



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Brenda and I have begun our visits to the Districts, and what an enjoyable experience it has been! These opportunities to meet with our members, conduct business and socialize a bit were just awesome. Playing bingo with our hospitalized Veterans at the Wilkes-Barre VA Center was fun and heart-warming. Brenda and I have visited District 9, District 22, District 11 and Auxiliary 6982 in Coaldale. Thank you District Presidents, Auxiliary Presidents and everyone who attended the meetings. Well done.

I encourage everyone to attend your Auxiliary and District meetings. There is so much to be gained through instruction, participation and socializing.

Please be conscientious about Schools of Instruction on the District level. Any subject relevant to the Auxiliary may be presented and discussed. It's a great opportunity to learn and clarify any misconceptions you may have.

**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)

**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.

Commander Gyger's Retreat will be held October 6-8 at the Ramada Conference Center, State College. Our Council of Administration meeting is scheduled for Saturday at 9:00 A.M. in Salon A. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Past Department President Janice E. Holmes (1995-1996) passed away on September 18, 2023, after an extended illness. **All Auxiliary Charters shall be draped for a period of thirty (30) days (page 91 under Special Ceremonies in our Ritual).**

Veterans & Family Support  
Americanism  
Centennial Brick Fundraiser  
Christmas Canteen Fund  
Delaware Valley Veterans Center  
Historian/Media Relations  
Hospital  
Membership  
Veterans Day Program  
TIPS

IMPORTANT DATES 2023

October 4 District 7 Meeting @ Essington #4845 – 7:00 P.M.  
October 6-8 Department Commander's Retreat, Ramada Conference Center, State College  
October 9 Department Headquarters Closed – Columbus Day  
October \* 15 District 1 Meeting @ Bridesburg-Lawton #2 – 1:30 P.M.  
October 15 District 14 Meeting @ Bloomsburg #804 – 2:00 P.M.  
October 20-22 – Eastern Conference, Atlantic City, N.J.  
October \* 29 District 17 Meeting @ Marysville #882 – 2:00 P.M.  
October 29 District 18 Meeting @ Shippensburg #6168 – 2:00 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 #4      October 2023

**It's time to combat emotional stress** – many of our Veterans return home with heavy hearts and heavy minds. Life has its challenges and Veterans need to know they don't have to solve them alone. We can provide them with helpful resources for when they feel burdened with depression, isolation, grief and loss, disability and/or health challenges, financial challenges, life transitions and more. Let them know it's ok to reach out for guidance, assistance and most importantly for someone to be there for them.

**Veterans and their loved ones can Dial 988 Press 1** to connect with qualified and caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders 24/7. Visit [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net) and [www.va.gov/REACH](http://www.va.gov/REACH) to learn the warning signs of suicide and information about VA mental health and suicide prevention resources.

**Be prepared.** There are resources and training for anyone who wishes to understand how to identify risks for suicide and what to do if you identify a Veteran at risk. **Learn about VA S.A.V.E. training.**

S.A.V.E. stands for **S**igns of suicidal thinking should be recognized; **A**sk the most important questions of all – Are you thinking of killing yourself?; **V**alidate the Veteran's experience; **E**ncourage treatment and expedite getting help. Visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/docs/VA\\_SAVE\\_Training.pdf](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/VA_SAVE_Training.pdf) Sign up for online training at <https://learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save>

**More Resources** to combat emotional stress: Give an Hour, Campaign to Change Direction, One Mind, PatientsLikeMe, and the Elizabeth Dole Foundation.

**VA's first-ever Buddy Check Week** is a national campaign encouraging Veterans to connect or reconnect with their Veteran friends Oct 16-20. Ask Veterans to: Take the Buddy Check Week Pledge to Talk to 10 and Take the Training (S.A.V.E.) and Find Buddies (TogetherWeServed.org and RallyPoint.com) Learn more: [www.va.gov/initiatives/national-buddy-check-week-talk-to-10-veterans](http://www.va.gov/initiatives/national-buddy-check-week-talk-to-10-veterans)

The **VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"** provides scholarships to service members and Veterans to assist in completing educational goals. Visit [www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veteranssupport](http://www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veteranssupport) for details and eligibility. Deadlines: November 15 and April 30. In addition to promoting the scholarship opportunity, let's help Sport Clips continue help our heroes by purchasing gift certificates to Sport Clips and encouraging others (male and female) to get a haircut at one of their locations in PA.

## Dates to remember:

<b>Oct 1-7</b>	Mental Illness Awareness Week	<b>Oct 8-14</b>	OCD Awareness Week
<b>Oct 3</b>	National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness	<b>Oct 10</b>	World Mental Health Day
<b>Oct 5</b>	National Depression Screening Day	<b>Oct 16-20</b>	Buddy Check Week

## *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)

# AMERICANISM

## General Orders #4

October 2023

Happy Fall Y'all!!! Our first promotion for this month on October 13<sup>th</sup> is to wish the **US NAVY a HAPPY 248<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY!!** Host an event commemorating this occasion, possibly with a cake or even something as simple as hanging posters in your Post to recognize this momentous occasion and those who served with this branch of our military. Invite the Naval Comrade members of your Post to celebrate along with you.

Second, is Halloween. Include passing out small **FLAGS** along with your candy to children attending your parties or your trick or treat events. Small flags are available through the Department office at no cost to your Auxiliary. (Donations to the Department Flag Fund are appreciated.) Simply e-mail or call Sandy or Jodie, and they will ship them out to you. Please give them enough notice as the mail can be a bit slow. We need to take every opportunity we can to share our **LOVE of AMERICANISM and PATRIOTISM** with our youth. This is another opportunity to combine the two programs and split your reporting.

By now some of you are planning your Veteran's Day events as well. Remember that giving a Veteran a Flag with a "Buddy" Poppy attached gives them a feeling of pride and reinforces that you remember and acknowledge their sacrifices.

Thank you to those Auxiliaries who sent photos and reports last month of your Air Force Birthday celebrations and your *Prisoner of War* and *Missing in Action* Awareness events. Please send this month's as well.

This Auxiliary year is a special one for the Americanism Program as we "***Let Freedom Ring***" while "**Banding Together For Our Veteran's.**"

Loyally,  
Carolyn Paccio  
2023-24 Americanism Chairman

**VFW NATIONAL HOME PROGRAM**  
**SPECIAL FUNDRAISER**  
**\*\*\*\*LET'S MAKE HISTORY\*\*\*\***

***We're raising FUNDS, please consider helping us out?? Let's BE EPIC!***

*All donations will fund the Dept of PA to purchase Centennial Garden Bricks  
in loving memory of*

*Past National Commander-in-Chief/Dept of PA, John Biedrzycki &  
Past National President/Dept of PA, Helen Harsh*

***What's the Centennial Garden????***

Whether it's to honor friends, family, organizations, or simply leave your mark on this historic occasion, the engraved bricks offer a timeless way to do just that. The bricks are made of highest quality materials and engraved with the latest technology, ensuring that your message will last for generations!

**Don't miss your chance to be a part of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.  
Let's work together and show them Pennsylvania ROCKS!**



This is a voluntary donation at the discretion of each Auxiliary and/or Post.

**Ponder this though, if MOST Auxiliaries and/or Posts  
donated as little as \$10 or more,**

Department of PA VFW & VFWA would stand out amidst the beautiful  
addition to VFW National Home!

**Please mail your in-kind donation to:**

**“VFWA Dept of PA”**

**(Earmarked Centennial Garden)**

4002 Fenton Avenue

Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943

If donations exceed expectations, the excess will be donated to National Commander/President's Special project towards the renovation project on behalf of the Department of Pennsylvania.

# CHRISTMAS CANTEEN FUND

## GENERAL ORDERS #4

October 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 our VFW Auxiliary Hospital and VA Home Representatives.

Make your checks payable to: Christmas Canteen Fund

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

Be sure to earmark Christmas Canteen Fund



# Delaware Valley Veteran's Home

General Order's #4

October 2023

As we "**Let Freedom Ring**" while "**Banding Together for our Veterans**" year, we are off to a great start. We have been very busy at the Delaware Valley Veterans Home. There are many activities planned with the Veterans. We have pizza and a movie once a month, and they certainly enjoy their pizza. They look forward to this day each month. Earlier in the summer we went to the Camden Aquarium with some of the Veterans and we all had a nice time. We had a bbq sponsored for a day in September but had to reschedule it for later.

Our National President Carla Martinez had a wonderful tour of the DVVH. She enjoyed meeting with the Veterans and they enjoyed their time with her.

The Veterans Activities Director has many events scheduled up to the end of this year and we will be right there working with her. On October 26th is their annual Trunk or Treat. The Veterans just love this day. We are in the process of getting volunteers to bring their car and help out. The Veterans Home is also starting a Womens group which Department President Mary Jean Mastridge will be hosting. She has lots of great Ideas to start.

During the winter months we will continue hosting Pizza and Movie Night. We have been asked to host a Chili Bingo Party and there will be many more activities for us to participate in.

Please make donations to the **Delaware Valley Veterans Home** through Department Headquarters VFW Auxiliary and mail your donation to 4002 Fenton Ave. Harrisburg, PA. 17109. If you wish to sponsor a party, please earmark the check for a party.

Thank you

Brenda Johnson Representative

Mary Jean Mastridge and Lori Myers, Deputies

**HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATION**  
**GENERAL ORDERS #4**  
**October 2023**

Are you wondering what you should include in your Historian book for your Auxiliary and/or District President? To be completely honest with you, there is no right or wrong answer to this question! I've been asked by several folks if there is a checklist of what to include, but at this time, there is no official checklist from National on what should be included in Historian books. I have listed below some suggestions on what you may want to consider including:

- A photo of your Auxiliary/District President along with the Auxiliary/District Number
- A list of all Auxiliary/District Officers and any Chairmen complete with photos and names
  - If it's a District Book, include the names and numbers of all Auxiliaries in the District along with the District President's name
  - Also include a list of the District meeting schedule with date, time, location and any scheduled District events such as fundraisers
- The first event in the book should be the nomination, election and installation of Auxiliary/District Officers, as that is when the Historian's year officially kicks off
  - If this is a book for the District President, you should also include the Installation of the District President at the Department Convention in June
- Keep a record of all that occurs during the year in chronological order and add photos and descriptions for each photo
  - Identify everyone in the photos (usually moving from left to right for groups)
  - All photos should have a label or caption
  - Make sure writing or typing is both clear and legible
  - If you have 4+ photos on the same page pertaining to the same event, be sure to label the top of the page with the event/activity name and the date
- Your Auxiliary/District President's year does not end until the following Department Convention where she receives her awards before going out of office

Again, these are just **suggestions** on what to include. Let your creativity shine through your work! Be mindful of how large you make your Historian book. It should be neat and concise while still giving its reader a full grasp on what your Auxiliary/District did over the year.

We should all strive to “**Let Freedom Ring**” as we continue “**Banding Together for Our Veterans**” today and every day!

Loyally,

*Kristin DiGiacomo*

Kristin DiGiacomo  
Historian & Media Relations Chairman  
[k.digi@pitt.edu](mailto:k.digi@pitt.edu) | 412-867-0021



# HOSPITAL

## General Orders #4

October 2023

### Women Veterans Health Care

Did you know that even though the current percentage of United States Veterans that are women is 10 percent, female veterans are often overlooked? These women tend to fall between the cracks of the support systems that have been put in place for our veterans. The mental, physical, and military service needs of women are often very different from those of male veterans.

A study performed by the Disabled American Veterans found that organizations and government agencies in charge of providing support for female veterans fail to understand the unique needs that women may have after being in the service and going through deployments.

We need to advocate for our women veterans and get them the services they are entitled to. The VA is working to get programs and services available for women veterans. Contact the Women Veteran Coordinator at your closest VA and you will find that they have information and pamphlets that are available free of charge that can be given and then distributed to VFW canteens, hair salons, libraries, wellness centers, etc.

***June 12 is Women Veterans Day.*** Let's remember them on this day and every day. Our women veterans deserve that!

**“Banding Together for Our Veterans” to “Let Freedom Ring”**

*Peggy Freyer*

Peggy Freyer

Dept Hospital Chairman



# **MEMBERSHIP**

## **GENERAL ORDERS #4 – OCTOBER 2023**

### ***“CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN”***

It is time to follow-up with your members who have not renewed their membership dues for the 2024-2025 year. Go into Malta, reprint your membership renewal letters and send them out again. But, maybe you could send a note with the letter reminding them that there is a new increase to membership dues for the incoming 2024-2025 year. The Bylaw Adopted in Section 708 shall be (\$10.00) per annum on each member effective July 1, 2024. With this passing instead of annual members costing \$12.00 you will be sending Department of Pennsylvania VFW Auxiliary \$17.00. Maybe, this would be a wonderful time to think about getting a life membership and let them know the amount it would be.



With this month being **TRICK OR TREAT** how about giving someone the **TREAT** of a life membership.

Would like to give a big shout out to the following Auxiliaries for reaching 100% or more in membership as of September 24, 2023: **District 19, Auxiliary 464 - 104.29%; District 22, Auxiliary 3 - 100%, Auxiliary 43 - 101.27%; District 26 – Auxiliary 7605 - 100%, & District 27 – Auxiliary 3368 - 101.45%.**

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

# **INDIANTOWN GAP NATIONAL CEMETERY MEMORIAL COUNCIL**



**41<sup>st</sup> 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.**

# TIPS

## **Buddy Poppy-VFW National Home – *Amy Peterson, Chairman***

Great news!!! **Every home is filled with happy families at the time of this printing!!**

How exciting because you've helped in MANY ways. **Thank you!** Keep it up PA!

Want to help more? Consider becoming a “**Home Front Hero**” with a monthly, recurring contribution to National Home. It's easy to set up at <https://vfwnationalhome.org/hero/> providing a steady reliable source of funding for essential programs and services. Set the amount of your monthly donation, as little as \$10.00 month (adjustable any time).

- Still no updates on the release of the Metal Buddy Poppies, when I get an update, you'll be the first to know.
- While you're patiently waiting, it is a super time to get started on a Buddy Poppy Display Entry. I can't wait to see the creativity flow.

## **Hospital – *Peggy Freyer, Chairman***

The pattern for the Adult Clothing Protectors is Simplicity 2687. If you are having difficulty finding this pattern locally, go on the internet and find it or a comparable one there. The important thing to remember is these need to be able to stand up to washing in industrial washing machines.

## **Auxiliary Outreach – *Kim Grundon, Chairman***

Partner with American Cancer Society, Heart Association, or Red Cross to participate in a Blood Drive.

Everybody wins!

- Patients are able to receive the lifesaving blood they urgently need.
- Auxiliary builds goodwill and improve team spirit by working together to help others.
- Auxiliary shows leadership in bringing volunteers and donors together for a good cause.