiliary donated to the Health & Happiness Fund yet?*
- ****ONLY 25 cents per member, pay online at MALTA or mail your auxiliary's donation****

If you checked off one or more, you're well on your way to HEALTHY reporting, THANK YOU!

Print off the Year End Reports at [VFW Auxiliary PA \(vfwauxpa.org\)](http://vfwauxpa.org) to help keep track 😊

Keep up the great work Pennsylvania!

If you know someone or a family who may need assistance encourage them to:

- Call the Helpline at 1-800-313-4200
- Email help@vfwnationalhome.org

2023-2024 COMBINED
SPECIAL PROJECT



Loyally,

Amy Peterson – Department of PA “Buddy” Poppy/VFW National Home Chairman



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

TO EVERY AUXILIARY BROTHER & SISTER
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PA



**A Happy & Healthy 2024 to all
Veterans and their families**

COATESVILLE VA MEDICAL CENTER

GENERAL ORDERS #6

December 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Thank you to our Department President Mary Jean Mastridge for these appointments as Representative and Deputy at Coatesville VA Medical Center. Every day we will "**Let Freedom Ring**" while "**Banding Together for our Veterans**" and continue to assist our Veterans and their families with everyday needs.

Our annual Spring Carnival is held in May. With all your donations we were able to purchase personal items, sweatshirts, hygiene items, and about anything our Veterans need.

With the help of our community, our Coatesville Veterans receive homemade meals throughout the year prepared by Auxiliary members. Birthday parties are held monthly with cake and gifts.

One of our events is the Labor Day picnic held on the holiday. Hotdogs, burgers and all the picnic fixings are prepared for the Veterans. Good time had by all.

A huge thank you to all the Auxiliaries for your donations.

Donations can be sent to: VFW Auxiliary - Department of PA,
4002 Fenton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109- 5943.

Earmark: Coatesville VA Medical Center.

Loyally,

Diane

Kelly

Diane Haller
Representative

Kelly Borrell
Deputy

Extension and Revitalization

General Orders #6

December 2023

As we “**Let Freedom Ring**” I am asking all District Chiefs of Staff to help to revitalize and rejuvenate our Auxiliaries. When you are with your District President you have first hand knowledge within each Auxiliary. It is important to have good communication with your President. Be the eyes and ears during meetings. Listen to the members and help them to revitalize.

When you visit an Auxiliary go in with a good attitude and look for positives in each Auxiliary. Our District Presidents should have inspiring words for our members at their meetings. Make sure they have energized conversations. Inspire the members by giving them entrusted words on how to vitalize their Auxiliary.

By using these words, we can revitalize our Auxiliaries on being the best they can be.

recharging.....energize.....vitalization.....ideals.....thrilling.....

aspire.....lift.....inspire.....zone.....entrust.....

Remember every member needs to feel that their involvement is necessary for the success of the Auxiliary. If members feel welcome and needed they will come back to meetings and other functions.

We can rejuvenate any Auxiliary that might need our assistance. The District President, Chief of Staff or any assigned Representative should maintain a positive attitude and have fresh ideas. You can tell someone they did the wrong thing in a positive way. A member will listen if you have positive words to share. If we revitalize and rejuvenate our Auxiliaries, that will mean less Red Flag Auxiliaries. Remember “**Banding Together for our Veterans**” starts by being positive.

Loyally,

Brenda

Brenda Johnson, Chief of Staff



MEMBERSHIP

General Orders #6
December 2023

85.25%



“CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN”



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

This would be a wonderful time to give the gift of membership renewal. Remember to stay in good standing you need to pay your dues by December 31st, 2023.

DO YOU HAVE A MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL PLAN?

- ❖ **Have you sent renewal notices out to members?**
- ❖ **Maybe you can make phone calls?**
- ❖ **During the Holiday Season have a get together and invite all members to attend.**
- ❖ **Consider being a Dues Angel for a brother or sister in need.**

Would like to give a big shout out to the following Auxiliaries for reaching 100% or more in membership as of November 21, 2023, **District 1, Auxiliary 7650 -102.04%; District 8, Auxiliary 7293- 104.05%; District 10, Auxiliary 25 -100%, Auxiliary 531 - 100% & Auxiliary 7963 - 102%; District 11, Auxiliary 8317 - 102.46%; District 18, Auxiliary 7530 - 100%; District 19, Auxiliary 8755 - 100%; District 20, Auxiliary 8225 - 100%; District 22, Auxiliary 5644 -102.50%; District 25, Auxiliary 1821- 100%; District 29, Auxiliary 7714 - 100%.**

As we **“Band Together for our Veterans”** it is time for us to get ready for a great year with **“Lights, Camera & Action.”** Get ready to **“Climb Every Mountain”** and we can reach the top of the mountain **“Let Freedom Ring.”**

Tammy Hunter

Tammy Hunter
Department Membership Chairman
huntertammyjo@aol.com

SOUTHEASTERN VETERANS CENTER

GENERAL ORDERS #6

December 2023

Another year to say hello to all of our VFW Auxiliaries across Pennsylvania. Thank you to President Mary Jean Mastridge for bestowing this position to myself and my deputy to continue supporting our Veterans and families.

Things have improved at Southeastern Veterans Center regarding the Covid virus, but that does not mean it has gone away. We still have to wear masks at times and some activities slow down, but then pick up again.

With the donations from our auxiliaries across the state we have been able to provide sweatpants, stamps, electric razors, sunglasses and many other items we take for granted. We hosted a Pretzel Day for residents and helped with a 100th Birthday Party for one of our residents with drinks and a performance of bagpipes, which everyone enjoyed. A request which we were glad to provide was extra large print Bibles. In November we helped by providing the goodies table at the Fall Festival.

Our Christmas parties are now being prepared as you read this document. We thank all Auxiliaries for their generous donations to the Canteen Christmas Fund. Without your generosity many Veterans would have no one to support them. Again, THANK YOU.

We continue to do all we can to take care of our Veteran's needs.

May you all have a blessed Christmas and a Healthy New Year. Thank you for supporting all hospitals and centers.

God Bless America

God Bless our Veterans

Respectfully,

Linda Neiman

Marsha Lush

Linda L. Neiman – Representative SEVC
205 Lilac Lane
Douglassville, Pa 19518
610-385-6394

Marsha Lush – Deputy

TIPS

December 2023
General Orders #6

Department Secretary-Treasurer Jodie Hollinger reminds all Auxiliary Treasurers:

It is your responsibility to process all continuous Annual memberships when you receive them. Upgrading a continuous membership to Life is also quite easily processed. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call Headquarters at 717-232-7604.

Auxiliary Outreach – Kimberly Grundon, Chairman

What to get involved in your community?

The Lions Club is always looking for volunteers for events in the community. Many opportunities exist that Auxiliary members can assist in local community. Partner with your local Lions Club to help with such things as:

- Christmas events
- Santa Claus Hot Line
- Plastic Bag Collections
- Food Trucks
- Lemonade Stands

Americanism – Carolyn Paccio, Chairman

This month brings joy to many but can be a rough time for those serving far from home and Veterans in personal care homes or without families. Please try to make care packages, send Christmas cards, donate to your local food pantries, or any other act of kindness your Auxiliary chooses to use. They all need us to let them know we are thinking of them even though we are busy with our own holiday festivities. If you do a project, be sure somehow to include something patriotic attached to it. Let them know we are proud and stand with them and thank them for their service.

Include your Auxiliary members who gave their time in the past but are no longer able to attend meetings or assist at your events. Just receiving a card from you can mean so much.

I wish you all good cheer and a season filled with love and kindness. **Let Freedom Ring!!** Throughout our land!!

TIPS (continued)

Historian/Media Relations – Kristin DiGiacomo, Chairman

Remember... a picture is worth a thousand words!

Make sure that your photos are newsworthy when submitting them to the local media, sharing on social media or adding to a scrapbook. You don't want to embarrass anyone at any time. Try to ensure that you don't catch folks with their mouths hanging open.

If the photo is newsworthy, you are going to capture the reader's attention. They are going to want to see about what we're doing in and around our communities for our veterans and their families. And that is exactly what we want! Think about it this way, if that photo doesn't seem to have a "wow factor", would you stick around to read more or move on to a photo or story that does?

Wishing all of you a lovely Holiday Season as the calendar year starts coming to a close, but let's all look forward as we continue to **"Let Freedom Ring"** while **"Banding Together for Our Veterans"** during the upcoming new year!