



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

**Auxiliary and Program Training in Gettysburg** was well attended and very informative. **Thank you** to **Sarah Smith and Jodie Hollinger** for an outstanding job of presenting information and keeping the participants involved and engaged.

The **VFW Auxiliary On The Road Training** has been successfully completed. We conducted a total of six full days of training and member assistance within Pennsylvania. A big **thank you** goes out to the line officers and staff on their delivery of an excellent training program for the members.

These opportunities to learn and be informed are so important. Active members are beyond important; they are essential. We are often in the public eye and we want to be our best at all times. While others who may be eligible witness our actions and hard work, it will entice them to join us. Our bond can become very strong by working together Serving our Veterans. We can do great things individually, and so much more when we work together.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during this “**Let Freedom Ring**” year. If it were physically possible, I would attend one meeting in every Auxiliary this year. Participating in Auxiliary meetings and/or projects and getting involved in your District activities ensures stronger participation and helps to build strong bonds. There is strength in numbers; therefore our participation both locally and in our Districts is so important in assuring we meet our Mission.

**ATTN: Treasurers** on all levels – have you filed your 990N-e-Postcard? Deadline for filing is November 15, 2023; however, we ask that you take the time right now to complete this. <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/annual-electronic-filing-requirement-for-small-exempt-organizations-form-990-n-e-postcard>

After filing remember to log back in two weeks later to receive your confirmation of acceptance. Don't forget to email a copy to Jodie at her correct email: [jodie@vfwauxpa.org](mailto:jodie@vfwauxpa.org)

Veterans & Family Support  
Buddy Poppy/National Home  
Chief of Staff  
Christmas Canteen Fund  
Membership  
Youth Activities  
TIPS

IMPORTANT DATES 2023

September 4 Labor Day Department Headquarters Closed  
September 11 Patriot's Day  
September 10\* District 9 Meeting @ Reinholds #6759 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 10 District 10 Meeting @ Clark Summit #7069 – 1:00 P.M.  
September 11–13 National President's Visit (Bucks County)  
September 10 District 21 Meeting @ Greencastle #6319 – 1:00 P.M.Awards/2:00 P.M. Meeting  
September 10 District 23 Meeting @ Normalville #12019 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 10 District 28 Meeting @ Edinboro/McCain #740 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 16 District 16 Meeting @ Trappe #7155 – 11:00 A.M.  
September 17 District 25 Meeting @ Hopewell #8805 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 17 District 29 Meeting @ Guyasuta #709 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 17 District 22 Meeting @ Howard #8269 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 17 District 20 Meeting @ Walnutport #7215 – 2:00 P.M.  
September 24\* District 11 Meeting @ Benton #8317 – 2:30 P.M.

\*Department President Official Visit

BY ORDER OF:

*Mary Jean Mastridge*

Mary Jean Mastridge  
Department President

ATTEST:

*Jodie Hollinger*

Jodie Hollinger  
Department Secretary/Treasurer

# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

## GENERAL ORDERS #3      September 2023

**“Be There”** for Veterans. Our Veterans are our heroes. Many return home with heavy hearts and heavy minds. We can provide them with helpful resources for when life gets rough.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is encouraging support of at-risk Veterans through their “Be There” campaign. The campaign provides effective ways to prevent Veteran suicide. Visit [va.gov/REACH/](http://va.gov/REACH/) to learn the warning signs for suicide, find information about VA mental health and suicide prevention resources.

Sharing VA Secretary Robert Wilkie’ words, “In our various communities, everyone is in a position to make a difference for a Veteran who may be at risk for suicide. A common misconception is that you need special training to talk safely about suicide risk or show concern for someone who is in distress. One simple act of kindness could help save a life. I encourage everyone this September, and beyond, to take the first step in acting as that support system.” Watch his video “A Message from VA Secretary Robert Wilkie for Suicide Prevention Month” at [youtube.com/watch?v=1YwJWKAL8PM](https://youtube.com/watch?v=1YwJWKAL8PM).

Simply “Be There” by sharing messages of support to show a Veteran that you care. Additional resources can be found at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net). Veterans in crisis, or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis can call 988 press 1 to connect with qualified Department of Veterans Affairs responders 24/7.

Show your concern about the rate of suicide among veterans by wearing the Auxiliary Suicide Awareness Prevention Pin (a blue tear drop with the Auxiliary logo and combat boots at [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org)) Print and share the Veteran & Military Suicide Awareness Stickers found in Malta, under Member Resources, under Veterans & Family Support.



The VFW teamed up with nationwide organizations: Give an Hour, Campaign to Change Direction, One Mind, PatientsLikeMe and the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to combat emotional stress. Go to The Veterans & Family Support page at [vfwpaaux.org](http://vfwpaaux.org) for a list of resources.

Dates to remember:

<b>Sept 10</b>	World Suicide Prevention Day	<b>Oct 5</b>	National Depression Screening Day
<b>Sept 10-16</b>	Suicide Prevention Week	<b>Oct 8-14</b>	OCD Awareness Week
<b>Oct 1-7</b>	Mental Illness Awareness Week	<b>Oct 10</b>	World Mental Health Day
<b>Oct 3</b>	National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness		

***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**

Tina Hinkle,  
Veterans & Family Support Chairman  
[tina@vfw5265.org](mailto:tina@vfw5265.org)

## “Buddy” Poppy & VFW National Home”

### General Orders #3 -- September 2023

Poppies still grow, the white crosses remain, and the poem echoes in the rain.  
“Banding together for our Veterans” Auxiliary members will continue to “Let Freedom Ring” through their drives & distributions this year!



**Welcome 2023-2024! Let's do this!!**

If you have not planned a Buddy Poppy Drive yet, don't wait another second!!!

**Order forms are online and ready to be filled!**

The **original poppies are still available**, a slight increase in pricing, but **WORTH IT!**  
Our **NEW 'clip-on' Metal Poppies** should be available at the VFW Store very soon!

#### A few simple reminders when hosting the next drive:

- Ask volunteers to **wear VFW or VFW Auxiliary branded clothing** to promote the organization and connect the flower distribution to it.
- Remind volunteers that they are **NOT SELLING** but are **DISTRIBUTING** Poppies
- **Please DO NOT refuse someone a poppy.** A donation is appreciated, but not necessary. Ask them to **'WEAR IT PROUDLY.'**
- Say **THANK YOU**, anything is everything 😊

Use **#poppiescount** to post photos of your “Buddy” Poppy Drives



#### VFW National Home has a NEW NAME & NEW Logo!

Changing beliefs that the home is only for children, they've dropped the 'for children' to promote the campus is for **Veterans AND their families!** The resources continue to grow for the **'fresh start' that is so deserved** to our military families in need of emotional & physical support.

#### Department of Pennsylvania VFW Auxiliary sponsors Cottage #3 at VFW National Home

**The Health and Happiness Fund is a critical resource for VFW & Auxiliary donations.**

**\*\*\*ONLY 25 cents per member, pay online at MALTA or mail your auxiliary's donation\*\*\***

**National's Special Project will help fund the newest addition to National Home,**  
The Welcome Center is getting a makeover to include a convenient ONE STOP shop & more!  
Please consider a donation or special event to support this much needed resource for the resident veterans and families! More info can be found MALTA resources.

**Look for “Welcome Center Renovation Project”**

If you know someone or a family who may need assistance encourage them to:

- **Call the Helpline at 1-800-313-4200**
- **Email [help@vfwnationalhome.org](mailto:help@vfwnationalhome.org)**



**2023-2024 COMBINED  
SPECIAL PROJECT**

Loyally,

Amy Peterson – “Buddy” Poppy/VFW National Home Chairman

# CHIEF OF STAFF/EXTENSION

## General Orders #3

September, 2023

Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters,

What a great start to the "**Let Freedom Ring**" year. The On the Road Training was a huge success. We loved all the positive feedback. It was so nice to meet everyone who came out.

As I have been speaking with members, they ask questions about holding position, duties, responsibility, etc. I refer them to Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation found in Malta under member resources. This resource is very valuable. It will help any member on any level to understand their duties. A member who advocates for their Auxiliary will find this booklet very useful to help other members who are interested in seeking an office.

I hope by now all members received the Healthy Auxiliary membership questionnaire. When you complete the questionnaire you can mail to me, Brenda Johnson, Chief of Staff, 5031 Garner Drive. Morrisville, PA. 19067 or you can email me at [bbjohns19@comcast.net](mailto:bbjohns19@comcast.net). You do not have to put your name on the form. I do however need your Auxiliary and District number. We cannot help your Auxiliary if we do not know there is a problem. Let's help to keep our Auxiliaries healthy by "**Banding together for our Veterans.**"

God Bless our Veterans and God Bless America

Loyally,

**Brenda Johnson**

Brenda Johnson

Chief of Staff 2023-2024

# CHRISTMAS CANTEEN FUND

## General Orders #3

September 2023

Dear Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters,

As Christmas is approaching, we are again asking that each Auxiliary make a donation to the Christmas Canteen Fund.

The goal of the Christmas Canteen Fund is to see that every patient in all our VA facilities receive at least a \$1.00 canteen book. It may not seem like a lot but to some it may be the only gift they receive. We ask that your Auxiliary be generous with your donation to the Christmas Canteen Fund.

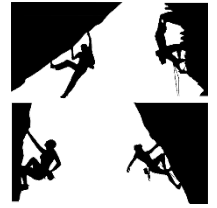
The deadline for receiving this gift is **October 31, 2023** so that we are able to process your gift and send it out to our VFW Auxiliary Hospital and VA Home Representatives.

Make your checks payable to: Dept of PA VFW Auxiliary

Mail to: Dept of PA VFW Auxiliary  
4002 Fenton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943

Be sure to earmark **Christmas Canteen Fund**













# MEMBERSHIP

## GENERAL ORDERS #3 – SEPTEMBER 2023

### ***“CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN”***

*Why do people join a membership?* *Members join a membership organization “because they believe in the cause it stands for and depends on you to advocate for their beliefs and rights”. So whether it is at a town hall meeting or lobbying on Captial Hill, the collective is stronger then the individual.*

### **8 WAYS TO INCREASE MEMBERSHIP**

-  Host events that potential new members would attend
-  Have a membership drive
-  Get feedback from your current members
-  Keep existing members happy
-  Provide a personalized message for your current & new members
-  Begin the renewal process early
-  Invite all potential members and news to meetings
-  Include new or potential members to Auxiliary Activities

Would like to give a big shout out to the following Auxiliaries for reaching 100% in membership as of August 21, 2023: **District 1 - Auxiliary 3090, & District 27 – Auxiliary 3368.**

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  
Department Membership Chairman  
huntertammyjo@aol.com

# Youth Activities

General Orders #3

September 2023

A new school year has begun for our youth as well as a new VFW Auxiliary Youth Activity program.

This year our Youth Activities include **Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue**. This is a singing contest for kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to show their talents by performing the “Star Spangled Banner.” Awards are presented at both the National and Department levels.

Our next contest is for the youth in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to show off their artistic ability in **Illustrating America**. This allows our young people to promote Patriotism through art.

Finally, **Patriotism through Literacy** is a program that helps us teach our youth about the history of our great nation through books. We can get involved by reading to them and by teaching them things like the Pledge to the Flag.

All these programs can be found at [www.vfwauxpa.org](http://www.vfwauxpa.org) or [www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org). To promote them you can contact teachers, daycares, homeschool groups, and libraries. Please remember these programs all have deadlines so mark your calendars.

We will help our youth to “**Let Freedom Ring**” by “**Banding together for our Veterans**” by engaging them and keeping them involved.

Joey Diehl

*Joey*

Youth Activities Chairman



# TIPS

September 2023  
General Orders #3

**NOTE THIS CORRECTION:** On the new Donations Cheat Sheet that was handed out at our On The Road Trainings and Program & Auxiliary Training there is a correction on where to send National VFW Military Service donations. These donations go to VFW Headquarters, 406 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO – **NOT VFW Auxiliary – 10<sup>th</sup> floor**. The corrected form is on our website.

**Auxiliary Officers (Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers)** dues MUST be paid by December 31, or they will be relieved from their office. Please let's take care of this immediately – we do not want to wait until December! Suggesting they upgrade to Life would be the perfect solution.

**Pennsylvania All State** — If you have not already done so; please pull out the PA All State form from your Program Book and check off each item as you complete it. This will give you a gauge for your accomplishments as well as keep you on track for all deadlines. Take note that the All State form shows the November 30 deadline for Officers dues. Meeting this deadline will ensure that you are not receiving calls and emails regarding unpaid officers and our time will be better used serving our Veterans.

## **Auxiliary Outreach** – *Kim Grundon*

Schools are starting backup in Central Pennsylvania for students. This will provide opportunities for Auxiliary members to volunteer at schools with various groups such as:

- Parent Teacher Organization/Association
- Sporting events and fundraising groups
- Classroom assistance and Field trips

## **Mentoring for Leadership** – *Sandy Brenner*

Take the time before or after your business meeting to try a mentoring activity. A fun suggestion is, each discover, discuss and develop your individual bucket list. This can lead to finding a service project that you can do together, further strengthening your bond as a group.

“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.” *John Crosby*

## **Historian and Media Relations** – *Kristin DiGiacomo*

Have you been thinking about interviewing a Legacy Member from your Auxiliary? Don't forget to make them our STARS this year! Ask them if you can interview them for a brief 3-to-5-minute video and remember to:

- Ask why they joined.
- Ask what keeps them active.
- Ask them what their favorite memorable moment(s) are.