

MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN

VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

WINTER 22/23



Australian Veteran, Brady Wheeler with VFW Department of Michigan State Commander, John Griffith.



Dept. Commander awards the first round of VFW Charities checks to Posts dressed as Santa.

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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, JOHN GRIFFITH

In writing an article for the “Michigan Overseas Veteran” around this holiday season it seems only appropriate to reflect upon the blessing we enjoy as members of the Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

This year many great things have come to pass. Just to highlight a few accomplishments, we were at the forefront in getting the PACT act passed by congress and signed by the president. The Department was able to put into place our VFW Michigan Charities a 901(3)c program. This enabled our department to start a grant program to assist posts that were financially struggling. As our veterans “Continue to Serve” post and individual veterans have become highly thought of and respected. So I count as a blessing that I am a US Veteran and member of the VFW.

In contrast our allies in recent wars are not so blessed. Kris and I just returned from a trip to Australia where we visited her only living Aunt near Perth. We then returned to Sydney and departed on a 10 day cruise to New Zealand. During this trip I took note that both in Australia and in New Zealand I observed no one wearing a T-Shirt or cap indicating that they were a veteran. It was not until I attended

a “Veterans Appreciation Program” aboard the Carnival Cruise Ship Splendor did I meet fellow veterans. When on-board other Carnival Cruises embarking from US Ports I have attended these programs and even recruited a few members following the program. However, the Splendor embarked from Sydney making this an “Australian” cruise. Thus the veteran’s appreciation program included 90% Australian veterans. While I had really never thought about it during the course of the program as veterans recounted experiences both at war and upon their return, I learned that the Australian Veterans returning from Vietnam encountered many of the same experiences as American service personnel, including protestors, and disrespectful actions by protestors to our allied comrades. After reflecting upon this for a moment this made sense because Vietnam was a very unpopular war with the civilian populations around the world. However, what really took me by surprise was to learn that our Australian allied veterans that served in both Afghanistan and Iraq alongside American service personnel are enduring the same problems our veterans have encountered. They are having respiratory problems as a result of exposure to burn pits, PTSD difficulties and this has resulted in a higher suicide rate than that reported by our VA and Defense Department. I met one young Australian veteran Brady Wheeler who had just been discharged after serving four years

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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, JOHN GRIFFITH - CONTINUED

as an infantryman in the Army. As he related to me the plight of Australian veterans he literally broke down into tears as he told me that he had six of his “mates” commit suicide in as many months. Over the next few days I had talks with Brady telling him about the VFW. Brady was so envious when learning of the VFW advocacy for our veterans. How we have Veteran Service Officers to assist returning veterans and post were comrades can meet and talk to one another about common experiences. Brady advised that in Australia there is no organization that even comes close to our VFW.

Brady was given one of my Commander Coins and brochures about the American VFW. We continue to communicate with one another via email and I am asking Douglas Brinker to provide me with literature on PTSD and suicide prevention that I can send to my allied comrade.

The moral of this story is that we really need to count as a blessing our membership in the US Veterans of Foreign Wars.

DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE, BRUCE BRIDSON



Thank you for this opportunity to serve as your Department of Michigan Judge Advocate for the last 2 years. I was deployed to Saudi Arabia in 1990 - 91, during the Persian Gulf / Desert Storm War, earning my eligibility in the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

While in the Air Force I earned the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, Outstanding Unit Award, National Defense Service Medal, Longevity Service Award, NCO Professional, the Air Force Training Ribbon, and Southwest Asia Service Medal with 2 Bronze Stars.

Comrades, it is an honor to serve as your Judge Advocate for the Department of Michigan, I ask that you please reelect me as your Department Judge Advocate for the 2023-2024 year as well.

I am a Life Member of St. Helen VFW Post 5680, honorably serving as the Post Quartermaster for the past 9 years, I was previously the Post Chaplain for 2 years and in the past, the Bingo chairman

In the past I have served the Department of Michigan as the Department Community Service Director for the 2018-19 year and I have also served VFW National, on the By-Laws and Resolutions Committee.

I served in the United States Air Force as a Firefighter from October

1987 to November 1991. During my 4 year term of service I was stationed at Andersen AFB, Guam, and Wurtsmith AFB, Oscoda, Mi.

Comrades, Let’s keep Michigan moving forward. Let’s all work together for our common goal. Let’s not let petty jealousies get in our way.

Thank you for your service, and thank you for being a member of the VFW. You being a member means you care about the many men and women who have served our country, as I do.

VISIT DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE TODAY
VFWMI.ORG

- vfwmi.org/join
- vfwmi.org/contact
- vfwmi.org/vethelp
- vfwmi.org/directory
- vfwmi.org/officers
- vfwmi.org/allstate
- vfwmi.org/mov
- vfwmi.org/forms
- vfwmi.org/gallery

When posting to social media add #VFWpostpride and tag @VFWMI

BIG 10 DELEGATE, NORM MAULDIN



Su-jen and I hope everyone’s holiday season was merry and bright. The hospitality offered by the Department

of Wisconsin during the Big TEN Conference was second to none. Fortunately, there were krinkles in the goodie bags we received. I do not know if you have ever had one of these delightful pastries from Kenosha Wisconsin, however if you are ever in the Cheese State and find yourself close by you simply must try one, the pecan

is my favorite. The brats were awesome also.

During the conference, bylaw changes were introduced. Unfortunately, they could not be entertained since the required advanced notice was not provided to all the Departments, as our department was not notified until the night before. Additionally, elections for Big TEN officers were held and Vice Chairman was an exciting one. There were three candidates running, the Wisconsin Department Commander Michele Rathke, our Department Commander John Griffith, and Richard Nail from Missouri all very good candidates. As I promised, I fully

supported our Department Commander in his run for Vice Chairman. Your new Big TEN Steering Committee is: Chairman – Paul Arnold (IA); Vice Chairman – Jim Nails (MO); Secretary/Treasurer – Don Lynch (WI); and Chaplain – Deborah Halter (MO). Congratulations to all of them and I know they will do what is best for Big TEN and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Dept. of Wisconsin PSC Jason E. Johns (2020-2021), will be running for National Judge Advocate General. He does have a very impressive resume, ask me about it and give me your inputs for the next National Convention in Phoenix.



DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT QUARTERMASTER, DEREK BLUMKE

Congratulations to all of the amazing posts who were selected to receive a grant from VFW Charities of Michigan in our inaugural grant cycle! Below are some highlights of what these amazing posts are doing with their funds and how they hope to impact their communities:

Post Outreach Grant Awardees:

2780 - Traverse City - \$2,500

hosting events to encourage partnerships with other service organization posts, Grand Traverse County and other VFW posts in the Traverse City area, using new software and social media tools to market events.

1136 - Wyandotte - \$2,500

Hosting a “bigger and better” “Freedom Festival” that the post hosted in 2022, which brought in over 500 guests. 2023’s “Freedom Festival” will be in partnership with the National Guard and local organizations.

3195 - Norton Shores - \$2,500

Will host a “Veteran/Community BBQ as part of the first Muskegon Air Show in 15 years”

8260 - Nashville - \$2,500

To host a holiday open house with local VFW posts and community organizations. Their goal is to “improve our image” in the community.

7581 - Wayland - \$800

To host an informational event with service officers and other providers for veterans and families in their community.

5585 - Emmett - \$2,500

To host a suicide prevention and outreach event to show the benefits of being involved in the veteran community.

Post Building Grant Awardees:

5670 - Gwinn - \$10,000 / Roof replacement

3701 - Lakeview - \$10,000 / Fire suppression system

6507 - Chassell - \$10,000 / Roof repairs/replacement

2144 - Holland- \$10,000 / Commercial cooling unit

6248 - Decatur - \$5,395 / New furnace

3165 - Negaunee - \$10,000 / Masonry repairs on 130+ year old historic building

There were a few common themes among the posts who were selected by the review committee to receive grants:

1) All of the posts that applied are VERY active in their communities. In many cases these posts are the anchors of their communities.

2) All of the applicants put a great deal of thought into their applications, especially the section of the application that asked to “Describe your vision for the future of your post”. Some of the grantees are working to turn their posts around, and didn’t have years of experience in their respective leadership positions, but through their applications they showed that they are excited for the future of their posts and want to make changes for the betterment of their VFWs.

VFW Charities of Michigan is launching another round of grants, and they will be announced prior to State Convention 2023. We strongly encourage your post to apply for both grants, and where possible support this program so other posts can get the support they need to be successful.

Finally, as you can see above, the VFW is working to evolve with the needs of our posts, members and families. If you have ideas for new programs, please share them with adjutant@vfwmi.vet. New programs come from a need, and in order for new programs to exist, we need to know what you need. If you have ideas, please share them with us!



DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER, RAY LOPEZ

Greetings Comrades, I hope you are all in good health and spirits.

As we approach the homestretch of this administrative year, I would like to congratulate the Posts that have achieved 100% in membership. We together can ensure the future of our organization through recruiting new members and working the programs both in our community and legislatively. Our mission of serving those that served depends on it.

I would also like to congratulate all of our Patriot Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the year winners along with the Posts that participated this year.

As we push forward through the last couple months of the current administrative year, let us continue forward towards reaching our goals.

We are fast approaching Post/District nominations and elections for next year. I would like to remind all to submit election reports as soon as elections are completed.

In closing, I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to serve as your Department Sr. Vice Commander.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION, JERRY GORSKI

I want to begin by wishing each and every one of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2023.

By the time you read my article, our 12 Districts will have already submitted their 1st Place Voice of

Democracy, 1st Place Patriot’s Pen Winner and Teacher of the Year Winners to Department for Judging. I look forward to our Banquet at the Radisson Hotel in Kalamazoo.

This Year, our 1st Place Department Voice of Democracy Winner will be going to Washington DC. The 52 Department Voice of Democracy Winners and the National Patriot’s Pen Winner will be touring Washington DC which could include visiting the National Monuments, Arlington National Cemetery, Mount Vernon, National Museums and maybe even the White House. They will not know where they will be going until they arrive on Saturday, March 5th. No matter where they go, they will have lasting memories. This year, Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland has increased the 1st Place National Voice of Democracy Winner to a \$35,000 Scholarship.

I would like to now talk about Membership. One of My Favorite Topics. As of December 14, Michigan is in 28th Place in the Nation at 90.76% with 29,131 Members. We need 2,964 New, Reinstated and Continuous Members to achieve 100%. WE CAN DO IT! WE CAN ACHIEVE 100% by June 30, 2023. In the Big Ten Conference, Michigan is in 6th Place at 90.76%. Minnesota is in 1st Place at 94.37%. South Dakota is in 2nd Place at 93.17%. Wisconsin is in 3rd Place at 93.16%. Illinois is in 4th Place at 91.83%. Missouri is in 5th Place at 91.53%.

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, who should be forwarding to you.

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

Thank You and God Bless You.

★ ★ ★ POST REPORTS ★ ★ ★

POST 582 - ORTONVILLE

Post 582 members presented the colors at hero's night football game, post color guard Cliff Filhart, Ron Allen, Dennis Hoffman and Mark Stahl lead homecoming parade through Ortonville. Veterans Day post members rededicated the Don Kengerski veterans park with a new sign from left Carl Jeffrey, John Wudarcki, Don Kengerski, Dennis Hoffman, Cliff Filhart, & Ron Allen. Post members and community volunteers gather to lay wreaths on the 600 veterans graves at the Ortonville Cemetery Dec.10th.



POST 9931 - BRIDGEPORT

Post 9931 held its "Salute to Service Banquet" where US Senator Debbie Stabenow's representative Dondre' Young presented Ms. Irene Hosking (104), Mr. B.L. Little (96) and Mr. Clinton McMillon, Sr. (98) with Congressional Recognition from the United States Senate.

The evening concluded with an inspiring salute to "The Greatest Generation," from Major General Adolph McQueen, United States Army Retired. Department of Michigan Jr. Vice Auxiliary President Jane Dady was also in attendance.



POST 3701 - LAKEVIEW



Post members meet on Veterans Day for a FREE breakfast paid by the Post



Post Quartermaster assisting in Wreaths Across America at the Grand Rapids Veterans Cemetery



Post Quartermaster, Post Commander and Karla Herndon unveil a women veterans monument in Belding



The Post was honored to be able to adopt two veteran families for Christmas once again.



Post set up a membership and merchandise table at the village's Christmas Craft Fair.

ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES

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

345 Redford Krum, Jeffrey 76 Vietnam	2780 Traverse City Coburn, William 97 Army Air Corps/WWII Worm, Ricky A. 75 Army/Vietnam	4573 Ishpeming Brouillette, Alfred R. 78 Army/Germany
446 Muskegon Nicolai, Raymond J. 81 Army/Korea	2998 Escanaba La March, William A. 81 Marines	4624 Hubbell Gardner, Edward J. 81 Army/Vietnam
607 Rogers City Vekaryasz, David P. 77 Army/Vietnam	3030 Otsego Dunlap, Harold E. 95 Air Force/WWII Holly, Charles A. 90 Korea	4659 Shelby Township Ponticelli, Joe 94 Air Force/Army/Korea Rehn, Oscar F. 93 Air Force/Korea
701 Lansing Fretter, Robert J. 96 Army/WWII	3165 Negaunee Lundin, Charles A. 73 Army/Vietnam	5065 Sheridan Bollinger, Paul M. 90 Army/Korea Edmonds, Karen L. 73 Army/Germany King, Jerome J. 74 Vietnam
796 Port Huron Zaremba, Kenneth G. 73 Army/Vietnam	3256 Montague Jablonski, Robert E. 99 WWII	6017 Pentwater Emery, Gerald A. 89 Army/Korea
822 Flint Evenson, Robert L. 95 Navy Hale, Kenneth D. 74 Army/Vietnam	3674 Iron Mountain Opsahl, Robert A. 84 Army	6248 Decatur Hamilton, Julian E. 92 Air Force/Korea
827 Kalamazoo Peraino, Vito 75 Marines/Vietnam	3701 Lakeview Vickers, Daniel 36 Army/Iraq	6250 Sterling Heights Forgie, Michael J. 35 Army/Iraq
1137 Watervliet Bouma, Willis A. 97 Army/WWII	3724 Standish Milks, Richard C. 74 Army/Vietnam	6333 Kaleva Hindman, Charles R. 77 Army/Vietnam
1138 Monroe Bowman, Leon C. 98 Army/WWII Estes, Shelby A. 80 Navy/Vietnam Lajiness, Floyd D. 99 WWII Mieden, Allen F. 88 Army/Korea Potcova, Nistor Jr. 96 Navy/WWII/Korea	3727 Potterville Garcia, Ramiro M. 81 Army/Vietnam	6756 Center Line Joswiak, Adolph 102 Marines/WWII Nunn, Kenneth D. 91 Army/Korea
1146 St. Clair Shores Cusumano, Lawrence 95 WWII/Korea Everett, Paul E. 75 Army/Vietnam Scott, Robert R. 82 Army/Vietnam Terry, Kenneth B. 78 Army	3735 Oscoda Kimerer, Daniel D. 73 Army/Vietnam	6782 Eastpointe Domanowski, Gregory A. 74 Vietnam
1329 Hart Lindgren, Michael G. 74 Vietnam	3900 Calumet Zubiena, Caesar J. 98 Army/WWII	6864 Cadillac Mc Ginn, James S. 71 Air Force/Vietnam Moore, Raymond W. 74 Army/Vietnam
1407 Ferndale Anstett, Raymond L. 80 Army/Vietnam	4005 Corunna Wesley, Steven P. 70 Navy/Vietnam 4034 Houghton Lake Heights Jacoby, Robert A. Jr. 61 Army/Korea	7573 New Baltimore Amatangelo, Ronald 74 Air Force/Korea Patti, Michael G. 77 Marines/Vietnam
1519 Northville Abele, Gilbert 103 Army/WWII Mattson, Douglas E. 78 Army/Vietnam	4054 Marcellus Thomas, James 75 Army/Vietnam	7911 Fennville Nowak, Stanley J. 79 Navy/Vietnam
1566 Saginaw Johnson, Gerald E. 89 Navy/Korea	4073 Marshall Edwards, Garwood L. 80 Marines	8215 Shepherd Brzak, Jerry L. 74 Vietnam
1784 Mt. Clemens Todd, Frank M. 52 Air Force/Army/Gulf	4139 Lapeer Muskovin, Jerry W. 83 Air Force/Vietnam	8236 Flint Hogan, Clem H. 91 Air Force/Korea
2272 Durand Decker, Jeffery S. 52 Navy/Gulf	4164 Caro Ollila, Matt A. 80 Army	8964 Ovid Reneaud, Everett H. 78 Army/Vietnam
2292 Edmore Harkness, Rick 73 Army/Vietnam	4187 Tecumseh Kennedy, Jerry L. 79 Army	9363 Flat Rock Hecox, Ben A. 71 Vietnam
2492 Imlay City Dick, Donald 99 Air Force/WWII/Korea	4249 Newaygo Boose, Vern 87 Navy/Korea Kowalski, Thomas A. 78 Army/Vietnam	9388 Muskegon Lester, Harold E. 75 Army/Vietnam
2496 Alpena Detloff, Frank L. 88 Army Oke, Kenneth L. 98 Army/WWII Pelleran, Gary L. 76 Army/Vietnam	4357 Brighton Smith, James R. 80 Army	9455 Owosso Hartley, Edmund P. 94 Marines/WWII Holler, Alfred 97 Army Air Corps/WWII
	4420 Manistique Reed, Daniel M. 71 Army/Vietnam	9885 Westland Broome, William 95 Navy/WWII
	4461 Lake Odessa Carr, Darrell 73 Vietnam Elliott, Gary A. 73 Army/Vietnam Howard, Archer L. 75 Army/Vietnam Pitman, William 102 Army/WWII	9931 Bridgeport Klein, Karl H. 88 Navy/Korea
		15023 Lansing Balhorn, Edward J. 92 Army/Korea Mc Nulty, David 77 Marines/Vietnam Moe, Arden J. 74 Army/Vietnam Rich, Harley W. Sr. 78 Army/Vietnam Tencate, John F. 85 Army/Korea Ventline, Harry W. 97 Army/WWII



AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT - DIANA WARD

I hope you all enjoyed the holidays and had time to spend them with your friends or family. I hope you had the opportunity to reach out to our veterans in need during the holidays. It is such a hard time for them – either donating your time and talents or making donations for our homeless veterans is very rewarding and it means so much to them.

It's hard to believe the year is already halfway over. We have accomplished so much but there is still so much more we can work at to provide for our veterans and their families. Are the Auxiliaries and the Department healthy? Are we covering the National Programs and are we doing what the VFW Auxiliary was founded for – providing aid and assistance to all veterans, their families and active military so that we help assure that they have better quality of life and service?

The National Programs are intended specifically to accomplish these goals. Our Auxiliaries provide meals; monetary support; care for our disabled, hospitalized and/or homeless veterans; write legislative appeals; teach our children and communities about patriotism and respect for our flags; and we provide scholarship opportunities to our veterans and their families as well as those in the community. We are utilizing the Community Outreach program to assist other organizations in an endeavor to better serve not just our veterans, but the communities.

We are a not-for-profit organization, and we prove this through the reporting system. This is how we show what we do and maintain a record of service. Therefore, we ask the Auxiliaries to report their activities. Additionally, we utilize this reporting system to give back to our Auxiliaries for all they do and establish awards for their achievements. To our Auxiliaries, thank you for being patient with the reporting system. Just when we think we have all the bugs worked out, we find others. Thank you for letting us know the issues you have had and/or continue to have. Continue to get your reports in and we will work on the backdoor

stuff to make it easier. It is through your reports that we know how our Department is doing.

As the Department President, I am enjoying traveling through the state to visit the members and your Post Homes, events, and meetings. I'm looking forward to more invitations – not just for our VFW Auxiliary events. I have really enjoyed being invited for Auxiliary tea parties, children's parties, membership drives. Whatever occasion it may be, let me know and I will try to be there. Your Auxiliary is not too small or too far away that I won't make that effort. In fact, looking forward to sometime in the upper peninsula.

National Midyear will be a time for connecting with the other Departments throughout the country, getting status reports and additional training from our National Ambassadors, and attending the National Council of Administration meeting. I look forward to bringing the information back to Michigan. I hope the members find our Michigan Mid-Winter Conference informative and beneficial for their Auxiliaries. Our conferences are a time for learning and renewal; however, take the time to also enjoy the fellowship of organization – see old friends and make many new friends.

Our membership is the how we go on and continue the great work of the VFW Auxiliary. Continue to reach out and share our organization with others to bring in new members, but also retain the members we have. Reach out to them if they haven't renewed and maybe they need some assistance. Look at your former members, maybe now is a time that they want to get back involved. Let's show our veterans and the community that we are Hands that Serve and Hearts that care.

It is an amazing organization we belong to. Thank you for all you do and thank you for letting me serve with you as your Department President for the 2022-23 year. We are diligently working and standing up for our veterans and the community. We are Being the Anchor for Our Veterans, and Holding Them Steady and Safe.



AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT JR. VICE PRESIDENT, JANE DADY

We all have seasons in our lives. Seasons change. We change. Some seasons are more difficult than others. It as if to climb to the top of a mountain, you reach a summit and you want to stay there.

While being at the top is great, there are all the hills and valleys you went through to get there. Each season was a challenge. Each time you weren't sure you could do it, yet you did, and you will have to do it again.

To get to the top, you go through a season of growth, a season of waiting, the trials and testing season, (most difficult time seeking to find answers). The temptation season where it seems hard to endure all that is happening to you. Finally, the pruning season arrives, you figure out and get rid of the things that weight you down.

This doesn't mean you have to like the season you are in. Embrace each season for what it is. Each season lays a foundation for the next. This is the journey called life. It is filled with valleys and hills.

Do not be discouraged when things aren't going your way. Remember, you will get past the difficult times, as there will be another peak to discover. There are just as many good times as bad.

Tonight, before you go to bed, remember 3 things that went right or were great today.

You just need to make a better effort to see them. They are always there, hidden blessings in plain sight.

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

DISTRICT 4 COMMANDER - ORVILLE BEAUCHAMP

To my fellow veterans, this is Orville Beauchamp the Commander for the 4th District. We have had a lot going on here in the fourth, November was a very busy month here in the fourth. We had our elections and I hope everyone had a chance to vote.

We should also remember the Marines on the 10th of November had their Birthday another big party time here in the fourth. Happy Birthday Comrades also the 11th of November we remembered our Comrades as well with our annual S.O.S. breakfast. This was put on by VFW post 1136 in Wyandotte as well.

The Wyandotte Post hosted the District 4 Joint Memorial on the 13th of November. The turnout was very good and we remembered our past Commanders and Presidents who came before us.

Our District Meeting was held on the 20th of November. We had some concerns that were addressed by the Department. Hopefully all were satisfied with the answers.

I must not forget that in November we had the Wyandotte Christmas Parade. Even though it was a cold morning, around 26 degrees, we all had a great time. I hope all will have a Blessed and prosperous Holiday season and a Happy New Year.

The District next meeting will be on February 26th so if you are available, please do not hesitate to drop in. We will be nominating next years officers for the District.

If you know of any veteran who needs a place to go for some one-on-one or just to decompress let them know the Veterans of Foreign Wars is here for them.

VA VOLUNTEER SERVICE

For more than 118 years, ensuring veterans receive the care and benefits they deserve has been one of our top priorities. Since the VA's Voluntary Service (VAVS) program's inception in 1946, our members and supporters have been volunteering their time at VA medical facilities nationwide, donating hundreds of thousands of service hours annually and providing much needed support and companionship to our nation's heroes and their families.

Making the decision to volunteer and donate your personal time to our nation's heroes while they are receiving care at a VA facility is an amazing way to give back and thank those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom.

Everyone can help make a difference to a veteran and volunteering through our service program makes it easy!

The VFW VA Voluntary Service program offers a unique level of support and experience that only an organization with a strong service history like ours can provide. From experienced VFW mentors with a clear understanding of VA infrastructure and providing the support you need, to national recognition for volunteer accomplishments and dedication, we're here to ensure sure you get the most out of your volunteer service experience.

With over 6,000 regular volunteers at over 150 health care facilities, our volunteer representatives perform a vital role at VA health care facilities nationwide. We can help identify volunteer opportunities that align with your interests, such as sports and recreation, social work, arts and music, personal assistance, writing, chapel services, companionship, transportation and escort services and so much more.

Locate and reach out to your local volunteer representative and get involved with the VFW's VA Voluntary Service program today!

John Gorte
VFW VAVS Representative
Aleda E Lutz VA Medical Center
(989) 729-2136

Richard Horschak
VFW VAVS Representative
Battle Creek VA Medical Center
(269) 965-4782

Ross E. Medos
VFW VAVS Representative VA
Ann Arbor Health Care System
(734) 461-9505



DISTRICT 8 COMMANDER - GARY RBOWN



I have finished visiting all of the Posts within our district and it was good to see all your posts again and meet with all

the membership within our district. I would like to recommend that all of you to get out and go visit all of our district posts yourselves.

Membership at the time I wrote this newsletter our district has 316 more members to go before we reach our goal of 100%. We currently have 1 post 422 that is above 100% and a lot of you out there only needing a couple more and you will be at 100%. If you would like assistance with working your membership listings, please contact me or Garrett Dickey for assistance. We are here to help you in any way to achieve your 100% membership.

In my travels to all your posts I went over reporting in great detail with all of you while I was at your posts. Please keep these reports coming and REPORT EVERYTHING YOUR POSTS are doing by the 10th of every month.

Our district lost one of our Posts this year. Post 1573 Saugatuck decided to turn in their charter and have voted to close. So, now our District is standing

with 24 active posts within the district. If your posts are having problems and need assistance....please let me or any of our district staff know immediately. We can sit down with you and discuss other means you might need before you go down this path.

By the time you read this MOV article we will be getting close to Spring the end of our year. We should be starting to look for candidates to fill positions within our Post and District seats for next years positions. Start looking for these candidates NOW and not Later. I will be doing another Training Class discussing these candidates' positions and what these candidates must understand to take of these positions. REMEMBER...Posts must have their post elections and be sworn in to office before the District Meeting is held. Your Post election rosters must be forwarded to District/Department and National HQ when you complete them.

Post Audits must be completed and forwarded to Department before the State Convention in June, or your post will not be allowed to vote. Please make sure you get your delegate dues into department also. This information is a little early but, I will be sending this out again in my next MOV letter as a reminder.



**MOV DESIGNER,
STACEY ROBERTS**

**Next deadline :
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.

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

(Last Name)

(First Name)

(Age) (Date of Death)

(Post)

Branch of Service :

ARMY AIR FORCE NAVY
MARINE CORP COAST GUARD

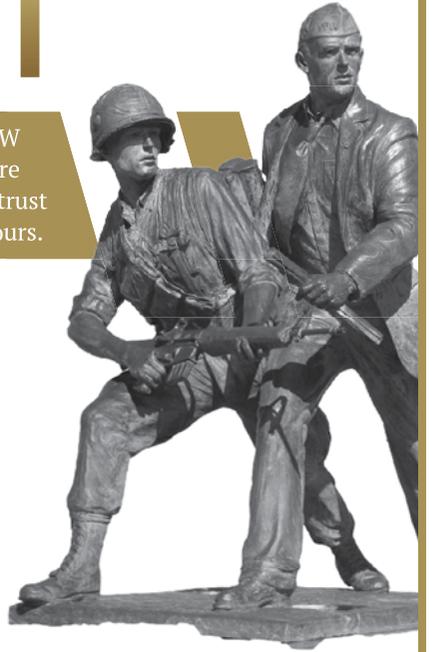
Served in :

WWI WWII KOREA VIETNAM
GULF IRAQ/ AFGHANISTAN
OTHER OCCUPATION FORCES



FACT SHEET

As the nation's oldest major war veterans' organization, the VFW has an impeccable and longstanding record of service and stewardship. More than 4.4 million patriotic Americans, both members and non-members, entrust the VFW with financial contributions and dedicate millions of volunteer hours.



**YOUR DONATION OF
\$20
ENSURES THE VFW CAN**

- Educate** a separating service member about his or her well-earned VA benefits through a private benefits counseling session with a VFW Service Officer.
- Provide** training to 12 VFW Service Officers on signs of emotional suffering so they can better direct veterans to programs and services.
- Help** cover rent, utilities or groceries for a military family struggling with the hardships of war.
- Deliver** 5 morale-boosting "welcome home" celebrations for service members who have returned from combat.

2,000+

Number of VA-accredited VFW representatives across America and abroad, helping veterans fight for the VA benefits they have earned.

\$11.55 million

Amount of scholarships awarded to more than 2,567 veterans and service members through VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" since January 2014.

\$11.2 billion

The total annual amount the VFW helped veterans recoup in VA disability compensation and pension benefits.

66

Number of VFW-SVA Fellows (student veterans) who have traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for veterans' rights.

20

Number of times the VFW has testified before Congress in the last 12 months alone. The VFW has been instrumental in virtually every major legislative victory for veterans in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Nearly \$3 million

Amount of scholarships, monetary awards and other incentives the VFW distributes annually to middle and high school students through two major patriotic essay competitions.

\$12.7 million+

Value of financial assistance awarded to military families since 2004 to help cover basic needs in times of crisis. 45% of the funds covered basic housing needs.

3.4 million+

Number of service members and their family members hosted at VFW Military Assistance Program (MAP) events since 2005.



The VFW by the numbers

1.5 million

Number of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members.

5,773

Number of VFW Posts worldwide.

1899

Year the VFW started to fight for veterans, service members and their families.



Helping struggling military families

11,326

Number of grants provided to military families facing financial hardship through **VFW Unmet Needs** since 2004.

\$5,741,123

Amount of grants provided through **VFW Unmet Needs** covering housing for struggling military families since 2004.

3,948

Number of military families who received assistance with housing needs since 2004.



Cutting red tape

115,000

Approximate number of veterans the VFW assisted in submitting new VA claims in fiscal year 2022.

Nearly 13,500

Number of VA claims filed by the VFW's Pre-Discharge offices in fiscal year 2022 resulting in more than \$64 million in disability compensation.

20+

Number of VFW Pre-Discharge offices across the nation, including the military district of Washington, D.C., area.

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