

### General Orders No.2

### **Greetings All,**

Well, we certainly jumped out of the gate running at full speed for the 2024-2025 Together Helping Veterans year. Our Program Conference was held in Altoona, PA where our Department Program Chairmen did an outstanding job presenting the Auxiliary programs. The event was filled with lots of fun and learning, and we received tons of positive feedback. Thank you, Thank you!

During July we also started our On-the-Road Training Sessions. So far, over 50 members have attended. There's still time to sign-up for one of the remaining informative classes. (See the attached Flyer for all the details.) A big thank you to Dupont VFW 4909 and John Billington VFW 6495 for hosting our first two training days.

### What's Due?

Bonds are due now...make sure your treasurer pays your bond in MALTA by July 30, 2024. (If your bond expires, the Auxiliary is automatically placed on suspension.)

990-E Post Cards can be submitted now. Remember to make sure it has been "Accepted" and not just "Submitted."

Christmas Canteen Fund donations must be in the office by October 31, 2024.

### **Auxiliaries-in-Action Spotlight**

I received lots of positive comments about our Auxiliaries and Members In-Action feature. Please keep submitting pictures and descriptions for our Facebook page and General Orders. Send your submissions to the office, to a Department Line Officer, to your District President or to a Program Chairman.

### Great Start to Our "Together" Year

I would like to take a moment to extend my deepest gratitude to all of you. Your dedication and countless hours of service have made a tremendous impact on the lives of our Veterans, their families and our community.

Together, we are making a difference, and I am profoundly grateful for each and everyone of you. Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- On-the-Road Training Sessions— Aug 10, Aug 11, Aug 17, Aug 18, Aug 25 (Check the flyer for locations):
  - o Join the Department Officers at one of these training sessions. Learn the Bylaws, learn why trustees are so important, learn how to grow your Auxiliary, learn what other Auxiliaries are doing, and much more. This is a great opportunity to discuss how to have a thriving Auxiliary. All members are encouraged to attend.
- Celebrating America's Freedom Event at the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan—September 6-8, 2024 Bus Trip (Check out the attached flyer):
  - o Come celebrate the VFW National Home with National President Brenda Bryant and the Department of PA. A bus trip has been planned for this exciting celebration.
- 100th Anniversary Celebration for the Department of PA, VFW Auxiliary—Nov. 15-16, 2024 in Harrisburg, PA
  - o The state organization is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a Night-at-the-Races fundraiser and a birthday bash. **Watch for all details very soon.**

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### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

- July 27 August 2 National Convention, Louisville, KY
- \*August 4 District 13 Meeting @ Birdsboro #411 2:00 P.M.
- August 4 District 18 Meeting @ New Cumberland #7415 2:00 P.M.
- \*August 5 Southeastern Veterans Home Visit
- August 10 On-the-Road Training, Clarion #2145 9:00 A.M.
- August 11 On-the-Road Training, Coraopolis #402 9:00 A.M.
- August 11 District 17 Meeting @ New Bloomfield #7463-2:00 P.M.
- August 11 District 30 Meeting @ McConnellsburg #655 2:00 P.M.
- August 17 On-the-Road Training, Duboistown #7863 9:00 A.M.
- \*August 18 District 8 Meeting @ Allentown #2124 1:30 P.M.
- August 18 On-the-Road Training, New Cumberland #7415 9:00 A.M.
- \*August 19 Delaware Valley Veterans Home Visit
- August 18 District 14 Meeting @ Rome #6824 2:00 P.M.
- August 18 District 19 Meeting @ Kane #1132 2:00 P.M.
- August 18 District 20 Meeting @ Tobyhanna #3448 2:00 P.M.
- \*August 19 Turbotville Auxiliary #8206 6:30 P.M.
- \*August 22 Sunbury Auxiliary #1532 7:00 P.M.
- August 25 District 21 Meeting @ Chambersburg #1599 2:00 P.M.
- August 25 District 25 Meeting @ Donegal #6743 2:00 P.M.
- August 25 On-the-Road Training, Duncansville #8724 9:00 A.M.
- Sept. 2 Labor Day Picnic, Coatesville VA
- Sept. 4 Caring and Sharing Boat Trip, Pittsburgh, PA
- Sept 6-8 CAFÉ VFW National Home, Eaton Rapids, MI

# Auxiliaries in Action Commander/President Special Project Membership On-the-Road Training Programs Tips for Writing Effectively

Review enclosed - On-the-Road Training information and sign-up.

### Andrea Meintel

Jodie Hollinger

Andrea Meintel
Department President

Jodie Hollinger Department Secretary/Treasurer

### **Stay Connected:**

• Visit our website: www.vfwauxpa.org

• Follow us on Facebook: VFW Auxiliary – Department of Pennsylvania

• Follow us on Instagram: pa\_vfw\_auxiliary



\* President's Official Visits

# 2024 ON-THE-ROAD AUXILIARY TRAINING

### Please Join Us

Who: Everyone is Welcome

Where: See Below Schedule

Time: 9am-4pm

Cost: \$15 (includes lunch)

How: Reserve Your Spot (closes 1 week before training date)

Send reservations with check to:

PA VFW Auxiliary Headquarters

4002 Fenton Ave, Harrisburg, PA 17109

What: Lots of Shared Information

Some topics include—

- New "Members Only" Section of the PA Aux Website
- Easy Program Reporting
- Why are Trustees so Important?
- Know the Auxiliary Bylaws
- ➢ Growing Your Auxiliary
- Engaging Your Members
- > Exploring the Online Academy
- What are Others Doing?

July 20—Dupont Post 4909 Aug 17—Duboistown Post 7863

July 21—Levittown Post 6495 Aug 18—New Cumberland Post 7415

Aug 10—Clarion Post 2145 Aug 25—Duncansville Post 8724

Aug 11—Coraopolis Post 402



# The Department of Pennsylvania 2024-2025 Commander and President's Joint Special Project: Outside Sports Complex for the VFW National Home

Challenge: Who will be the first to raise \$30,000, the VFW or the Auxiliary?

Challenge: Who will raise the most money, the VFW or the Auxiliary?

Let's Help the National Home upgrade their old, worn-down tennis court into a Versatility Court which will provide space for pickle ball, tennis, basketball and a separate area for beach volleyball. This court will give the veterans and their families a state-of-theart, multi-court system where they can enjoy a variety of sports. This will help the residents enjoy an active lifestyle and bond with one another!







Join President Andrea and let's see the Auxiliary beat the pants off of the VFW.

Earmark donation: "Outside Sports Complex"

Please send donations to:

VFW Dept. of Pennsylvania Auxiliary 4002 Fenton Ave. Harrisburg, PA 17109

Please direct questions to: Jodie Hollinger jodie@vfwauxpa.org

### Thank you!

\*Excess funds raised will be put into Maintenance Fund for ongoing maintenance of the Sports Complex

### **Auxiliaries and Members In-Action**



The 2nd Annual Family Freedom Festival was hosted by Harmony-Evan City VFW Post 499 and Auxiliary. All monies raised were donated to 3 worthy causes: Colonial Jordan Guest Home for Veterans; Butler VA Homeless Veterans Program: and, Butler Guitars for Vets. Pictured are Auxiliary President Nancy Petshot and District 25 President Rosemary Hasulak.



District 21 President Tina Hinkle helped with the Membership Drive at the York Fair. Auxiliary and VFW Members from across the district banded Together and manned the booth throughout the 10 day event.



Our first On-the-Road Training was held at Dupont VFW 4909. Lots of great information was shared among the participants.



Our second On-the-Road Training was hosted by John Billington VFW Post 6495. Members attended from 4 different districts.



Tobyhanna Post and Auxiliary 3448 held a Fishing Derby for hospitalized veterans from the Wilkes Barre VA at the Tobyhanna State Park. What a fun day, but we did "let the big one get away."

# AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS AUGUST 2024

"Together Helping Veterans"
"From Our Roots to our Branches

### 2024-2025

#### **VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT**

### Stacey Miller

October is Agent Orange Awareness Month; a time in which communities around the world can learn about the dangerous chemical Agent Orange and how it affected American Veterans and Vietnamese civilians.

Agent Orange was a deadly herbicide used by the US military to destroy Vietnam crops, which were used for cover and vegetation during the Vietnam War. Many Veterans and civilians still suffer from their exposure and are seeking medical treatment for Agent Orange presumptive diseases. The Department of Veterans Affairs urges Veterans and their families to schedule an exam with a local VA Environmental Health Coordinator if they are concerned about Agent Orange illnesses.

The VFW's National Veterans Service (NVS) was established to assist all veterans, service members and their families, and survivors navigate the VA claims process. Information can be found at VA Claims & Separation Benefits - VFW, or directly through the VA accredited Service Officers.

#VFWAuxiliaryVetFamSupportPA

### AMERCANISM & PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR Tim Altman

Hello Auxiliary members. August 7<sup>th</sup> is Purple Heart Day, which is one of our lesser-known patriotic dates that we should recognize. Purple Heart Day is to honor and remember U.S. service members who were wounded or killed in action while serving in the military. The day highlights the importance of providing resources the Veterans and their family's needs. August 29<sup>th</sup> is the Marine Forces Reserve Birthday. Remember as Auxiliary's we need to recognize and support our Veterans not only the patriotic days but every day

July 27<sup>th</sup> is Korean War Armistice Day. As for Korean Armistice Day, arrange a celebration for your Korean war vets to show your appreciation for their service. So let's all band "Together Helping Veterans."

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

It was so nice to see so many of you at the training session!

As we CELEBRATE the 100th Anniversary of National Home, I want to share with you one more new program. This program is called **Heroes to Hives** which offers beekeeping classes taught by a local resident who is a beekeeper and a local VFW Post member! This is offered to National Home residents and staff! This is a fitting example of our Dept. of PA Auxiliary President Meintel's theme – "TOGETHER HELPING VETERANS."

I am asking all Auxiliaries and individual members to mail a birthday card to National Home! These cards will be displayed during their party on the National Home Campus! These cards MUST be received by January 7, 2025.

There is a new Centennial Lifetime Membership form available online at the National Home Website! It will not be offered forever, but after purchasing this, you will receive an Exclusive Centennial Membership Pin, 10% Off Souvenirs and Apparel, Reduced Guest Lodge Rate, and Exclusive Member-only Apparel! Please consider signing up and enjoying the great benefits being offered!

The National Home is an amazing place for Veterans and their families, and well worth anything we can raise together! Please feel free to contact me at imuttercin1@hotmail.com or call me if I can help with anything at 814-598-7743 and leave a message if I don't pick up. Thank you all for all you do!

# AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS AUGUST 2024, PAGE 2

# EXTENTION, REVITALIZATION & MENTORING Kathy Altoff



### "TOGETHER HELPING VETERANS."

Where do your Auxiliaries fit in? Work to get all the Auxiliaries in the GREEN "GO" light! There are definite red flags that alert us to the YELLOW "CAUTION" status. Is the Auxiliary growing and bringing in new and reinstated members? How about attendance at Auxiliary, District and Department training and meetings? Are Officers changing? Work on those YELLOW light Auxiliaries to advance to GREEN. If they are in the RED, assist them - observe and revitalize them! The mentoring team/teams can be used to assist in the YELLOW and RED lights and to empower the GREEN. Placing an Auxiliary on suspension is not a terrible thing. Sometimes it is necessary to provide an effective opportunity to allow that auxiliary to come back stronger and better than before. "FROM OUR ROOTS TO OUR BRANCHES, EXTENDING SERVICE TO OUR **VETERANS.**"

### **HOSPITAL** - Linda Dilling

Busy People! It is no secret that people are busier than ever. Consider creating 2-3 hours of volunteer opportunities. We want to start out small. Pick a facility at which you would like to volunteer. Make that phone call to the facility and see where your skills and talents can lead you. Ask friends and family to come along and check out what volunteering is all about. Most important - make that commitment whether it is for special events, once a month, every week, or every day! Most people cannot commit to a regular volunteer position. But many people want to give back! Every moment you volunteer – you will make the life of our Veterans better.

### **LEGISLATION** - Karen Mooney

Do you know what a claim shark is? The Action Corps Weekly newsletter references this on a regular basis. A claim shark is a person or entity that charges large volumes of money to veterans/families when they are attempting to submit VA claims for benefits. Veterans deserve effective assistance when navigating the VA disability claims process. By choosing reputable services, Veterans can avoid the pitfalls of claim sharks. Empower yourself with the knowledge and caution to ensure that your Veteran receives the support they need to manage their claims. Consider researching this process and provide reputable persons/organizations in our Posts that our Veterans can use to safeguard missteps in this claims process. Knowledge is power so let's help put this power back in our Veteran's hands!!

### **SCHOLARSHIPS - Pam Sopher**

This program is new to me too, so we will all learn and make mistakes together. If you have any questions, with our amazing resources, we will find the answers. New to the Scholarship program this year is a QR Code. When used this code brings up all the information about our program, as well as the ability to print any forms we need. Not only do I feel that this will be much more convenient, but it will also be more accessible to those we couldn't reach before – the younger, sophisticated, iPhone generation!

I gave out flyers with our Themes for our Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen including deadlines, and QR codes to your District President. At your next meeting, please ask them about it or contact me and I will this information to you.

The biggest concern I have heard is the lack of information reaching our students in their schools. Maybe you will be able to post this flyer on their bulletin boards for students to use. Please make sure your students adhere to all the rules and regulations to avoid disqualification.

Let's ALL have fun this year with this program, and please let me know how our QR Code works for you to get more information out.

On your year-end report, President
Meintel is offering a Star citation to the
Auxiliary using the most creative ways to
benefit from the code. Remember you can
find this code on our Department website. Scan the code, use the

# AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS AUGUST 2024, PAGE 3



### YOUTH ACTIVITIES - Jeanna Leydic

I enjoyed seeing everyone at Program
Leadership and I learned a lot of new stuff! I hope
everyone enjoyed the weekend as much as I did!

I want to make this year a great year for Youth Activities and let everyone know what the VFW Auxiliary program is!

"Together Helping Veterans" is Madam President Meintel's theme let's get the youth more involved than ever this year!

This is the start of fair season in PA and there are a ton of 4-H/FFA clubs or the individual members that need sponsorship. Reach out to your local clubs to see if they need any support from your Auxiliary and its members.

I have created a Facebook profile for everyone to find everything on one page! To find this page simply search, **PA VFW AUX YOUTH ACTIVITIES 2024-25.** I will be attaching flyers and contest rules along with entry forms. I may also run a few contests to help get our interaction with Youth Activities numbers up!

# AUXILIARY PROGRAM NEWS AUGUST 2024, PAGE 4

### HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATIONS—KRISTIN DIGIACOMO

In the words of the amazing classic rock band *Journey*, I'm asking that you "**Don't Stop Believin**" that you can master social media and the use of hashtags!

Hashtags are important on social media as they enable your content to be found by the right people. Using relevant hashtags helps give context to your content and drives traffic so that you can boost views, likes, and shares. The key is finding the right hashtags that match your content and appeal to users.

Here are some of the hashtags that the VFW Auxiliary National Organization uses on a regular basis!

- #vfwaux & #vfwauxiliary to be used for general posts about the VFW Auxiliary
- #auxiliaries in action & #auxinaction to be used for Auxiliaries in Action and recent activities
- #vfwauxtbt to be used for VFW Auxiliary Throwback Thursday photos from our past
- #VFWrepost to be used when sharing information directly from the VFW

Here are some of the hashtags that the VFW Auxiliary Department of PA uses on a regular basis!

- #PAproud & #PArocks & #Veterans & #Community & #Service & #SupportingOurVeterans & #MakingADifference & #AuxiliaryPatriotismPA & #TogetherHelpingVeterans – any and all of these can be used for general posts about what your Auxiliary is doing, events you're hosting, etc.
- #StrikeUpTheBand & #vfwauxmembershipPA to be used for posts related to President Andrea's membership initiative

Kristin DiGiacomo Historian and Media Relations Chairman

### **MEMBERSHIP 2024-2025**

### **Amy Peterson**

"TOGETHER HELPING VETERANS" "TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE"

"FROM OUR ROOTS TO OUR BRANCHES EXTENDING SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS"

"STRIKE UP THE BAND!"

NOW is the TIME to crank up your VOLUME and get MOVIN' & GROOVIN'!

CHECK COMMUNITY CALENDARS FOR EVENTS TO ATTEND,

DON'T EXPECT PEOPLE TO COME TO YOU, YOU HAVE TO GO TO WHERE THE PARTY IS!

PEOPLE LOVE TO "HANG OUT" ONLINE,

MAKE AN ONLINE PROMO TO JOIN & SHARE THE OPPORTUNITY!

**DON'T FORGET YOUR HASHTAGS!** 

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

Tips for Retaining Annual Members!

ENCOURAGE LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

OFFER INCENTIVES, REMIND THEM WHY THEY ARE IMPORTANT!

Send REMINDERS EARLY, Make CALLS if needed

### **REVITALIZE & GROW!**

WITHOUT GROWTH,
WE WEAR DOWN OUR LONGTIME MEMBERS
WE RISK LOSING OUR VOICES AT CONGRESS
DANCE IT OUT, TOP THE CHARTS!

- ALL STATE HIGHLIGHTS
  - BONDS DUE BY JULY 31, 2024
  - NEW QR CODE
  - NEW MEMBER PACKETS
    - DUE NOV 17, 2024
  - CHRISTMAS CANTEEN
    - MUST REC'D BY OCT 31, 2024

USE THIS QR CODE at your recruiting events, keep on your phone, post on your social media!

QUICK AND EASY way to check out

NEW QR CODE!

WHO we are and WHAT we accomplish and stand for!

QUICK TOOL FOR REFERENCE AND/OR RECRUITING

Potential Members want EASY, Give it to them!



QUICK TOOL FOR REFERENCE AND/OR RECRUITING



LESS PAPER, MORE ACTION!

**ASK** POSSIBLE MEMBERS TO

SCAN NOW, LOOK LATER!

### SOUTHEASTERN VETERANS CENTER

# GENERAL ORDERS #2 August 2024

The beginning of a new year and sending best wishes to all of our VFW Auxiliaries across Pennsylvania. Thank you to President Andrea Meintel for trusting this position to myself and my deputy for the 2024-25 year. It is so important to support our Veterans in the hospitals and homes.

We continue to gain new volunteers at Southeastern Veterans Center.

With the donations from our auxiliaries across the state we have been able to provide gift cards to Dunkin and Wa-Wa. We made a canteen donation, bought clothing and sweatpants for residents. Soft pretzels are always a treat at baseball season and we assisted with bringing a Tater Tot food truck to the premises.

We had another resident turn 100 years young. He was surprised with the Philadelphia Phillies Phanatic, announcer Tom McCarthy and a former Philly player. The organization presented him with a ball to be thrown out for the first pitch at a game this past spring. He was showered with many other gifts. He was certainly surprised and thankful.

Recently we purchased a coffee/cappuccino maker, cups and plates to use for a monthly Bistro for residents. This has been a big hit. Our next Bistro is the end of July.

Our Veterans wants and needs are always first on our minds, so thank you again for supporting all of the hospitals. Have a wonderful year and continue to keep our Veterans in your thoughts and prayers.

**God Bless America** 

**God Bless our Veterans** 

Respectfully,

Linda

Marsha

Linda L. Neiman – Representative SEVC 205 Lilac Lane Douglassville, Pa 19518 610-385-6394 Marsha Lush – Deputy

### **VFW Auxiliary Membership Moment**

Tips for Writing an Effective Dues Renewal Letter



Whether it is sent by mail or e-mail, your Auxiliary's membership dues renewal letter is one of the most important tools for member retention. To ensure that it is effective, here is a brief checklist of suggested items to follow before you lick that envelope or hit the "Send" button.

### Tone – Is your message personal?

- Is the greeting personalized? (For example, use the member's name instead of "Dear Member.")
- Is your tone warm and conversational? (For example, use "You" and "We" and read the letter/email out loud to make sure it sounds conversational.)
- Does it read like a letter or an invoice?
- Are you making an emotional connection? (Where possible, tailor the message to the member's personal reasons for joining the VFW Auxiliary.)
- Does it sound like you are building a lasting relationship with the member?

### Content – What have you done for me lately?

- Did you outline the personal benefits and services available through VFW Auxiliary membership?
- Did you share local, state, or national VFW Auxiliary accomplishments from the past year?
- Do you instill excitement for the coming year by "setting the scene" about future events, activities, or projects?

### Action – Did you make it easy for members to renew?

- Did you demonstrate urgency? (For example, "Renew your membership today!")
- Did you include (or attach) an invoice?
- Did you include a deadline for receipt of member payment?

### Closing – Did you say thanks?

- Did you thank the member for their support, and acknowledge that the VFW Auxiliary values their continued membership?
- Did you provide a contact person (with phone number and/or email address) if the member has questions or needs more information?