



General Orders No.9

March 2025

Dear Members,

As we welcome the arrival of Spring, I am filled with gratitude and inspiration by the unwavering commitment each of you has demonstrated over the past months. As I travel across our state visiting with our members, I've witnessed your tireless efforts in support of our Veterans and their families. I am proud to serve alongside such passionate and driven individuals.

Year-End Reports

March means it's time to complete your Program Year-End Reports. Although your reports are used for determining State and National Citations and Awards, this is not the only purpose. Have you ever had a potential member, or a questioning member ask you, "What does the Auxiliary do?" The information you provide helps in gathering information for the VFW Auxiliary Fact Sheet (see the attached Order form). The Auxiliary Fact Sheet explains Who We Are and What We Do. It contains information on Americanism (American Flag Presentations); Veterans & Family Support (Monies and Services given to Veterans and their Families); Hospital (Monies and Hours Volunteered); Scholarships (VOD, Patriot's Pen, Patriotic Art and Continuing Education); Youth Activities (Youth and Youth Groups worked with/recognized); and Legislative (Contacts made to Legislators regarding Veterans' issues). These Fact Sheets are a great tool to show the impact of the VFW Auxiliary.

Membership

As I write this, the Department just went over 100% in membership, which is a testament to the dedication and commitment of each and everyone of you. It reflects the value placed in our organization's work and mission. Our strength as an organization lies in our membership. Reaching 100% is not just a number; it is a statement of strength. It means more hands to help, more voices to advocate, and a greater impact in the lives of those who have sacrificed for our freedom. This achievement is possible because of **you**. Your efforts to recruit, retain, and engage members.

Acknowledging Our Members

I would also like to take a moment to recognize and celebrate the achievements of our members. Whether you have been a member for many years or are new to our Auxiliary, your contributions are deeply appreciated. As we move forward, let us continue to support and uplift one another, always keeping our mission at the forefront of our efforts. Together, we can achieve great things and make a lasting impact on the lives of our veterans and their families. Thank you for all that you do. I look forward to seeing you at the Joint Testimonial scheduled April 11-13 in Gettysburg, PA.

Important Dates:

March 2 - District 26 Meeting @ Johnstown #155 – 2:00 P.M.
March 5 – District 7 Meeting @ Media #3460 – 7:00 P.M. *

March 9 - District 9 Meeting @ Phoenixville #1564 – 2:00 P.M. *
March 9 - District 10 Meeting @ Cortez #6520 – 1:00 P.M.
March 9 - District 21 Meeting @ East Berlin #8896 – 2:00 P.M.
March 9 - District 27 Meeting @ New Kensington #92 – 2:00 P.M.
March 9 - District 28 Meeting @ Venago #169 – 2:00 P.M.
March 16- District 11 Meeting @ White Haven #6615 – 2:30 P.M.
March 16 –District 14 Meeting @ Montrose #5642 – 2:00 P.M.
March 16 - District 15 Meeting @ Emporium #6221 – 2:00 P.M.
March 16 - District 22 Meeting @ Roaring Springs #7689 – 2:00 P.M.
March 16 - District 25 Meeting @ Saxonburg #7376 – 2:00 P.M. *
March 23 - District 23 Meeting @ Uniontown #3514 – 2:00 P.M. *

*Official Visit

Stay Connected:

- Visit our website: www.vfwauxpa.org
- Follow us on Facebook: VFW Auxiliary – Department of Pennsylvania
- Follow us on Instagram: pa_vfw_auxiliary



With warmest regards,

Andrea

Andrea Meintel
Department President

Jodie

Jodie Hollinger
Department Secretary/Treasurer

Auxiliaries and Members in Action



Members of Mechanicsburg VFW Auxiliary 6704 and other community partners put together care packages for “A Soldiers Hand.” (State Commander Loncar and Department Conductor Carolyn Paccio were also there helping.)



Standing Stone Post 1764 VFW and Auxiliary members made hoagies and fed their local National Guard troop on their return from deployment in Africa.



VFW and Auxiliary members from Horsham Post 9788 held a paint party at Southeastern Veterans Center.



District 28 President Jody Mallory recognizes Merari the District's 1st place Patriot's Pen winner sponsored by Shenango Valley Post 1338.



Oil City Auxiliary 464 promoted their Patriot's Pen Winners and the program at the local library.



PDP's Bonnie Eichelberger and Bette Jean Biedrzycki enjoyed the National Mid-Year Conference

VFW Auxiliary Membership Moment

Matching Member Talents to Leadership Success

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™

In the past, how often have our invitations to members to join a volunteer committee or take on a leadership role sounded like this?

“You’re invited! Join one of our committees that have been around forever and even though you don’t really understand how it works or what it requires when you agree to serve, it’s the only way we ask you to share your talents, so you feel like you had better say yes if you want to get involved at all.

“And we’ll likely sign you up for whatever you select even though we don’t really know if it is a good fit for you (or us) but we need people to help and this is the only way we’ve ever done it, so we’re going to just keep on doing so even though it rarely works as well as we hope it will.”

For too long, we’ve been first telling members about available committee positions or leadership roles and then asking if they are interested. Instead, we should be learning about our members’ interests first and then suggesting possible volunteer opportunities that match.

If we match people quickly to an opportunity they find attractive, we can more rapidly convert them from a passive joiner to an active member. We can move a member from someone who simply pays dues...to a member who is doing things that make a difference in the community.

Here are six questions that members should be asked prior to being informed about available leadership opportunities within your Auxiliary.

1. What do you care about?
2. What type of contribution would you like to make?
3. What constraints should we know about?
4. What support would help you fulfill your commitment?
5. How can we best communicate/connect with you?
6. Who else do you know who might be interested in our cause?

By flipping the way we invite members to get involved, we increase the likelihood of those members saying “yes” and joining our community of contributors “getting things done” for the VFW Auxiliary and for veterans.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY

Brochure Order Form

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

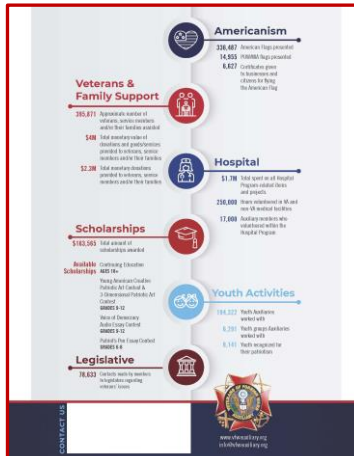
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters is pleased to offer the following brochures to our members at no charge. **Please allow two weeks for delivery.**

Fillable/printable copies are also available in MALTA/Member Resources: Historian & Media Relations, Membership and Scholarships.

Membership Brochure (includes application)



Fact Sheet



Patriotic Art & 3-Dimensional Art Brochure



Please indicate the quantity requested below. Order quantity is not to exceed 50 copies of each.*

**Please contact National Headquarters should you need larger quantities for a recruiting event.*

Brochure

Auxiliary Membership Brochure (includes application)

Auxiliary Fact Sheet

Young American Creative Patriotic Art Brochure & 3-Dimensional (2 sided)

Quantity

MAIL BROCHURES TO:

First and Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Daytime Phone (_____) _____ Email _____

Auxiliary Number _____ Member Number _____

Submit order forms to:

VFW Auxiliary, Attn: Brochure Orders, 406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111 or email to info@vfwauxiliary.org with "Brochure Order" in the subject line.

Note: VFW program brochures (including "Buddy® Poppy", Teacher of the Year, Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy) can be ordered from the VFW Store at www.vfwstore.org or by calling 1.833.VFW.VETS.

GENERAL ORDERS - MARCH 2025
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN – AMY PETERSON

#TOGETHERHELPINGVETERANS #TOGETHEREVERYONEACHIEVESMORE
#FROMOURROOTSTOOURBRANCHES #STRIKEUPTHEBAND #VFWAUXMEMBERSHIP
#VFWAUXMEMBERSHIPPA



“COMPOSING” Auxiliary EXCELLENCE!!!
Recognize the SOLO acts or the whole BAND
Going above and beyond, hittin’ the HIGH NOTES!

CHART TOPPERS

Auxiliary#/District #	
1665, N/A	
6982, N/A	
6495	8
4480	9
1425	11
8227	
804	14
1568	
32	16
882	17
5863	
6631	
8023	18
212	19
5265	21
43	22
1785	
747	23
4795	
927	24
4793	
499	25
7376	
4200	26
6555	
7377	
264	28
2341	
6345	
1754	30
2088	
4129	
9219	



UPCOMING AWARDS!!!

DEPARTMENT AWARDS:

“REFRAIN” AWARD

Nominate THAT member that has sweet harmony to RETAIN!
 Deadline, March 31st, Email ME!!! thepetersons@breezeline.net

“ALL ABOUT THE BRASS” & “PREACH TO THE CHOIR”

INCREASED LIFE MEMBERSHIPS?
MOST RECRUITED/REJOINED MEMBERSHIPS?
DEADLINE, April 30, BE THAT Auxiliary!!!!

QUESTIONS? ASK!!!!

NATIONAL AWARDS

NO YEAR END REPORT THIS YEAR

Did YOU KNOW??? National has some “KICK ASK” rewards for Post & Auxiliary MEMBERS that RECRUIT and/or REJOIN at least 5 peeps!!! Go for 20 new/rejoins by May 31st and you’d

be **THE** ‘CHART-TOPPER’ with the

National Membership Achievement Award

***See National Program Book on MALTA for details!



DISTRICTS 9,10,13,21,24,26 ARE 100+ AS OF FEBRUARY 9, 2025*****

AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS

MARCH 2025

“Together Helping Veterans”

“From Our Roots to our Branches extending Service to our Veterans”

2024-2025

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

Stacey Miller

It is that time of year again where we report to Department the great work our Auxiliaries have done to raise awareness and support our Veterans and their Families. Here are a few reminders as you prepare your Year End Reports:

- Highlight the **ACTIONS** your Auxiliary has done.
- Capture the **IMPACT** they have made to veterans.
- **CAPTURE** with photos and stories.

NATIONAL AWARD: Most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of Suicide and mental health for veterans, military and their families. National Award Application - complete and send to **Department Chair by March 31!**

DEPARTMENT AWARDS:

1. Outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of Suicide and mental health for veterans, military and their families.
2. Outstanding activity and/or event to increase the support of veterans, active-duty service members, and their families.
3. Outstanding activity and/or event in support of the VFW Veterans and Military Support.
4. Outstanding activity and/or event in support of a VFW National Veterans Service.
5. Outstanding activity and/or event in support of a veteran's families and their Youth.
6. Outstanding activity and/or event in support of veteran support organizations in your local community.

For consideration for each of the Department awards, description of the event / activity along with photos must be submitted to your **District President by April 5th, 2025**

Thank you in advance for **ALL** your support in coming **“Together Helping Veterans!”**

AMERICANISM & PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR

Tim Altman

Hello Auxiliary members. Our year together is almost over but we still have a lot of work to do! Here are a few dates this month to be recognized. March 3rd is the Navy Reserve Birthday. The Navy Reserve was established on March 3rd, 1915, and the Navy Reserve came in response to growing international tensions leading up to World War 1. March 25 is Medal of Honor Day; the Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration in the United States. March 29th is National Vietnam Veterans Day; this day is commemorated as it is the day the last combat troops left Vietnam March 29, 1973.

This month you should be preparing your year-end reports. Your District Presidents must receive the reports by April 5, 2025. Let's continue to **“Work Together Helping Our Veterans”**.

AUXILIARY OUTREACH

Jency Mercado

National Auxiliary Outreach Award #1 is for the most outstanding photo collage created by the VFW Auxiliary of their VFW Auxiliary Outreach partnerships during the current Program Year. Take all of your pictures from your Auxiliary Outreach events and put them together into a digital collage and send them to me along with the completed entry form. (Yes, you can do it the old fashioned way and put them on paper). Auxiliaries must send this completed entry form to the Department Auxiliary Outreach Chairman by **March 31, 2025** for judging. You'll find the **Auxiliary Outreach Award #1 Form** in MALTA. Go to Member Resources and then Auxiliary Outreach and Award #1 Form.



“BUDDY” POPPY & NATIONAL HOME **Cindy Utter Peters**

The VFW National Home is the perfect example of **"FROM OUR ROOTS TO OUR BRANCHES EXTENDING SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS."** It was wonderful seeing you at the Mid-Winter Convention. Thank those of you who donated to the National Home Bank I had at my seat during the meeting! It was truly appreciated!

I hope you were able to attend The National Home Birthday Party on January 7th or the Gala held on Feb. 8th. There is still time to join them for a Community Celebration on June 28th. This VFW National Home Community Celebration honors their 100th anniversary of dedicated service to military and veteran families. The event will have a car show, family activities, and free carnival rides from 11AM to 4PM on the grounds. Also provided will be a wide variety of food trucks to purchase meals and snacks. After 4 PM, entertainment will be provided by Michigan's Country Hall of Fame 2024 Inductees **"The Bronk Brothers."** There will also be a beer and beverage tent. This special night will end with a Laser light show!

Remember, as we fulfill our responsibilities using these programs, we work **"TOGETHER HELPING VETERANS."**

FYI, time for program reporting is just around the corner! Please look at your programs for any questions or concerns and contact your Program Chairmen for explanation if needed. - **My contact info:** Cynthia (Cindy) Utter-Peters; phone no. 1-814-598-7743; email: imuttercin1@hotmail.com; address: 1075 South Kendall Ave. ; Bradford, PA 16701.

The awards for Auxiliaries this year are geared towards educating the public about the VFW "Buddy" Poppy program using an event or activity. Another award is for having an event to recognize and **"CELEBRATE"** the 100th birthday of the VFW National Home! It is time you keep up on your programs to make sure everything gets reported on time! Enjoy yourself and have fun doing these programs! It's not work if you have fun! Thank you all for everything you do for Veterans and their families!



EXTENTION, REVITALIZATION & MENTORING

KATHY ALTOFF

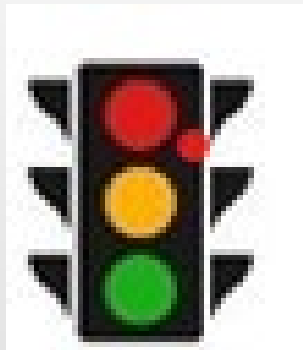
I hope everyone is making plans to attend the Joint Testimonial in April. National Chief-of-Staff Betty Arnold has categorized Auxiliaries by traffic light colors this year to make it easier than ever to identify and help those struggling.

A Green Light Auxiliary is one that is thriving, healthy and running smoothly.

A Yellow Light Auxiliary is flashing a caution sign, which lets the Department President and Chief-of-Staff know members need observation, guidance, mentorship and possibly more. Don't be afraid to admit it if your Auxiliary has that Yellow Light shining – this is the first step toward getting back on track! That's what Revitalization is all about.

A Red Light means stop. Once on Suspension, a Red-Light Auxiliary has time to pause and regroup. It is not, however, time to give up hope. With mentorship, leadership and a solid commitment to teamwork, a Red-Light Auxiliary can go from Red to Yellow to Green in no time!

To learn more about Extension & Revitalization, check out the 2024-2025 Program Book, available to members behind MALTA login under Member Resources. And remember, your Chief-of-Staff is here to help!





SCHOLARSHIPS—PAM SOPHER

Greetings! I hope you are all ready and eager to start your year-end reporting in all of our Programs, and have all your information at your fingertips to make this process easy and effortless. Your reporting period is from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025. Your District President must receive the reports by April 5, 2025. Remember to keep a copy for your own records.

On the report form:

Question 1. If you posted a flyer, brochure anywhere, posted on social media, used the QR Code, handed this information out personally, or worked with your Post on getting this information out to the public, your answer would be yes.

Question 2. Most of you have worked with your Posts or Auxiliary on promoting this program (brochures, flyers publicized, social media, used the QR Code), then you will answer yes.

Question 1. Did your Auxiliary, or did you assist with your Post an awards ceremony to honor our youth in their participation in any or all of our Scholarships contests? Then your answer would be yes.

Question 2. Please answer the total amount of monies, awards given to all of your winners.

Questions 3 and 4, are important this year so we know if the QR Code made it more efficient! What were some of the benefits you found by using the code (ease of getting information out, scan to know more information, able to use and print out all the information on our Programs, and able to print off our applications etc. Your feedback on the use of this code is very important to us. Email your report to your District President by April 5th. You can also email me directly at pamauxdp@gmail.com. Thank you all, happy reporting!

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

JEANNA LEYDIC

What a year it has been so far! Who's excited for the Illustrating America Art Contest? I cannot wait to see all the amazing art done by our youth! How many youth groups or clubs have you reached out to for entries for the contest? Links are below for the contest info sheet and entry form, you can also find these on the PA VFW Auxiliary website.

[VFWAUXPA.ORG/UPLOADS/DOCUMENTS/PROGRAMS/ILLUSTRATINGAMERICAINFOSHEET2024-2025.PDF](https://vfwauxpa.org/uploads/documents/programs/illustratingamericainfosheet2024-2025.pdf)

[VFWAUXPA.ORG/UPLOADS/DOCUMENTS/PROGRAMS/ILLUSTRATINGAMERICAENTRYFORM2024-2025.PDF](https://vfwauxpa.org/uploads/documents/programs/illustratingamericaentryform2024-2025.pdf)

Read Across America is this month! Schools normally have a spirit week, it would be a great time to get together and work with our youth thru reading! If we could read to our youth about America and all the important things this country has accomplished, we could just make them become a tad bit more patriotic and knowledgeable about our great country and military.

Don't forget about our National Youth Activities Awards! You can find those in the Youth Activities program!! Let's make sure Pennsylvania and Madame President Andrea stand out at National Convention this year!! Get excited for those awards and strive to reach them!! Also don't forget about my "Special Starburst Award!"

Reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns! I am also here to answer any questions.

HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATION



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 during your Auxiliary's monthly business meeting this month!

- 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 1-6 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, 2024, through March 31, 2025.
- Complete the form online, then **Save** it to your computer.
 - Once saved, send your reports to your District President by ***April 5, 2025***

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

Let us all remember to reach ***"From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans"*** as we continue coming ***"Together Helping Veterans"*** today and every day!

Loyally,

Kristin DiGiacomo

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

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK

APRIL 20-26

Honoring the Hearts of Our Volunteers



We want to recognize the amazing work and commitment of those volunteers that are working hard for our veterans.

VOLUNTEERS might work for free, but that does not mean they are not valuable. In fact, they are invaluable! People get to feel good in exchange for giving their time and it is your job to help them feel great by thanking them regularly, especially during National Volunteer Appreciation week.

Maybe you THINK you thank them regularly, but do you? When was the last time you looked a volunteer in the eye and said “thanks,” jotted a note expressing your gratitude or presented them with a Certificate of Appreciation? Time can easily slip away and maybe it has been months since you last thanked them. Now’s your chance.

How can we show our thanks!

1. Say a thank you with a Certificate of Appreciation, present it at a meeting or an event. Check out the free/fillable certificates at vfwauxpa.org website under Program – Hospital – Volunteer Awards.
2. Order VFW Auxiliary Hospital Volunteer Service Pin & Bar Guards to hand out to your volunteers, find the forms at vfwauxpa.org website under Program – Hospital – Volunteer Awards. Read your Hospital Program Guide pages 9 & 10 for eligibility.
3. When thanking your hospital volunteer include an example: Thank you Sharon for your assistance with the veterans at the *hospital bingos*. We would like to present you with this Certificate of Appreciation.

Here are some benefits of thanking our volunteers:

- They will come back. When people feel appreciated, they will do more of what they are already doing.
- They will advocate. They will talk about their experience of volunteering for you and how much they love helping our veterans.
- They will invite their friends and family to join them, magically growing your volunteer base.



“Together Helping Veterans”



“From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans”

Linda Dilling - HOSPITAL – March – General Orders

March 2025 Legislative Program
Karen Mooney, Program Chair

As you all are reading this, we find ourselves already into March and starting to work on end of month reports which are due to your District President by April 5, 2025. If you were not keeping track of your activities throughout the year, now is the time to double back and be sure you can give yourself credit for all your Auxiliary has done over the last fiscal year. From the Legislative side of the process, the year end report is short and sweet and hoping that we have 100 percent participation in this program this year. Along with the State report, we also need to see what you may have done that will qualify for a National Award. The National Legislative award this year is looking for the "Most outstanding activity and/or event collaborating with the VFW Post connecting members with local lawmakers". Hoping that the fact that 2024 was an election year that some of you took advantage of this and coordinated something with your local lawmakers for this award. If you have not yet, you still have time. The reports are not due for another month, so it is still possible to put something on the calendar.

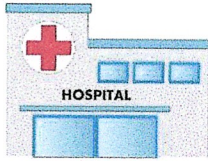


March also hosts the largest VFW conference in Washington DC from March 2-6, 2025. Our Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen winners will be competing against the rest of the Nation and we wish our Pennsylvania representatives all the best at this level of the competition. The VFW Commander in Chief will be testifying on Capital Hill before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on behalf of all our Veterans. If you check out the VFW website, you can find the agenda for this week's events.

As we start to wrap up our fiscal year reporting, it is important to know that our responsibilities continue even after our year end reports are turned in. Action Corps is still sent out on a weekly basis so continue to check this out and see what is at the forefront of the VFW. At the time of writing this, the Action Corps listed that the independent budget recommendations for 2026-2027 has been released. Another topic that was shared was that the House passed the Veteran Homelessness Bill which will exclude VA disability compensation from income calculations for housing programs. This change could provide more veterans greater eligibility for housing programs. Now that bill goes to the Senate to pass.....these are the types of topics that we should be reaching out to our Senators for and urge them for their support on these types of bills. There is a lot of great things that are going on in the legislative world and the more voices we can share, the stronger our position become. As I shared once before, membership is more than just bodies in the canteens.....they have a purpose if we put them to use. The VFW and Auxiliary have a strong voice for this reason when it comes to Washington DC. Continue to allow our voices to be heard.

Remember that **Together Helping Veterans** and **From Our Roots to Our Branches, Extending Service to Our Veterans**, No one does more for Veterans than the VFW Auxiliary!!!!!!!!!! Let's be sure we are heard.

BE AN ADVOCATE* BE INFORMED* BE ENGAGED



Department Hospital Fund

Why we donate to the Department Hospital Fund

Funding the Hospital Program should not be the sole responsibility of the nearest auxiliaries. The cost should be shared by the entire Department. Local VFW Auxiliaries should donate to the Department Hospital Fund to assure continued strong support of all VA hospital and VA nursing facilities. This fund is distributed evenly to all the facilities.

Each month in our General Orders you will find a letter from one of our VA Hospitals VAVS Representatives and/or VA Nursing Home Representatives describing some of the work and purchases your donations are providing. We have a total of 15 VA Hospitals and VA Nursing Homes in Pennsylvania that need your support.

I want to give a heartfelt Thank You for you continued support of the Dept. of PA VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program.

Do not forget if you are wanting to qualify for the Pennsylvania All State Award you will need to donate to the Department Hospital Fund.

Help us by making a donation to our Department Hospital Fund. Make Checks payable to:

Dept. of PA VFWA
4002 Fenton Ave.
Harrisburg, PA 17109



“Together Helping Veterans”



“From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans”

Linda Dilling - HOSPITAL – March