

# MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN

# VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

FALL 22/23



VFW Department of Michigan State Honor Guard Post the Colors at the State of Michigan Veterans Affairs Veterans Day Ceremony



Ray Lopez & John Griffith with Commander in Chief Tim Borland at the Big 10 Conference

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## DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, JOHN GRIFFITH

To all my VFW Comrades, Sisters, and Brothers of the Auxiliary, I send fall greetings. Having just completed a wonderful Fall Conference and watching leaves turn color with a chill in the air, tells me it's time to write another article for the "Michigan Overseas

Veteran".

It has been a world wind four months since you gave me the honor of electing me Commander. First was National Convention in Kansas City, where Michigan had more committee appointments and participants than any other department within the Big 10. Thanks to Tom and Rose Sancrant, who hosted a joint hospitality suite with the Department of Indiana, which was the envy of the other Departments.

Sr. Vice Ray Lopez, and Jr. Vice Kimberly Napoleon assisted me with a host of Post visits, enabling me to participate in the Hillsdale VJ Day Celebration. There, I was able to represent the VFW in Marching with Representative Jack Bergman in the VJ Day Parade. The highlight of that trip was when I was honored by Judy and Tom Brown with a presentation of a Quilt of Valor, along with 17 other veterans honoring Jeffrey Brown, Judy and Tom's Veteran son, who lost his life to cancer.

August ended with a visit to Phoenix, AZ, for the Commander-In-Chief's (Tim Borland)

Homecoming. By the way, I don't care if it is a "dry heat" - it was HOT!

September was filled with District meetings throughout the State, including a visit to the 14th & 15th Districts in the Upper Peninsula. Deputy Chief of Staff/Acting Department Inspector Reinold Yahnka traveled with me, providing much needed training to Post Participants. The District Commanders were certainly fine hosts, have scheduled their District meeting in Sault Ste. Marie and Bessemer. (Take a look at a map to see the significant distances) I think they wanted me to have the full UP experience!

Since Reinold and I were so far west, it was convenient to leave the UP and travel through Wisconsin to the Illinois facilities of the Oscar Mike Foundation. Oscar Mike is this year's Commander's "Special Project" and was suggested by two of our younger Post Commander's and Post 9/11 veterans Brian Martin of Post 1136 and Al Bond of Post 1138. Having toured the facilities and meeting some of the arriving participants, it was our pleasure to meet the founder of Oscar Mike Noah Currier. This was an eye opening experience and I am so happy with the Assistance of our State Auxiliary President Diana Ward that our fund raising for Oscar Mike is off to a great start. Our Department Director of Development and Communications, Sarah Anderson (because of a late flight, arrived after our visit ended) participated in the week long program, along with invited participants. Sarah has been commissioned to write an article for the VFW

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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, JOHN GRIFFITH - CONTINUED

National Magazine about the Oscar Mike Foundation and her experience. I will be looking forward for her article to be published in the coming months.

September brought with it more District meetings and Post visits. Of course planning for Fall Conference was a must. Diana Ward was a big help in planning for the joint training and worked well with the VFW HQ's Staff Amanda Lipocky, Jan Passmore, Sarah Anderson and of course my Adjutant/Quartermaster Derek Blumke. Their planning efforts, along with the convention coordinators Paul McIvor and Patty Patterson, made for an absolutely fantastic Fall Conference. It was wonderful to receive repeated compliments from the Jr. Commander-In-Chief Alfred J. "Al" Lipphardt and his wife Carol, both of whom were very impressed with our "Inclusion Training" presented by Ti'Kyra Napoleon. So much impressed that, Al has made arrangement to have Ti'Kyra present training during his National Sr. Vice Training next year. Al and Carol were also overwhelmed with our Oscar Mike Initiative and provided a personal donation of a \$1,000 to our Special Project. Al also liked our Western night Karaoke provided by John & Larry Coleman. In case you missed it, Al did a little line dancing and even sang with our legislative Committee Member Cameron Zbikowski. With all the wonderful things happening at Fall Conference I must admit that the most rewarding part for me was the fact that laughter has returned. During our training, meetings, in casual conversations and in the hospitality room, our VFW and Auxiliary members had good time. Now we can start planning and looking forward to a fantastic Mid-Winter Conference.



DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER, RAY LOPEZ

Greetings Comrades, Brothers, Sisters, Family and Friends

First I would like to thank our Department Commander, and Directors along with everyone involved for a successful Fall Conference.

As we return back to our posts from fall conference, I encourage all to share the training and knowledge gained with your membership. I want to congratulate the numerous posts that hit the ground running when this administrative year began. We have several post that already achieved 100%. Let us continue in our mission of serving veterans, along with our community through our programs. We need to be active legislatively at all levels of government, holding our elected officials accountable.

I couldn't help noticing that we are getting younger members in leadership positions throughout the department. Let us help, assist and continue mentoring to insure success, our future depends on it! I would highly encourage post/district officers to attend a VTS. If specific training is needed, please reach out to Department Headquarters. There are also training videos available on the National website.

This is the time of year where we should be anxiously waiting to see how our Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen participants fair in this years judging. I wish all the best of luck!

In closing, I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to serve as your Department Sr. Vice Commander. Please reach out if there is anything I can do to assist.



DEPARTMENT CHIEF OF STAFF, REINOLD YAHNKA

Fellow Comrades, it has been my honor assisting Commander Griffith where needed throughout the Department since he appointed me as his State Deputy Chief of Staff after the State Convention. I have been busy assisting those Comrades and Post that have had problems with Quartermaster duties, audits, All-American Dashboard, Inspections, and several other issues.

When our State Inspector Randy Baldwin had a health issue, Commander Griffith called upon me to step up and fill the interim vacancy as the State Inspector. We wish Randy a speedy recovery and he should be back on the job very soon. Get you Post quarterly audits in as soon as you can. It is not the Quartermaster's job to do the audit. The three Trustees are to perform the Audit, that is why it is called the Trustees Report of Audit. This is a checks and balances to make sure that the Quartermaster is accounting for all monies and expenditures for the Post. So, let's make sure

the Trustees are doing their job and doing the audit. Commander's it is your job to call the Audit and you should be there when the Trustee's perform the Audit. Make sure your Post Bond covers the total amount of your assets. All monies are to be reported on the Audit to include Canteens. Every Post is required to have a Relief Fund in accordance with the By-Laws. There are several Post that do not have a Relief fund. All Buddy Poppy funds are to go into the Relief Fund.

District and Post Inspections are doing well. There are still some inspections out there. Please get them done and turned in as soon as possible. One of the biggest problems so far is Incorporation dates. Incorporation dates are not the same as By-Laws, so don't put the By-Laws date down for the Incorporation dates. The Incorporation dates can be found on the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) website at [WWW.michigan.gov/lara](http://WWW.michigan.gov/lara).

If a Comrade or Post needs assistance, please contact me at [deputychief@vfwmi.vet](mailto:deputychief@vfwmi.vet) or call me at (517)-745-3705.



### DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT QUARTERMASTER, DEREK BLUMKE

The VFW has historically relied on membership dues to sustain our post, state and national operations and programs. Throughout the past two decades, the non-profit world has shifted and professionalized, but unfortunately we have not moved as quickly as the rest of

our industry has. Today, the VFW Department of Michigan seeks to grow with the rest of our non-profit colleagues. To do so, the Department has worked to establish the VFW Charities of Michigan. This new venture has been created as a mechanism to further the great work of our comrades across the state and to provide a vehicle for foundations, corporations and high net worth individuals to support and scale your efforts. A few months ago, the VFW Charities of Michigan announced two separate grant programs for posts across the state. One of these grants is for posts with post homes who are looking to transform themselves, and might be in dire need of repairs. The second grant has been created to support new programs or events our posts might be interested in hosting in their local areas.

We hope this first round of grants is only the beginning, as we want to help strengthen post operations and to make strategic investments in you. If your post has a plan to improve your operations and strengthen your community, the VFW Department of Michigan wants to support you and your colleagues.

To that end, if your post is doing well financially, or if you or a friend or family member would like to support this new initiative, please consider supporting the VFW Charities of Michigan. These funds can be invaluable in providing a second breath to another post that might have been on their last.

Above we used the term “transformation”. This transformation is intended to span across the organization, and it means providing more tangible support for our members. As such, the VFW Department of Michigan has begun working on a new economic empowerment initiative that focuses on connecting our veterans and family members with great employers. The first of these amazing organizations is Modern Woodmen of America (MWA). They have made a significant financial commitment as an investment in you and the VFW. MWA is a fraternal financial services and planning organization that is looking to hire veterans. If you are reading this and are interested in learning more about this type of career, or have a friend that might be interested, please contact Marine Corps veteran and VFW member Chris Buck: [christopher.buck@mwarep.org](mailto:christopher.buck@mwarep.org) to learn more.

We will be bringing on other employment partners moving forward, but the plan for the future is to leverage our own community to support our own veteran and veteran family owned small businesses. More information is to come, but if you have ideas or would like to support these new initiatives, please contact me at [adjutant@vfwmi.vet](mailto:adjutant@vfwmi.vet)



### AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT - DIANA WARD

The VFW Auxiliary was founded in 1914 in an effort to provide aid and assistance to our active military personnel, veterans, their families and the community. The Auxiliary is comprised of family members of veterans who have served in foreign conflicts or areas of imminent danger.

The terminology established by Congress is “three degrees of consanguinity”. In other terms, it is a familial connection from grandparents, parents, spouses, children and grandchildren. Over 100 years later, we are still going strong! We have over 400,000 members nationwide and three foreign Auxiliaries. In Michigan alone, we have nearly 25,000 members. In 2015, we changed and improved our composition by bringing men into the organization so we truly do encompass all family members of our veterans.

We volunteer our time and our talents to better the lives of our veterans. The national theme is Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care and my theme this year for Michigan is Be the Anchor for Our Veterans, Hold them Steady and Safe. That is exactly what we do 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Veterans and Family Support is the backbone of our programs – through this program, we provide all aid and assistance to our Posts, our members, veterans and their families, and our communities. This can be either financial, emotional or physical support of the needs of these groups. Through Americanism, we promote patriotism, defense of our flag, and support of our nation. Our Hospital Program was established to get into the VA Hospitals and Homes to bring joy and caring to our wounded veterans and it has been broadened to encompass all care facilities where veterans and their family members may be in need of caring. We do bingo parties, take refreshments or just cards and providing a friendly face. We have developed programs to aid our homeless veterans. We promote the POW/MIA incentive to make sure that our veterans are not forgotten and to see that they are all brought home. We provide scholarship programs for kids through our Voice of Democracy/Patriots Pen programs, Patriotic Art, promotion of the National Anthem through the Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue; and we even offer scholarship funds for our members and their kids for

higher educations through the Continuing Education Scholarship. Through our association with the VFW and our large membership, we have a voice in Congress to promote legislation to better and increase benefits our veterans are entitled to. Through our newest program, Community Outreach, we partner and aid other community programs to deliver services to the communities.

Michigan is the home of the VFW National Home. It was founded in 1925 to provide for the wives/widows and children of our veterans and active-duty personnel. The VFW National Home has grown and developed over the years. It is fully funded by the VFW and its Auxiliaries along with the Military Order of the Cooties and their Auxiliaries. Not only does it provide a home for those in need, they have respite care and a Help Line to provide aid and connect veterans and their families to resources they may need. Michigan also has VFW Camp Trotter to provide summer recreation to our veterans’ families but any kid that would like to spend a week at camp.

Our Membership program is essential to continue to build and sustain our organization into the future. For so long as there are veterans, there will be a need for the VFW Auxiliary. We need to work to retain the members we have and to share our organization with others by bringing them into our membership. We all have times of hardship and can use a helping hand – it’s the human experience. Our Relief Fund is a great source to pay the dues of our members who have hit hard times. Don’t be afraid to extend the hand of friendship and inquire if the person in front of you at the grocery store has an eligible veteran in their family. Carry Membership Applications with you – you never know when you might meet a potential new member. Be mentors for our members – help them learn the foundations and initiatives we seek to promote. Help educate them so that they might be the next member to have the confidence and drive to lead the organization.

To the membership, as your Dept. President along with my Line Officers, we are here for you. Reach out and we will give as much help as we are able. If you ever need anything, I can be reached on my cell at (810) 955-2931, at home (810) 629-3976 or by internet at [legalblaze@aol.com](mailto:legalblaze@aol.com). I’m looking forward to a great year!



### AUXILIARY DEPT. JR. VICE PRESIDENT, JANE DADY

We have all heard that music is good for the soul. It is also good for your health. Listening to music or playing an instrument has many benefits, especially for veterans. Music is powerful therapy that can decrease your anxiety, reduce muscle tension, and increase motivation. Music is a whole other universe where people are changed.

Music is therapy that works for anxiety and depression through stress reduction and relaxation, meaningful social interaction, and decreasing isolation.

Some people experience triggers in response to music. Perhaps a genre of music was used a lot during their military or combat experiences to decrease anxiety and increasing the relaxation.

Everyone has music preferences that lift them up, or calm them down, that mellow them out, or that make them joyful. It is not the same for everyone.

Some individuals like heavy metal and that may be relaxing for them; in fact, they may react with more anxiety to music that is more traditionally associated with relaxation, like elevator music.

Songs like The Star-Spangled Banner by Jimi Hendrix or "I Feel Like I'm Fixin to Die Rag" by Country Joe and the Fish, "Have You Ever Seen the Rain" by CCR, "American Soldier" by Toby Keith, or "Blowing in the Wind" by Bob Dylan. Start clapping when you hear "We Will Rock You" by Queen or sing to "Another Brick in the Wall" by Pink Floyd.

For too many veterans the biggest battle is coming home. Music helps-one song at a time. The shy become confident, the agitated become calm, the lonely become included, the quiet become heard and the lost become found.

Music reveals the real you. Connect to the music. VFW Auxiliary member Sonya VanValkenberg has been involved with a wonderful program since 2010 called Guitars for Vets. They offer guitar lessons at the Boat & Canoe Club every Wednesday at 4 PM. Their theme is "The Healing Power of Music". You practice on a guitar for 6 weeks; give a solo performance and you are gifted a new guitar. If this interests you, contact Dave Kirvan at 517-862-9413. All veterans are welcome.

Music speaks what cannot be expressed. Explore the possibilities in your area.

By the way, "Did you ever know you were my hero?"



### DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS, SARAH ANDERSON

Greetings to you all! I am so excited to see the development of digital communications across the state. We've trained in media relations and marketing, and I am amazed when I see people proudly wearing or featuring the VFW brand in and around their post. To me, marketing is just a tool we use to communicate our true goal, which is to support and advocate for Michigan veterans

and their families.

We have some great opportunities coming up to reach our Michigan community due to the holiday season. Holidays are a time for togetherness, and as our posts gather for special events like Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas, try to use the opportunity to use social media and your media connections to get our mission out there to the public.

Thank you to all of you who have been working with me and guiding me to better serve our VFW and VFW Auxiliary family. I hope you all have a blessed holiday season!

If any of you need support or collaboration, please reach out to me at [pr@vfwmi.vet](mailto:pr@vfwmi.vet)



### AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT CHIEF OF STAFF, STEPHANIE KRUEGER

There are many things that an auxiliary can

do to assist a VFW Post that has never had an Auxiliary. Please think about starting one if your Post is what we call Unaffiliated, or in other words, does not already have an Auxiliary. We will be happy to send someone to speak to you about the asset of an Auxiliary as well as the process to get one Instituted. I promise we will walk you through it, and we will not leave you or your new auxiliary alone to struggle through the process. We will meet with the post, and also the potential new members. We then meet numerous times to assist the incoming new auxiliary to help them get acclimated in the way things are to occur within an Auxiliary. All this to happen before the Auxiliary is instituted. After the institution has occurred, an organizer will remain with the new Auxiliary for twelve months. That gives both the new Auxiliary members and the organizer the assurance that everyone is comfortable in their role as a leader or member, in a new VFW Auxiliary.

An Auxiliary can be a huge assistance to a VFW Post. They bring energy and willing workers. Please contact me at 313-585-5066 or at [stepherthevfer@aol.com](mailto:stepherthevfer@aol.com). You can also call the Department Office and they will help you get information to get started.

Remember, we as Auxiliary members, are here to assist Veterans. Won't you please consider allowing us to show you the joy of an Auxiliary?



### AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT GUARD, JAN PASSMORE

Hello to the members of the Department of Michigan VFW Auxiliary!

I am a member of Corunna Auxiliary 4005 located in District 9 and have been a member of this organization since November 1978.

As I travel throughout the Department this year visiting the various Districts, I am hopeful to renew old friendships and make new ones. Please join with me and the other Department Officers to make this 2022-2023 year a success and to show our Department President Diana how well Michigan can shine.

HELPFUL  
DEPARTMENT  
QUICK LINKS

[VFWMI.ORG/CONTACT](https://vfwmi.org/contact)

[VFWMI.ORG/VETHELP](https://vfwmi.org/vethelp)

[VFWMI.ORG/FORMS](https://vfwmi.org/forms)

[VFWMI.ORG/ MOV](https://vfwmi.org/mov)

[VFWMI.ORG/JOIN](https://vfwmi.org/join)



### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION, JERRY GORSKI

I want to begin by telling you that I attended the National Council of Administration workshop and National Council of Administration meeting in Kansas City, Missouri on August 20th and 21st, 2022. At that workshop, the

budget for 2022-2023 was brought up. Specifically, the salaries for the top three line officers. The National Council Members discussed the yearly raises that our top line officers should make. Back in 2019 at my 1st National Council workshop, the National Council members debated into the night and came up with a cost-of-living raise (COLA) instead of a percentage raise. This year because of high Inflation, the salary increase is 6%. Well, that did not go over very well with the National Council members because the VFW employees will not be receiving the same percentage of salary increase but will receive a lesser increase. The National Council members decided for the budget year 2023-2024 and going forward, that the average salary increase for the top line officers should be the SAME as the AVERAGE VFW employee's salary increase. The National Council members will approve the 2023-2024 budget at the Washington DC Legislative Conference in March. Besides the many other responsibilities of a National C. of A. member, the budget is the most discussed and debated.

At the Big Ten Conference at the National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri on Saturday, July 16, 2022, Carol Whitmore from Iowa won the election for National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief 2023-2024. I congratulated Carol and wished her well. Carol and I are both National Council members and we sit next to each other at the National Council of Administration meetings.

Even though I did not win the election and I did receive "Your Endorsement" back in 2019, I only received one delegate vote and it was from Big Ten Delegate, Norm Mauldin. I did not receive the other (4) Michigan Delegate votes from the other Michigan steering committee members. They voted for Carol Whitmore. Needless to say, I was very disappointed and very sad, since I had already received Your Department of Michigan Endorsement back in 2019.

I want to thank the members of the Department of Michigan again for endorsing me back in 2019 for National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief for 2023-2024. I will never forget you!

I told you many times that I want to be transparent with all of you. I will continue to keep that promise. I hope each of you are receiving my weekly national emails that I send to your District Commanders.

Thank you for electing me as your National Council of Administration member representing YOU and the Department of Michigan for 2019 - 2023.

Thank You and God Bless You.



### DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN, JIM MUYS

Another convention is over. I hope everyone got some good training information and had a safe trip home. The next time we meet it will be in Kalamazoo for mid-winter and VOD/PP/TOY. I hope everyone has a safe trip there and has a good time.

Remember elections are coming up next month. Make sure you get out and registered to vote. No matter what your party affiliations are make sure you vote and let your voice be heard.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at mid-winter, be safe, and may God bless everyone and the United States.



### BIG 10 DELEGATE, NORM MAULDIN

Let me begin by wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving. As the leaves begin to change here is hoping you are able to get out and enjoy the Fall and maybe even some of the cider mills. If you like to hunt, good luck in the pursuit of your choice of game and hoping to see some nice

pictures of some big bucks at Mid-Winter Conference. My family wants to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, and Happy New Year from our family to yours.

Now, as I stated when I was elected, I would support the membership's decision to endorse Comrade Jerry Gorski, and I would help him in his campaign. The membership voted to endorse Comrade Gorski in his run for National Junior Vice Commander in Chief for 2023-2024 back in 2019. I kept my promise unfortunately he was not elected.

In accordance with Article XI Steering Committee - Section 3 of the Dept. of Michigan By-Laws - "The delegates of the Big Ten Conference shall have their own vote on matters concerning the conference issues and shall not be mandated to vote a certain way. After caucusing the Michigan chairman shall notify the Big Ten Secretary of the delegate's decisions (either a split vote or unanimous vote.)" Michigan voted 4-1 for Junior Vice Command-in-Chief Elect Carol Whitmore. I feel, since you elected me to represent YOU, I am accountable to YOU the membership.

As of this article, we are on our way to Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the Annual BIG TEN Fall Conference where we will be electing new Big TEN officers. I will have the results available for you in the next issue.



### DEPARTMENT CAMP TROTTER, ORVILLE BEAUCHAMP

The Camp has finally reopened after being closed for two years due to COVID. We had a great Summer Program even though it was a short season only 4 weeks and welcomed a total of 171 children at the camp. It was thanks to

the dedication of the posts, auxiliaries, and volunteers in the State and the rest of the camp trotter committee that the camp was a success. We are looking forward to next summer when we hopefully can have it opened for an extended period.

### DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY DIRECTOR / BOB LUTZ

Comrades, can anybody tell me where the summer went? I hope that everybody is in good health and spirits.

As I talk to post Commanders about not sending in the monthly reports I receive answers from I'm not going for a white hat to the post doesn't do anything. I would like to remind everybody that in the National Manual of procedure Section 218 duties and obligation of the Commander paragraph I "assure that all reports are correctly prepared and promptly forwarded" so it is each and every post Commander's duty to make sure that their Post is properly sending in their reports. As far as the Post not doing anything, I'm sure that the Post and some Post members fly the American flag and POW/MIA flag. Every Commander should be striving to be an All State post. I have spoken to some of the Commanders and in general conversation they say that the younger generation is only doing enough to get by. My question is, isn't that what you're doing? It doesn't take long to do the reports so let's get the Dept. of Michigan 100% reported.

AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP

DELLA STEEGE

I wanted to take a moment of your time to share some of the wonderful benefits of being an auxiliary member. All these benefits are listed on our national VFW auxiliary website and links are available. Please visit [www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org) and scroll to the bottom of the page to “Member Benefits”

- Insurance Plans
- Stars and Stripes Loyalty Accidental Death Insurance
- Auto and Home Insurance
- Long Term Care Insurance
- Medicare Supplement Insurance
- Dental and Vision Insurance
- Critical Cancer Insurance
- Travel Benefits
- Comfort Tours
- Cruise Holidays
- Veterans Holidays
- VFW Auxiliary Benefit Hub
- Discounts on various products and services
- Additional Benefits
- Cancer Grants
- Hearing Plans
- Thank you for your continued membership and please sign up those new members.

AUXILIARY BUDDY POPPY & NATIONAL HOME

CHRISTINE LEBRUN

“The thing I remember best about successful people I’ve met all through the years is their obvious delight in what they’re doing, and it seems to have very little to do with worldly success. They just love what they’re doing, and they love it in front of others.” -Fred Rogers

As another year closes, we often reflect on the things that we are thankful for and the people, places, and the things we love. Our love and ongoing support for the VFW National Home and our beloved “Buddy”® Poppy are no exception. We love supporting them and bringing awareness to their important purpose and this holiday season is a perfect time to show everyone just how much we love them both! Share the opportunity to online shop through AmazonSmile, gift a Tribute Brick in honor of loved one, become a Home Front Hero, share and/or purchase items from the National Home’s Amazon Wish List, promote the “Buddy”® Poppy/National Home on Social Media, or become a Life Member of the National Home.

The legacy of the “Buddy”® Poppy and the VFW National Home is a result of each and everyone’s love in supporting these two programs. Be sure to love them in front of others and leave YOUR legacy!

CAMP TROTTER RAFFLE WINNERS					
1ST - \$1,000	JAMES DUNN	6TH - \$125	GEORGE BORST	11TH - \$75	DALE RASMUSSEN
2ND - \$500	EDWARD SPUDOWSKI	7TH - \$125	MIKE STUCK	12TH - \$75	RONALD STAUFFER
3RD - \$300	JOSEPH DAVIS	8TH - \$125	WILLIAM VALLANCE	13TH - \$75	ROBERT SANDERSON
4TH - \$250	ROBERT CLARK	9TH - \$125	FLORIAN ROMANOWSKI	14TH - \$75	BARBARA NOWAK
5TH - \$125	TERRY FROBERG	10TH - \$125	JAMES HART	15TH - \$75	RAYMOND KLEIN

AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIPS

EVELYN AVERY

Since this is the November issue of the MOV I am sure the excitement is building to find out who will be the 2022-23 Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen Department of Michigan winners to be named at the Mid-Winter banquet on January 21, 2023, at Kalamazoo Raddison Hotel. Congratulations to all the District winners and good luck to everyone involved in the contests. Please remember to recognize and have an awards ceremony for local and District winners also and please report everything you did for the contest as chairman.

An exciting friendly competition between VFW Commander-in-Chief Timothy Borland and VFW Auxiliary National President Jane Reape was announced in the Oct. 22 issue of the VFW National Magazine to raise money to support the Voice of Democracy Program. The two leaders have issued a challenge to see who could raise the most money during the year for this program. This is a perfect way to demonstrate the teamwork between the VFW and the Auxiliary showing that together we can achieve a positive outcome for the Voice of Democracy program. Plan now to show you are part of the team by supporting the Voice of Democracy Program with a donation today for this challenge.

Next Scholarship to work towards is the VFW Auxiliary Continuing Education Scholarship, it is open to members (who have been a member for at least a year), their spouses, or children over the age of 18 - it provides financial assistance to further their education. The application needs to include an essay of no more than 300 words about why you need the scholarship. The application is sent directly to National Headquarters. Four \$1,000.00 scholarships are awarded each year, one in each of the four VFW Auxiliary Conferences. Get the word out early to Posts and Auxiliaries by using posters, newsletters, websites, social

media, and meeting announcements. Application can be found at [www.vfwmi.org](http://www.vfwmi.org) & [www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org). Applications are sent directly to the National VFW Auxiliary office and are due by February 15, 2023.

The National President, Jean Hamil’s Special Project this year is to establish an escrow fund to provide 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest scholarships to student in the years to come. This is the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest, which was part of the Young American Creative Patriotic Art since 2018-2019 Program year. Starting this year, the opportunity is DOUBLED: The American Creative Patriotic Art 2-D Art Contest and the 3-Dimensional Contest are TWO SEPARATE Contests with separate awards. Department of Michigan will also have separate prizes for both Contests. Students can enter both contests if they wish – separate entry forms are needed. The deadline for entry is March 31, 2023, and the rules remain the same as last year. There will no longer be a District judging level for either Art Scholarship contest. Forms and rules are located on the National and Department Websites. Winning entries advance from the Auxiliary to Department to National.

To support this project and “build for the future” you can log into MALTA. Click “Make a Gift”. Select National President’s Special Project. Or Mail checks earmarked 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art to National Headquarters.

Please report what you do for the Scholarship program and include how much you donated. You are “Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care”. Supporting programs that teach about and support our Veterans is what the VFW Auxiliary is all about. Working together, we can “Be THE ANCHOR FOR OUR VETERANS, HOLD THEM STEADY AND SAFE”.

AUXILIARY AMERICANISM

CAROL JOHNSON

This was taken from a Department of Michigan VFW & Auxiliary Loyalty Day, POW/MIA program on May 1, 2009 in Lansing MI

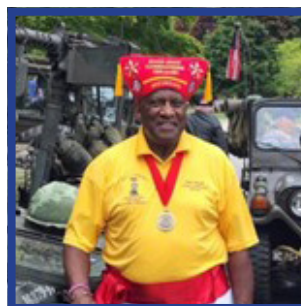
- A-** is for ADVANTAGES, we have so many more;  
Because we are Americans, lets give thanks therefore.
- M-** is for MAJORITY; decision by the most;  
Thats the rules we follow from coast to rugged coast.
- E-** is for EDUCATION, available to all;  
So, every last American stands up straight and tall.
- R-** is for RELIGION; we worship as we will;  
A right we'll always cherish and let no evil kill.
- I-** is for INDEPENDENCE, that our fathers once declared;  
Our Nation rose to greatness because these brave men dared.
- C-** is for CITIZENSHIP, of which we should be proud,  
So let's proclaim it daily and do it long and loud.
- A-** is for ASSEMBLY, to gather as we might;  
That's another privilege, another precious right.
- N-** is for NEW's, a press that's always free;  
A Sentinel on watch to guard our liberty.
- I-** is for IMPARTIAL, Equal justice for us all;  
Law -the same for everyone, the great, the poor, the small.
- S-** is for SPEECH, though others disagree;  
You may still express yourself, because our speech is free.
- M-** is for MOTTO, and that is why we say;  
"IN GOD WE TRUST", to live the good American way.
- Author Unknown

COOTIE CORNER - ERIC BELL

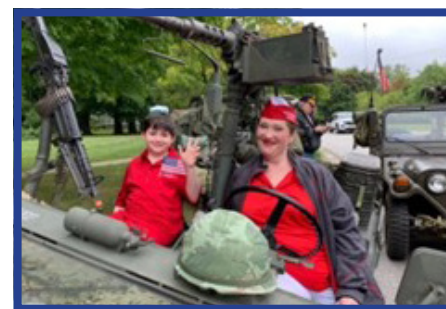


The Grand of Michigan had some lousy times in August and September. August was the VFW National Home Cedar Point Trip, and Michigan Day at the National Home. September, we participated in the Romeo Peach Festival Parade. We also started a new

Pup Tent at Post 1888 in Trenton and are working on starting one at Post 423 in Ann Arbor! Increase and Multiply!



At the parade, Grand Commander Nate Powell, Grand President Bridget White and her son Liam pose for pictures with the American Legion Jeep Brigade.



AUXILIARY HOSPITAL

MARIANN HAMANN

Veterans, especially those in a hospital or nursing home, need your help. Everyone has something to offer. Contact a VA Medical Facility, Veterans' Home or nursing home in your area today. Thanksgiving and the Christmas season will soon be upon us. Let's make sure our Veterans know they are not forgotten and that we care!

Websters Dictionary defines a volunteer as a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service. Volunteering is a voluntary act of an individual or group freely giving time and labor for community service.

Want to know how to delay the effects of aging and extend your years of healthy living?

**VOLUNTEER** - According to an article I read a few years ago in the AARP Magazine, sharing your skills and passion with others is "the closest thing to a silver bullet for personal and societal well-being" ever discovered. The article states that those who

donate their time to others have a lower mortality rate and less depression. Volunteering gives you a sense of purpose, ends loneliness, promotes new friendships, and builds self-esteem.

Ask a volunteer about "giver's high". It is the jolt you get when you contribute your talents to others. New volunteers have told me that they love what they are doing and wish they had started earlier.

Won't you find a way to help hospitalized Veterans and Veterans confined to a nursing home or a Veterans' Home?

**UPCOMING EVENT** - Mid Winter Conference – January 24-30  
Gift cards are needed for our Hospital Program fundraiser, the STAR Raffle. The cards should range anywhere from \$5 to \$25 and may be at statewide restaurants, stores, gas stations, etc. Visit us at the Hospital Booth to drop off gift cards and buy a STAR or two. You cannot loose! Gift cards can also be mailed to my home by January 10 to allow for postal delivery.

AUXILIARY MENTORING

DIANA HERRICK

The continued success of the VFW and its Auxiliaries depends on our continued ability to build on the strong foundation laid down for us by those who we now follow. We continue to build on the foundation by sharing our knowledge on procedures, programs, and most importantly by teaching all members the traditions of our organization.

First and foremost, by Honoring Our Mission to Serve Veterans, we can each be ready and prepared to aid all our Brothers and Sisters when action is called for. We should be ready to defend the traditions that got us to this point in the organization yet, willing to see how we as a group can lead us to an even better future. How

can that be accomplished you ask? By bannng together as a team to be more involved with building not only on the traditions that now exist, but also building towards a solid future for generations to come. Thus, making a difference in the lives of those that served to protect ours.

Regardless of our different backgrounds and cultures, we as members have one thing in common: VETERANS! So be a team member, share your knowledge with as many members and outside individuals as possible. Make our Veterans Service Organization shine as the best opportunity to give back to those who deserve their just rewards.

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POST REPORTS

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POST 582 - ORTONVILLE

Members of the Post honor guard presented the colors at hero's night at the Ortonville football game pictured from left Mark Stahl, James Lombardi, Dennis Hoffman, Ron Allen, Cliff Filhart, Carl Jeffrey, Steve Willet, John Wudarcki, & Justin Quisenberry. Post members lead the homecoming parade thru Ortonville from left Cliff Filhart, Ron Allen, Dennis Hoffman, & Mark Stahl. Post commander Dennis Hoffman attended Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Timothy A Whalen III.



POST 3701 - LAKEVIEW

There is still time to enter into our 2023 Gun of the Month Raffle where we draw a winner for a different gun at each meeting. You can even win more than once!

Contact us at  
989-460-8250  
or scan the link >>  
Happy Holidays!



Members dress up for annual Halloween event at the Post



Members offer free coffee & donuts to soldiers of the 1073rd Maint. Co.

**Veterans Crisis Line** 1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

POST 9931 - BRIDGEPORT

Bridgeport Post 9931 Sr. Vice Commander Daren Humes is an avid fisherman. Here he shares his love of fishing and donates his time to teach little ones how to "hook 'em" and catch them.

Sr. Vice Humes stated "I thought the time that I spent teaching/ helping others to fish was helping them, but in actuality, THEY helped me." This is a true testament of who we are as being involved in the lives of our youth.

Post Commander Kimberly A. Napoleon was selected to represent not only Bridgeport Post 9931 but also Saginaw Veterans by participating in Saginaw County's BWell Mental Health initiative to promote mental health awareness. The project included 20 billboards placed throughout the entire Saginaw County region featuring "community influencers" to promote its message that anyone can struggle with mental health.



DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN STATE COMMANDER JOHN GRIFFITH VISITS OSCAR MIKE FOUNDER NOAH CURRIER

Commander Griffith met with Oscar Mike Founder Noah Currier at the Oscar Mike Headquarters and distribution center on 12 September 2022 in Illinois. Oscar Mike is Commander Griffiths Special Project this year. Check out Oscar Mike Apparel at <https://www.oscarmike.org>. Please make your donations for All-State turned into Department.

Don't forget the rest of the donations to Mental Health (PTSD), Camp Trotter, Day of Challenges, Goldstar Mothers, National Home, Cancer, Scouting, National Cemeteries. Veterans Military Support (VMS) donation needs to be made at [VFW.ORG](https://www.vfw.org) from the All-American Dashboard page.



NATIONAL HOME FISHING EVENT / WILLIAM ALMY

On Sunday August 7, District 9 hosted the fishing event at the National Home for Children Michigan Day". The event ran from 9 – 11 am.

With clear skies and plenty of warm Michigan weather, 13 children were eager to get started with the event. Parents assisted the children where needed as did volunteers Reid Almy, Darren Humes and Wade Almy.

Throughout the two-hour event, the children hustled back and forth from the pond to the weigh-in station with their prize catch of the day. The children's spirits were high with plenty of laughter. Each fish caught was weighted and registered for heaviest fish in each age group (0-10 & 10 -17) .Jan Passmore, Nicole Koutz, Robert Brown handled the documenting and weigh-in process. Grand prize for two age groups with the heaviest fish was a complete fishing pole kit with a tackle box and tackle inside.

At the conclusion of the event, each of the children participating received a tackle box with fishing supplies.

Thank you to both District 9 VFW and Auxiliary for the donations. At last count, there was over \$600.00 donated towards this event. Thank you to District 9 Auxiliary president Robert Brown for donating a fishing pole and tackle box. Thank you to Barry Walter district 9 National Home representative for assisting in the event. Thank you to Todd Marriott (grounds maintenance manager) for your expertise in planning the event. Thank you to Department of Michigan VFW commander John Griffith for giving District 9 the honor of hosting the fishing event.

The fishing event was fun and rewarding to participate in and I for one, plan to return soon. This was my first time at the National Home and will not be my last.

MEET THE CANDIDATES



REINOLD YAHNKA

CANDIDATE FOR  
DEPARTMENT  
OF MICHIGAN  
JUNIOR VICE  
COMMANDER  
2022-2023



BRUCE BRIDSON

CANDIDATE FOR  
DEPARTMENT  
OF MICHIGAN  
JUDGE  
ADVOCATE  
2022-2023

MID WINTER CONFERENCE



January 27-29 at the Radisson in Flint.

Please note that the Radisson is sold out. Contact the Hilton Garden Inn or the Home 2 Suites for room reservations.

For additional hotel information, banquet tickets and more, visit [vfwmi.org](https://www.vfwmi.org) or the link below.

LEARN MORE AT [HTTPS://BIT.LY/MIDWINTER2023](https://bit.ly/midwinter2023)



## DISTRICT COMMANDER REPORTS



### DISTRICT 4 COMMANDER - ORVILLE BEAUCHAMP

To my fellow veterans, I want to first say sorry for not writing sooner this is Orville Beauchamp the Commander for the 4th District.

On the 16th of September there were two POW/MIA events going on. One was at BOVA Post 9885 in Westland and the other at our James Europe Post 2233 in Detroit. If you have never been to one, you need to see these events. They are well presented

and bring great honor on the posts and the organization. We also hosted the first three district joint VTS meetings for Southeast Michigan which was comprised of the 4th, 5th, and 6th, and was held on the 17th of September. We had the Department VTS team come in and do the event for us. We look forward to doing more events like these in the future. On the 24th of September there was a joint Golf outing sponsored by District 5 Posts 1136, 4230, 9363 and District 6 Post 1138 whom we have aligned ourselves with. Proceeds from this event went to Veterans assistance and Camp Trotter. A good time was had by all.

If anyone is around Wayne Macomb or Oakland counties or the 6th District, please stop in and say hello. We would love to have you come in & stay awhile. If you are on the fence about the VFW, don't be, we need you to be a part of the fight to keep our benefits, otherwise the politicians will take away what we gave so freely.



### DISTRICT 9 COMMANDER - WILLIAM ALMY

This being my first year as District commander I have a lot of learning to do. I appreciate all the coaching tips from past district and department officers.

One of my top goals is to help posts overcome obstacles that hinder their path to growth and success. As a district, we have the experience and knowledge to assist a post with its operation within and outside the walls of their post home. Our district

VTS training is an excellent resource for all members to learn new ways to recruit membership. It is clear that traditional methods are in need of revision and frankly do not work well in today's world. However, the Department of Michigan continues to provide training and materials for bringing all of us up to new and proven techniques that work. VFWmi.org and VFW.org have resources available for information and training. Commanders and line officers take the time to visit both sites; I think you will find a wealth of knowledge at your fingertips.

On September 29, I attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Shiawassee County Veterans Center. The building is located at 1042 N. Shiawassee St. Corunna.

The ceremony began at 1 pm. with the posting of the colors by the Elsie American Legion Post. Leaders from the county and the Veterans Center council spoke about the sacrifices veterans have made throughout the nations wars and conflicts and why it was time to help veterans in need by providing a location for support.

Overall, the event was well organized and made for a proud moment for all who attended. It was evident that the community was on board with support.

Thank you to Mark Draton, District 9 Chaplin and Shiawassee County council member for the invitation to witness a historical event that will be beneficial to all veterans and the county of Shiawassee.

District 9 Post commanders, please encourage your members to attend District meetings. The meetings provided a good way to network with other Posts and a learning experience including Department updates. The meetings run according to National bylaws and are a good example of rules of order. The VTS training covers topics such as; membership recruiting techniques, explanation of specific bylaws, veterans benefits, quartermaster, trustee training and order of business.

District 9 meetings remaining:

November 12th – Post 3055 St. Louis

VTS starts at 9:30am – Joint lunch at 11 am – Meeting at 12:00 noon.

February 4th - Post 3055 St. Louis

VTS starts at 9:30am – Joint lunch at 11 am – Meeting at 12:00 noon.

April 29th - District 9 convention - Post 3055 St. Louis

VTS starts at 9:30am – Joint lunch at 11 am – Meeting at 12:00 noon.

(Nomination, elections and oath)



### DISTRICT 8 COMMANDER - GARY BROWN

As your District Commander, I visited 16 posts in September and in October.

Our next District Meeting will be in Charlotte on Nov 5th, and I will be having a VTS Class starting at 10:00 am for All Post Commanders and anyone who would like to come.

I would like to remind everyone to please report all your events that you have done by the 10th of the month on the department of Michigan website (no paper forms will be taken).

I would like to thank all the post commanders for reporting as each post in our district shows GREEN on the All-American-Dashboard.

This year on the dashboard we have REPORTING, VMS, VOD, PP, TOY, BUDDY POPPY, MEMBERSHIP, and a RECRUITING EVENT as our requirements for All American.

VMS is a donation that you do while on the Dashboard. It is located in the top right corner of the heading and has to be done on-line to get credit.

VOD, PP and TOY are submitted as an entry on the dashboard of the total number of students and teachers you received and submitted to district on these programs.

To see how many Buddy Poppy amounts your post has to purchase will show up when you place your cursor over the buddy poppy button.

MEMBERSHIP when you put your cursor over this tab will show you your current percentage your post is currently holding to get towards 100%.

And RECRUITING EVENT is a 2-item event...your post must do 2 entries and submit photos to the Department membership director and All State director showing your post doing recruiting tables at events to get credit for this tab.

Membership in our district as I write this MOV article we currently need 474 members to become 100%...but remember this.... if we can get those members who are ANNUALS to pay their dues now and not later.... would bring all of you very close to being 100% by Mid-Winter....so please reach out to those members and see if they will help the post!

You can reach me at  
garybrownsr@outlook.com



### DISTRICT 12 COMMANDER - BARBARA LOCKE

It is been an honor to serve as your District 12 Commander. Its been a wild year with many of Post having events and membership drives.

We have completed all of our inspections and have turned them in. Thank you to the inspectors that stepped up to the plate.

This is the beginning of our responsibilities to our Post in our District.

Our next step is VTS training. In our first District meeting held August 14, in Manistee at Post 4499, we held a Quartermasters training, a Inspectors training, and a short Commanders training.

Our Department guest, All State Chairman David Martin gave an informative class on the All State program. Also with us was the Membership Chairman, Garrett Dickey who answered questions on this years programs.

Our third meeting will be held in Hart at Post 1329 on May 7th 2023, in which we will have a Memorial Service. As always we ask that you come early to be able to attend.

As our winter weather will soon be upon us I encourage you all to check on your membership. Make sure all of our members have heat, food and if needed transportation. Check out the shelters in your areas. Membership is a always a need in all of our post. Please continue to reach out to any Veterans in your area. Ask your membership weather they have Grand children, nieces, nephews, Great Grand Children whom have chosen to enlist.

To all our members in District 12, I send out to you my sincere wishes on health and happiness. Do a buddy check on you Comrades for mental awareness. Watch for signs of depression and over reactions.

Our VOD and Patriots Pen Banquet will be held in Baldwin Post 5315 in December. I will contact each to let you know time.



**YOU FOUGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY.  
NOW JOIN US IN THE FIGHT  
FOR VETERANS**



## AUXILIARY DISTRICT REPORTS



### DISTRICT 4 PRESIDENT DEEANN MILLER

As District President, I have started official visits to all of the

Auxiliaries in Wayne County. My team visits each Auxiliary to make sure they are healthy and functioning according to the National bylaws. I would like to thank Sr. Vice President Shirley Caldwell and Jr. Vice President Melissa Selders for assisting me in the official visits. Thank you to all the Auxiliaries who have provided lunch or dinner prior to the meeting. The team appreciates all the kindness shown to us. We are here to assist the Auxiliaries, not criticize them. I am your cheerleader for the year and cheering all your accomplishments. I want to commend all that has been completed so far this year for Veterans. Keep up the GREAT work. If you have any questions or need help, I am only a phone call, a text, or email away. Let's have fun assisting our Veterans.

Upcoming District Meeting dates are February 5th, at VFW Post #4230, and May 6 at VFW Post #6695.



### DISTRICT 5 PRESIDENT, JANET SWICA

The first event I attended as District 5 President was the Bell Ringing on July 4th at Lempke-Blackwell VFW Post #7573 in New Baltimore. This is a unique event held in Michigan and more members should try to plan attending possibly next year.

August 7th found me at the VFW National Home for Michigan Day. District Sr. Vice President Kathy Hubbard, and Jr. Vice President Anntoinette Shelvy was in attendance also.

We donated needed supplies for the home early in the morning. Once that task was completed, we all took a tour of the beautiful National Home grounds, and visited a couple of houses that sponsored families live in.

August 14th VJ Day/Gold Star Mother's Day, I was present at White Chapel Cemetery for their reverent program. Following the event, I went for a light luncheon that was held at the Acorn VFW Post #1669 in Royal Oak.

On August 18th, myself along with our District Sr. Vice and District Jr. Vice travel to the VFW Post #3243 in Fenton where a special luncheon was being held in honor of VFW Auxiliary National President Jane Reape. It was special for us to hear the National President speak on how she first became involved with our organization and why her commitment hasn't waived after all these years. A sincere thank you to Shannon Tennent for not only driving, but also for traveling with us to this wonderful luncheon held at our Department President Diana Ward's home Post.

I found myself at VFW Camp Trotter on August 20th for Family Fun Day at Bills Lake in Newaygo. I enjoyed spending time with Dan Ritter, and Chuck and Vickie Haskens, as we took advantage of a boat ride around the beautiful lake, tie-dyed t-shirts, played Corn Hole, and had a very nice lunch.

I really felt at ease conducting my first District 5 Meeting. The Lawrence-Sims Post #2269 hosted this first meeting. We were happy to have the Department of Michigan VFW Auxiliary Guard, Jan Passmore as our Official Department Representative.

The year is underway. I am looking forward to what comes next. If you, or someone you know, is eligible to join our organization please consider becoming an integral part of the greatest Veterans support group on the planet.



## AUXILIARY DISTRICT REPORTS



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PRESIDENT  
DEEANN  
MILLER**

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**DIST 6 PRESIDENT, PATRICK RICH**

I attended the VFW National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri this past July. It was exciting for those of us in attendance to watch our Department come home with so many wonderful awards. I can speak on behalf of all of us when I say we had an awesome time.

On August 7th, I visited the V.F.W. National Home for Michigan Day event. It was wonderful wandering the campus and enjoying one another's companionship. The Michigan VFW and Auxiliary Officers put on an excellent lunch program. I enjoyed the day.

In August I also started making my Official Visits to the Auxiliary's within the 6th District. I truly love to visit and watch as our Auxiliary members conduct business that advances our organization and benefits our beloved Veterans.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary National President, Jane Reape, came to Michigan for her official visit on August 17-18th. I was fortunate to represent District 6. It was great visiting with her at the dinner held at the Mt. Pleasant, Auxiliary #3033. The meal and entertainment were explementary.

Camp Trotter Family Day was held on Aug 20th. The turnout was not great this year but those in attendance seemed to have really enjoyed themselves.

My first District 6 meeting was on September 10th. Huge thank you to Post #701 for hosting. Fall Conference was held in Flint with wonderful training.

We are always seeking to initiate new members. Be inviting. Be knowledgeable about our organization. Show your patriotism. Invest in our future. Working together the Auxiliary can, and do, many wonderful things for our Veterans.



**DIST 8 PRESIDENT, BLANCHE BROWN**

District 8 Auxiliaries are known as the "Great 8" because of their great accomplishments and great members. As District President, my goals are to have auxiliaries reporting in every program every quarter, get to 100% in membership and to be healthy auxiliaries. Myself and

my officers put out information on the VFW Auxiliary Dept of Michigan District 8 facebook page and emails to give you the tools. Next District 8 meeting is Feb. 4, 2023 at the Boat and Canoe Club, Post #3946, 401 N. Park St. N. E., Grand Rapids, Mi.

August 6th district meeting, school of instruction, was filled with information and site locations for additional info. There were 15 out of 16 auxiliaries present. District 8 attended Michigan Day at the VFW National Home, August 7th. Fundraiser raffles patriotic basket, fall basket, poppy quilt and 50/50 were our event, raising \$807 for the National Home. Post #2406 auxiliary hosted "Picnic in the USA", a dinner with National President Jane Reape, August 17th. The video of the event can be seen on the department facebook page. Camp Trotter's family day was August 20th, District 8 was present for this great event.

Our February 4th meeting will include the Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy program. Hope everyone had great participation in this program. The Mid-Winter Conference

January 25 - 29, 2023 will be hosting the Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy Banquet, showcasing our department winners.

Meeting all District 8 Auxiliaries has been a treat for me. Getting to know your events for your veterans and your programs gives insight into your commitment as an auxiliary and ideas to share. Keep up the great work for the "Great 8".

### DISTRICT 7 PRESIDENT, BELINDA GRAVIT

We are almost finished with our auxiliary visits. Sheryl Proteau (Sr. Vice President) & I have visited 7 out of the 9 auxiliaries. I've been pretty impressed with the work they have been doing. It appears the auxiliaries have their books and paperwork in order.

From what I've seen and heard at these visits, our auxiliaries are very busy in their communities. I believe there have been 8 new members so far in September. Good Job!

Auxiliaries are working with the communities on things like; Craft Shows, working with the Marine Corp at the VA. Their

working on care packages to VA units & active duty-military. Their going in the schools to teach Buddy Poppy and American flag education and so much more. Watch out for the VFW Riders... they're also out and about...maybe they'll stop in for a visit.

On last check, the District membership was at 84.28%, That's pretty good but, we're the 7th District, we don't stand for pretty good. We're going all the way to 101% plus. So, let's get out make those phone calls and collect the rest of those membership dues.

We can do it because we're the 7th District!



### DISTRICT 9 PRESIDENT, BOB BROWN

I am very excited to be serving as the District 9 VFW Auxiliary President for the 2022-2023 year. I am a member of VFW Auxiliary Post Olsen Kiste #4406 in Belding. It's an honor and pleasure to be play and integral part of such a great organization.

Thus far, I've had the pleasure of presiding over my first District Meeting which was held at the St. Louis, Fred E. Richards VFW Post #3055 on Saturday August 6th where I hosted a School of Instruction for Auxiliary members in attendance. The next day, August 7, 2022, I traveled to the VFW National Home for Children. After arriving, I along with the District 9 Commander, Bill Almy from the Portland VFW Post #4090, ran the children's Fishing Tournament. It was a wonderful experience to see the kids living at the VFW National Home, along with invited family members attending the Michigan Day Event enjoy themselves. It ended up not only being a wonderful time for us to see how happy the kids were, it was also great fun for those of VFW and Auxiliary members that worked the with the kids to make their experience wonderful.

Two things that I find enjoyment in is, First and foremost,

helping our veterans out in all the ways that they need assistance. That could mean providing a ride to the doctor for a scheduled appointment, or to the store to replenish their needed supplies.

I love to drop into local Nursing Homes just to say hi to those living there. I can personally tell you that when I stop in at my local nursing home, the Veterans faces light up and they are so happy to realize someone cares enough to drop in on them. lease make it a point to check up on your local heroes residing in Nursing Homes. You will walk away feeling completely fulfilled.

Second is making a determined effort to focus on VFW Auxiliary Membership. I am personally challenging every Auxiliary to sign up five new members to their membership rolls this year. Always carry applications with you so that they are easily accessible. Check with current members to see if they still have family members eligible to join this great Veterans organization. I know we can succeed if we extend ourselves and commit to accomplishing this simple challenge. The more members we have, the stronger our organization becomes. The more we can do for Veterans, their families and meeting the needs that they face.

In closing, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or the Department Office. After all, we are here to serve you!



### DISTRICT 11 PRESIDENT, DENISE ARNOLD

As the leaves have changed colors and we are getting ready for the cold months ahead, we still have lots of work to do for our veterans and their families. Do you keep membership applications with you? You never know when you will meet someone who is eligible and ready to become a member of our elite organization.

Our district was honored to host the National VFW Auxiliary President Jane Reape at the Mt Pleasant Post 3033. The post hosted approximately 75 members from VFWs and Auxiliaries across the state. The meal was wonderful as well as the program. The entertainment included the state high school winner of the Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue Clara Bonnell. Clara was

sponsored by Post and Aux 3033.

We were also excited for our Illustrating America 8th grade Winner Madison Fisher who received 3rd in the Nation for her art project. Madison was sponsored by Post and Aux 3033.

Each year our district hosts Operation Help. This is a fundraiser which raises money to help any of the District 11 Posts if an emergency arises. This year was a spaghetti dinner with live music and a silent auction. The evening raised around \$2000.

Fall Conference was very informative, and fun was had by all. The skit by the District Presidents at the Past Presidents luncheon was entertaining. The Quartermania event was a great time, & in support for the general fund.

With the holidays approaching, please remember our veterans who may be alone and need your support. Take care and be safe!



### DISTRICT 12 PRESIDENT, JUDITH SCHAFER

As I make my official visits, I am glad that you are bringing in new members to this great organization. Members are the life blood if the Auxiliaries are to continue. Breakfasts, dinners, fairs, and many activities are being held by you. This is what keeps us going and growing.

It is so encouraging to see so many brothers taking the roll of officers. Thank you for stepping up in these positions. I hope

that many of you attend the three department conferences that are held each year, Fall, Mid-Winter, and Department.

If you have questions, please call or text me at 231-510-7494

If I do not know the answer, I will get right back to you.

Please remember if you change officers or you change your meeting day and time, let Department as soon as possible.

And remember to REPORT, REPORT, REPORT all you do. If you need help with reporting, let me know.



DEPARTMENT  
JUDGE  
ADVOCATE,  
BRUCE  
BRIDSON

    H e l l o  
C o m r a d e s ,  
Brothers, &  
Sisters. Thank  
you for this great opportunity to serve  
as your Department of Michigan Judge  
Advocate, it was great seeing everyone  
at Fall Conference, & I am looking  
forward to our Mid-Winter conference  
in January. Hearing the students give  
their patriotic speeches during the VOD/  
PP Banquet is always a highlight of  
the year for me. If you don't have your  
2023 Bylaws & Manual of Procedure it  
is available at the VFW Store, it is also  
available electronically at vfw.org. Save  
it to your cloud drive and it will always  
be right at hand when you need it. Is your  
post looking to adopt its own by-laws?  
A template is also available at vfw.org.  
Please look at your post bylaws, many  
items in the bylaws became outdated  
in 2021-2022, many changes have  
happened over that last few years, so if  
your posts bylaws are older than that, it  
is time to update those once again. If I  
can be of any service to you please don't  
hesitate to contact me. I am seeking  
your continued support into the 2023-  
2024 year, as I would like to once again  
be your Department of Michigan Judge  
Advocate. I will continue to support you  
and your posts to the best of my ability. I  
look forward to once again seeing you at  
the next conference.

VFW NATIONAL #STILLSERVING COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

VFW #StillServing Community Support Grant has been designed to aid VFW Posts and Auxiliaries with projects that support, enrich and give back to their communities. Eligible applicants may apply for up to \$1,500 each through reimbursement for qualifying projects.

There are two qualifying project types for which an eligible applicant may be awarded funding:

Community outreach projects operated directly by the Post or Auxiliary. Examples include but are not limited to: Hosting a

PTSD stand down event, a clothing drive for unemployed veterans, maintaining Post owned vehicles that transport veterans to medical appointments, etc.

Repairs or renovations to Post buildings outside of a canteen area. The grant application must clearly indicate how the repair/upgrade allows the Post to better serve their community.

Applications for the VFW #StillServing Community Support Grant will be accepted through June 1, 2023, or until all grant funding is exhausted.

VISIT THE LINK TO LEARN MORE

HTTPS://BIT.LY/STILL-SERVING-GRANT

VFW NATIONAL STUDENT VETERAN SUPPORT GRANT

The VFW recognizes that both funding and support for our student veterans and dependents at institutions of higher learning, can often be difficult to find. The VFW's Student Veteran Support Grant offers much needed assistance to support specific student veteran events. The grant, administered by the VFW Washington Office, focuses on supporting the overall student veteran population within the community, which consists of many student veterans at campuses across the country that are not affiliated with an SVA chapter. The grants will be disbursed to a VFW Post or Department that has submitted an application, to support the student

veterans at the university or college.

Applicants must be VFW members associated with an appropriate entity of the VFW. Appropriate VFW Post, District, Department, or National leadership serve as the convening authority on the grant request and is responsible for receiving funds.

Funds must be utilized for events and outreach designed to assist and support veterans currently enrolled in institutions of higher learning.

Grants may be awarded up to \$500 to support each event, and grants can be awarded to a VFW entity twice each fiscal year, totaling up to \$1,000.

VISIT THE LINK TO LEARN MORE

HTTPS://BIT.LY/VFW-STUDENT-GRANT

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## GREAT LAKES NATIONAL CEMETERY

DANE BEZEMEK

The fiscal year has been busy for the Cemetery with 5033 internments from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022. June 2021 saw 614 internments. Total internments since opening is now 57,405.

Notable internments this past year were LTC Alexander Jefferson of the Tuskegee Airmen, and Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Robert E. Simanek.

The Daughters of the American Revolution hosted an Unaccompanied Veteran Ceremony on September 10, 2022 recognizing 22 comrades that were interned this past fiscal year.

There are several opportunities to assist, every Monday morning, excluding holidays, at 9:00 AM a team of volunteers meets at the maintenance building to walk the Avenue of Flags for maintenance needs. The Avenue of Flags will be extended with the addition of a new cortege lane, and donations are being accepted for flag poles, one pole is approximately \$3500.

As Covid restrictions are lifted for the cemetery more of the Ceremonies will be opened to the public.

Upcoming Ceremony : Wreaths Across America December 17, 2022, if donating wreath(s), you can select Great Lakes National Cemetery for your donations.

Thank you for the opportunity to server in this capacity.



## VFW NATIONAL : WOMEN VETERANS

Ensuring women veterans receive veterans' benefits and services that honor their brave military service is one of the VFW's top priorities. Currently, women comprise 15 percent of the active-duty military and 18 percent of the Guard and Reserve. With the steady increase of women wearing our nation's uniform and their increased role in military operations, it has never been more important that we ensure women veterans have a VA that is ready and able to care for them when they transition back to civilian life.

**BACKGROUND :** To gauge how well VA is serving women veterans and to identify areas where it needs to improve, the VFW's women veterans' advisory team commissioned a survey of women veterans to collect direct feedback from women veterans around the country. After analyzing survey responses and direct feedback from nearly 2,000 women veterans, the VFW has identified multiple recommendations to improve VA health care, outreach, training and homeless programs.

**HEALTH CARE :** The overwhelming majority of women veterans want VA to expand access to women-specific health care, which includes hiring more VA health care professionals who are able to identify and treat their unique health care needs. More specifically, women veterans want the opportunity to receive their health care from women health care providers. The VFW has urged Congress and VA to expand its Designated Women's Health Primary Care Provider model to mental health clinics and other health care specialties. This would ensure all women veterans have access to health care professionals with specialized women's health care training. The VFW has also urged VA to allow all women veterans to choose the gender of their health care provider.

**IDENTITY & OUTREACH :** The VFW was disturbed to hear from survey respondents that VA employees continue to confuse them for spouses and caregivers or challenge their veteran status. This is unacceptable and the VFW has urged VA to properly train its workforce to treat women veterans with the respect and dignity they have earned.

**HOMELESSNESS :** Women veterans with children who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless face much different barriers than homeless veterans without children. In fact, homeless and at risk veterans with children report the lack of childcare services impact their ability to receive the VA health care and job training services they need. The VFW has urged Congress and VA to ensure homeless veterans have access to childcare when receiving health care and job training services.

## VA APPRENTICE PROGRAM

ANTHONY VANDEVOORDE

Did you know there is VA program out there which allows veterans to collect their GI Bill benefits without going to college, or to finish the remainder of their benefits after college?

Even before becoming the Junior Vice Commander of VFW Post 4090, in Portland, I have always been an advocate for veterans utilizing the benefits they deserve and earned. One of those programs is the VA Apprenticeship program. This program allows the qualifying veteran to use their GI Bill benefits in lieu of college. The VA sees it as one, college is not for everyone. Second a veteran who gave time to their country, instead of going into the work force like many of their peers are now behind on pay and benefits because they were not learning job skills needed for pay raises or promotions. In a nutshell the VA is paying you to learn your job and substitute that pay gap had you not entered into military service.

I introduced this program to the City of Concord in North Carolina where I was a Law Enforcement officer for almost 10 years. I used this program for almost a year, utilized all my GI Bill benefits. This program is a benefit to employers across the state because they would be recruiting employees who have a good work ethics, morals and other traits instilled in them by the military. This program is also available to existing veteran employees not just new hires, once the program is up and running. You the veteran who is eligible will also have to do your part each month by verifying with the VA.

The VA apprenticeship program costs the employer no money. It only costs them time and seeing how you the veteran gave more than just your time to your country, state and community, At the very least an employer can do is to provide an benefit earned. Employers will have to register with the State of Michigan Veterans Employment Services, and then be approved by the VA. The employer will verify the veteran's hours to the VA each month, just like schools have too. The veteran will also have to verify each month. Then each month the veteran receives their benefits.

If you are interested in this program at your place of work, go to your department head and introduce this to them. There are many resources out there that will help guide the employer through the application process. It will also assist with resources for monthly monitoring of the program.

To start, give your employer the following web page

[michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/wd/apprenticeships](https://michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/wd/apprenticeships)

If they need further assistance or have questions refer them to Michigan Veterans Employment Services Contact,

Crystal Bersche / [berschec@michigan.gov](mailto:berschec@michigan.gov) / 517-249-0026

LEARN MORE AT

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/VFW-WOMENVETS](https://bit.ly/vfw-women vets)



DESIGNER / EDITOR,  
STACEY ROBERTS

This year is moving too quickly. I'm spending much time chasing our toddler or with my nose in homework. Sorry for the lateness of this issue. Happiest of holidays to you and yours

Next two deadlines =  
12/15/22 & 3/15/2023  
Send articles for consideration to:  
MOV@VFWMI.VET

The mission of this paper is to provide pertinent and accurate information about the decisions and activities of the VFW at the Post, District and Department level; the relevant affairs of the State and Federal governments, and the decisions and activities of the national organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The paper is also the voice of the members. We welcome articles from all members. All articles should contribute positively to the welfare of the VFW and its members. We will accept no attacks on any member or leader of the VFW. We will accept a thoughtful discussion of all related issues and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the VFW and its policies. Articles more than 500 words may be rejected or returned for revision. *We reserve the right to edit all articles as we see fit.*

The news and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Michigan or the National Organization.

TAPS FORM

Comrades, please copy this form and use it for your TAPS report.

Send completed form to:  
VFW of Michigan  
924 N Washington - Lansing, MI 48906  
or Amanda@vfwmi.org

(Last Name)

(First Name)

(Age) (Date of Death)

(Post)

Branch of Service :

ARMY AIR FORCE NAVY  
MARINE CORP COAST GUARD

Served in :

WWI WWII KOREA VIETNAM  
GULF IRAQ/ AFGHANISTAN  
OTHER OCCUPATION FORCES



ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES

LISTED BY POST NUMBER / LAST NAME / FIRST NAME / AGE / SERVICE / WAR

345 Redford

Holcomb, Herbert A. 96 Navy/WWII

3314 Arcadia

Counsell, Keith L. 91 Marines/Korea

796 Port Huron

Zgieb, William M. 71 Marines/Vietnam

3623 Cheboygan

Barrette, Russell 90 Army/Korea  
Jankoviak, Sylvester 97 Army/WWII

2053 White Cloud

Bills, Matthew 71 Navy/Vietnam  
Johnson, Gene 90 Army/Korea

3701 Lakeview

Farrell, Robert 73 Army/Vietnam  
Killough Chester 74 Navy/Vietnam

2144 Holland

DeWeerd, Ervin 77 Army/Vietnam

3941 Livonia

Ingram, Ronald 93 Navy/Korea

2292 Edmore

Anderson, Lawrence 96 Marines/WWII

4054 Marcellus

Huff, John 77 Army/Vietnam

3023 Grand Rapids

Bunker, Donald 90 Army/Korea  
Bushell, Ervin S. 85 Navy  
Cooley, Ronald D. 95 Army/WWII  
Czerkies, George 93  
Dingman, Arlin D. 96 Navy/WWII  
Haight, Harry B. 94 Navy/WWII  
Halvorson, Milton E. 90 Army/Germany  
Johnson, Dennis C. 70 Marines/Vietnam  
Mazzarelli, Michael G. 96 Navy/WWII  
Richer, John W. 74 Army/Vietnam  
Vandermoere, James 97 Navy/WWII  
Waddis, James R. 91 Army/Korea  
Youngs, Elaine 99 Navy/WWII

6965 Ubly

Blome, Donna 53 Army/Gulf  
McNamara, Conrad 90 Army/Korea

8846 Muskegon

Ferski, David P. 77 Air Force/Vietnam  
Swope, Frederick M. 93 Army/Korea  
White, Jack L. 90 Navy/WWII

WE WILL  
NEVER  
FORGET



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