



## General Orders No.5

November 2024

Sisters and Brothers:

As we enter this season of giving and thanksgiving, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for each of you. Your dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to our mission make an incredible difference. Together, we honor our Veterans, support their families, and ensure that our mission is more than just words – it's action, respect, and genuine care.

As I reflect on our journey together, I'm reminded of the countless lives we touch – Veterans, families, and communities. Each hour you volunteer, every event you help organize, and every small gesture contributes to a legacy of service and compassion. Our mission is alive because of you.

On a personal note, I am so blessed to be your President and so grateful for each of you. Your kindness, your willingness to lend a hand, and your belief in our mission fill me with immense pride and hope. It's an honor to work alongside such devoted and inspiring individuals. Wishing you all a season filled with gratitude, joy, and the love and family we share.

### Important Dates:

- November 1-2 – Eastern Conference Burlington, VT
- November 3 – District 18 Meeting @ Carlisle #447 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 3 – District 24 Meeting @ McMurray #724 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 6 – District 1 Meeting @ Parkway Memorial #7650 – 2:30 P.M.
- \* November 7 – All Vets Bus Trip
- \* November 10 – District 10 Meeting @ Clark Summit #7069 – 1:00 P.M.
- November 10 – District 13 Meeting @ Sinking Springs #6150 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 10 – District 14 Meeting @ Towanda #1568 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 10 – District 17 Meeting @ Mifflinburg #1964 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 12-14 – National President's Official Visit to PA
- November 15 – National Home Fundraiser – Red Lion Hotel, Harrisburg
- November 16 – Council of Administration Meeting - 9:00 A.M.
- November 16 – 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Dinner/Program – 6:00 P.M.
- November 17 – District 8 Meeting @ Warminster #6493 – 1:30 P.M.
- November 17 – District 9 Meeting @ Kennett Square #5467 – 2:00 P.M.
- November 17 – District 11 Meeting @ Freeland #5010 – 2:30 P.M.
- November 17 – District 15 Meeting @ Knoxville #6753 – 2:00 P.M.

- November 17 – District 19 Meeting @ Franklin #1835 – 2:00 P.M.  
November 17 – District 20 Meeting @ Tobyhanna #3448 – 2:00 P.M.  
\* November 17 – District 22 Meeting @ Martinsburg #43 – 2:30 P.M.  
November 17 – District 23 Meeting @ Berlin #7295 – 2:00 P.M..  
\* November 18 – President’s official visit to Turbotville Auxiliary #8206  
\* November 19 – President’s official visit to Danville Auxiliary #298  
November 24 – District 27 Meeting @ Ligonier #734 – 2:00 P.M.  
\* November 24 – District 29 Meeting @ Coraopolis #402 – 1:00 P.M.

**\*Department President’s Official Visit**

**Stay Connected:**

- Visit our website: [www.vfwauxpa.org](http://www.vfwauxpa.org)
- Follow us on Facebook: VFW Auxiliary – Department of Pennsylvania
- Follow us on Instagram: pa\_vfw\_auxiliary



Loyally,

*Andrea*

Andrea Meintel  
Department President

*Jodie*

Jodie Hollinger  
Department Secretary/Treasurer

**We wanted to share the letter that our Commander and President wrote for the Fall 2024 edition of the PA VFW Newspaper.**

## **VFW AND AUXILIARY ONE TEAM ONE FAMILY**



### **We need to “Remember Our Mission” and The Importance of Working Together.**

Our State Auxiliary President not too long ago, stood in the doorway of a meeting room, witnessing an exchange that deeply troubled her. A comrade and an Auxiliary member were engaged in a heated argument, exchanging unkind words with one another. Each of them, after the confrontation, came to her separately to explain their side. The comrade spoke of defending his family, expressing his frustration and need to protect his loved ones. The Auxiliary member, with tears streaming down her face, said, “We’re supposed to be here supporting veterans.”

At that moment, it struck her. Do they not see? The comrade is a veteran, yes, but this Auxiliary member is part of his extended family—the family we vow to protect and serve. And the Auxiliary member, though hurt, is also a part of this veteran’s life. They are bound by a shared mission, one that both of them seem to have lost sight of at that moment.

### **“One Mission, One Team”**

It is easy to forget, in the heat of the moment, that we are all here for the same reason: to serve veterans, their families, and our communities. As members of the VFW and its Auxiliary, we commit ourselves to a mission of support and solidarity, and by doing so, we must recognize that we are a team—a family. We are all connected by this singular purpose.

When tensions arise, we must remind ourselves that we are stronger together. Veterans fought side by side, defending not just their brothers and sisters in arms, but also the freedoms and families they left behind. Auxiliary members work tirelessly to support veterans and their families, often making sacrifices that go unnoticed. We must never lose sight of the fact that both sides are essential parts of this effort.

### **“Recognizing Each Other’s Value”**

The comrade who spoke to her was right—his family matters. But what he may not have realized in that moment is that the Auxiliary member standing before him is part of that family. Just as the Auxiliary member was right to say that we are here to support veterans, she also needed to recognize that the comrade she was upset with is the very veteran she is fighting for.

This isn’t just about our own personal grievances or individual perspectives. This is about something much larger—the collective mission we all share. Veterans are not just individuals; they are fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, spouses, and friends. And Auxiliary members are not just supporters—they are the family that continues to stand by their side, long after the battles are over.

### **“Finding Common Ground”**

Disagreements are inevitable in any organization, especially one that deals with such emotionally charged topics as service and sacrifice. But in these moments of conflict, we must take a step back and remind ourselves of why we are here. Our mission is not just to protect our families, but to protect each other’s families. Our goal is not just to support veterans, but to support everyone who is part of this extended community.

There is common ground in the shared desire to do good for those who have given so much. We must approach each other with empathy and understanding, recognizing the pain and passion that often fuel these conflicts. The comrade was defending what he holds dear, and the Auxiliary member was expressing her commitment to our mission. Both of these perspectives are valid, but they must come together, not apart, if we are to truly serve those who need us.

### **“A Call for Unity”**

As we move forward, let this be a reminder of the importance of unity. The importance of Togetherness. The VFW members and the Auxiliary members are all pieces of the same puzzle. When we work together, we create a complete picture of support for veterans, military families, and our communities.

We must never forget that our strength comes from our unity, and that our differences should never tear us apart. VFW members and Auxiliary members are not opponents—they are partners in this mission. By recognizing each other’s value and working through our disagreements, we can ensure that we are providing the best possible support to those we serve.

Let’s refocus on what truly matters: our veterans, their families, and the communities we serve. United, we stand strong. Divided, we risk failing those who need us the most. Let’s commit to working together, with kindness and understanding, to achieve more for the ones we are here to serve.

**Barbara Loncar**



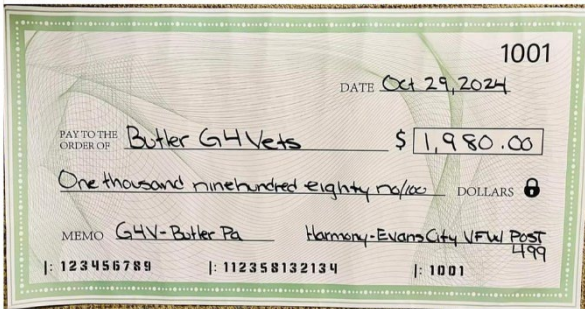
**VFW PA, State Commander**

**Andrea Meintel**



**VFW Auxiliary PA, State President**

# Auxiliaries and Members in Action



VFW Auxiliary 499, Harmony-Evans City in Butler PA donated \$1980 to the local Guitar for Vets program.



Members of District 1 hosting a visit from the Department President, Andrea Meintel.



VFW Post 15 Auxiliary Gettysburg participated in the Adams County Farmers Market's Trick or Treat Trail, handing out over 100 baggies of candy, Flags and Poppies to the children and adults that stopped by.



Past Department Presidents Brenda Johnson and Mary Jean Mastridge participated in Trunk-or-Treat at the Delaware Valley Veterans Home.

**MEMBERSHIP 2024-2025, Chairman Amy Peterson**

*"TOGETHER HELPING VETERANS" "TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE"  
"FROM OUR ROOTS TO OUR BRANCHES EXTENDING SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS"  
"STRIKE UP THE BAND!"*

*#PAproud #VFWAuxiliary #vfwauxmembership  
#TogetherHelpingVeterans #vfwauxmembershipPA  
#StrikeUpTheBand*



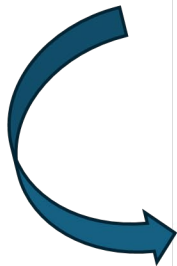
**Congratulations!  
Who's Next???!?**

**Pennsylvania's  
TOP 100  
'ASK'-KICKERS!**

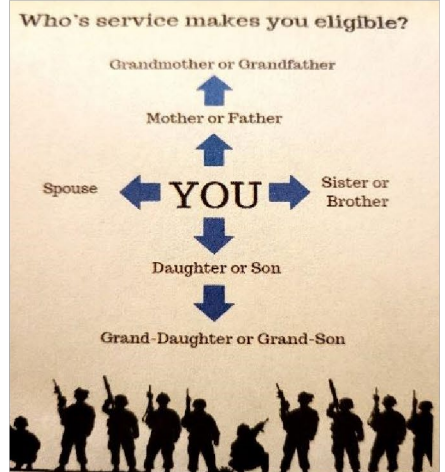
AUXILIARY 7293, DISTRICT 8  
AUXILIARY 7530, DISTRICT 18  
AUXILIARY 464, DISTRICT 19  
AS OF OCTOBER 15, 2024

*Have you done a Social Media Promo?  
SHOW ME, I REEL-Y want to SEE!  
Tag me or Send in Messenger!*

# SHARE THE CODE!



# RECRUIT & RETAIN



Currently 77.05%..... **November 30<sup>th</sup> Goal... 95%+**

**"LET'S GO CRAZY, Let's get NUTS!!"**

**"Put on your "Boogie Shoes" & get movin' & groovin' Pennsylvania!!!!**

**WE CAN MAKE THIS NUMBER!!!! SHOW ME your ASK!**

## **"ALL-STATE" HOT-TOPICS!**

**"New Member Welcome Packets" Deadline is November 17.**

You may mail, email or bring to the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Weekend!

**President, Treasurer and Secretary Dues MUST be paid by November 30.**



# AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS

## NOVEMBER 2024

“Together Helping Veterans”

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

2024-2025

### VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

Stacey Miller

As we come **Together Helping Veterans**, join to support our Veterans, their families, and those who provide care and support, we know, it isn't just the Veteran that is serving our country, it is their family, their children, their parents and other loved ones that are serving our great nation. Every November, we honor military families and our beloved Veterans during **National Veterans and Military Families Month** and **National Family Caregivers Month**. The work we do as a VFW Auxiliary can make a huge impact, so let's see how your Auxiliaries will **Join Together in Helping Veterans**.

Helpful ideas: Partner with a Family Readiness Group at your local base or armory, hosting a meal, providing day care, sending care packages, helping rake leaves for the families, or even offering a ride to an appointment.

Caregivers are another group that we honor in November. Share our gratitude for the support, love, and care they provide by sending cards, delivering a special treat, or offering to sit with their loved one and provide them with a break, giving them the time to run errands and provide for their own personal care.

We invite you to join us in recognizing and honoring these important members of our military community. Share your stories and ways that you are showing your support. **#VFWAuxiliaryVetFamSupportPA**.

### AMERICANISM & PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR

Tim Altman

Can you believe it's November already? There are only a couple of days to celebrate this month. November 10th is the Marine Corp birthday. The Marine Corp was established in 1775 to help the Naval forces during the Revolutionary War. November 11th is Veterans Day where we honor those who have served or are currently serving in the U. S. military. There is a National ceremony held at the Tomb of the Unknown at Arlington National cemetery.

If there is a parade in your area you can get involved and hand out Flags or help in other ways needed to thank our Veteran's. Remember it's all about getting “Together Helping Veterans” that are deployed.

As always lets band **“Together Helping Veterans”**

**AUXILIARY OUTREACH**  
**Jency Mercado**

It's FALL! My favorite time of the year. The leaves are changing, the weather is finally cooling down and Outreach is booming! We have fall festivals, apple picking, school football games, pumpkin patches, and organizations that need our help!

Reach out to your local organizations and see what kind of help they need to make their fall events a success! Just remember to add your organization to your local meeting and wear your VFW attire.

I want to see everything that you are accomplishing to make Pennsylvania Great! If you are adding it on Social Media, please hashtag it #AuxiliaryOutreachPA so I can see it and email me your pictures to jencyvfw@gmail.com. I am so proud of all the hard work you're accomplishing, and thankful that we can assist our VFW stay great!

**"BUDDY" POPPY & NATIONAL HOME**  
**Cindy Utter Peters**

A reminder to make sure each auxiliary mails a birthday card to National Home to help CELEBRATE their 100th anniversary. The address is: VFW National Home, 3573 S Waverly Rd, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

During the upcoming Holidays, it is important to consider becoming (or gifting) a Centennial Life Membership to the National Home! You will receive an exclusive pin, 10% off Souvenirs and apparel, reduced Guest Lodge Rates, and Exclusive Member-only Apparel! These memberships must be purchased by December 31, 2024.

Don't forget Madam President Meintel and Commander Loncar's special project CHALLENGE! We need to raise funds for National Home to upgrade the Outside Sports Complex. We want to turn the old tennis court into a Versatility Court, providing space for tennis, basketball, pickle ball, and hopscotch, with a space for beach volleyball. The challenge is Post versus Auxiliary total donations! All donations need to be earmarked "Outside Sports Complex."

The earlier we start to raise money, the better our victory will be, LOL! This project will be a great addition for the National Home families!

Have a warm, wonderful, and happy Thanksgiving!!





## EXTENSION, REVITALIZATION & MENTORING

**Kathy Altoff**

The following information is from our Extension and Revitalization National Ambassador, Betty Arnold: Many times, a standard greeting to those we meet is "How are you doing?" Working with our Auxiliaries is much the same. How is your Auxiliary doing?

Is your Auxiliary doing just OK or are you a healthy, vibrant asset to Veterans, their families and your community? We want your Auxiliary to be the best it can be! The resources to achieve that status are available. Check the resources available behind MALTA for tools to achieve your goals.

Are your Auxiliaries at the GREEN light or do they need a bit of help as they are in the YELLOW caution area? I am seeing RED light Auxiliaries placed on suspension that need support and guidance to bring them back into the GREEN. This is when a MENTORING TEAM needs to start working with the members of the Auxiliary. The SUSPENSION TEAM is chosen to evaluate and offer positive support to struggling Auxiliaries.

Extension & Revitalization is a two-part Program. Both areas are important. We need to institute new Auxiliaries, but also assist troubled Auxiliaries. We need to save what we have and grow the new into well-functioning Auxiliaries. District Presidents or an assigned official representative need to recognize when an Auxiliary is having problems and honestly assess and report to our Department President the "red flags" so that corrective measures can be put in place. Always recognize the positive within an Auxiliary and encourage membership.

---

## AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS

OCTOBER 2024, PAGE 3

---

### HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATIONS KRISTIN DIGIACOMO



***"CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES COME ON!!!"***

***Are you and/or members of your Auxiliary planning to join us for the VFW Department of PA Auxiliary's 100th Birthday Celebration this month? If not, you should reconsider. Think about it, this is a GREAT way for your Auxiliary to document (for our future generations and Auxiliary members) just how much our past and current members, in addition to our Auxiliary programs, make an impact on our Veterans, their families and our communities! This event will be a wonderful addition to any Historian book at the Auxiliary or District level!***

***"Together Helping Veterans" it's what we do!***

---

**AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS**  
**NOVEMBER 2024, PAGE 4**

---



**LEGISLATIVE**  
**KAREN MOONEY**

We are coming down to the wire..... November 5 will be here before we know it. Have you researched your candidates? Have you determined which candidates will make the best decisions for you, your family and our Veterans? We need to make our voices heard by being sure we vote on November 5, 2024.

Have you signed up for the Action Corps newsletter yet? It is a free subscription and provides a great deal of information on what is going on in Washington DC.

#### Pending Legislation in Washington DC

The VFW is very active in DC and this is a great way to stay in touch with what the VFW is working on for our Veterans. A few items in the Action Corps newsletter are:

H.R 7729, Dennis and Lois Krisfalusy Act: Will authorize the VA to provide headstone markers or burial receptacles for any eligible spouse or child buried in a national, stat or tribal veterans cemetery regardless of the date of death.

H.R. 8854, To amend title 38, Unites States Code, to authorize the provision of certain additional benefits for individuals for whom an urn or plaque is furnished and other purposes.

H.R. 8881, To amend title 38, United States Code, to permanently authorize the performance of Department of Veterans Affairs disability examinations by non-Department physicians pursuant to contracts, and for other purposes

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.

---

## AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS

NOVEMBER 2024, PAGE 5

---



## SCHOLARSHIPS

PAM SOPHER

This month is starting, and that means that you should have your essays turned in and ready to be judged on your Post level. Please remember that the Post judging is to be completed by November 18, 2024, and sent onto your District level to be judged there. The completion of District judging deadline is December 3, 2024, then to be turned over to our Voice of Democracy Chairman Mr. Vince Gavin, by December 9, 2024. His address is 658 Miller Street,

Enyon, PA. 18403. Please make sure that your District winner entry form, recorded speech, a typed copy of essay, and a head and shoulder photo must be sent in as well.

The deadline dates are the same as our Voice Of Democracy Contest, but our Patriots Pen Essay contest winners must be forwarded to Mr. Bill Lamond, State of Pennsylvania Chairman, 3360 Nashotks Road, Madison Township, PA. 18444. Please make sure that you adhere to these dates, as that is very important. If your other local Posts happen to need an essay, please share one of yours that you are not sending onto District for judging, so other students have a chance to be entered. If possible, please reward our students for their hard work by inviting them to your Post, having a dinner or pizza party, show them around your Posts. Explain what the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action table signifies, along with the history of your Post and what we do for our Veterans, their families, and our Communities. Maybe by doing so, we could have new members soon. Students who will age out of the Patriot's Pen contest need to be informed they are now eligible to enter our Voice of Democracy! We have these amazing programs for our youth, so let's make sure we utilize these programs to the fullest.

I am getting so excited for our Mid-Winter Conference, and can't wait to meet these students who take the time to participate in our programs. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

**AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS**  
**NOVEMBER 2024, PAGE 6**

**YOUTH ACTIVITIES**  
**JEANNA LEYDIC**



**VFW Auxiliary National  
Illustrating America Art Contest**  
An art contest for eligible students in grades K-8  
2024-2025

The VFW National Auxiliary is pleased to present this National art contest to introduce, encourage and recognize young artists with patriotism through art. Entries will be judged on patriotic theme and technique.

**Contest Eligibility**

- Students in grades K-8 by the March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions, or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools.
- Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Student does not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Foreign exchange students and students aged 15 or older are ineligible.
- National grade division winners of previous Illustrating America contests may enter the subsequent grade division but are ineligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous national winner.

**Contest Rules**

- Students name, age and grade level must be printed on the back of art submission.
- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
- Entry must be two dimensional.
- Entry must be on canvas or paper.
- Submit canvas entries on a stretcher frame or canvas board.
- Reinforce the back with heavy paper.
- Do not frame art with wood, metal, plastic or glass.
- Mats, including mounted and floating mats, may be used.
- Entries may not be smaller than 8" x 10" and not larger than 18" x 24", **INCLUDING** mat.
- Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, glitter, marker or other media may be used.
- If the American Flag is used, it **DOES NOT** need to conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors or numbers of stars and stripes.
- Complete contest entry form and submit with art entry.
- Parent or guardian signature required on contest entry form.
- Coloring sheets, digital art and photography and are **NOT** accepted.

<b>Awards for Grades K-2</b> First place: \$100 gift card Second place: \$50 gift card Third place: \$25 gift card	<b>Awards for Grades 3-5</b> First place: \$100 gift card Second place: \$50 gift card Third place: \$25 gift card	<b>Awards for Grades 6-8</b> First place: \$100 gift card Second place: \$50 gift card Third place: \$25 gift card
---	---	---

*VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for incomplete, lost, late, misdirected entries. All scores are final as received from the judges. Falsifying information on the entry form is reason for immediate disqualification. All contestants agree to abide by the contest rules. Any violation of these rules shall be cause for immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.*

To acquire contact information and application assistance in your state please email [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org)

**VFW Auxiliary judging and deadlines**

- **March 31:** Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary.
- **April 15:** One winner in each grade division from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the VFW Auxiliary District (optional) then Department (state) for judging.
- **May 5:** VFW Auxiliary Department (state) winners in each grade division due to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.
- **July/August:** Students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. First through third-place winners in each grade division named on VFW Auxiliary social media pages and displayed at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.
- **September:** All art entries will be returned to address on entry form.

Page 1 of 2  
Revised August 2024

It's time to start promoting the Illustrating America Art Contest. There are three categories, Grades K-2, Grades 3-5 & Grades 6-8. Deadline for student entries is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

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

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To our Department President Andrea Meintel, 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 of 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 than we have in a while. With your ongoing support we can continue to show that we band ***'TOGETHER HELPING VETERANS'***. ***"FROM OUR ROOTS TO THE BRANCHES, EXTENDING SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS"*** is what each volunteer does every time they go to the facility to provide support for our Nation's Hero's.

Through all of your past support, we have been able to have Bocce games, ward functions, bingos, provide comfort items, assist in the ceramic shop and support all the requests from the facility. Most importantly this year we have continued to be able to meet the needs of the residents even while continuing to social distance, and thinking outside of the box.

In the past, you have been very generous and it 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 2024 and all of 2025 can be booked. Please contact myself or one of the deputies to book a party. Also, please take a few moments 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

## 2025 PA Women Veterans Expo

March 14-16, 2025

State College, PA

Sponsored by

Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of PA



**All women veterans in Pennsylvania are welcome to attend.**  
*You do not need to be a member of the VFW in order to attend.*

Please join us for a time of fellowship, camaraderie, workshops and presentations by, for, and about women veterans—highlighting the issues that matter and impact them directly.

Each year is different, don't miss out!

Preregistration is required. This event fills quickly!

Register and view the agenda by using the QR code:

**Or visit [www.vfwpa.org](http://www.vfwpa.org)** (under the "Programs" tab)

Final Registration 01/31/2025 *(or until sold out)*



This event is organized by the  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Department of Pennsylvania, with  
financial contributions from Districts,  
Posts, Auxiliaries, & Individuals.

**Location:** The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center

215 Innovation Blvd, State College, PA 16803

2025 will offer a new, expanded format, consisting of breakout sessions, resource and informational vendors, and "down-time" to develop and renew personal connections. Each year is different, don't miss out!

**Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of PA**

**Women Veterans Chairperson Amy MacKenzie**

**717.575.3982**

**[pawomenvets@gmail.com](mailto:pawomenvets@gmail.com)**