



Greetings,

I'd like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your continued dedication to our Veterans, their families, our communities. Your service and spirit make a lasting impact every day, and it brings me joy to see your dedication to this amazing organization as I travel across the state.

There are a lot of activities coming up, so stay informed by visiting www.vfwauxpa.org, your central source for updates, resources, and upcoming events across Pennsylvania.

A friendly reminder that your dues renewal notices should be in the hands of your annual members to ensure their dues are paid by the end of the calendar year. Additionally, Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers on all levels must have their dues paid by December 31. **(Paid by November 30 for All State)**. If dues are not paid, they will be removed from their respective office. Therefore, don't delay and process all dues renewals early and frequently.

As the holiday season approaches, we need to take time to celebrate the joy of togetherness, reflect on our shared mission, and spread kindness wherever we go. Whether with family, friends, or fellow members, let this season be filled with warmth and gratitude.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- November 2 – District 30 Meeting @ Breezewood #8333 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 2 - District 18 Meeting @ New Cumberland #7415 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 9 - District 17 Meeting @ Marysville #882 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 9 - District 24 Meeting @ Canonsburg #191 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 9 - District 26 Meeting @ Sankertown #7377 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 11 - Veterans Day Headquarters closed
- November 12 – 14 National President Lois Callahan visit to PA
- November 15 - District 25 Meeting @ Rochester #128 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 16 - District 8 Meeting @ Whitehall #7293 – 2:30 P.M.
- November 16 - District 10 Meeting @ Wozniak-Pavolski-Eynon #7963 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 16 - District 11 Meeting @ Conyngham #8161 – 2:30 P.M.
- November 16 - District 12 Meeting @ Coaldale #6982 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 16 - District 13 Meeting @ Sinking Springs #6150 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 16 - District 14 Meeting @ Bloomsburg #804 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 16 - District 15 Meeting @ Duboistown #7863 – 2:00 P.M.

November 16 - District 19 Meeting @ Port Allegany #6391 – 2:00 P.M.
November 16 - District 20 Meeting @ Mt. Pocono #3448 – 2:00 P.M.
November 16 - District 22 Meeting @ Snow Shoe #5644 – 2:30 P.M.
November 23 - District 9 Meeting @ Millersville #7294 – 2:00 P.M.
November 23 - District 23 Meeting @ Masontown #4584 – 2:00 P.M.
November 23 - District 27 Meeting @ Irwin #781 – 2:30 P.M.
November 27-28 – Thanksgiving Holiday Headquarters Closed
November 30 - District 29 Meeting @ Natrona Heights – 1:00 P.M.

Robin Kohler

Robin Kohler
Department President

Jodie Hollinger

Jodie Hollinger
Department Secretary/Treasurer

Breaking News!!!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & PROCESSING DEPARTMENT OF PA VFW AUXILIARY

There is some very exciting updates coming, regarding our membership application and processing!

Very soon we will see a **new** application launched. As information is received, it will be shared with all of you. It will be imperative to get the word out – **only** this new updated application will be accepted beginning January 1, 2026. There will be **NO** exceptions.

Plans are being made to assure that all Treasurers are well informed and comfortable with the new procedures that will be in place as well as the new application.

No matter whether you have an elected position or not; being knowledgeable about properly filling out a membership application is the responsibility of each of us.

Please mark your calendar: On Saturday, January 17, 2026 at Mid Winter Conference in Gettysburg, there will be a training session open to all members regarding our new membership application and the procedures for processing. Stay tuned for further updates.

EVERY DAY IS VETERANS DAY

DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA

MEMBERSHIP 2025-2026

NOVEMBER 2025~GENERAL ORDERS

CHAIRMAN – AMY PETERSON amyaux212@gmail.com

#EVERYDAYISVETERANS DAY #SERVINGTHOSEWHOSERVEDJOINOURRANKS

#FROMSEATOSHININGSEAHONORINGVETERANSTHATKEEPUSFREE

Veterans Day 2025

November 11 @ 1100hours

Take furlough to HONOR those that
Served & Continue to Serve!

THANK YOU VETERANS!

Share what YOUR Auxiliary has planned!

Let's RANK UP Grandma's Auxiliary !

MAKE IT FUN, EXCITING AND NEW!!

"FALL OUT" into the community!!

SHOW them what we DO!!

INVITE, INCLUDE & TRAIN

ALL Members.....

ASK for NEW Ideas!!!

Embrace Suggestions

Traditional Values Amplified!

Work together, Step up, Show UP!

Call Members that are AWOL...

Let her/him know they are missed!



BOOTS TO THE GROUND Privates!!

~~November 30th Deadlines~~

President, Secretary & Treasurers Dues Paid?

Auxiliaries 100% + will go into
"Specialist Award" \$100 Drawing by Division!

TIPS to RETAIN & RECRUIT

Follow up on reminders

Check in on Shut – ins

Offer Early Pay Discounts

Membership Drawings

Ask ONE Friend to join!

**SERVING
THOSE WHO
SERVED**



JOIN OUR RANKS



UNIT LEADERS – 100% ++ WELL DONE TROOPS!!!

District	Auxiliary
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8	6493
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14	5642
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15	1630
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17	1964
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26	1989
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AS OF 10-23-2025

PENNSYLVANIA ~80.30% ~PAID MEMBERS!!

From my Home to Yours...
Happy Thanksgiving!

**PROGRAM
SPOTLIGHT
November
2025**

EVERY DAY IS VETERANS DAY



VFW Auxiliary Department of Pennsylvania

HOSPITAL

Linda Dilling, Chairman

Honors Escort Program

"The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others." (Deann Hollis)

The VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program would like to educate and raise awareness of the Honors Escort / Final Salute Program. By reaching out to nursing facilities throughout Pennsylvania, together we can respectfully take steps toward honoring every military veteran at their time of passing with dignity and excellence.

The Honors Escort is an end-of-life protocol at the hour of death to honor military Veterans who have unselfishly served our country. This brief ceremonial procession invites staff, Veterans, and visitors to a moment of recognition that offers a dignified farewell to institutionalized Veterans.

- Honors Veteran and Family members
- Creates a visual display of military heritage
- Allows staff a moment to grieve

Thank you for accepting this challenge to educate and raise awareness about the Honors Escort Program



With this QR Code you can go directly to the VFWA Dept of PA Hospital Program Website where you will find the Honors Escort Fact Sheet and Ceremony Steps plus a video of a modified service for nursing homes.

BUDDY POPPY/ NATIONAL HOME

Beverly Kemmerer, Chairman

♥ **Support Our Veterans and Their Families**

VFW National Home Health and Happiness Program

The VFW National Home stands as a beacon of hope for the families of our nation's veterans and service members. Located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, the National Home provides housing, education, and support services to military families facing difficult times—helping them rebuild their lives and look toward a brighter future.

Through the Health and Happiness Program, we extend that same compassion and care by raising funds to ensure the Home can continue maintaining Auxiliary-sponsored buildings, including emergency repairs and renovations, and provide Christmas and graduation gifts to our youth.

When you contribute to Health and Happiness, you're giving more than money—you're giving stability, healing, and opportunity to those who have sacrificed for our country.

Join us in spreading Health, Happiness, and Hope!

Additional information for these programs and activities can be found at vfwauxpa.org then programs – check out each program and look for the "Information Station!"

It's November! Has your Auxiliary donated to the National Home Health & Happiness Fund in Malta?

HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATIONS

Debra Antosh, Chairman

5 Reasons Why Historians and Social Media Coincide

Historians and social media work together well in a VFW Auxiliary because social media helps to preserve, share, and expand the reach of the organization's history. The "Historian & Media Relations" program is a key part of the VFW Auxiliary's national programming, combining traditional historical documentation with modern digital tools.

1. **Preserves memories and history:** Social media platforms serve as a digital scrapbook for capturing and archiving events and activities through photos, videos, and captions. This ensures that the organization's legacy is preserved for future generations.
2. **Connects with current members:** Social media provides a direct and accessible line of communication, allowing historians to share updates, news, and nostalgic content like "throwback Thursdays" with current members, keeping them engaged and informed.
3. **Attracts new, younger members:** By using platforms like Facebook and Instagram, the Auxiliary can attract new members who may not be reached through traditional media. Highlighting events and community impact on social media helps clear up misconceptions and generates interest.
4. **Amplifies community outreach:** Social media allows the Auxiliary to share stories and promote fundraisers, projects, and events to a wider public audience. This helps to educate the community about the organization's mission and how it supports veterans and their families.
5. **Makes the historian's work dynamic:** Instead of static archives, social media gives historians a dynamic tool to "tell the story" and showcase the Auxiliary in action. This transforms the role of historian from a passive record-keeper into an active media creator.

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

Athena Theodorakos-Gjerde, Chairman

Considering holding an activity or event to celebrate or assist service members and veterans in your community!

One idea is to host a **Veterans Resource Fair** at your VFW Post - an event where veterans and service members can connect with local resources — job placement services, health screenings, VA benefits assistance, and community support programs. Invite local businesses and organizations to set up tables. Highlight the National Veterans Service programs and the Veterans Crisis Line.

Other Ideas:

- Unit homecomings
- Mental health-related stand downs
- Wellness workshops

AUXILIARY OUTREACH

Jency Mercado, Chairman

Here are a few basic steps in making your Auxiliary Outreach Program successful:

- Find local groups and organizations in need of assistance, ask what your Auxiliary can do to help.
- Discuss the project and vote at your meeting to accept your volunteer hours. Some organizations you partner with may have ongoing activities so you would just need to make a motion at the start of the year for that, others have events they plan in advance so that would need a motion for each new event.
- At least one Auxiliary member needs to work the event.
- Wear your Auxiliary attire (shirt, hat, name badge, lanyard, jacket)
- Report the details - remember only report what doesn't fit under any other Program.

LEGISLATIVE

Tim Altman, Chairman

There is still time to plan an activity and enter into the National VFW Auxiliary Award contest for the legislative program this year.

This year's award will recognize the auxiliaries doing the most outstanding activity and/or event to create thank-you notes and cards to veterans that include links to VFW Action Corps Weekly and/or the VFW Priority Goals.

LINKS to include on your notes and cards:

Action Corps Weekly -

<https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>

VFW Priority Goals –

<https://www.vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service>

Notes and cards should be hand-written, and adding a sticker that includes the above links will make your efforts easier. A template can be found on the legislative program page on pavfwaux.org under Information Station.

Sending hand-written notes and cards to veterans and service members shows them that you appreciate them and will encourage them to engage with legislative efforts on their behalf.



EXTENSION

Karen Hoover, Chief of Staff

Have you checked out the member resources in MALTA or within the program pages on the pavfwaux.org websites?

Take a look at these great resources when you have a few minutes:

- The Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit
- Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation
- “Understanding Auxiliary Traditions” video
- “Why Having an Auxiliary Can Boost your Post”
- Top 10 Reasons for your Post to Have an Auxiliary
- Good Job Certificates

If you know of a post that does not have an Auxiliary – reach out and share some of the above information and encourage them to start an Auxiliary.

Christmas is great time to reach out to your members who you haven't heard from or seen in a while – a card or phone call telling them how much they are missed may get them to be more active.

Don't hesitate to reach out to me if you need any assistance!

AMERICANISM

Cherie Dysard, Chairman

One of our focuses as Auxiliary members is to engage our communities in having proper respect for our Flag.

Some ideas to engage your communities:

- Flag Education in Schools – host a program or presentation at a school assembly
- Recognize Outstanding Community Flag Displays with a certificate and/or social media post
- Flag Retirement Ceremony – work with a local scout troop to collect flags and retire them properly
- Promote patriotism and celebrate patriotic holidays! Patriotic holidays are an opportune time to involve the whole family and bring community attention to your Auxiliary.

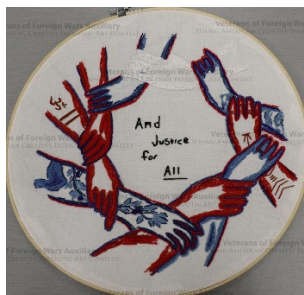


SCHOLARSHIP

Karen Mooney, Chairman

As we move into November and many of us are just returning from the Commanders Testimonial in Pittsburgh, most Posts/Auxiliaries are busy judging their submissions for the Voice of Democracy and the Patriot Pen Scholarship Contests. Remember that Post judging needs to be completed by November 15, 2025. As you move your winners onto the District level for judging be sure that you do something for those that participated at the Post level. Children appreciate the recognition for the efforts they put into an event. Consider hosting an event at the Post that allows your winners to present their essays to their friends and families. Maybe if you have whole classes that participated, consider a cookie party for the class or a morning of donuts to share your appreciation for their time. This is a great way to thank the students for the time they dedicated to these programs.

Remember that there are still Art programs that we need to advertise and promote for participation. As you can see from some of the images below, there is a great level of talent in the world today and this is a great way to let students show off their skills. The 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest, the Young American Patriotic Art Contest, and the Illustrating America Art Contest are all due at the end of April. Hopefully, you have been promoting these contests but if you have not, now is the time to engage and get these students time to participate in these programs.



Easy to share the QR code for the Scholarships program this year which is attached below. One other factor to remember for the Auxiliary is the Continuing Education Scholarships Program to promote. This is the National Auxiliary Presidents special project. There is also the T-Shirt Fundraiser that is being held until May next year to help raise funds for the Scholarships programs. If interested, the T-Shirt order form can be found under the Scholarships Program page on the Department Auxiliary webpage to place your order and support these programs.

Please remember that "Every Day is Veterans Day" and Uncle Sam wants to know what YOU are going to do to support the VFW & Auxiliary Scholarships Programs!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Marsha Fuhrman, Chairman



As our Auxiliary year progresses, we as the auxiliary need to continue to teach our youth the skills that they need in order to become responsible adults. We can accomplish this as they assist us in serving our veterans and their families and our communities.

Does your auxiliary use the **RAP** (RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS) cards for our youth. We can encourage and reward patriotism through R.A.P. If you see a child thanking a veteran, properly placing their hand on their heart during the Pledge of Allegiance or involved in some other activity that promotes patriotism, give them a R.A.P. card. You can print the cards from the department website—[vfwauxpa.org/Programs/Youth Activities/R.A.P. cards](http://vfwauxpa.org/Programs/Youth%20Activities/R.A.P.%20cards). You have several options for printing. What a great way to show our youth that we are watching.

It is not too early to be promoting the **Illustrating America Art Contest**. The contest is open to students in grades K-8 (there are three levels -K-2, Grades 3-5 and Grades 6-8) and the deadline is March 30, 2026. This is a great way for students to show their artistic abilities. It is awesome for us to see the world through the eyes of these young students. The entry must be on paper or canvas and be two dimensional and submitted on canvas board or stretcher frame. The entry form and contest rules can be found on the national (under Scholarships and Contests/ Illustrating America) or department (under Youth Activities) websites.

There is a great and very simple way for us to recognize our youth groups for honoring our veterans. There is a Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans citation in MALTA under Member Resources/Youth Activities. I am sure that these groups would be happy to receive this recognition.

Remember that many of these students need to do community service and what better way than to assist the VFW & Auxiliary with their programs. We can remind them that **“Every Day is Veterans Day”** and there is no better way for us to do this than making sure that we reach out to the youth and demonstrate that we **“From Sea To Shining Sea Honoring Veterans,”** who have kept us free and continue to do so.



Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center: Origins and Volunteer Impact

Beverly Kemmerer – VA Medical Center, Representative
Angie Getz & Kathy Watts – VA Medical Center, Deputies

GENERAL ORDERS #5

Origins of the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center

The Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center traces its beginnings to 1944, when the Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce formally advocated for Wilkes-Barre as a potential location for a Veterans Administration Medical Center. This pivotal request initiated a series of efforts aimed at establishing a facility dedicated to meeting the health needs of Veterans in the region.

In the wake of this request, veteran organizations, community members, and individuals united to raise the necessary funds for purchasing land designated for the medical center. By 1945, VA authorities had selected the site, setting the stage for construction. The culmination of these efforts was marked by the formal dedication of the new Wilkes-Barre Hospital on East End Boulevard on December 9, 1950. Upon its opening, the hospital was celebrated as one of the finest in the nation, representing a significant achievement for both the community and the Veterans it was built to serve.

Volunteer Contributions and Activities

Volunteers and hospital representatives at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center play a vital role in shaping the experiences of Veterans. Their involvement goes beyond routine support, helping to create a welcoming and engaging environment for patients. Through their time, financial contributions, and donations of needed items, volunteers directly enhance the well-being and enjoyment of Veterans during their visits.

Ways Volunteers Make a Difference

- Assisting Veterans with recreational activities such as bingo, providing prizes and canteen books.
- Supporting outings like bowling by helping with donations for shoes and food.
- Arranging entertainment, including performances by Ricky Lee, which are highly anticipated and requested by Veterans.
- Delivering Christmas cards to every patient, along with ten canteen books to brighten the holiday season.
- Helping organize annual events, such as the picnic, by supplying food, and the Carnival, where Veterans play games and receive prizes regardless of the outcome, ensuring everyone feels like a winner.
- Regularly visiting the hospital to greet and show appreciation for America's heroes, reinforcing the sense of community and gratitude.

These activities foster a positive atmosphere and provide meaningful connections and memorable experiences for Veterans at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center.

By giving the special gift of time, money, or needed items, volunteers help Wilkes-Barre Veterans in meaningful ways. Volunteer contributions make patients' visits more enjoyable and can have a lasting impact on many lives.

Thank you for your continued support of Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center. Our Veterans appreciate all that you do for them.

**PITTSBURGH VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
H.J. HEINZ PROGRESSIVE CARE CENTER, ASPINWALL, PA
UNIVERSITY DRIVE, OAKLAND, PA
General Orders #5**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To our Department President Robin Kohler, we would like to express our sincerest thanks for the appointments as Representative and Deputies at the Pittsburgh VA Healthcare system, which includes both HJ Heinz and University Drive.

To all the Auxiliaries that have sponsored parties and especially delivered or sent donations, we would like to say a big "Thank You" We have been able to go into the facilities and provide more interaction with our veterans each week. With your ongoing support we continue to show that **"EVERY DAY IS VETERANS DAY"**. Each time a volunteer goes to the facility they show love and care **"FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA HONORING VETERANS."**

Through your continued support, we have been able to have Bingo parties, sponsor Bowling trips, Ward functions, provide comfort items and support all the requests from the facilities.

In the past, you have been very generous, and it is greatly appreciated. This year we are again asking for your continued support of patients at H.J. Heinz Progressive Care and Oakland (University Drive) Medical Center. **Donations should be sent to: Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Department of Pennsylvania, 4002 Fenton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943.**

Parties for the remainder of 2025 and all of 2026 can still be booked. Please contact myself or one of the deputies to book a party. Also, please take a few minutes to thank your volunteers that go to your parties at your next meeting, you may just be able to pick up a new volunteer.

Loyally,

Cecelia R. Cook
Representative

Donna Melnick
Deputy

Bill Melnick
Deputy