



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

As I travel through our great State and meet more of our members, I am filled with pride. Our Auxiliary members are serving our Veterans, their families and communities in so many ways. Unselfishly, you give your time and energy. You are doing so with enthusiasm and love while having fun in the process. It takes work of course, but you are dedicated to our Veterans.

I see your creativity when you plan children's events and fundraisers. With all that you do, your own family still comes first. When you talk about your successes, I can see your pride and hear your satisfaction.

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

Take note: All Department, District & Auxiliary Officers (Pres, Sec, Treas) dues **must** be paid by 12/31/23. Anyone not paid will be relieve of their position.

Veterans Day: Saturday, November 11. Many VFW Posts and Auxiliaries have special programs scheduled in observance. Please find the time to participate, or volunteer with these programs. Remember to take pictures and send them to our Department Historian at k.digi@pitt.edu to be added to our Facebook page.

Our **2024 Mid-Winter Conference** will be held January 19-21 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry, 910 Sheraton Drive, Mars, PA 16046. Watch for detailed information on our website in the very near future.

Auxiliary Outreach
Pittsburgh Health Systems
Legislative
Membership
Mentoring for Leadership
Veterans Day Program
Youth Activities
TIPS

IMPORTANT DATES 2023

- November 4 District 16 Meeting @ Conshohocken #1074 – 11:00 A.M.
November * 5 District 24 Meeting @ McMurray #764 – 2:00 P.M.
November 10 Department Headquarters Closed – Observance of Veterans Day
November 12 District 9 Meeting @ Kennett Square #5467 - 2:00 P.M.
November 12 District 10 Meeting @ Eynon #7963 – 1:00 P.M.
November * 12 District 13 Meeting @ Mohnton #9045 – 2:00 P.M.
November * 12 District 30 Meeting @ Breezewood – 2:00 P.M.
November 12 District 23 Meeting @ Confluence #12019 – 2:00 P.M.
November 12 District 26 Meeting @ Robinson #9310 – 2:30 P.M.
November 19 District 8 Meeting @ Macungie #9264 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 11 Meeting @ Berwick #821 – 2:30 P.M.
November 19 District 14 Meeting @ Sayre #1536 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 15 Meeting @ Knoxville #6753 – 2:00 P.M.
November * 19 District 19 Meeting @ Port Allegany #6391 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 20 Meeting @ Tobyhanna #3448 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 22 Meeting @ Roaring Spring #7689 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 25 Meeting @ New Castle #315 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 27 Meeting @ Herminie #8427 – 2:00 P.M.
November 19 District 29 Meeting @ Coraopolis #402 – 2:00 P.M.
November 23/24 Department Headquarters closed - Thanksgiving
*Department President Official Visit

BY ORDER OF:

Mary Jean Mastridge

Mary Jean Mastridge
Department President

ATTEST:

Jodie Hollinger

Jodie Hollinger
Department Secretary/Treasurer



Building Partnerships • Auxiliary Participating in Outreach

General Orders #5

November 2023

Several organizations are available to assist senior citizens and those with disabilities that Auxiliary members can partner with in their respective communities.

Senior Centers - <https://www.seniorcenterdirectory.com>

- Help serve meals.
- Assist with activities and educational classes.
- Provide transportation services.

Meals on Wheels – <https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org>

- Deliver meals.
- Offer home repair and modification services.
- Provide pet assistance.

AARP – <https://www.aarp.org/volunteer> (in person and virtual opportunities)

- Tax Aid Volunteer
- Nurse Mentor
- Wish of a Lifetime Post Card Program Volunteer

Area Agency on Aging Programs - <https://p4a.org>

- Ombudsman Program – Advocate for and protect the rights of individuals in long-term care facilities. Training required.
- Apprise Program – Assist with PA Medicare offers and Insurance Counseling. Training required.
- Advisory Board Member

Auxiliary Members **“Banding together for our Veterans” to “Let Freedom Ring!”**

Loyally,
Kimberly Grundon
Auxiliary Outreach Chairman

GENERAL ORDERS #5

November 2023

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

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To our Department President Mary Jean Masteridge, we would like to express our sincerest thanks for the appointments as Representative and Deputies at the Pittsburgh VA Healthcare system, which includes 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". Even though we cannot go into the facilities consistently at this time; through your continued support and concern for our hospitalized veterans, you have shown that we continue to **"BAND TOGETHER FOR OUR VETERANS"** by our efforts; and that we truly have **"LET FREEDOM RING"** by listening to them and speaking up for them when necessary.

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 social distancing, 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. **Please send your donation to: Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, Department of Pennsylvania, 4002 Fenton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943.**

As soon as we receive notification that we can physically return to the facilities, we will be able to begin booking parties for 2024. 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

Kathy DiGiacomo
Deputy

Donna Melnick
Deputy

**LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
GENERAL ORDERS #5
NOVEMBER, 2023**

We are well into our Auxiliary year so we should be going strong with our Legislative promotions. I have just taken over the chairmanship due to healthy issues with the previous chairman. I will be sending you informative information about bills that we need to support for our veterans as well as other legislative issues and facts.

By the time many of you read this, the election will be over and the winners will have been announced. Thank you to all of you who voted to voice your personal choices for our leaders.

I want to reemphasize the priority goals that the VFW and Auxiliary focus on. These priority goals reflect the resolutions passed by the VFW to strengthen and ensure an adequate VA system for all veterans (current and future.) These goals cover much needed help in veteran homeless and suicide, traumatic brain injuries and the backlog of claims, addressing veteran unemployment, and help with transition back to civilian life after discharge. The goals are grouped into six areas of concern:

- Budget
- Health Care
- Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs
- Education, Employment and Transition Assistance
- Military Quality of Life
- National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW-MIA

There are two bills out there right now that target two of the goals. They are HR4157 & S928 (not just a number act) states that we need to do whatever we can to prevent veteran suicide. The other bill is HR3933 & S2888 and that is to have a credited service officer on bases when soldiers are transitioning out of the military. Get in touch with your house and senate leaders and encourage them to sponsor these bills.

I will ask you every promotion letter to encourage your members, family and friends to join Action Corp. You only have to be 18 years old to do so. It is free and has tons of information about what is happening on Capitol Hill with regard to our veterans, service member issues and national security. Some posts encourage social members to join Action Corps when they join the post as a social member.

Remember that one of the reasons you joined the Auxiliary was to take care of our veterans and their families so what better way then to practice the above suggestions. **“Let Freedom Ring”** as we are **“Banding Together for Our Veterans.”**

Loyally,

Marsha Fuhrman

Marsha Fuhrman

Department of PA Legislative Chairman



MEMBERSHIP

General Orders #5

November 2023

77.66%



“CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN”

Why form Membership Committees? Committees help spread the workload. At its simplest, a committee is simply a group of motivated people who meet regularly, at least one of whom acts as a convenor. What is a committee? A committee is elected by the members of a organization to continue the work of the association between general meetings.

7 Responsibilities for a Membership Committee

- ❖ Identifying the needs of members & recommending the development of service to meet those needs
- ❖ Help increase membership
- ❖ Keep members informed with benefits that the VFW Auxiliary provides
- ❖ Welcoming New Members to meetings & events
- ❖ Indentify New Members needs & perceptions
- ❖ Help sending letters, make phone calls or emails to collect yearly membership dues.
- ❖ To help setup membership drives in the community to boost members

Would like to give a big shout out to the following Auxiliaries for reaching 100% or more in membership as of October 22, 2023, **District 10, Auxiliary 6520 - 108.70%; District 14, Auxiliary 384 - 103.33% & Auxiliary 5642 100.90%; District 17, Auxiliary 1964 - 100%; District 20, Auxiliary 7215 - 100%; and District 21, Auxiliary 8896 - 100.26%.**

As we “**Band Together for our Veterans**” it is time for us to get ready for a great year with “**Lights, Camera & Action.**” Get ready to “**Climb Every Mountain**” and we can reach the top of the mountain “**Let Freedom Ring.**”

Tammy Hunter

Tammy Hunter

Department Membership Chairman

huntertammyjo@aol.com

MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP

General Orders #5

November 2023

The act of mentoring is a series of ongoing and little successes. An effective mentor understands that his or her role is to be dependable, engaged, authentic, and tuned into the needs of the mentee. I ask that you continue to brainstorm about ways you can personally mentor and inspire in your own Auxiliary and District. No matter what position you hold, no matter how long you have been an Auxiliary member; you can become a mentor.

There is a huge value in mentoring our members for future leadership roles. We must always be working toward finding our replacement in serving Veterans, their families and our Communities. Never, never feel as though you have completed this task.

Always seek out members who show enthusiasm and dedication and establish open and honest communications with them. By showing understanding and kindness, you can build a passion for stepping up and taking the lead.

Henry Ford, a great American Industrialist said, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."

As we promote this "**Let Freedom Ring**" year to every "new" and "seasoned" member, be good to people; as being good to people is a wonderful legacy to leave behind.

Loyally,

Sandy

Sandy Brenner, Chairman
Mentoring for Leadership

INDIANTOWN GAP NATIONAL CEMETERY MEMORIAL COUNCIL



**41st Annual Veterans Day Ceremony
Sunday, November 5, 2023, 2:00 P.M.**

**Co-sponsored by
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of PA
Public Invited – Ceremony Held Rain or Shine**

**Commander Gyger would like to request
maximum participation from all Post in the
Department for this ceremony.**

**Requesting blues and greys as the uniform for all
VFW. Official look for all Auxiliary members.
Thank you for your participation.**

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

General Orders #5

November 2023

“Oh say can you see by the dawns early light.” This is the first line of our National Anthem. Did you know we have a Youth contest for Grades K to 12th grade where the students can perform and record this great song? The Star Spangled Banner represents our great country that our Veterans have defended to keep us the Land of the Free. Let us get them Excited for the Red, White and Blue. The rules are in MALTA and at www.vfwauxpa.org under Member Resources.

Music isn't for everyone, but maybe you know a young artist ages Kindergarten through Eighth Grade. We are having a contest called “Illustrating America” which is a two-dimensional art project. There are three different grade levels. This will give our artist the ability to show their Patriotism. Once again the rules can be found in MALTA and at www.vfwauxpa.org.

Does your Auxiliary members carry the RAP cards? RAP stands for Random Acts of Patriotism and are to be given to our youth when you see them showing patriotism to our Veterans and to our Flag. Our young people appreciate that someone notices they are showing respect and it is a small gesture of our appreciation to them.

Finally get involved with Youth groups in your community. Most towns have Boy Scout Troops, Girl Scout Troops, Church Groups and School Clubs. Join them in their community activities, but more important get them involved in your projects for the Veterans. We can teach them to “**Let Freedom Ring**” by “**Banding Together for our Veterans.**” Our Youth are our future.

Joey Diehl

Joey Diehl

Department Youth Activities Chairman

joeydiehl@aol.com

717-386-7598

TIPS

November 2023 General Orders #5

Message from Department Secretary/Treasurer, Jodie Hollinger

All checks sent to Department Headquarters for membership, programs, etc., must be made payable to: **Dept of PA VFW Auxiliary** – never to Jodie Hollinger or any other way. Thank you for making a special note of this.

Buddy Poppy - VFW National Home - Amy Peterson, Chairman

- As we celebrate our Veterans service November 11th, be sure to include Buddy Poppies into your Veterans Day celebrations.... make **Buddy Poppy** centerpieces, attach a poppy to each takeout at the canteen, wrap a poppy around a small flag and distribute at the local parade or nursing home Veterans....GO BIG or keep it simple, just **CELEBRATE our Veterans** accordingly!
- **VFW National Home** is absolutely the busiest place on earth lately.....it's so great to receive updates of all the happenings within the campus, it's truly a magical place for our Veterans and families!
 - Become a **National Home Life Member** for a one-time fee of \$50...it's so heartwarming knowing that YOUR membership helps so many! Visit <https://vfnationalhome.org/you-can-help/membership/>

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT – Tina Hinkle, Chairman

- **Thank a Veteran!** Host a program honoring Veterans on Veterans Day, November 11. Make a point to attend Veteran Programs to honor local Veterans and support your community organizations. Take a moment to Thank a Vet when you see them out and about, such as the grocery store and restaurant.
- **Veteran Scholarship** November 15 is the last day to apply for VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" - visit www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veterans-support for details and eligibility. You can help fund these scholarships by donating to Sport Clips, visit www.sportclips.com.
- **Ho! Ho! Ho! Gifts for Veterans:** Give gift cards and products from **Sport Clips**, visit www.sportclips.com and find a location near you. **Veterans' Voices** serves veterans each year with writing therapy and readership of the magazine – *Writing From the Soul...For the Soul*. To learn more, donate and subscribe visit: www.veteransvoices.org/subscribe or print form https://veteransvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/formidable/2/Subscribe-Donate-form_051216.pdf and remember to support your Post's Canteen/Dining Hall by purchasing gift cards.

Historian and Media Relations – Kristin DiGiacomo, Chairman

Remember to connect with your members on a regular basis! BUT keep in mind that not everyone has Facebook or an email address. So, what can you do to?

- **PREPARE** a monthly or quarterly newsletter to be both mailed **and** e-mailed out for your members.
- **RECOGNIZE** those members who are celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, volunteer work, etc.
- **UPDATE** your Auxiliary/Post Facebook page regularly.