



Membership Program
Department of Pennsylvania
2022-2023

“Every Member Matters”

Andrea Meintel, Department Chairman
104 Belle Vista Drive, Marysville, PA 17053
717-580-0533 / andreavfwaux@gmail.com

Invite New Members-Include Current Members-Invest in the Future of the Organization

Mission Possible: The Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been in existence for more than 100 years. Throughout this time, our organization has supported veterans, active military personnel, their families and our communities. From the inception, our organization grew. Unfortunately, the last ten years have taken a toll on our Department Membership. Despite our best efforts, our numbers have been declining. If our organization is going to survive and thrive, we need to accept this mission and reverse this trend. I know we can do it! If we pull together, we can make this Mission is Possible!

This year’s Membership Program is all about **Building, Reinforcing and Reuniting Connections** to ensure that **Every Member Matters**. We want new members to feel welcomed, current members to feel needed, and disengaged members to feel re-energized. Through **Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care**, we will **Respect...Honor...Remember...** our veterans. Together, we will accomplish our mission and catapult the Auxiliary into a successful future.

Where do you begin? Begin by having a **MEMBERSHIP PLAN**. Every Auxiliary should have a **Membership Committee**. This Committee should develop a Membership Plan at the beginning of the program year. This Plan serves as a road map to **connect** all aspects of your membership: Recruitment, Orientation, Engagement & Follow-Up.

What should be included in the Plan?

How/when you will contact current and former members

When/where you will have recruitment events (try to hold at least 4 community events)

How you will welcome new members;

Assigning mentors for new members or existing members
who want to learn something new;

How/when dues notices will be distributed

How to reconnect with disengaged members, etc.

Recruiting New Members How are we going to do this? The first time you talk about our organization to someone, they might not be ready to join. It's very important to follow up with them. Ask for their contact information and give them yours. Review the *Auxiliary Talking Points* and *Elevator Speech* (in MALTA), so you are prepared to talk to anyone you meet. Let others know about the great work the Auxiliary does. When questioned why they haven't joined the Auxiliary, some people say, "Nobody ever asked me." **Ask Them! Connect** with them over common interests, especially interests in veterans' issues. Conduct recruiting events with information tables/booths. Use the *Auxiliary Fact Sheet* to emphasize our programs, to include number of individuals helped, monies donated, and hours volunteered. Print some business cards and hand them out to potential members. Ask current members if they have family members or friends that might be interested. Use the *Eligibility Wheel* to find out if current members know of a family member or friend that might be eligible to join (having someone to volunteer with or come to meetings with makes a huge difference). Reach out to the 18–21 year-old age group through a school of higher education. Make a Campus Connection and use this as a feeder to membership and life-long appreciation of our veterans' sacrifices. Submit your efforts for **Connections Challenge Award #1. Make the Connection because Every Member Matters!**

Build Connections: Orient New Members Make sure New Members get more than just a key card for the canteen. You want them to understand the Auxiliary Programs, bylaws, and traditions. You want them to know when/where events are happening and how to get involved. Make them *feel welcomed and needed*. Acknowledge and listen to their interests. *Build connections* between their interests and Auxiliary programs and events. (For example, maybe they coach a sports team—Youth Activities; maybe they work with another organization in the community—Auxiliary Community Outreach; maybe they just love to bake—Bake Sale volunteer). Develop a New Member Welcome Packet for **Connections Challenge Award #2. Make the Connection because Every Member Matters!**

Reinforce Connections: Engage Current Members

Have you heard it said, "well nobody wants to help" or "we can't get anyone to come to the meetings" or "it's the same few people that do all of the work?"

Ask Them!

The key to keeping new and current members is getting them involved. Call or email them with information on upcoming events or project and ask for their help. Ask them about their interests, create an Interest Survey (Do they sew or bake? What are their hobbies? What are they already involved in? Do they volunteer at the hospital or at the fire company? Are they in the church choir?) Match their interests with Auxiliary needs, events and projects. Share your mission.

Connect with them!

If they feel connected and needed, they are more likely to get involved and stay involved. Be sure you have their contact information and know their preferred method of contact (phone call, email, text message).

Encourage Participation:

Post Monthly Sign-Up Sheets for regular events

Email/Call about special events

Make Member Recruitment Videos and post on Social Media

Publicly recognize current volunteers: thank them in the meeting, post a thank you in the Club, recognize their efforts on Social Media.

If it's their first-time volunteering for something, assign a mentor to help them, stay with them and check on them.

Plan family events! Members with children want the opportunity to do things that are family-oriented.

Keep up your Facebook presence—post about it (Aux. news, events, legislation, needs.) Focus on our mission and helping Veterans.

Enlist current members to make ***Tell-Your-Story Recruitment Videos***. Post and share these short (maximum 1 minute) informational videos on Social Media. It's easy to make and post these videos right from your Smart phone. Have your members speak from their hearts, as this will touch the hearts of those watching. (One tip—always record with your phone horizontal, which ensures the video is full screen.) Have younger members help with this project, as they are often tech savvy. Have a video contest and submit your top winner for ***Connections Challenge Award #3***.

Follow-Up!

If they say “no” to the first invitation, be sure to ask again. After a member has helped with an event or project, touch base with them. Ask them how they think it went and if they thought anything could have gone differently. New members and current members can bring fresh ideas. Don't dismiss something new; welcome these ideas, give them a try. Be receptive to changes. Eliminate “we've always done it that way” from your vocabulary. **Make the Connection because Every Member Matters!**

Reunite Connections: Disengaged Members Disengaged members are those who are not actively involved or those who have dropped their membership. Don't make your first contact about coming to a meeting. Find out how they've been doing, and show an interest in their life outside of the Auxiliary. What's been going on in their lives? Make the first contact about them and show them they matter. They matter to you and they matter to the Auxiliary. Connect with them about their “why.” Why they joined the Auxiliary and Who was their reason? What was their goal for their membership? Focus on the positive and show your appreciation. Share *your* Why, Who and What with them. Tell them about *your* Auxiliary Connection. Don't just let them know, make them feel that **Every Member Matters**. Tell them that They Matter. Just as you would for a new member, utilize their strengths (find out their interests/hobbies/work—youth teams/clubs; volunteer EMT, baking, etc.) and follow-up. **Make the Re-Connection because Every Member Matters!**

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Every Member Matters: Building, Reinforcing, and Reuniting Connections



Connections Challenge Award #1: Campus Connection

We have an entire age group that we haven't targeted for membership (Ages 18 to 21). Let's get out there and engage them. I am challenging you to reach out to a school of higher education (college, university, trade-school). Contact the Student Activities Office, the Veterans Affairs Office or Veterans Representative. Find out if they have an ROTC. Explain that you are interested in working with an existing campus group or forming a new group that will focus on helping veterans, their families and the community. (Many schools have community service requirements.) Meet them on their turf, at the school. Don't expect them to come to meetings at the Post. Do invite them to participate in events, such as a kids Christmas Party, an Easter Egg Hunt, a Memorial Day Parade, a Flag Ceremony, etc. By sharing our mission and values, you will be investing in them for future participation. Use this as a feeder group for Membership and volunteers. Expose them to our programs and give them a positive image of our organization. Here is where we can find future leaders for our Auxiliary. Recognize each student's participation with a year-end certificate, and don't forget to give a certificate to the school. **Make the Connection because Every Member Matters!**

A Certificate to Each Auxiliary that reaches out to a school of higher education and develops a Campus Connection. A description must be sent to the Department Membership Chairman by March 31, 2023 to qualify. This description should include the name of the school, the name of the Campus Group, as well as a description of any Auxiliary activities/events/projects the group helped with. Include the number of students that helped and the number of students who joined the Auxiliary. (Photos are encouraged)



Connections Challenge Award #2: New Member Welcome Packet

Someone joins your Auxiliary, so now what? We need to make them feel welcome and invited to participate. This should start with a phone call or a visit, if possible. Assign them a mentor. Give them a Welcome Packet. Not sure what to include in the packet? How about a list of contact names/numbers/emails for the Auxiliary and meeting information? Did you find out their preferred method of communication (text, phone call, email)? Perhaps include, a welcome letter, information on how to sign-up for events, information on resources (such as Facebook, Malta, Department website), Auxiliary Traditions, and/or information on benefits (such as a Cancer Grant). An Interest Survey can be included (do they like to bake, do they coach a team sport, do they volunteer as an EMT, etc.?) and information on how they can help/volunteer with the Auxiliary. Create your Auxiliary's Welcome Packet. **Make the Connection because Every Member Matters!**

Develop a New Member Welcome Packet and enter it into the judging contest, which will be held at Mid-Winter Conference. You can either bring your Welcome Packet to the convention or you can mail it to the Department Membership Chairman by 1/7/2023. A \$50 VFW Store Certificate will be given to the Auxiliary winner in each membership division.



Connections Challenge Award #3: Tell-Your-Story Recruitment Videos

Each of our members has a story to tell: Why did they join the VFW Auxiliary? How long have they been a member and why do they stay? What is their favorite program? How do they believe they've been impacted by their membership? What impact do they believe they've had through their membership? I know a video might sound a bit intimidating, but it's just about talking. Have a conversation and get them to tell their story. A short story can make a huge difference for someone considering membership or someone who needs some motivation to get involved. Try It, Post It, and **Make the Connection because Every Member Matters!**

Pick the best Tell-Your-Story Video for your Auxiliary and submit it to the Department Membership Chairman by April 15, 2023. The Auxiliary with the top video for each Membership Division will receive a \$50 VFW Store Gift Certificate. ***In order to qualify for judging, each video must mention this year's membership theme: Every Member Matters. Winners will be announced and shown at Department Convention.

Auxiliary Membership Awards



Every Member Matters Award #1

In each Membership Division, all Auxiliaries reaching 100% Plus in membership by April 30, 2023 will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a \$50 VFW Store Gift Certificate.



Every Member Matters Award #2

In each Membership Division, the Auxiliary that recruits the most new/or rejoined members from July 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023, will receive a \$50 VFW Store Gift Certificate.



Every Member Matters Award #3

In each Membership Division, the Auxiliary that has the highest increase in Life Members by April 30, 2023, will receive a \$50 VFW Store Gift Certificate.

District Membership Awards



Pennsylvania Past Presidents' Plaque Award #1

In memory of our deceased Past Presidents, a Membership Traveling Plaque shall be presented to the Auxiliary that attained the greatest increase in membership as of April 30, 2023. A loving cup will be presented to the Auxiliary for which the Travelling Plaque was awarded. In case of a tie, each Auxiliary shall have the opportunity to display the plaque for an equal number of months throughout the year.



District Award #2

The first three District Presidents reaching 100% Plus in membership shall be given one complimentary Saturday evening banquet ticket to the Department President's Testimonial.



District Award #3

The District in each Membership Division with the best overall promotion of the Department Membership Program will be awarded \$50. All promotional materials must be submitted to the Department Chairman by April 30, 2023.

ALL STATE AWARD

Pennsylvania All State Award



The All-State Award goes to the Auxiliary Presidents and Treasurers who attain exemplary achievements during the program year. The award will consist of a pin and a year bar for the Auxiliary President and the Auxiliary Treasurer. Special recognition will be held at Department Convention and \$25 will be given to the Auxiliary Treasury. The qualifying criteria appears on the Auxiliary All State Award Form/Checklist. ***In order to qualify for this award, all obligations must be met by May 5, 2023. The completed All State Form, as well as the supporting documentation must be received by the Department Membership Chairman by May 5, 2023.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM AWARDS: MEMBERSHIP DIVISIONS

Division I Auxiliaries with 10-20 members

Division V Auxiliaries with 101-200 members

Division II Auxiliaries with 21-40 members

Division VI Auxiliaries with 201-325 members

Division III Auxiliaries with 41-70 members

Division VII Auxiliaries with 326 or greater

Division IV Auxiliaries with 71-100 members

National Membership Awards

1. ***Heart-Shaped Hands Pin** to each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new members to the VFW Auxiliary from July 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023. Due to Department Treasurer by June 10, 2023. Pin will be mailed directly to the member from National Headquarters.
2. ***National Membership Achievement Award** to each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new members to the VFW Auxiliary from July 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023. Due to Department Treasurer by June 10, 2023. Award will be presented at the 2023 National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona or mailed directly to the member from National Headquarters.
3. ***Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care Award** to one VFW Auxiliary member in the nation who recruits the most new members from July 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023. The award will feature the member's name alongside the name of an honored veteran. Award will be presented at the 2023 National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona or mailed to the Department for presentation. Department Treasurers and VFW Members are not eligible.

Forms are no longer needed from VFW Auxiliary Recruiters; reports are compiled by VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters staff from information entered in MALTA.

*VFW members who qualify for awards(s) #1 and #2 above will still need to complete the form & mail to Department by June 10 as Auxiliary cannot track VFW members in MALTA. See Resources page on the Auxiliary National website Resources page.

National Membership Awards for Auxiliaries

1. \$25 to each Auxiliary that reaches 98% Plus Membership by March 31, 2023*
2. \$25 to each Auxiliary that reaches 100% Plus in Membership by June 30, 2020*

**Based on the June 30, 2022 total membership numbers.*

ALL OBLIGATIONS INCLUDING AUDITS, BONDS, DELEGATE FEES, PLEDGES, SUPPLIES, ETC. TO NATIONAL, DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND DISTRICT MUST BE MET FOR YOUR AUXILIARY/DISTRICT PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMEN TO QUALIFY FOR AWARDS.

PENNSYLVANIA ALL STATE AWARD FORM/CHECKLIST
FOR AUXILIARY PRESIDENTS AND TREASURERS
2022-2023

DISTRICT# _____ AUXILIARY# _____
AUXILIARY NAME _____
AUXILIARY PRESIDENT _____
AUXILIARY TREASURER _____

Please attach all necessary documentation and submit to Andrea Meintel, 104 Belle Vista Dr., Marysville, PA 17053 no later than May 5, 2023*

- ___ 1. President & Treasurer bonded by August 31, 2022
- ___ 2. President, Treasurer and Secretary dues must be paid by November 30, 2022
- ___ 3. Membership 100% Plus by April 30, 2023
- ___ 4. All Audits must be on file at Department Headquarters before: August 31, 2022, November 30, 2022, February 28, 2023, and May 31, 2023
- ___ 5. Auxiliary Inspection by District President completed (submit date inspected)
- ___ 6. Voice of Democracy entry and/or donation (minimum \$10.00) (submit check number and date)
- ___ 7. Patriot's Pen entry and/or donation (minimum \$10.00) (submit check number and date)
- ___ 8. Young American Creative Art entry and/or donation (minimum \$10.00) (submit check number and date)
- ___ 9. Donation to Pennsylvania's Cottage #3 (minimum \$10.00) at the VFW National Home (submit check number and date)
- ___ 10. President Special Project donation (minimum \$10.00) (submit check number and date)
- ___ 11. Buddy Poppy purchase (submit check number and date of purchase)
- ___ 12. Donation to all 16 VA hospitals, Christmas Canteen Fund and Department Hospital fund (submit check number and date) (minimum \$10.00 each)
- ___ 13. Donation to Department Flag Fund (minimum \$10.00) (submit check number and date)
- ___ 14. At least one member has to attend each District Meetings, but the Auxiliary President must attend at least one meeting.
- ___ 15. Must have an Auxiliary Membership Committee. (Submit committee members names)
- ___ 16. Must have completed one of the following: Membership Plan, Tell-Your-Story Recruitment Video, Membership Recruitment event, or New Member Welcome Packet (submit relevant documentation)

*In order to qualify for the All-State Award, all Auxiliary obligations must be met by May 5, 2023