



## Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Spring has sprung, bringing fresh starts and new possibilities. This makes me think there's no better time to strengthen the VFW and VFW Auxiliary membership by recruiting new members who want to give back and support our Veterans, their families, and our communities.

Speaking of, and despite not wanting to even consider the challenge, VFW State Commander Bill Roland has set a goal of getting the VFW membership over 100% before June 30, 2026. If it takes me jumping out of a perfectly good airplane to ensure the VFW reaches this goal, then I suppose I'm all in! My request to you, our Auxiliary members, is to work hard to help recruit new VFW members so the VFW can reach this important milestone. Surely, these new VFW members will have family members we can welcome into the VFW Auxiliary as well. It's a win-win if you ask me!



This time of year also brings to mind spring cleaning. It's more than tidying our homes; it's a time to reflect, reset, and refocus on what truly matters. In the same spirit, this season is also an opportunity to recommit ourselves to our mission of serving Veterans and continuing to support our programs. Just because our Year-End Reports (YER) were submitted to your District President by April 5, it doesn't mean we sit back and wait. Like that closet, garage, or attic, by renewing our dedication, strengthening our outreach, and supporting one another, we ensure our organization remains ready to meet the needs of those who have served. As spring brings clarity and growth, so too does our continued commitment to honoring and advocating for our Veterans as "***Every Day is Veterans Day.***"

While April is known for reporting, voting on Delegates, and the Testimonial, it's also time to start planning for the Department Convention. It will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh Cranberry, Mars, PA. While the schedule is still being finalized, we anticipate the bulk of meetings and activities to take place between June 17 and June 20, culminating with the Welcome Reception for our newly elected Commander and President on Saturday evening. Information on reserving your room is available on [www.vfwauxpa.org](http://www.vfwauxpa.org), with the tentative agenda to follow soon.

As this journey continues to speed by with a handful of District visits remaining, I am eternally grateful for the fellowship, friendships, inspiration, dedication, and so much more I have been privileged to witness as I travel across the state. Pennsylvania is an amazing and diverse place that I am proud to call home, and I'm humbled and honored to serve our members in this position.

## IMPORTANT DATES:

April 3 & 6 Easter Holiday – Department Headquarters Closed

April 10-11 President Kohler's Testimonial Weekend, Wyndham Gardens, York

April 19 – District 14 Meeting @ Towanda #1568 – 2:00 P.M. \*

April 26 – District 1 Meeting @ Parkway Memorial #7650 – 2:00 P.M.

Department President Kohler will visit \*

*Robin Kohler*

Robin Kohler  
Department President

*Jodie Hollinger*

Jodie Hollinger  
Department Secretary/Treasurer

## **ATTENTION AUXILIARY/DISTRICT OFFICERS**

### **Per Section 804B-Auxiliary**

- A. Elective Officers shall be nominated and elected at a regular business meeting in **April**
- B. Each year at the regular annual election, one (1) Trustee shall be elected for a three-year (3-year) period. (Your 3yr drops to 2yr, the 2yr drops to 1yr, and your 1yr drops off)

### **Section 804C -District**

- A. Each year at the regular annual election, one (1) Trustee shall be elected for a three-year (3-year) period. (Your 3yr drops to 2yr, the 2yr drops to 1yr, and your 1yr drops off)

**Secretaries** – Please sign into MALTA and under your Duties look for your Manage Auxiliary/District Section. You will see Officer Resources, click this! You will then see a title: Installation Report; Long Form or Short Form. Please pick which form you will fill out. You want to be sure you have this copy PRINTED because the installing officer will sign this form in MAY after the Installation of the officers. This form will be used to fill out the Installation Report on MALTA under SHORTCUTS. The signed Installation Report will be placed in the Secretary book.

## **Who may Install the New Officers?**

Per Bylaws Section 806A – Auxiliary Installation

- 3. The following members in good standing may conduct the Installation Ceremony:
  - a. A member who is a Past or current Auxiliary President
  - b. A member who has held a higher elective office in the Auxiliary
  - c. Or a past or current Post Commander or higher office.

# Delegate Cheat Sheet

## Section 302 – District Meetings & Convention – pg 33

\*One (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for each fifteen (15) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Auxiliary at the time of election of delegates

Example: 30 paid members = 2 Delegates and 2 Alternates

35 paid members = 3 Delegates and 3 Alternates

Your **District Secretary** may send a form for you to list your District delegates this **MUST** be returned to your **District Secretary** BEFORE your District convention. This will be the May meeting. There is no fee for District delegates.

## Section 303 – Department Meetings & Convention – pg 33/34

\*One (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for each thirty (30) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Auxiliary at the time of election of delegates.

Example: 60 paid members = 2 Delegates and 2 Alternates

65 paid members = 3 Delegates and 3 Alternates

Department will **EMAIL** the letter with the number of delegates and the amount of Delegate fees each Auxiliary owes in the beginning of April. The EMAIL will go out to every President, Secretary and Treasurer to keep everyone informed. The delegate fees and the delegate/alternate sheet **MUST** be returned to Department Headquarters by date on letter to avoid being in arrears.

## Section 304 – National Convention – pg 35

\*One (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for each thirty-five (35) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Auxiliary at the time of election of delegates

Example: 100 paid members = 3 Delegates and 3 Alternates

105 paid members = 4 Delegates and 4 Alternates

National Delegates are inputted into **MALTA** by the **Auxiliary Secretary**.  
**The deadline for this is May 31<sup>st</sup>.**



**PROGRAM  
SPOTLIGHT**

**April  
2026**

**EVERY DAY IS  
VETERANS DAY**



**VFW Auxiliary Department of Pennsylvania**



*Auxiliary Year-End Checklist*

- Completed Year-end Reports to your District President by April 5, 2026
- Election of Officers, including District, Department and National Delegates at your April meeting. Choose delegates who are planning to attend district meetings and department and national conventions, and send delegate lists/update Malta even if no one is able to attend these events.
- Secretary fill out all delegate forms and sign them, along with the President
- Secretary send district delegate form to district secretary prior to district meeting
- Send department delegate forms AND convention dues to Department Headquarters by May 22, 2026 – Auxiliary officers look for an email from Dept Treasurer Jodie Hollinger!
- Install new officers at your May meeting
- Secretary should update officers in MALTA following Installation of Officers
- Secretary should update national delegates in MALTA by May 31, 2026
- Members attending National Convention should register themselves for National Convention in MALTA by May 31, 2026, to save some \$\$\$

**AMERICANISM**

**Cherie Dysard, Chairman**

Working alongside your VFW Post to prepare for Memorial Day is a powerful reminder of the deep respect our community holds for the veterans who gave their lives in service. Our dedication to honoring the fallen ensures that every detail—from the parade and ceremony to the shared moments of reflection—carries real meaning.

Together, we help create a day that not only remembers our lost heroes but also strengthens the bonds of gratitude and remembrance within our community.

It's not too early to start planning for this important day of remembrance.

# BUDDY POPPY/ NATIONAL HOME

Beverly Kemmerer, Chairman

As we move into the warmer months, auxiliaries are reminded to continue supporting the VFW National Home so they can provide stability and care for military and veteran families.

Your donations during this time help sustain essential programs, maintain the grounds, and ensure families have a safe, supportive place to grow and heal.

Consider becoming a Home Front Hero or purchasing a Tribute or Centennial Garden Brick!

<https://vfnationalhome.org/you-can-help/>



# AUXILIARY OUTREACH

Jency Mercado, Chairman

Engaging with local community organizations remains an essential way to strengthen the well-being and resilience of our shared communities.

By collaborating with established groups, auxiliaries can help expand the reach and effectiveness of programs that address meaningful local needs.

Continued participation ensures that our communities grow more connected, supported, and capable of achieving lasting positive impact.

# LEGISLATIVE

Tim Altman, Chairman

Hello sisters and brothers - Auxiliary members. As of now you should have filled out your year end reports and sent them to your district presidents. They will be getting them to me hopefully soon. You will receive any awards you may have earned at the state convention in June.

On a legislative note, the Richard Star Act has been stopped in congress for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, we need to continue to let our senators know we want this bill passed for our veterans. This bill is extremely important for our veterans and we need it passed. We should all be a part of Action Corps Weekly. This is the best way to let our legislators know what we want them to do.

Remember "Every Day Is Veterans Day"

# HOSPITAL

Linda Dilling, Chairman



**The 2026-2027 reporting year has started. If you haven't volunteered at least once at a VA or non-VA hospital or nursing home, you are missing out on a very rewarding experience. A simple call to your VFW Auxiliary Hospital Representative asking to volunteer for an activity or event will break the ice. Don't miss out on brightening a veteran's day!**

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

**Marsha Fuhrman, Chairman**

Supporting the youth in our communities is essential to fostering growth, confidence, and opportunity for the next generation.

By investing time, resources, and mentorship, auxiliaries can help young people build the skills and resilience they need to thrive.

Continued engagement ensures that our youth feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Ideas for supporting the youth in your communities:

- Sponsor sports leagues, art camps, or music programs that give youth a positive outlet and a sense of belonging.
- Create safe community spaces—like open gyms, reading rooms, or drop-in centers—where young people can gather and connect.
- Support local libraries and recreation centers by sponsoring activities or volunteering or being a reading buddy.

# EXTENSION

**Karen Hoover, Chief of Staff**

With the weather improving, it is more difficult to get our auxiliary members to attend meetings and activities! Keep your members engaged by trying something new:

Make Meetings More Appealing

- **Incorporate outdoor elements**, such as holding part of the meeting outside, offering refreshments on a patio, or using a pavilion at a local park.
- **Shorten or streamline agendas** so members know their time will be respected during busy summer months.
- **Add a social component**, like a brief cookout, ice cream social, or casual gathering before or after the meeting.

Strengthen Connection and Purpose

- **Highlight the importance of seasonal initiatives**, reminding members how their presence directly supports upcoming projects or community events.
- **Recognize member contributions**, giving people a reason to show up and feel valued.

# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

**Athena Theodorakos-Gjerde, Chairman**

Here are several thoughtful and practical ways auxiliaries can support veterans during the warmer months:

Create Opportunities for Connection

- **Host outdoor gatherings**, such as picnics, barbecues, or community appreciation events that bring veterans together in a relaxed setting.
- **Organize volunteer days** to help with yardwork, home repairs, or accessibility improvements for veterans who may need extra assistance.
- **Partner with local parks or recreation centers** to offer nature walks, fishing outings, or wellness activities that promote camaraderie and well-being.

Strengthen Access to Resources

- **Set up mobile outreach events** where veterans can connect with service officers, benefits counselors, or support organizations.
- **Provide transportation assistance** to help veterans attend medical appointments, community events, or social gatherings.

Build Community Engagement

- **Encourage youth groups or civic organizations** to participate in service projects that honor and assist veterans.
- **Promote veteran-owned businesses** through summer markets, fairs, or community spotlights.

# SCHOLARSHIP

Karen Mooney, Chairman



Time continues to move along, flying by to be honest.....April 2026. By now each Auxiliary should have received the art projects for the creative art scholarship contest. Be sure that after your Auxiliary judges the submissions that were received consider how you are going to recognize those students that participated. Some Auxiliaries make arrangements to attend a school award ceremony, some Auxiliaries ask the winner to come into the VFW to present their award to the students. Another option, depending on how many submissions you received, consider hosting an art show for the entries. Invite the participants with friends and families. Consider inviting local art teachers as well to show off the talents of the students who submitted an entry. Depending on the entries, the Illustrating America entries could be highlighted along with the Patriotic Art Contest submissions to share this celebration between Scholarships and Youth Programs. Have all the art work displayed for viewing, have light refreshments for those in attendance and then offer a mini awards ceremony to award your top 3 winners for both contests. This way the family gets to see the student receive their award and share in the moment.

Remember that year end reports are due to your District President by April 5, 2026. Hopefully you remembered that you need to answer just one question with a yes to be considered "participating" in each program. We should all strive to be 100% reporting in all our programs across the board. Be sure to give everything that you do proper credit, your Auxiliary deserves the recognition.

One last push for the Scholarships Shirt Fundraiser. Taking orders for these shirts until the end of May so that funds can be prepared and presented to the Scholarships Programs at Convention in June. The fundraiser has done better than I had hoped so looking to see where we can finish this process for this program year. For all that have supported this program, thank you very much. It is truly appreciated!! An updated order form is attached to the Department website under the Scholarships Program at [vfwauxpa.org](http://vfwauxpa.org)

Please remember that "Every Day is Veterans Day" and we should all celebrate all that we do for our Veterans, our VFW, and our communities. The VFW Auxiliary MAKES a difference! Here's to the VFW Auxiliary Scholarships Programs!! Fight to the finish line!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



# HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATIONS

Debra Antosh, Chairman

May is National Military Appreciation Month, and there are several key dates to honor veterans, fallen service members, and their families. Top observances include Memorial Day (last Monday in May) for deceased veterans, Armed Forces Day (third Saturday) for those currently serving, and Silver Star Service Banner Day (May 1) for wounded veterans.

Silver Star Service Banner Day (May 1): Focuses on honoring wounded, ill, and injured veterans.

Loyalty Day (May 1): Reaffirms loyalty to the U.S. and honors military service.

Military Spouse Appreciation Day (Friday before Mother's Day): Recognizes the sacrifices of military spouses.

VE Day (May 8): Commemorates the end of World War II in Europe.

Children of Fallen Patriots Day (May 13): Honors the children of military members who died in service.

Armed Forces Day (Third Saturday in May): Honors those currently serving in all branches.

Memorial Day (Last Monday in May): A solemn federal holiday honoring military members who died in service.

Month of the Military Caregiver: Dedicated to those caring for wounded veterans.

These days offer opportunities for public appreciation, ceremonies, and honoring the sacrifices made by military families and veterans.

Here are some ways to help our Veterans

Volunteer: Offer your time at a local VA hospital or veterans' organization.

Visit Memorials: Spend time at a national cemetery to place flags or flowers on gravesites.

Donate: Support charities like the USO or Hope for the Warriors that provide direct assistance to military families.

Write Letters: Send "thank you" cards or care packages to veterans in retirement communities or hospitals.

*I encourage all to get involved and or participate in 1 or more of these events and also volunteer, donate and do all that you can remembering what was done for us.*

**Gino J. Merli Veteran Center**  
**Scranton, Pennsylvania**  
**General Orders #10**

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

The Gino J. Merli Veterans Center is located at 401 Penn Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503. There are 189 Veterans in this facility, (thirty-one being women) and many activities are planned every month. Right now, the Department of PA VFW Auxiliary gives \$100.00 a month for bingo, which I'm told they love to play.

On one of the many shopping trips, we purchased items for the men and women at the center. I have purchased stamps (especially around the holidays), sweatpants, tee shirts, sneakers, socks, clothes and razors. We also have collected funds for the shadow boxes. We are in the process of ordering them and will be spending time with the Veterans placing their memories in the box.

In an effort to show our support and thanks to these Veterans who have given so much to our Nation, we would like to ask for any donations you may be able to give. Earmark: **Gino Merli Veterans Center**. Make checks payable: Department of PA VFW Auxiliary and mail to 4002 Fenton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943.

Please remember that **"EVERY DAY IS VETERANS DAY"** and to show our gratitude stretches **"FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA"** honoring our Veterans. At this time we would like to thank Department President Robin Kohler for this appointment. We look forward to our continued work at Gino J Merli Veterans Center.

Loyally yours,

*Naomi*

Naomi M. Woody, Representative  
688 Homestead Street  
Simpson, PA 18407  
570-840-8585

*Bonnie*

Bonnie Drake, Deputy  
2318 Owego Turnpike  
Honesdale, PA 18431  
570-647-8685