



The Navigator

Department of Illinois VFW Auxiliary
Newsletter

From the Desk of Department President Cindy Watters:

Welcome to the inaugural edition of “The Navigator,” covering the 2024-2025 year of Navigating the Future! The name “The Navigator” reflects not only the compass, which serves as our logo this year but also guides us toward the path our organization must take to enhance the lives of Veterans and their families.

I am Cindy Watters, the name behind the compass, and I’d like to introduce myself. I’m married to a wonderful man, John, and together we have three children: J.R., Josh, and Jennifer. Over time, our family has grown through our kids’ marriages, adding two bonus children and four grandsons.

I joined the VFW Auxiliary on the eligibility of my father, a World War II Army Infantry Veteran who was awarded a Purple Heart. I’ll talk about Dad more in future issues.

My membership to the Auxiliary began in 2008 when Jen was a part of the (JROTC) and the Aux of 4226 held a breakfast fundraiser for them. Someone asked me if I was eligible. That is all it took for me to jump in with both feet to start volunteering. My point being is to ASK people, strike up a conversation and let them know how their membership is crucial to the Aux and that is a great way to honor their Veteran.

The special project this year is “This Able Veteran.” I chose this organization for several reasons that are dear to me.

1) It reminds me of Stubby, my Dad’s rat terrier and a brother to our beloved dog, Daisy. Stubby was not a trained service dog, but he fulfilled that role for my father in ways words cannot capture.

2) I have had a few opportunities to speak with Veterans who have completed the program through “This Able Veteran” and they spoke so highly of the services and program. A few even said having the service dog actually saved their life.

3) Some veterans may feel that don’t need mental health services or want to avoid the stigma associated with seeking help. “This Able Veteran” teaches veterans coping skills to manage their PTSD symptoms. The service dogs also help recognize symptoms early, providing a way to handle the challenges of post-trauma life. Their service dog program helps veterans cope with PTSD symptoms, including depression, nightmares, and social anxiety. The specially trained dogs provide valuable support. Maybe to those who don’t even realize they could benefit from their services.

I hope that through this year we can not only raise funds for a service dog but raise awareness of the need; by doing this, we can change the life of a Veteran.

From Department Secretary Rhonda Borkgren:

I hope everyone has gotten off to a great beginning of the year. Thank you to all our Auxiliaries for getting Installation reports early enough to qualify for the Circle of Excellence. Great job!

If any Auxiliaries have a change of officer, please send it to me immediately. I will enter it into MALTA and then National has the information also. We will be updating the roster on the Department website. Look there for current information. Malta and our Department Roster on the website will be updated often. Be sure to send any changes to me at vfwauxilsec@gmail.com.

Our webmaster Colette is working hard to get our website running smoothly. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact her. She knows what is happening each day.

We have many events coming up in the next couple of months.

The National President's Visit will be on August 15 and 16th. Come meet her on August 15th at Collinsville Post 5691 from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. There will be food and drink available to purchase.

She will be at the Belleville Post 4183 on August 16th at 6:00 P.M. for a Mixer with the VFW. Come join the fun and meet your Department Officers. Food and Drink will be available for purchase.

The Council of Administration Meeting will be on August 17, 2024, at 8:30 A.M. at the Four Points by Sheraton, Fairview Heights, Illinois. Commander and President's Homecoming is August 17, 2024. Social hour 6:00 P.M. Dinner 7:00 P.M. Tickets available at vfwil.org/donations. \$55.00 per person

CAFÉ: Celebrating America's Freedom Event, National Home, September 7, 2024. Information on the National website under events

Illinois Day at National Home September 21, 2024. Make reservations soon, as availability is limited. Comfort Inn, 1302 Packard Hwy., Charlotte, Mi. 517-543-7307, Holiday Inn, 500 Meijer St., Charlotte, Mi. 517-541-5000 or the America's Best Value Inn, 828 Shepard St., Charlotte, Mi., 517-543-8288. More information will be coming.

Big 10 Conference, October 18-20, 2024, Indianapolis, Indiana. The room rate is \$127. Plus, tax, call 800-228-9290 use the group rate VFW Big 10 Conference. Registration \$160. Before September 25, 2024.

From Department Treasurer Linda Lorenz:

Welcome to the 2024 – 2025 term of office.

- If you are a new Auxiliary or District Treasurer, you need to submit Form 8822-B to the IRS. This is the Change of Address or Responsible Party. If you move during the year, this form should also be submitted for your address correction. You can find this on the IRS website or on MALTA under Treasurer's Resources

- Make sure that your President has a copy of the most recent audit and the membership total to submit to the Post/District Commander.
- Be sure that the signatures at your bank are current. Remember that only the President and Treasurer are allowed to be on the checking account. Money from committees should be given to you to be deposited and no cash should be withdrawn from the checking account directly.
- If your Auxiliary has voted to have a debit card, only the treasurer should be in possession of the card.
- By now you should have submitted your Bond through Malta (preferably) or on paper to the VFW National Auxiliary Headquarters.
- The 2nd Quarter Audit is to be completed and sent to the Department Treasurer no later than August 31, 2024. Please avoid taking a photo and texting it to me if possible. It is very hard to get a clear copy this way. It is best to scan or fax the report.
- Dues should be submitted as received. No motion is required to submit the annual dues of your current members to National on MALTA.
- Your 990N, can be completed and submitted at this time. It should be entered no later than November 15, 2024. The Treasurer's Resources on MALTA has training on how to set up your IRS account and complete your 990N. This is FREE through IRS.gov. You never have to pay to file. Please send a copy of your acceptance receipt to me once you have completed it.
- Please make sure that membership applications are filled out completely before you send it to me. Some of the common things we see are missing dates of birth, missing or incorrect ribbons or medals (please refer to the bylaws for a list of qualifying medals), relationship to the veteran and the veteran's name.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Americanism

Karen Hirstein, Chairman

As you review the Americanism program and as I begin to work on this article many movies, new reports, clubs around my hometown, commemorate D-Day on June 6, 1944. The Battle of Normandy was fought so bravely as the Allied Forces from the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom and other countries during World War II, achieved victory, but not without losing 4,415 servicemen of that number 2,502 were U.S. Servicemen. Some 156,000 allied soldier landed on the beaches of Normandy by the end of the day.

A weather delay June 5, 1944, bad weather on the days leading up to the operation caused it to be delayed, however on the morning of June 5, after meteorologist predicted improved conditions for the following days, Eisenhower gave the go-ahead for Operation Overload. He told his troops "you are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you" and they were. The Normandy invasion began to turn the tide against Nazis. The following spring, on May 8, 1945, the Allies formally accepted the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany. Hitler had committed suicide a week earlier, on April 30.

Patriotism is showing how proud you are of our county, its grandeur, it's deficiencies and the willingness to assist it with vigor to correct these deficiencies. As we continue our quest to serve our veterans we honor, we have recognized we need to be Proud, Inspired and Honored to have known such great men and women.

Please set yourself some goals to promote patriotism and celebrating our patriotic holidays, I know You can't do all but please do some.

In the words of two great men Abraham Lincoln "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent , a new nation, conceived in Liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all

men are created equal”

John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country.

These two great American President's made these statements in hopes to generate and instill confidence at home and respect abroad.

Please try and attend District and Department meetings, as missing those mean you are missing out On comradeship, education, information, socializing. There is a wealth of information out there please do not hesitate to ask. Make sure you report all the work you have done, flag information, any ceremonies you participated in Honoring Veterans past and present. Make sure you report this on your X-sheet. All the work you do does not go unnoticed nor unappreciated.

Auxiliary Outreach

Denita Ricci, Chairman

Welcome to “Navigating the Future” with Auxiliary Outreach!

It's time to start the brainstorming about what outreach activities your Auxiliary would like to do this year!

First, put veterans focused activities out of your head for this program. Auxiliary Outreach is all about helping other organizations and civic groups in your community, Auxiliary Outreach is not about giving goods or money. It's about giving your time to help the cause of another group.

Your Auxiliary Chairman should start discussing and listing out events in the community, whether past or present, to see where another organization could use help.

Here are some examples:

There is a fall festival in the township you reside in. At that festival, the Fire The department has a booth on fire safety. Could they use help passing out materials?

A foster home is hosting a golf event to fund raise. Do they need people to check-in attendees?

The local food pantry is expecting to be busy during the holidays. Could they use help stocking shelves?

An animal rescue posts on Facebook that they need help walking dogs. Does your Auxiliary have a dog lover?

The hospital is hosting a Breast Cancer 5K in October. Do they need people at water stations?

What now? The chairman or interested member, should contact the organization by mail, email, or phone call and explain who the VFW Auxiliary is and offer assistance.

My name is -----. I am the ----- at Post ----- located at -----.

The VFW Auxiliary is one of the nation's oldest veterans' service organizations.

Our members have relatives who served in foreign conflicts, and we are dedicated to improving the lives of veterans, active-duty military, their families, and community.

One of our initiatives as an organization is to provide support to local organizations and civic groups in the community. Do you have an upcoming events you need assistance with?

I am going to bring this information back to my meeting on ---- and find out if I can get some members to help you out.

Next, bring these ideas, in advance of the event, to the monthly meeting to see if

members are interested. Is it something a member can do based on time and physical capabilities? If they can, the Auxiliary needs to have a motion and hold a vote that the Auxiliary Outreach idea meets the program criteria and 1 or more members will offer their time at the event or for that organization.

As long as the Auxiliary Outreach activity or event is reflected in the meeting minutes, any time volunteering after that meeting can be reported in the program.

Members can commit their time then report it at the following meeting, to the chairman, or do online reporting on their own.

Keep in mind the Auxiliary Outreach hours count collectively for the Post too. Be sure to accurately log time and miles each time you volunteer your time.

If you are not sure if volunteering for an organization or civic group counts, please contact me in advance.

I look forward to seeing your reports!

Best regards,

Denita Ricci

Department of Illinois Auxiliary Outreach Chairman

denita14aux@gmail.com | 847-951-9260

Buddy Poppy/VFW National Home

Cheryl Miller, Chairman

Hello everyone! Here we are rolling along through the summer and getting closer to Illinois Day at the VFW National Home on September 21, 2024

Do you have stacks of birthday cards received in promotions from National

Headquarters, which you will never in your lifetime send, no matter how big your family, or how many friends you have?

Well, I have a solution for that problem!

I've told you all about the National Homes' 100th birthday celebration which will be held on January 7, 2025. National Ambassador Jodie Hollinger has asked Auxiliaries to consider

sending a birthday card to the home in time for that event....so, why not use up those birthday cards gathering dust and have your members sign them for the home!

You could even have youth groups decorate or make cards, as suggested by Youth Activities Ambassador Dominique, and then you would have something to report in that program!

To save on that expensive 73 cent postage, bring whatever you have to the COA on August 17 th , give it to me, and I will hand carry it all to the home on Illinois Day! We can cover a large portion of the gym wall where they will be displayed. Let's make a big showing for Illinois!

Get those thinking caps on and see if you can come up with a way to incorporate this in one of the 2024-2025 awards which are available (pages 39-40 in your program book) and don't forget to send me a report!

Extension & Revitalization

John Watters, Chairman

- Mentoring helps broaden leadership skills and leadership provides guidance for mentoring members, they work bullet hand in hand.
- A stronger membership on every level of our organization will be accomplished through mentoring. Mentoring for leadership will enhance all types of Program activities.
- Through the mentoring process, extending the hand of friendship to a new member or even a tenured member who has been inactive for a while can create a strong and vibrant organization providing a positive and organized meeting experience will leave members wanting to come back especially when good communication and respect for each other is demonstrated.
- Utilizing the Mentoring at VFW auxiliary: Relationship Building for the future document will help you get started in creating a Program for your Auxiliary.
- Through this Program you will be encouraged to embrace and promote the CARE concept.
 - C-** Catch the member when they first join.
 - A-** Ask them to participate.
 - R-** Remember what it felt like to be new.
 - E-** Engage them in a program that fits them.
- Over time this member may express interest in holding an office or chairmanship. Work with them to help them succeed. This will only make the auxiliary and the organization better. Choose the mentor carefully. If the member is interested in floor work choose an experienced floor worker, if they are interested in keeping books, have them work with the Secretary or Treasurer.
- The real goal here is to train your replacement and give them the tools they need to succeed. Remember to navigate your resources!
 - ✓ Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation
 - ✓ Healthy Auxiliary Checklist
 - ✓ Malta Extension and Revitalization
 - ✓ The Current Program Book
 - ✓ Podium edition Bylaws and Ritual Book.

We will conduct training on How to Identify an Unhealthy Auxiliary at the Department Council of Administration meeting on August 17th. Hope to see you there!

National Theme: From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans

Department Theme: Navigating the Future-A Compass for Leadership and Unity

Welcome to the 2024-2025 year! Our Department has been off to a great start sharing all the great work we're doing within our auxiliaries, with our posts and in the community!

Some quick thoughts from the Historian/Social Media world...

- ❖ Capturing Auxiliary events and Programs today preserves memories for tomorrow. Do you know what happened with your Auxiliary 10, 20, 30 or 100 years ago?
- ❖ We celebrated our 100th Convention; did you share your photos?
- ❖ We just celebrated the Fourth of July; did your Auxiliary participate in any community celebrations? Be sure to record & share!
- ❖ Post and take pride in your efforts, take the credit! Enjoy all your Auxiliary and Post events and make sure everyone else does also through your postings.
- ❖ If you haven't already, NOW is the time to start recording and sharing the history of the VFW Auxiliary!

Have you noticed that our Department President Cindy Watters bears a striking resemblance to "Waldo"?



I am asking for your help this year. I need to know "Where's Watters" ?

If you see President Cindy out and about on "Official" & "Unofficial" business, please ask her for photo and post it to our Facebook page and/or email to me and I will make sure everyone knows....

"Where's Watters"



Be sure to capture her visit to your District; there's an award up for grabs!

Please be sure to visit our new website for additional information & resources.

www.vfwauxil.org



Hospital
Laura Knackstead, Chairman

We are in the heat of the summer. Let's try and think of ideas for our Veterans to do indoors in the air conditioning. We can set up a bowling game. Put up a net, find some pool noodles, blow up some balloons and have a volleyball game. Get some small trash cans, some rubber balloons and have the senior version of beer pong. All these will keep the Veterans active but let them have some fun. They are inexpensive but serve the purpose.

Now is the time to start sending in your hospital pledge and hospital donations. Please, please keep in mind that the hospital pledge is used solely to pay for the travel of our VA reps. Some of our reps travel over 100 miles one-way to deliver items to our VA facilities for our Veterans. Any assistance you can give them would be appreciated.

We are working on projects to help our Veterans at our VA facilities. If anyone has a suggestion or project they think would benefit our Veterans, please let me or the rep know. We will try our best to get it working and see it through to the finish.

Please remember our women Veterans when making donations of items to our VA facilities. Women Veterans are the fastest growing group among our Veterans. Their needs are very different from our Male Veterans. As soon as I receive want lists for our VA facilities, they will be posted on the website and facebook page for everyone to see.

Now that our nursing homes and assisted living facilities are back open to the public, it is time to reach out to the administrators about getting an Honors Escort program. It is the final tribute that we can give our Veterans plus it gives the people that have been with them day in and day out a way to honor them.

Keep up the great work you all are doing for our Veterans. I look forward to a productive year and know you all will do the best to support our Veterans in our VA facilities, nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Legislative
Lisa Rivera, Chairman

Greetings to all!

I am honored and excited to serve as Department Legislative Chairman this year, and to my fellow Chairmen, thank you for accepting this very important appointment as well! Working together as a team makes all good things possible.

*The Purpose of the Legislative Program is to promote the VFW Priority Goals grouped under six areas of concern:

*Health Care

*Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs

*Education, Employment and Transition Assistance

*Military Quality of Life

*National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA

Chairman, please be sure to distribute the VFW Priority Goals as soon as possible. Encourage all members, family, and friends to sign up for VFW Action Corps Weekly (subscribe at vfwauxiliary.org — select "What We do," then click on "Legislative"). Read every newsletter. Respond to VFW Action Alerts regarding pending legislation that is VFW supported, then spread the word for others to do the same.

This year is an election year — an excellent opportunity to engage in the election process beginning with our local government. On the Legislative Program page, you will find valuable resources on how to contact local legislators, how legislation works in Washington D.C., how a Bill progresses, etc. It is up to each of us to make this important election year successful for all VFW supported legislation. Begin a successful election year by committing to do these three things:

*Be an Advocate

*Be Informed

*Be Engaged

Department President, Cindy Watters's theme is "Navigating the Future." Navigating the legislative process and voting IS "Navigating the Future." The VFW Priority goals are our priority goals! Let's work together to make this election year matter to those who matter the most — our active military, our veterans, and their families.

Be safe in all you do and enjoy your Summer!

Lisa Rivera, Department Legislative Chairman

Membership

Kathy Rowold & Mary Lee, Co-Chairmen

THE NAVIGATOR - AUGUST 2024

MEMBERSHIP

KATHRYN ROWOLD, CHAIRMAN

MARY LEE, CO-CHAIRMAN



For our membership plane to take off at 100%+ capacity, you need to have a membership “flight plan” that includes sending dues notices (available now via Malta for your President, Secretary or Treasurer to send), calling members as a reminder to pay their dues, and publicizing your dues notices in your local paper and on your local and District Facebook page.

Your membership flight plan should also include ideas on how to recruit NEW members. New members are what keeps our organization not only “in the air” but also on the ground! Brainstorm at your meetings on when and where to have a membership table. Fall festivals, cookoffs, and local sports events are great events to recruit. Make sure your recruiting table has something to attract someone to want to stop—like spinning a wheel to get a free giveaway. Another important tip at a recruiting event is not to sit behind the table, but to be in FRONT of the table so you can engage with the visitor.

Talking points should include the benefits of becoming a member—for example: cancer grants of \$550 to any member whose dues is current and has been diagnosed with any kind of cancer and also the fact that membership numbers help get veteran rights bills passed in congress. You will be surprised how many potential members do not know 1) 12 family members qualify to join the Auxiliary from that one family member who served overseas 2) we are no longer the “ladies Auxiliary” and 3) males are eligible to join!

With a successful membership flight plan comes rewards to both the Auxiliary AND the District! The wheel returns as “Watters Flight Reward” with all Auxiliaries who are 85% by August 3, 2024 going into a drawing. If you are 95% or 100% by the August 3 deadline, you will get two extra airline tickets (chances) in the drawing. If you are 101% by August 3, 2024, you will get four chances in the drawing. One Auxiliary will be drawn and that Auxiliary will get to spin the Watters Flight Reward Wheel. If no one from the Auxiliary drawn is present, the District President will spin for them. The Auxiliary that spins the wheel wins whatever amount it lands on. Amounts on the wheel will vary. We will begin with the highest amount of \$750 and the lowest amount of \$200. The Watters Flight Reward Wheel will be spun at every Council meeting. Depending on what has been won, amounts will be changed as the year goes on. The higher your membership actual percentage is, the more chances you have to win. (Note percentages must include at least one continuous annual member, one new, or one rejoined member and if you win a Watters Flight Reward, you will not win any subsequent awards.) Awards for Districts will be drawn at each Council meeting and will require the same percentages and deadlines as Auxiliary awards but dollar amounts on the wheel will be less.

Mary Lee and I look forward to our August Council meeting to see who spins the Watters Flight Reward wheel!

Let's start Navigating the Future with your membership flight plan and get those dues collected!

Scholarships

Laurie Sparwasser, Chairman

This program has 4 parts; Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, the Continuing Education Scholarship and Young American Creative Patriotic Art which also includes the 3-D Patriotic Art.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT'S PEN

These two scholarships are the first ones due during our Auxiliary year. These are VFW Post Scholarships, but auxiliaries are encouraged to help their posts with these entries. I know a lot of auxiliaries do a lot or all the work, but for those that don't, please help out as much as possible. The theme this year for the Voice of Democracy is "Is America Today Our Forefathers' Vision" This essay and recording are for High School students. These are due to your VFW Post by October 31, 2024.

The Patriot's Pen essay contest is for those students in 6th , 7th and 8th grade. The theme for this contest is "My Voice in America's Democracy". This entry is also due to your Post by October 31, 2024.

The applications can be found on the VFW website under Youth and Education, then Youth Scholarships.

The Department of Illinois VFW has a new Department Award this year for the district who recruits the largest number of students in the PP and VOD programs. Since some districts have more posts than others, the award will be determined by the total number of students divided by the number of posts in the district. (Regardless of whether they participate in the programs or not), so any help you can give your Post will help their District to win this award.

CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

This entry form is due to National by February 15, 2025. THIS IS ONLY FOR AUXILIARY MEMBERS who have been a member for at least one year by February 15, 2025, THEIR SPOUSE OR STUDENT LIVING AT HOME. Please DO NOT give these applications to the schools. The applicant must be 21 years of age by the date of February 15, 2025. A 300-word essay is also required with the application, so please give these out as soon as possible. This scholarship is based on need and there is only one winner in each of the four conferences. This scholarship is for \$1250.

The applications are available in Malta under Member Resources and then Scholarships.

YOUNG AMERICAN CREATIVE PATRIOTIC ART

This contest is due to your auxiliary by March 31, 2025. The winner from your auxiliary needs to be in my hands by April 15, 2025. All auxiliaries can send me an art entry. Remember, there are also 3-D entries. Every Auxiliary can send me their 1 st place entry for the art and 3-D art.

Applications for this contest are also in Malta under Member Resources and then

Scholarships.

National Award

Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about the scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary.

• Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2025 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

VFW Auxiliaries must send this completed entry form to the Department Scholarships Chairman by March 31, 2025 for judging.

This form is also on Malta under Member Resources.

I will bring copies of all entry forms for the District Scholarship Chairman at the August C of A meeting. Your Auxiliary can ask them for copies of anything you need.

Veterans and Family Support

Tammy Napier, Chairman

To donate or not to donate? That is the question!

The beginning of an Auxiliary year comes with many changes and financial expectations. There are changes to the Auxiliary's leadership, programs, forms. Fortunately, other than new Veterans and Family Support Chairmen levels, this program has not changed much since last year. On the some of the most daunting expectations for Auxiliaries at this time of year financial. From the requirement to pay District dues to making contributions programs and "special" projects, your Auxiliary may find itself a little low on funds.



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Please remember the Veterans and Family Support Program when making your donations this year. There are two programs and two special projects asking for your financial support. The VFW's National Veterans Service Program and Veterans and Military Support Program put your Auxiliary's donations to good use helping our veterans, service members, and their families just as they have done for many years. This year, two new special projects are asking for your donations as well: the National President's special project, Operation Bottom Cover, which provides diapers to those service members' families with small children to help alleviate some financial burden for the families, and the Department President's special project, This Able Vet, which provides life-changing service animals to veterans. For more information on these programs and special projects, please refer to the 2024-2025 Department Program Book (on the Department website) where you will find information on how to donate.

The Answer: Donate and Win!



Once your Auxiliary has made its donations, remember to REPORT them!!! The Department of Illinois Veterans and Family Support Auxiliary Award #1 is a drawing for two \$50 prizes to Auxiliaries who have earned entries in any, or all, of the following ways:

\$50 or more donation to National Veterans Service = 1 entry

\$50 or more donation to Veterans and Military Support = 1 entry

\$50 or more donation to This Able Veteran = 1 entry

\$50 or more donation to Operation Bottom Cover = 1 entry

(maximum number of entries per Auxiliary is 4)

Donations must be sent as detailed in the 2024-2025 Department of Illinois Program Book and a report sent to the Department Veterans and Family Support Chairman no later than October 1, 2024, to qualify for entries.

I am looking forward to a fantastic year “Navigating the Future” for our Veterans through your Auxiliary’s hard work and kind generosity!

Youth Activities

Barb Sweger, Chairman

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Youth Activities Program. Now there are a few changes to the program this year. But like last year, I am planning to highlight specific parts of the program in each bulletin.

So, for this bulletin I am going to focus on a new part of the Youth Reading to Our Veterans & Veterans Reading to Youth. focus for our National Ambassador Dominique Garcia. She feels children are the future leaders of the VFW and its Auxiliary and if involved now instead of later in life, it will make for a better



program -
This is a
that our
they get
future.

Since reading is a big part of growing up, it works great to merge our Veterans. Your auxiliary could host a reading night at a local have a member of your Post come in and read a book to a group is a suggested list of books available on Malta under Member Resources/Youth Activities and our Department website under the Youth Activities program tab. This list is broken out into grade groups so that you can better style the readings to an intended age group.

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of kids. There

On another spectrum, if your local junior high or high school has a volunteer program, then have them visit a Veteran’s Home that is near you. This could be to a group of veterans or to an individual veteran, the choice is up to them. If you have a youth in your family that likes to read, have them read to a veteran in your family, this will count!

Just remember to document this for reporting. I especially love getting pics of the youth in our state helping out and am anxiously awaiting the start of the photos this year. I have already gotten a few pics from a couple auxiliaries, and I love them! Keep on sending them in.

We have a much easier reporting system this year with our new website, so please remember to get those reports in.

Until next time, have a ball working with our future leaders!

President's Pins and Shirts
Ruth Coleman, Chairman



Presidents pins are available, please contact me to purchase. (618)839-4066
email rucole1@frontier.com

T-shirts will be available at council meetings and President Cindy will have them with her when she makes her visits to your district.

Fundraising
Laurie Lesperance, Chairman

Department Veterans Day Raffle tickets are available, please contact your District President, Department line officers or myself to purchase tickets. You have a chance to win every day in the month of November.

Laurie Lesperance
Email: mypawkids@yahoo.com
Phone: (618)708-2609



The Navigator

Department of Illinois VFW Auxiliary
Newsletter