



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

As we continue our visits to our PA Veterans Medical Centers and Homes, I am overwhelmed by so many smiles, hugs and handshakes. They were brave in combat and their courage is still apparent. My time with them is brief but they still manage to tell me stories about their wedding, their grandchildren or their creations in arts/crafts. We owe these Veterans and those who have passed a never-ending debt of gratitude. Please volunteer and spend some time with our Nation's **real heroes**. You will never regret the time you spent volunteering in VA Medical Centers and Homes!

We have climbed that mountain and reached our 100% goal! Let's not stop now! There is still work to be done as we continue to reach out to those unpaid continuous members. **"Band Together for our Veterans"** and work hard to keep every member current and well informed.

Reminder the Annual Department Raffle will be drawn at my Testimonial on Friday, April 5. If you have not sent your tickets and donation in to Headquarters, be sure to bring them along to the Testimonial Weekend at the Eisenhower in Gettysburg. If you would like to purchase additional raffle tickets, you can do so prior to the drawing on April 5.

Please watch all deadlines for the Testimonial. Don't miss out on a great weekend in Gettysburg.

Program Update: Auxiliary Presidents, the end of our program year is March 31, 2024 and your completed reports must be with your District President **no later** than April 6, 2024. All reports are on line at www.vfwauxpa.org and are fillable. They can be emailed to your District President, mailed, or given to your District President at the Testimonial. Please, please adhere to this deadline – don't add extra work to your District President's already busy schedule.

100th Department Convention of the Pa VFW Auxiliary: Our 2024 State Convention is scheduled for June 12 – 16 at the Sheraton in Harrisburg. Convention information will be available soon on our website at www.vfwauxpa.org

Please continue to **"Walk With Me"** during this **"Let Freedom Ring"** year. We still have work to do!

Veterans & Family Support
Auxiliary 100th Convention/Anniversary
Barger Nursing Scholarship Application
Buddy Poppy/National Home
Historian
Hospital
Membership
Scholarships
Southwestern VA Home
Texas Wildfires
TIPS

IMPORTANT DATES 2024

March 6 * District 7 Meeting @ Media #3460 – 7:00 P.M.
March 10 District 1 Meeting @ Bridesburg-Lawton #6558 – 1:30 P.M.
March 10 District 9 Meeting @ Phoenixville #1564 – 2:00 P.M.
March 10 District 10 Meeting @ Cortez #6520 – 1:00 P.M.
March 10 District 21 Meeting @ Hanover #2506 – 2:00 P.M.
March 10 * District 23 Meeting @ Uniontown #3514 – 2:00 P.M.
March 10 District 27 Meeting @ New Kensington #92 – 2:00 P.M.
March 10 District 28 Meeting @ Hickory #6166 – 2:00 P.M.
March 16 District 15 Meeting @ Wellsboro #4907 – 2:00 P.M.
March 17 * District 14 Meeting @ Montrose #5642 – 2:00 P.M.
March 17 District 22 Meeting @ Howard # 8269 - 2:00 P.M.
March 17 District 25 Meeting @ Rochester #128 – 2:00 P.M.
March 29 – April 1 Good Friday & Easter Monday, Department Headquarters Closed

*Department President Official Visit

Climb Every Mountain,

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 #9 March 2024

May your Troubles be less, your Blessings be more, and nothing but Happiness come through your door! We can ease the troubles Veterans face and be a blessing to them by sharing the many resources available to them. We can bring them happiness by sharing a smile and thanking them for their service. We can share our time visiting with shut-in and hospitalized Veterans. We can donate items to Veteran centers. We can donate funds to programs and organizations that provide services we can't.

Send donations by March 31 to include in your year-end reporting. Consider: **National Veterans Service (NVS)**, **Military Assistance Program (MAP)** and **Unmet Needs** – to send these donations, refer to program book page 68. Send donations for **Pennsylvania Wounded Warriors, Inc.** to Department Headquarters, make check payable to VFW Aux Dept of PA, earmarked "President's Special Project." Total your donations for veterans and their families, include the value of goods/services and enter the amount in question #5 of your year-end report.

Print the **Resource Rack Card** (located in MALTA under Member Resources). Hang them on bulletin boards in your Post. Include them on your table when you distribute Buddy Poppies. Ask to place them in your library and municipal office. Then check Yes to question 1 on your Year-End-Report.

K9 Veterans Day Honor military dogs for their service on March 13. Support local organizations that work with and pair service dogs with Veterans. Share their information to help connect them with Veterans seeking a service dog.

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is March 29 - hold or attend a ceremony to recognize Veterans who served during the Vietnam War. Thank the Veterans for their service and welcome them home!

VFW "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" - Veterans apply by April 30 for the fall semester - visit www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veterans-support for details and eligibility. Help fund these scholarships by donating to Sport Clips, visit www.sportclips.com.

Dates to remember:

March	Women's History Month	April 5	Gold Star Spouses Day
Mar 13	K-9 Veterans Day	Apr 6	Year-End Reports due by today**
Mar 29	National Vietnam War Veterans Day	April 15	Purple Up! For Military Kids Day
Mar 31	National Award Forms due by today*	April 30	National Military Brats Day
Mar 31	Dept of PA Citation criteria due by today*	April 30	Sport Clips Scholarship Application due
April	Month of the Military Child		

* **National Veterans & Family Support Award #1 & Award #2** forms are located at www.vfwauxpa.org click on Programs then Veterans & Family Support. **Dept of PA Citation** criteria for Auxiliaries and District Chairman is listed in the [Dept of PA Auxiliary Program Book](#) on page 72. These are due to me, preferably by email, no later than March 31.

** **Veterans & Family Support Year-End Report** (2) copies are due to your District President, no later than April 6. It is found in the [Dept of PA Auxiliary Program Book](#) and at www.vfwauxpa.org click on Programs then Veterans & Family Support.

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

Veterans & Family Support Chairman

tina@vfw5265.org



**VFW AUXILIARY
DEPT OF PA
100TH ANNIVERSARY**

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH CONVENTION AND THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VFW AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA, WE ARE CREATING A 100TH ANNIVERSARY SHOWCASE AT DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS. WE ARE LOOKING FOR **DONATIONS** OF MEMORABILIA FOR THE SHOWCASE. (THE SHOWCASE WILL BE UNVEILED AT THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, NOVEMBER 15-16, 2024.)

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES AND IF YOU HAVE ANY ITEMS THAT YOU MAY LIKE TO DONATE, CONTACT ANDREA MEINTEL: ANDREAVFWAUX@GMAIL.COM



REGISTRATION FORM

____ Yes, I'll Play. Enclosed is my entry fee.
Number of players ____ @ \$80.00/player.

____ I am paying for a team of four golfers.
Please register the golfers listed below.

____ I am paying for myself and would like to
be paired with other golfers.

Sorry, I am unable to play, but here is my
donation of \$_____.

Player #1 _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Player #2 _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Player #3 _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Player #4 _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Dwight Fuhrman
SEND ENTRY AND FEE TO: Dwight Fuhrman
5059 Rislyn Court Spring Grove, PA 17362
Please return form & payment by July 22, 2024

THE TOURNAMENT

PRIZES AWARDED AT LUNCHEON

Par-three holes will offer
"Closest to the pin" prizes

BONUS PRIZE:

\$500.00 will be paid for the
first Hole-In-One
on any par-three on the golf course.

Any additional Hole-In-One that day
Receive \$100.00.

Held at
THE BRIDGES GOLF CLUB
6729 York Road
Abbottstown PA 17301
717-624-9551
proshop@bridgesgc.com

SCHEDULE

7:00 AM Registration Begins

8:00 AM Golf Scramble Shotgun Start
Players need to be on the course

Luncheon Buffet at VFW Post 8896, East Berlin, PA
Lunch, prizes & awards will be at the VFW
upon completion of golf, 12PM to 3:00 PM

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT
Dwight Fuhrman- 717-578-2953
Email: fuhrman1970@comcast.net

VFW POST 8896

presents

30TH ANNUAL PA VFW DISTRICT 21



GOLF SCRAMBLE

FRIDAY
AUGUST 9, 2024



Proceeds will go to the
Jack Barger Memorial Nursing Scholarship Fund.

THE JACK E. BARGER, SR. MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP FUND

INTRODUCTION

A Memorial Nursing Scholarship Fund was established at the 1989 VFW State Convention, held at King of Prussia, PA. This fund was in Memorial of Jack Barger, Sr., Department Commander, 1987-88, who passed away during his term of office.

POLICIES

Candidates for the award will be solicited through the Pennsylvania Nursing Association and its contacts with nursing schools in Pennsylvania. Chairpersons and deans of nursing schools will be asked to submit names of worthy candidates. The recipient(s) will be chosen by means of a lottery conducted by P.N.A. with the VFW State Commander and Barger Scholarship Chairman drawing the name(s).

There are two qualifications placed on the candidate(s) by the VFW: (1) the individual be a veteran or the son or daughter of a veteran; (2) be a resident of Pennsylvania.



HISTORY

A \$500.00 scholarship was awarded in 1990 and over the past 20 years the amount and number of scholarships awarded have increased to six (6) \$1,000.00 scholarships per year.

There have been various fund-raising efforts made over the years but the two main efforts have been requesting donations from VFW posts and auxiliaries and the Nursing Scholarship Golf Scramble.

FUTURE GOALS

Each year give six (6) scholarships. Increase the equity in the fund in order to make the fund self-sustaining. It is believed that an equity of approximately \$150,000 will be required.

With the help of the VFW posts and auxiliaries within Pennsylvania supporting the Golf Scramble by buying advertisements in the program book we will be able to increase the donation for the golf scramble to over \$10,000.00 each year. All money for advertisements in the Golf Scramble program book goes to the scholarship fund. Remember that none of this money supports the golfers participating in the scramble; however, they support the scholarship program.



**NOTICE: This order is a contract.
No verbal arrangements have been made other than those incorporated in this agreement.
This order is noncancellable and becomes of force on acceptance thereof.**

2024 PROGRAM AD APPLICATION

_____ Full Page & Sponsor of Hole.....	\$200.00
_____ Full Page.....	\$100.00
_____ Half Page.....	\$50.00
_____ Quarter Page.....	\$30.00

100% of the proceeds from Hole Sponsors and Ads go to the Jack Barger Memorial Nursing Scholarship Fund.

Deadline for ADS is July 22, 2024. Make checks payable to Dwight Fuhrman and mail to 5059 Rislyn Court Spring Grove Pa 17362

Attach Your AD Copy Here

NOTE

Any donations other than ads or golfers can be mailed to Dwight Fuhrman 5059 Rislyn Court Spring Groce PA 17362



Buddy Poppy/ VFW National Home General Orders # 9

Amy Peterson, Auxiliary Chairman 2023-2024



VFW NATIONAL HOME

You make me SO PROUD!!! We're coming close to closing out year already! I have seen so many new ideas promoting both ends of this program. Super great ideas and creative minds throughout this organization....please keep doing what you do every day, all day!

The Buddy Poppy Program is, I feel, one of the 'staples' of the organization....they REMIND us of sacrifices made. **PROMOTE, SHARE, DISPLAY.** Poppies can be used/promoted 24/7, not just military holidays. Donations are great, but we want to know how many you shared throughout the year, remember to keep track! 😊

VFW National Home fundraising has been phenomenal! YOU ARE AWESOME! A little birdie tells me, we have exceeded our Centennial Brick fundraising efforts with over \$2200 sent in thus far!!! THANK YOU!

Yes!!!! YOU did this through the generous donations....simply, THANK YOU!

Keep in mind, VFW National Home serves as a living memorial to veterans by helping our nation's military and their families during difficult times. It's a well-deserved fresh start, offering many services for the whole family! It's open to ALL Veterans and their families!

Time to sit down and fill out your **YEAR END REPORTS, PLEASE NOTE**, there are Department & National forms to fill out for Awards.... please refer to your Program books or the PA Auxiliary website for details.

😊 **PAY ATTENTION TO DEADLINE DATES** 😊

No matter how small or BIG, I want to hear about it.....TOOT YOUR HORN!!!

***National Auxiliary President Carla Martinez & National Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento's
2023-2024 COMBINED SPECIAL PROJECT***

The VFW National Home **Welcome Center Renovation Project** goals include:

- Welcoming retail space
- Updated reception & information area
- Nonslip surfaces
- ADA compliant walkways
- Resident convenience store area
- Postal and parcel operations

WAYS TO DONATE

- MALTA by selecting Make a Gift, National President's Special Project
- **CHECKS CAN BE MADE PAYABLE/SENT TO:**
VFW National Home 3573 S Waverly Rd. Eaton Rapids, MI 48827
Reference "Welcome Center Renovation Project"
- *Visit vfwnationalhome.org/donate*
In comments section type: "Welcome Center Renovation Project"

"Let Freedom Ring"



"Banding Together for our Veterans"

HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATION
GENERAL ORDERS #9
March 2024



It's hard to believe that we are more than halfway through our program year at this point! Is it just me or does time seem to be flying by lately?

With that said, it's time to prepare our Department Year-End Reports once again!

- Remember that you can now find all our Year-End reports online by visiting <https://vfwauxpa.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=127984>. Once there, simply click on **Historian/Media Relations** for a copy of this program's year end-report.
- Answer questions 1-8 and any sub questions.
 - Many of these are simple "Yes" or "No" answers. Every Auxiliary should be answering these! And remember -- there is no right or wrong answer!
- Always keep in mind that our reporting year is April 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024.
- Complete the form online, then **Save** it to your computer.
 - Once saved, email it to your District President by **April 6, 2024**

As a reminder, please remember that any Historian Book (at the Auxiliary **or** District level) can be turned into me at Madam President's Retreat next month! I will be available all weekend. This will save Auxiliaries and Districts the cost of shipping any book submissions to me. If you are not attending, please get your book to your District President for submission, as they will be in attendance.

Contact me with any questions at k.digi@pitt.edu! I'm here to help!

Let us all remember to always "**Let Freedom Ring**" as we continue "**Banding Together for Our Veterans**" not just today but every day!

Loyally,

Kristin DiGiacomo

Kristin DiGiacomo
Historian & Media Relations Chairman
k.digi@pitt.edu | 412-867-0021

HOSPITAL

General Orders # 9

March 2024

As the program year is coming to an end and reports are being finalized and sent in, our hospitalized veterans benefit from the love and support we must continue to show them. Remember our duty to our veterans does not have a deadline.

Our veterans at VA hospitals, VA homes and non-VA nursing homes and care facilities need to be reminded that their sacrifices have not gone unnoticed.

Our women veterans deserve that as well. Women have been serving but because they are women their sacrifices are not as readily recognized. The VA is working to give women veterans the services they are entitled to. Our job is to recognize them and lead them to the services they are entitled to.

March is Women Veterans History Month

June 12 is Women Veterans Day

The Women Veterans Call Center is your guide to women's health:

If you have questions or can't find what you're looking for, you can call, text, or **chat online** with the **Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC)** at **855-829-6636** to get help and find available resources and services in your area. Trained women representatives can also:

- Provide you with information on enrolling in VA health care if you have not already
- Provide you with information on setting up a medical appointment in your area
- Provide you with information about your eligibility (including questions about disability ratings) and other VA benefits like employment, education, and home loans
- Connect you with your local VA Medical Center or local women's health contact who can assist in coordinating all the services you need

“Let Freedom Ring!” By “Banding Together for Our Veterans”

Loyally,

Peggy Freyer
Dept of PA Hospital Chairman



MEMBERSHIP

General Orders #9
March 2024

"CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN"

100.32%



Congratulations Pennsylvania for reaching 100.32%

Congratulations to District 18, District 26, District 27, District 11 & District 16th for reaching over 100% in Membership.

End of the Year is approaching quickly and our climb for your Auxiliary to reach the top of the Mountain is so close. Has your Auxiliary reach 98% plus by March 31st, 2024 you will receive \$25. If you reach 100% plus by June 30th, 2024 you will also receive \$25. Lights, Camera, Action VFW Auxiliary Drawing is at your fingertips if you reach 101% plus you qualify to be entered into a onetime drawing to receive \$500 by June 30th, 2024.

Would like to give a big shout out to the following Auxiliaries for reaching 100% or more in membership as of Febuary 21, 2024: District 8, Auxiliary 6495-100.78% & Auxiliary 11322-100%; District 9, Auxiliary 1690 -100%; District 10, Auxiliary 25 -109.26%, Auxiliary 531-100%, Auxiliary 5207 -101.03%, Auxiliary 6520-110.87% & Auxiliary 7963 108%; District 14, Auxiliary 1536-100% & Auxiliary 8488-100%; District 15, Auxiliary 4907-106.67% & Auxiliary 8730 -101.33%; District 16, Auxiliary 5954 -121.21%; District 17, Auxiliary 5863 -101.52% & Auxiliary- 107.72%; District 18, Auxiliary 1213-101.46%, Auxiliary 6070-100% & Auxiliary-104.26%; District 19, Auxiliary 1132-100% & Auxiliary-100%; District 21, Auxiliary 5265 -100.29%, Auxiliary 7012-101.49% & Auxiliary 7374-100.99%; District 22, Auxiliary 842-102.70%, Auxiliary 1785-103.31%, Auxiliary 4559-100% & Auxiliary 7689-100.80%; District 24, Auxiliary 927-100%; District 25, Auxiliary 249 -104.55%; District 26, Auxiliary 4315-102.56%, Auxiliary 6555-104.20% & Auxiliary 7377-100.93%; District 27, Auxiliary 33-100%; District 28, Auxiliary 169 -100%, Auxiliary 740-102.22%, Auxiliary 1338 -100%, Auxiliary 4789-102.11%, Auxiliary 7465- 101.22% & Auxiliary 7599-101.32%; District 30, Auxiliary 4440-100.83%, Auxiliary 8333-104.29% & Auxiliary 9219-100% District 30 .

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

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

March 2024 #9

The Young American Creative Patriotic Art competition will be winding down this month. Please, read and be informed regarding the rules governing this competition! I hate it when I must disqualify Artists. The rules do not say you cannot contact them and ask them to change a matting to white, or fix something! We want to add students to our competitions, not discourage them by disqualifications.



Metal and Woodwork Flag

Art pieces should be at the sponsoring Auxiliary by March 31, 2024, for judging. That is when each piece of art should be scrutinized by members. If it is 3-dimensional, please weigh it and measure it. If 2-Dimensional, measure this too. The matting **must be white**. The back must be reinforced with heavy paper or cardboard if the art is on paper. It must be able to stand up against a wall without bending. Stretcher frames and canvas boards are not to be framed.



Each Auxiliary in Pennsylvania may enter one art piece. (There is no District Level judging.) The winning entries should be sent to me at 12 Melissa Lane, Downingtown, PA 19335-1255, (or bring it to Mary Jean's Testimonial,) so that it reaches me, no later than April 15, 2024. Please call or email me if there are problems involving shipping.

The winning entry will be sent to National Auxiliary Headquarters to be judged there. The remaining entries will be on display at Department Convention in June. Please assign someone from **Sewn & Embroidery Pillow** your Auxiliary/District to pick up the artwork at the conclusion of Department Convention to return to the students, as we do not ship or mail unclaimed artwork. National HQ will return our Department winner to the student after Convention concludes.

Good luck to all!
Loyally,

Joan

Joan Faddis
Department Scholarship Chairman



SCHOLARSHIP REPORTING

Let's talk reporting! It's a pain, I know, I get it. But it is necessary to prove our non-profit status, so let's learn how to do it correctly, and be done with it. (At least until next March.....)

#1a, 2a, and 3a: Did you participate in this program? **If you talked about it at your meeting, passed out applications, hung up a poster in your club, talked about it in your newsletter, mailed information or letter to your schools, with or even without a single entry - you participated!!!!**

#1b, 2c, 3b, and 5b: **If you contributed 5 cents, a thousand dollars, or any amount in between - write it here!**

#2b: Did you have entries to this competition? **If so, how many – write it here.**

#5a: I know, a lot of Posts do the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Essays without the assistance of the Auxiliary and it is a shame. **But did you help in any way? Did you cook? Did you clean up afterwards? Did you stand in the Audience with your spouse and applaud? If you did, you supported the Post and participated!**

#6: It's a question from Madam President Mary Jean Mastridge. **Please tell us what you honestly think of these programs. There can never be changes made if no one speaks up and makes suggestions for improvements.**

Loyally,

Joan

Joan Faddis

Dept. Scholarship Chairman

SOUTHWESTERN VETERANS CENTER

GENERAL ORDERS #9

MARCH 2024

Good day Department of Pennsylvania Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters. We as volunteers of Southwest Veterans Center want to give a big shoutout to all the Auxiliaries in the Department of Pennsylvania for stepping up and going above and beyond during the trying times of America. We could not provide for our Hospitalized Veterans if it were not for your donations, whether it be monetary or dropping of treats for our hospitalized Veterans. For this we say **THANK YOU.**

We stay in touch with Voluntary Services to see what the Veterans need, on behalf of the Department we donated funds to continue the ice cream socials, funds for a fish tank for the veterans, funds for the veterans carnival, and funds for veterans to golf. This year for Christmas we held a pizza, hoagie and drinks for a Christmas luncheon. **“Banding Together for Our Veterans “** is a key factor in providing clothing items, and our monetary donations that allow us to provide outings for our Veterans is very much appreciated. Continue the great work of our organization, **“Let Freedom Ring.”** Thank you to Madam President Mary Jean Cuddyre Mastridge for this appointment.

Loyally,

Kelley

Kelley M. Lepak: Representative

Cecelia

Cecelia R. Cook: Deputy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Texas VFW Foundation Responds to Panhandle Wildfires

Texas VFW Foundation offers financial assistance to affected veterans and asks for public's help.

AUSTIN, TX, February 29, 2024 – The Texas Panhandle is currently experiencing the largest wildfire in Texas history with over one million acres consumed by fire and is less than 3% contained. The Texas VFW Foundation stands in solidarity with those impacted by these wildfires and offers support during this difficult time. We are extending more than just our thoughts and prayers.

The Texas VFW Foundation offers disaster relief and other programs to help Texas veterans in need. Disasters create such loss and suffering. We are committed to making sure Texas veterans have every resource available to them. The programs offered by the Texas VFW Foundation were developed by combat veterans and others to be able to respond with speed and empathy to address the most urgent needs: food, shelter, and security. However, we cannot do this alone.

The Disaster Assistance Program is a financial assistance grant for qualifying Texas veterans affected by a natural or manmade disaster. Awardees can expect up to \$500 per veteran household. This grant is a one-time grant and can be used for needs of the veteran during the disaster, such as replenishing food stores, hotel stays, vehicle fuel, and/or other expenses incurred during and immediately after the disaster.

In addition to the Disaster Assistance Program, qualifying applicants can apply for the Veterans' Assistance Program. This grant, funded in part by the Fund for Veterans' Assistance, can assist up to \$2,500 per veteran household for basic living needs such as rent/mortgage, utilities, vehicle payment, and/or auto insurance.

“The Texas VFW and the Texas VFW Foundation have been there for Texas veterans through the Bastrop fires, Hurricanes Harvey and Katrina, and the West fertilizer plant explosion,” stated Beth West, Executive Director. “Each disaster brings different needs, yet they are similar. Displacement and loss occur each time. The Disaster Assistance grant is designed to assist with those immediate needs first and the Veterans' Assistance grant is to help pay the bills during and following the disaster. We can only assist when we have sufficient funds to do so. If you are not affected by these wildfires, please ‘pass the ammo’ and help those veterans who are.”

Donations may be made online or mailed in. To donate online, please visit <https://txvfw.org/texas-vfw-foundation/>. Click on the “Donate” button. You will be able to designate the Disaster Program there. To donate by mail, please make the check payable to “Texas VFW Foundation” and mail to PO Box 14468, Austin, TX 78761-4468.

To apply online, please visit <https://texasvfwfoundation.smapply.org/>. The applicant will need to create a login using the “Register” button. For more information or assistance, please email foundation@texasvfw.org or call 512-291-6850.

About the Texas VFW Foundation

The Texas VFW Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity founded by the Texas VFW to provide assistance to qualifying Texas veterans and their families who are in financial hardship and to promote programs that raise awareness and educate the public about the sacrifices made by America's veterans and the unique and special needs resulting from their service. Founded in 2002, the Texas VFW Foundation has received over \$6.9 million in grants and assistance over 3,300 veterans' families, which included over 4,000 dependents, and 123 surviving spouses.

Contact:

Beth West
Executive Director

TEXAS VFW
FOUNDATION



(512) 291-6850

foundation@txvfw.org

<https://txvfw.org/texas-vfw-foundation/>



###



Patriotic Instructor
General Orders 09
March 2024

A question was asked recently regarding the propriety of a project in relation to the United States Flag Code. The project involved the removal of stars from the Flag before the flag is properly retired and giving the stars to our troops and/or veterans with an inspirational quotation. A better gift to our veterans and active-duty service members is to take the small parade flags and fold them in the traditional triangular, include that inspirational quotation and give the whole flag to our troops and veterans. That way the flag is maintained in its proper condition, and we are not gifting our troops and/or veterans a piece of a flag that should be properly retired in one piece.

Remember, when we gift that piece of the flag, there is no way that we can guarantee that those pieces of the United States Flag that are cut out will end up with a proper retirement and not just tossed in the trash. The best practice for managing the United States Flag would be to NOT mutilate or cut any portion of the Flag. According to the United States Flag Code, disposal is as follows: *“The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.”*

There was a similar question asked during a Programs Seminar at a previous National Convention. The Americanism Ambassador at that time shared a blog on the very topic. Here is a portion of that communication:

“Many well-meaning individuals have cut up soiled or worn Flags, sometimes cutting out stars and mailing them to our troops. Although this is a thoughtful gesture and appears on the Internet in several places, it is in fact, an inappropriate act and should not be conducted by any VFW Post or Auxiliary.

In August 2000, at the VFW 101st National Convention, delegates passed a resolution establishing a U.S. Flag disposal program by fire for VFW Posts to conduct, privately or publicly as follows:

- *The Flag should be folded in its customary manner. (See VFW Ritual Book)*
- *It is important that the fire be sizeable and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the Flag.*
- *Place the Flag on the fire.*
- *The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the Flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, and have a brief period of silent reflection.*
- *After the Flag is completely consumed, the fire should be safely extinguished, and the ashes buried.*
- *Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.*

The resolution conforms to the intent and letter of the U.S. Code and the Federal Flag Code. This is the only acceptable way of handling U.S. Flags that are no longer in condition to be flown. No other handling of a retired Flag is considered acceptable. This issue has been reviewed by VFW National leaders and confirmed as the policy for the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliaries.”

We will continue to serve our veterans and their families as we “Let Freedom Ring” while we are “Banding Together for Our Veterans.”

Loyally,

Janet Albin

TIPS

GENERAL ORDERS # 9

March 2024

Legislative – Marsha Fuhrman, Chairman

Just a reminder for everyone prior to the primary elections. Be educated on the races, so you can vote intelligently for the candidates that represent your goals and ideals.

Listed here are the DO'S and DON'Ts reminders that you can do prior to the elections.

DO'S--attend any candidate town hall meetings and ask the candidates where they stand on veteran issues, set up voter registration drive/Get Out the Vote campaign on the local levels, provide carpool service on Election Day to help the elderly and disabled get to the voting booths, support and work for your favorite candidates as a voting constituent and wear clothing/pins with the VFW Auxiliary emblem at public events such as town halls, rallies, forums and/or debates.

DON'Ts—Do not endorse candidates on behalf of the VFW Auxiliary Organization, Department, District or Auxiliary levels or wear your VFW Auxiliary cap when actively campaigning for a candidate (knocking on doors and asking people to pledge their vote for a candidate or soliciting donations).

Remember that as Auxiliary member we can make a difference in any election by getting involved in the political process. It doesn't matter which candidate(s) you support; it is important that they know you are a VFW Auxiliary member concerned about veterans, active military and their families.

Youth Activity Tips – Joey Diehl, Chairman

How many Youth do you know that can sing or have artistic talent? We still have time to get them entered in the “Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue” contest. I am sure there are plenty of beautiful voices in your area to sing our National Anthem.

Have you ever looked at a picture and thought “that is beautiful” and you find out that it was done by a young person? We all have some youth in our area that are talented artists so please reach out to them before the deadline of March 31, 2024.

Please check out the details in the Program Book for all the information.

Youth are our future keep them involved even after the contests are over for this year. Let us continue to mentor our young people.

Auxiliary Outreach – Kimberly Grundon, Chairman

Pet Shelters provide an invaluable service to our communities and are always in need of volunteers. Auxiliaries can help their local shelters by volunteering for tasks such as:

- Dog walking
- Feeding
- Cleanup of pens/cages
- Maintenance

Check with your local shelter to see what specific volunteer opportunities are available. Do not forget to report time for Auxiliary Outreach.

Americanism – Carolyn Paccio, Chairman

Hello Auxiliaries! A quick informational tip for you all. You may be unaware that on the Auxiliary's National website there are **BLOGS** from some of our Program Ambassadors that you can review. They are very interesting and cover different topics. As always there is so much GREAT information on this website.

Checking it out is easy, no need to log into MALTA. Although, I do encourage the use of MALTA as well as our Department Auxiliary website. **“Let Freedom Ring”**