

MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN

VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.
WINTER/SPRING 25



Elementary School Teacher of the Year, Tracy Roberts, from District 10



Middle School Teacher of the Year, Tiffany Nicholas, from District 14



High School Teacher of the Year, Dana Blank, from District 9

VFWMI.ORG Quick Links

- vfwmi.org/contact
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- vfwmi.org/join
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- vfwmi.org/officers
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- vfwmi.org/mov
- vfwmi.org/gallery

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vfwmi.org

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Lansing, MI 48906
[Facebook.com/vfwmi](https://www.facebook.com/vfwmi)



Voice of Democracy State Winner, Marissa Zonnebelt, from District 12



Patriot's Pen State Winner, Autumn Gillis, from District 9

KALAMAZOO AIR ZOO OUTING

On Saturday, February 1st, 2025 the Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy District Winners were taken on a trip to the Kalamazoo Air Zoo for a morning of fun and learning.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **2025 Operation Bottom Cover Baby Shower:** April 12th at VFW Post 3651
- **2025 MOC Easter Treat:** April 11th-13th at VFW National Home
- **2025 Dept Pool League Tournament:** April 24th-26th at VFW Post 4499
- **2025 Gold Star Mothers Banquet:** April 26th at VFW Post 6248
- **2025 MI State Convention:** May 29th-June 1st in Kalamazoo, Michigan
- **2025 Camp Trotter Golf Outing:** June 22nd in Newaygo, Michigan
- **2025 National Home 100th Birthday Celebration:** June 28th at VFW National Home
- **2025 Camp Trotter Family Day:** August 2nd at Camp Trotter
- **2025 VFW National Convention:** August 9th-13th in Columbus, Ohio
- **2025 VFW Fall Legislative Conference:** September 8th-11th in Washington, D.C.
- **2025 Big 10 Conference:** October 17th-19th in Bettendorf, Iowa
- **2025 MI Fall Conference:** October 29th-November 2 in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan



DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, KIMBERLY NAPOLEON

Greetings, Comrades, Brothers, and Sisters. In 2022, I took the risk of becoming the first, regardless of the cost. I took the risk of laying everything on the line and embarking on a journey in turning my vision into a reality. And here we are in 2025, reading my farewell article as your Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars United States of America State Commander. As I write this farewell greeting, I am filled with a mix of emotions of gratitude, as well as a touch of sadness, as my time as your Department of Michigan and Veterans of Foreign Wars Commander has come to an end. It has been such a great pleasure to work with a wonderful, amazing group of people. To my dear friend, Past State Commander Richard Lehner, thank you for your encouragement, your support, and most of all for accepting me as me and seeing the leader in me and planting the seed that you believed that I could serve this Department and be an asset. I thank you for the long rides, the talks, and the friendship that has developed over the years. You are a true gem, and I love you for your unwavering love for me and for sacrificing your own personal health and well-being while promoting me. To you and "Ma Lehner," I love you both for being such an incredible source of inspiration and support, with such amazing pride for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Michigan. To Barry Walter, my Department Adjutant, the wealth of knowledge you have along with the willingness to see my vision of leaving the Department better than I found it—thank you. You not only listened to my concerns and the desire for Standard Operating Procedures, you also understood and agreed to the importance of such measures. You readily embraced the task and my leading with vision, integrity, structure, and accountability and worked tirelessly to create a footprint of what I hope will be a great asset to my predecessor, SVC Yahnka, and those who follow. To my Line Officers, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to each one of you. Working along such dedicated Comrades has been an incredible experience, and I will cherish the friendships that we've built. To the 2024-2025 Directors and Chairpersons, I thank you for your dedication and your support. I thank you for all of the sacrifices of time that you have put in and for serving as "One Team, One Mission" so that we may continue as the pillars in our communities. To my Post Commander, Daren K. Humes, thank you for "getting

me there" each and every time, safely and on time—you're the best! To Mrs. Humes and Marizza, thank you for understanding, supporting, and sharing. To our office staff, Amanda, thank you for all that you do behind the scenes. Please know that I value you and I respect the contributions that you provide to the Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars office. To our bookkeeper, Ms. Jan Passmore, thank you. I love you for all that you've done throughout this year—you are indeed a valuable asset. To Jessica, thank you for stepping in and stepping up to the plate when I needed you the most. You are absolutely amazing! Alyssa, thank you for your patience! To our events coordinator, Past State Commander Paul McIvor, and Ms. Pat Patterson, thank you for making sure that I was taken care of at every conference with zero to worry about and making my stays comfortable. Lastly, but certainly not least, to my Chief of Staff, my friend, Past State Commander Matthew David, words cannot begin to express my gratitude to you for always being there as a listening ear and a sounding board and, most of all, for your sound candidate advice and never steering me wrong. I love you. I thank you for being you, and more importantly, I thank you for the friendship that we have developed in just a short time. Thank you for all that you have done for me. I'm truly grateful to you. Department of Michigan, one of the things that we do naturally is that we focus on the veterans in the communities that we live in; we also pause and celebrate those who have given the ultimate sacrifice; we celebrate those who have left contributions and paved the way for us. We have celebrated our youth, as we encourage them as our young to use their voice by participating in such programs as the Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy Scholarship programs. In addition, we celebrated the educational component while paying homage to educators through our Teacher of the Year program. I am truly grateful for you all and for all that you have done as a team for the mission. In Michigan, we collaborate with brilliance all over the state with leaders working together to create our programs of sharing and taking care of our community. Our service to veterans and families has depended on us for 125 years. I would like to think the Department of Michigan is in good hands and poised to be available to the future generations of veterans who have sacrificed and signed on the line to serve. VFW is a space for us to come together and serve as a family, for generations that have gone before us and the generations to come. I couldn't think of a greater organization to be chosen to lead. To my family and #1 cheerleader, Ti'Kyra "Bubbles," thank you all for your support and love.



DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER, REINOLD YAHNKA

Comrades, Brothers, and Sisters, where has this year gone? The year is ending, and you should be working on meeting the membership goal of 102%. This is achievable and will allow the Department and Commander Napoleon to achieve All-American. So, I encourage you to keep working on membership and reach that goal of 102%. You should also be looking at the All-State checklist and preparing to turn it in to the All-State Director, Mike Martin, by April 30th, 2025. Even if you have not met the membership requirement, you should still turn in your All-State application so that your Post

can be recognized at the Fall Conference. Post elections will be happening in April, so please attend your meetings and vote for those members willing to step up and lead your Post. For those willing to step up and take a position of leadership, do your best, seek out training, and ask questions of those who held the position before you. Don't hesitate to contact your District and Department Officers for advice. Try to handle situations at the lowest level before you elevate the problem. Just like in the military, the Veterans of Foreign Wars have a chain of command: Post, District, Department, and then National. If you don't follow the chain of command, your problem will probably get sent back to the command above you. Buddy Poppy days are coming up, so make arrangements with your local businesses to

set up a table and distribute Buddy Poppies to raise money for your relief fund. I also encourage you to work with your Auxiliary and Scouts if you have them. If you haven't ordered Buddy Poppies this year, you can still order them through the Department by using the available forms online at VFWmi.org. You can order the traditional or the new tin-tab Buddy Poppies. The Department Convention is coming up on May 28-31 at the Radisson in Kalamazoo. Make sure that your Post has met the requirements so that your Post will be eligible to vote. Make sure all audits, election reports, and delegate fees have been paid. Comrades, I can be reached at (517)-745-3705. If you need assistance or advice, please give me a call. I look forward to seeing you at Convention and Post visits throughout my travels around the state.



DEPARTMENT JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER, LARRY THAYER

Greetings, Comrades! Wow, the year is more than half over; where does time fly to? A successful Mid-Winter is behind us. Congratulations to our Voice of Democracy State Winner, Marissa Zonnebelt, sponsored by District 8 Post & Auxiliary 8846; Patriot's Pen State Winner, Autumn Gillis, sponsored by District 9 Post 19809; and Teachers of the Year State Winners: Elementary School Tracy Roberts Sponsored by Post 822, District 10, Middle School Tiffany Nicholas Sponsored by Post 3165, District 14, and High

School Dana Blank Sponsored by Post 8964, District 9. We will see Marissa in Washington, D.C., during the Legislative Conference. At Mid-Winter we got to spend time with our National Jr. Vice C-n-C, Tim Peters. We are all looking forward to Tim's year as C-n-C; he's going to have some exciting programs. At the Legislative Conference we will meet with our Representatives and Senators to make sure that they know the VFW views. Many of the issues we will be discussing you might have seen if you subscribe to the National Action Corp. If you are not subscribed, you need to be; it's easy and free. Just Google VFW Action Corps weekly and join. At the time of the printing, Posts should be finishing up their

All-State requirements. Hopefully you made 102% in membership; if not, it's not too late. If you have all the qualifications for All-State, except membership, make sure to send in your application by the deadline because you have until June 30th to get it done. For the new incoming Officers, read your duties and responsibilities carefully; the success of your Post depends on you. There will be many training opportunities in the coming year. If there is something you don't know or understand, reach out to other Posts, your District, or even Department. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve as your Jr. Vice Commander, and I look forward to seeing you all at the State Convention.



DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER, BARRY WALTER

Comrades: With Mid-Winter Conference 2025 behind us, we are already looking forward to State Convention the last week of May. But before we get there, we have work to do. Districts are wrapping up Post Inspections and the Department Inspector is hard at work reviewing Inspection Reports and Audits. Please respond to him as soon as possible if he has questions on your reports. Don't leave them for the next guy to handle. We are preparing for the National Legislative Conference in March, and you will read all about it upon our return in various communications from Department and National. These visits with our legislators are very important, so if we ask you to reach out to them with your voice of support, please respond. The National Legislative priorities are on the Department website under the Legislative Program. The National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure Section 217 provide that Posts

will open nominations for elected officers in March and hold elections in April. All elected officers and the Adjutant must submit to the Adjutant a copy of proof of membership eligibility, which shall be retained by the Adjutant during the term of office. Adjutants are responsible for receiving and securing these documents prior to the installation of the officer. At the time of nomination and election, please make sure that these requirements are well known. The Department Planning Meeting for incoming District Commanders and Committee Directors will be on April 19th at 9:00 am at Department Headquarters. District Conventions are the precursor to the Department Convention. Please attend your District Convention and be part of the process. This process, of course, includes the District delegate review of proposed resolutions, proposed Department Bylaw amendments, and proposed amendments to National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure. If you intend to prepare a resolution or a proposed amendment, please review the Department and National Bylaws to ensure you are following the required

process. Department and National Bylaws are on the Department website under the Members Only section. A guide to preparing amendments and resolutions is available on the Department website under Resources—Forms & Guides. District Conventions are also where the District Officers for the next year are elected. Attend, learn, and make your voice heard. The agenda for the Department Convention, May 29 to June 1, is being coordinated with the VFW Auxiliary and will be published on the Department website as soon as possible. It will also be emailed to all Post and District officers for distribution to members. We are planning a Department golf outing on May 28. Details will be published as soon as the plans are complete. Last but not least, we must mention membership. At this point your Department Membership Director is moving hard towards a successful end of year on June 30th. Now is the time to look at your membership and wrap up those last few unpaids and get those new ones completed and on the books so that your Post can share in the success. If we may assist you, please contact us.



MENTAL HEALTH/VMS DIRECTOR, DOUG BRINKER

What a phenomenal Mid-Winter Conference. Huge thanks to Jan Passmore and her team for allowing Shane Houghton to display the Wall of Tears. I hope those who attended were able to not only read the panels but reflect on reading that no matter what your status in life, suicide affects everyone! From loss of family or friends to maybe yourself attempting at some point in your life. No matter what the event that you have experienced, understand your mental health team is here 24/7 to listen, to care, and if need be, come to your rescue. "I would rather lose hours of sleep than learn you took your life while I slept." Onto the most fulfilling program report. I am ecstatic that all of you who visited the table for only the second time since my appointment began have cleaned us out of the mental health resources and swag. Remember to take photos of the materials at your Post and submit them to my email, douglas.brinker14@gmail.com, to receive All State points credit. I have received 4 boxes

of new supplies and plan on another 10-12 boxes for State Convention in Mt. Pleasant on May 29-June 2 at the Comfort Inn. We are accepting nominations for the Mental Health Advocate of the Year Award; the deadline is March 31st, 2025. Some key dates to place on your calendar are as follows. April 21st in Jackson, there will be a Tri-County Military Coalition consisting of Jackson, Hillsdale, and Lenawee Counties, this includes a clinic and resource fair at Jackson College from 0900 to 1600 hours. Jackson Ruck to Remember Veterans Suicides is Saturday, September 6th, 0900-1300 hours at Jackson Eagles 612 (301 Detroit Street), set up at 0700-0830. You need not have to carry a ruck! Seeking organization vendors for resources? Contact me for the form. Keep in mind, as posted in the last MOV article, your Post and/or District can still schedule to have the Program at your Post or District as a School of Instruction; follow protocol per Department policy requesting by form submitted prior to the Program attending your event. Knowing SAD is detrimental to your mental, physical, and emotional health. Seeking proper treatment can

provide relief and comfort. The Northern Michigan United Suicide Prevention Coalition, which I am a member of, hosted recorded statements on February 18th, which are available per request. If you are interested in attending the monthly meetings, please reach out to either me or District CDR Derek Braun for meeting details. Each day for some or many might be a significant challenge both at home and at work, and how you respond to those challenges does affect your overall mental health. Being transparent with all of you, I too sometimes allow myself to respond in a negative way rather than looking at the situation from a learning perspective, which I personally am working on. Attending support groups and having meaningful conversations with each other does help the soul and, more importantly, the mind. Every one of you matters always and has a purpose; never forget that. It's why I wrote my book My Dark Shadow: From A Suicidal Self To A Purpose of HOPE (Helping One Person Everyday), available at our State Convention. 50% of all proceeds will go to fight and eradicate not only veterans suicides but also their families as well.



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

DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY DIRECTOR

BOB LUTZ

Comrades, I hope that everybody is in good health and spirits. I would like to remind everybody that in the National Manual of Procedure Section 218 duties and obligations of the Commander paragraph I, "assure that all reports are correctly prepared and promptly forwarded," so it is each Post Commander's duty to make sure that their Post is properly sending in their reports. I know that I have posted this before, but I just want to make sure that both current and future Commanders are aware of it. Everybody has probably

heard me talk about Posts that claim more members fly the flag than they have members. Now, I have a new one. Since we can now claim some Auxiliary reports, I have Posts that are claiming credits for the Auxiliary and they don't even have an Auxiliary. Come on, Comrades, please be truthful in your reports. Remember, the 10th is a hard deadline. If your report is late, you will get credit for the report but not for that month. If you are having some problems with getting your report on time, let me know. Be proud of what the Post does

and report it. Remember to put the value of the hall on your report. If you rent the hall, it is not reportable; you have to donate it to get credit. If you give, for example, a 10% discount on the hall, it is not reportable; the Post is still making money on it. I have some Posts that keep claiming money value for hours donated; this is not reportable. I have Posts that are claiming anywhere from \$9.25 an hour all the way to \$50.00 an hour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at either activity@vfwmi.org or 586-924-4591.

POST REPORTS

POST 334 - NORTH OAKLAND



The VFW Post 334 Honor Guards presented a \$500 check to the GLNC Advisory Committee for use in maintaining the food & snack basket (example held above the check) in the Honor Guard building.



DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR, WILLIAM (BUTCH) OGDEN

Congratulations to all the winners at our Mid-Winter Conference. Comrades and Sisters, our year is half over, and we have a lot of housekeeping to get done. Audits: There are too many Posts that are in arrears for audit submissions. Audits are due at

the end of the month following the end of the quarter. Audits must be signed by the 3 elected trustees and the Post Commander. If a trustee signature is missing, the Post Commander must submit a letter explaining the reason for the missing signature. All audits must be sent to Department Headquarters for entry on the checklist. Inspections are coming in; we have 238 Posts, and we have received 161 as of this article,

which is 67% completion. I will start emailing District Commanders with the information on inspections that need to be followed up and corrected. Commanders, Post and District, it is your responsibility to ensure that all reports are accurate and complete and in a timely manner. Any questions or concerns? Please contact me via email at 1950americanpatriot@gmail.com or by phone at 517-304-4069.



STATE SURGEON, BEN LIGHT

Hello, Comrades. Thank you for all your time and effort working on the Hospital Report Program! This has been a most rewarding and educational assignment, and I'm proud

of what the Department of Michigan has accomplished in this program! A big shoutout to the following Districts for being 100% reported for hospital reports in 2024-2025: Districts Four, Five, Six, Seven, Nine, Eleven, and Thirteen. For those Districts still working towards 100%, there's still time. And working together, I know the Department of

Michigan will be 100% reported before the April 30th deadline. Again, thank you all for the dedication and hard work, thank you Commanders Napoleon and Lopez for the appointments, and thank you to the Members of the Department of Michigan for supporting me these last two years as your State Surgeon. Serve First—Build Trust.

POST 582 - ORTONVILLE



On Nov. 9th the 5th Annual Ruck Walk was held to raise money for veterans awareness and programs in the community. 6 Post members and 72 community members walked, and over \$2,500.00 was raised.



Dec. 12th Post members and community volunteers placed 641 wreaths on veterans graves at Ortonville and Seymour Lake cemetery's.



Veterans Day Post 582 placed a wreath on our WWII monument.

POST 3734 - FRUITPORT

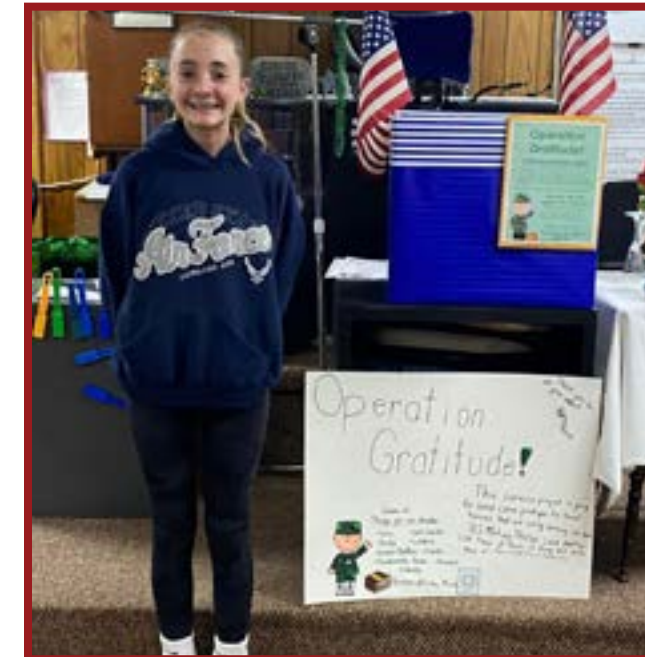


Sgt. Joshua Petty being presented with a Quilt of Valor at Post 3734 on January 8th, 2025.

When Posting to social media use #VFWPostPride

POST 6464 - FOWLerville

Fowlerville Junior High 8th Grader, Abigail "Abby" Reed, created a service project as part of an assignment for membership in her school's National Junior Honors Society. She came up with "Operation Gratitude", a project to fill three gift boxes with hygiene products, portable chargers, gum, candy, a tumbler water bottle, and some gear with the Fowlerville logo on it, and ship to three servicemen stationed around the world. Abby and her mom were able to fundraise \$800 from social media, and VFW Post 6464 gave Abby \$400 to cover shipping costs. The first box went to a Marine in Japan. The second to Cameron Hinton, an Electronics Technician 2nd Class currently serving aboard the submarine Tender USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) home ported in Naval Station Guam, Cameron is a 2017 graduate from Fowlerville High School. The third box went to her uncle Chris Murdock, Air Force, who is currently stationed in South Korea.



POST 8846 - MUSKOGON



Don Rea Post 8846 is proud to announce that Marissa Zonnebelt of North Muskegon High School is the winner of this year's Voice of Democracy Scholarship. "On behalf of the Department of Michigan, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary, it is with pride that we recognize Marissa as the winner of the 2024-2025 Voice of Democracy \$6,000 Ralph J. Seabold Scholarship." Don Rea Post 8846 and District 12 have chosen an excellent representative for the Voice of Democracy program. Our best wishes go with Marissa as she embarks on her future endeavors. We thank her for participating in this year's program. - Rod Siegel, Post Adjutant.

POST 8872 - PORT SANILAC

Each month, 4-6 members from Post 8872 donate their time to help out at a local food drive held in Sandusky, Michigan. The Post has been doing this now for several years. Earlier in 2024 the food drive was short to get a semi-truck load and Post 8872 donated \$500 to make it happen. Later in the year, the Post donated \$1,200 which paid for the entire truck load for the December 4th, 2024 drive.



POST 8935 - COVINGTON

Post 8935 Auxiliary learned of a female veteran and her husband in failing health, and unfortunately homeless. The couple was able to get into a halfway house, and the Auxiliary decided to adopt the veteran, who was a medic in Vietnam. She now has a family with the Post 8935 Auxiliary. This auxiliary really is doing what is need for veterans. God bless this country. - Judy Fell

AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT, JANE DADY



Congratulations to VFW National Home on its 100th Anniversary of dedicated service to military and veteran families. This jewel in our backyard is open to all states, not just Michigan. The National Home's community is for families of active military, veterans, and relatives of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members. For more information, call 1-800-313-4200. Thank you to everyone who bought or sold the

program pins. All the money raised will be given to the National Home. The new mission statement for the VA is: "To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors." The website also has resources for caregivers. The VA is a great source for a wide variety of help. Over 400,000 veterans live in Michigan. We need to make sure every one of them makes full use of the benefits they are entitled to. If you have access to a computer, go to www.va.gov. If you are in a crisis, there is a

link to the veteran crisis line, or you can call the crisis line at 988 and press 1. Thank you, members, for allowing me to be your Department President this year. Every one of you made a difference, and every one of you is an important part of our organization. I want all our members to know they are appreciated and thank you for the countless ways you make a difference. "Remember the duty we owe one another, and if we thus carry out daily the lessons and principles taught, our country will be better that we have existed." We are better because of our veterans and you.

AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN/MEDIA RELATIONS, BLANCHE BROWN



During the VFW Auxiliary 2024-2025 year, we do numerous activities and events to promote our mission. We work hard to help and honor our veterans throughout the year. Also introducing the community to our cause by promoting what we do to help veterans and through mutual causes. The Auxiliary has many programs that we work on to cover the aspects of our mission. If we put our programs out for the public to observe on social media, plus other media, we find the same desire from them to

help our veterans and their families and give them an opportunity to join us. That is why posting photos on social media catches the public eye. Everyone scrolls through Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and other social media, which makes it possible to be seen on numerous venues and by numerous eyes. Capture your activities and events in photos. As the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Once we can get others to see our veterans as we do, the more patriotic pride we can produce. Once we get more youth involved in our mission through our youth activities, as seen in photos, the more we can spread Americanism and patriotism. Once we get others to see how we help

our veterans, the more others will want to help. Once we show how we work as a group to get legislation passed that makes sure our veterans get their benefits and care they deserve for what they did for us, the sooner we can have the loudest rallying cry across our country for our veterans. That is why we as an organization exist. A historian captures the journey, saves the memories and achievements, and puts all the information together to tell the story. A story that continues every year through the eyes of the Historian/Media Relations Chairman. Remember how important it is to be able to look back on what we have done to help encourage others to continue the mission.



AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN, ANN BACKHURST



Continuing with the MASH theme, at one Department meeting, Major "Hot Lips" Hoolihan appeared and explained what MASH means in Michigan—Michigan Auxiliaries Serving Hospitals. Auxiliaries and their members worked on amassing

MASH points by reading and discussing the Hospital bulletins at Auxiliary meetings, and when submitting their hospital reports, if they included the "code" word found in the bulletins, they got MASH points. At the Department meetings, Auxiliary members were given Hospital crossword puzzles and word scrambles to complete. When they turned those in, their auxiliary earned more MASH points. At the Mid-

Winter Conference, each program had 10 questions for the membership to answer to gain more knowledge and have fun about the programs. We are looking forward to the Department Convention where awards will be given out. It's always an exciting time. We have also submitted several Hospital Volunteer of the Year applications to National. It's been a busy year serving our veterans.

AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRMAN, DENISE ARNOLD



It has been a pleasure working with Mike Martin, the VFW Scholarship Chairman, again this year. Thank you, Department President Jane Dady, for allowing me to do this chairmanship again this year. This program holds a special place in my heart. Our Mid-Winter Conference was filled with lots of fun and excitement for our 24 Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen students. Friday was a night of bowling,

pizza, and escape room fun. On Saturday morning the students were able to explore the Air Zoo and learn about flight history. Saturday afternoon the students presented a beautiful Americanism program with the assistance of the Americanism Chairman Wendy Hall and Brian Martin. Students explained the folds of the flag and the missing man table. Saturday night we celebrated the students' accomplishments as well as the Teachers of the Year. Over \$35,000 in prizes were awarded. The Michigan VOD winner will now travel to Washington DC in March to receive their National Awards of possible

\$35,000. Only the first-place PP winner is invited to the national event. Thank you to all of the VFW Posts and Auxiliaries that helped make this year's VOD, PP, and TOY a success in Michigan. It is time to check in with your high schools, youth groups, or any other location you are in contact with any student in 9th-12th grade who would like to participate in the Patriotic Art 2D or 3D contest. Please review the information form for each program for complete rules. All entries are due to the local Post on March 31st, 2025, and to Department (Denise Arnold) by April 15th, 2025. Always aspire to inspire!

AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

DEBRA MARSHALL

We are now several months into our new administration, and we need to step up our advocacy game. We need to hold our new and re-elected legislators responsible to uphold their campaign promises. It is now more important than ever that we urge our lawmakers to promote our VFW-

supported bills. As I'm sure you are all aware, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare & Benefits Improvement Act was signed into law by President Biden in December. This is a significant step in helping to keep the promises made to those who have served.

But our work is never done! We still need support for the Major Richard Star Act as well as S.2888/H.R.3933, the TAP Promotion Act. So get those letters and emails out to your U.S. Senators & Congressmen. Thank you for all you do to support our veterans, active military, and their families.

AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN/CHIEF-OF-STAFF, JAN PASSMORE



Our 2024-2025 administrative year is coming to a close. I have enjoyed my time as your Department Chaplain, and I look forward to assisting in our Department Memorial Service at our upcoming Department Convention. We do mourn the loss of our Past Department

President, Faith Stenson. I also enjoyed my time as your Department Chief of Staff. It has certainly been a learning experience for me. Many of our Auxiliaries are in good working order. We do have a few that did need a bit of assistance or are continuing to need assistance. Assisting and guiding is what the Department is here to do. Please remember that your April Auxiliary meeting is to conduct the election of Officers for the ensuing (2025-2026) year.

Please ensure that all offices are filled and that your installation of Officers is reported by the Auxiliary Secretary in MALTA or to the Department Secretary within 7 calendar days of installation. Please consider attending our upcoming Department Convention at the Kalamazoo Radisson in Kalamazoo. The dates are May 29th to May 31st. Even if you can only come for 1 day, I'm sure it will provide valuable information for you and your Auxiliary.

SERVICE DOESN'T STOP WHEN WE'RE DONE SERVING.

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

TodaysVFW.org

FLEECE HOODIE Established 1899 in gray screened on front. 51/42/7 polyester/cotton/ rayon. Front pouch pocket. Imported; decorated in the USA. 7648 S-3XL \$48.00

ANNIVERSARY BLANKET Recycled and organic black cotton blend with logo woven in design. Machine washable. 72 x 54". Made in the USA. 1077 \$80.00

VFW THROW This knit throw is 100% acrylic, machine washable and dryable. The VFW Emblem is woven into the design. 65 x 65". Made in the USA. 1987 \$81.95

#STILLSERVING KNIT HAT Black knit with solid cuff and embroidered logo. Made in USA. 7921 \$14.95

LEATHER PATCH KNIT CAP Made of 3M Thinsulate® material. Made in the USA. 7174 \$31.95

PATRIOTIC KNIT CAP Show your patriotic side with this warm knit cap! Navy blue with white USA and red stripes plus coordinating pom. Made in the USA. 7236 \$16.95

BUDDY POPPY SEEDS Grow your own red corn poppies. This annual can grow to 12" to 30" tall. Plant in full sun. Approx. 350 seeds per packet. 1250 \$3.00

Prices valid through 8/31/2025 To place your order, call 1.833.839.8387 or go online to VFWSTORE.ORG

DISTRICT COMMANDER REPORTS

DISTRICT 4 COMMANDER, TRACY NAGY



As we move into 2025, VFW District 4 remains steadfast in our mission of service, camaraderie, and community engagement. Over the past few months, our members have been actively involved in supporting veterans, organizing community initiatives, and strengthening our Posts. From honoring our fallen comrades to advocating for veterans' benefits, District 4 continues to demonstrate its commitment to excellence and unity. Our outreach efforts have brought members together in support of various initiatives, including food drives, veteran

support programs, and fundraising events. Strengthening communication among Posts has been a priority, ensuring that all members stay informed and engaged. Patriotism has been at the forefront as District 4 participated in numerous ceremonies and awareness campaigns to honor our nation's heroes. We kicked off the new year on January 4th with the District 4 Voice of Democracy/Patriot's Pen Banquet, where we recognized and celebrated the achievements of our youth essay competition winners. Later that month, our members had the opportunity to attend the Department of Michigan Mid-Winter Conference at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo. Looking ahead, in April, we will take time to honor our leaders at the District 4 Commander/

President Appreciation Dinner on April 4th. Later that month, on April 27th, we will come together for District 4 Loyalty Day, celebrating American loyalty and patriotism. May will be a significant month, beginning with the District 4 Convention on May 3rd, where we will hold our annual leadership elections. That evening, we will continue the celebration with the District 4 Banquet. Finally, on May 10th, we will gather for the District 4 Joint Memorial to honor those Post and Auxiliary members who have passed from our ranks. We look forward to working together to make District 4 the best it can be. Your participation in these events strengthens our community and ensures our mission continues. For more information, please reach out to your local Post leadership.

DISTRICT 8 COMMANDER, LEONARD BOSTON



Greetings, Comrades of District 8! The District continues to make great strides in support of our veterans and the communities we serve! I am hopeful all our District Comrades had a very enjoyable holiday season with family and friends. I know this winter has been an extremely harsh one, not just in the form of lots of snow and bone-chilling temperatures but in the form of sickness and family devastation in our own backyard. Just this past month, one of our Comrades and his family lost their home in a devastating fire. Many of our Brothers and Sisters from around the Department have helped with their prayers, words of strength, as well as monetary donations, as our Comrade

and his family navigate the unfortunate loss. I also know for a fact that his Post home is quite supportive of the needs of him and his family. As I have met and spoken with our Comrade, I continue to hold them in my thoughts, hoping that their recovery is speedy and that they know we are here for them. Now, let's talk membership! Because of the nature of our organization, membership and maintaining member totals will always be a priority; on average, membership is doing fairly well, with always room for improvement. As I travel to the various Posts in our District, membership opportunities/events are almost always a topic of discussion. I enjoy sharing ideas for membership events that I can think of or have attended on my travels. Please, if you have ideas for membership events and tools, don't be afraid to share. There is absolutely nothing wrong with

all 24 Posts in the Great 8 achieving 102% membership! Congratulations to the Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, and Teacher of the Year winners, and a big "thank you" to all the Posts and Auxiliaries that dedicated time fostering patriotism in the entrants and in their communities through the program. Finally, elections are upon us, and I know that all around the District there are Comrades out there with something new and innovative to offer. Now is your time to run for that Officer position within your Post or take on a Chairmanship. Our focus as volunteers in the VFW is to serve our veterans and their families, and we will not reach our full potential as an organization to accomplish our goals without your vision and new ideas. District Meeting is May 3rd at Otsego Post 3030, VTS from 10:00am to 11:00am, with meeting to follow at 12:30pm.

DISTRICT 9 COMMANDER, AARON MCCLUNG



Comrades of the Mighty 9th, 2024-2025 is proving to be a great year for our District. It has been an honor serving as your Commander this year. I look forward to finishing the year strong and poised to catapult us into next year. We have had outstanding feedback from inspectors, great participation with Youth Activities, positive direction with membership, and solid reporting from our District Posts. It has been good to get out into the District for inspections and visits. I am happy to see how active and involved with the community our Posts are; we are definitely still serving. Inspections have gone well, with only minor corrections or adjustments needing to be made at just a handful of Posts. It is good to remember a few items that will keep your Post in good standing. First, please ensure that when you renew your bond, you renew it in anticipation of an amount higher than your account will reach during the calendar year. Second, it is advisable to maintain multiple copies of your 990s; for the next inspection, inspectors will be required to submit a copy with the inspection report. These are just a couple of items that will help keep things in good order. I would like to thank all of the Posts that participated in the Youth Activities programs this year. It was a good turnout for participation. This year, the 9th District's representative

for Patriot's Pen, Autumn Gillis from Saginaw Post 9809, won 1st place for the Department level. The entry was fantastic, and we are looking forward to Autumn's participation in the Voice of Democracy in years to come. This year's Department of Michigan High School Teacher of the Year is also from District 9. Dana Blank, a teacher at Ovid-Elsie High School, was nominated and selected from Ovid Memorial Post 8964. Dana Blank is a great spokesperson for Americanism and a great advocate for veterans. Her lesson plans, as a Language Arts teacher, are rooted in American history, the founding of our nation, and patriotism. Ms. Blank has also asked for us to keep her updated on our legislative initiatives, as she would like to use them to help teach her students how to write letters to our legislators and other government officials. At the time this article was written, District 9 was at 100% of reporting. It is important that we finish the year strong and keep that number high. Reporting is how we self-report to the government to help strengthen our voice with our community and national legislators. If any Posts would like guidance on reporting, such as how to report efficiently or what's reportable, please reach out to me or our chairpersons for guidance. As we get ready for the end of our year, membership numbers are key. Keeping our membership at 100%, or more importantly, growing our membership to 102% or higher, isn't just something we want to do to receive awards like All-State and All-

American, but it's something we need to survive as an organization. First and foremost, we need to retain our current members. In addition to retention, we also need to recruit new members to keep our numbers growing. Currently, we need to make sure we are active in our communities to show as a home for the Global War on Terrorism Veterans. GWOT veterans are predominantly Generation X. Many in Generation X are independent-minded with a sense that they don't need anyone's help. However, Generation X is a group of individuals that are helpers or problem solvers. I recommend approaching this era of veterans as a welcoming community of veterans that needs help, the kind of help that can appeal to a sense of service from these veterans while making them feel at home. Finally, we are preparing for our District 9 Conference on May 10th, 2025. The meeting will be at the Fred. E. Richard's Post 305 in St. Louis. It is exciting to see all of the new faces showing interest in leadership and positions at the District level. It is good to get different faces into positions to learn and grow with the organization. Fresh faces equal fresh ideas. If you are interested in a District office or chair, please communicate with membership to find where you might fit in. We all have great talents and experiences that can be very beneficial to the organization. "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit." - Harry S. Truman.

DISTRICT 10 COMMANDER, FRED VANTROOSTENBERGHE



I hope it is all well with everyone in the District. We have had a lot of things happening around here, and most of the Posts are doing very well statistically. I see a lot of hard work from the Posts, and I'm impressed. I would like to see this continue. We have been doing a lot for our veterans in and out of our great organization. Let's keep up the great work and keep striving forward. The Posts and District are having their elections, and I am looking forward to working with the new regimes of the new year. Yes, I will be stepping down as

your District Commander, but I'll still be around helping our great District. I will always be available to help out; please don't hesitate to reach out. It was a great pleasure to be your District Commander this past year. I wish the new District 10 Commander well, as I know he will do a good job. I'm confident that everyone will continue to work well with each other. I want to thank every student that participated in the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen this year. There was solid competition throughout our District, and our District winners did an excellent job within the Department. I extend a big "thank you" to every Post that had a student that participated with these essays. These students deserve every

thank you as well. We, as a District have been doing a great job getting all reports turned in. Make sure that your quarterly audits are filled out properly and your trustees are checking everything over and signing them. Also, make sure they are turned in on time. Keep those Hospital and Activity Reports coming in. There are many good things that every Post is doing; make sure that we are showing that we are doing the work. I am looking forward to seeing everyone that goes to the State Convention. I am grateful to have served this great District one final time before our new District Commander takes over. It was a pleasure to have worked with you all, and I am very grateful that you all had faith in me to be your Commander.

ALL GAVE SOME SOME GAVE ALL

POW/MIA YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN



DISTRICT 11 COMMANDER, SCOTT TAYLOR

Greetings, Comrades from the 11th District. Things continue to be busy here in the 11th District with Post visits, Post Inspections, onsite training with Post Commanders and Quartermasters, as well as members from within the District attending the Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo. Like everyone else, we have spent the past week digging out of snowdrifts and battling the cold. The good news is there are only 34 days left until spring. I had the occasion this past month to have contact with a veteran in need who happens to live in an area of our state that no longer has a Post. At one point, we had two separate Posts serving the county where the veteran lives; however, they both had closed. This veteran reached out to a Post outside of their area asking for assistance with food for him and his family, and he was advised he needed to contact another Post closer to where he lived. My point in bringing this up is for educational purposes only and to define how we can do better as members of the VFW. Imagine that you are that veteran who must make

the decision to swallow your pride and ask for assistance. That step in and of itself is a tough choice to make, but after making this decision, you reach out to a VFW Post to ask for help feeding your family, only to be told that it is not within their Post area, that the veteran would have to be referred to someone else. The affected Post appropriately reached out to their District Commander, who in turn reached out to me to see if I could follow up. Initially I did not have the veteran's contact information, so when it was all said and done, it took over a week to ensure that this veteran received the food assistance needed. I don't bring this up to say that anyone failed, because ultimately the Post and District members did their best to ensure this veteran received the assistance he was asking for. I bring this up to identify ways that we can do better as members of the VFW. If you are the member who receives this phone call from a veteran asking for assistance, have a plan in place to obtain their complete contact information, and utilize your resources within the VFW to get the veteran in touch with the appropriate Post Commander who can best serve the needs of the veteran and their family. Have a plan to ensure this happens immediately and that there is not a weeklong gap from the

time the veteran is asking for assistance to when that assistance can be provided. This veteran shared how hard it was to reach out and ask for help and how initially he felt as though the VFW members seemed to keep passing him off to someone else. There are always two sides to a story, and somewhere in the middle is the truth, but at the same time, this was the veteran's impression and therefore his truth on the matter. In the end, through the conversations and cooperative efforts between two Posts and two Districts, we as a Post were able to provide fuel and food assistance to a combat veteran and his family of four. As a bonus, given the veteran's service in Iraq, our Post membership voted and approved to pay for this veteran to become a new biannual member of our Post. Always be mindful of the fact that our mission is "Honoring the dead by helping the living." With each contact we as members of the VFW have with veterans, we are being judged as the "VFW" in how we respond to their needs and their requests for service. Ensure that you are representing the VFW in a positive light with each contact and treat veterans as you would want your family treated. "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader." - John Quincy Adams



DISTRICT 12 COMMANDER, MAX RIEKSE

Greetings! I attended the Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo. It was great to see the Patriot's Pen District winner, who received \$500 from Department, as well as the Voice of Democracy state winner, who is from our very own 12th District, Post 8846 North Muskegon. She received \$6,000 from Department and will be going with her parents to Washington, D.C. The really large VOD Department trophy will be on display at the North Muskegon VFW Post for the next year; go check it out! Next, you should be aware the VA is undertaking some changes. One of which I hope is a change

in the very anti-Second Amendment policies—really anti-veteran policies—that have been embedded in the VA for the past four years. Contact both your US Senators and your United States Congressmen, as well as President Donald Trump, and ask them for a written response; then report that for legislative credit. President Donald Trump is focused on peace and ending the war between Ukraine and Russia. Now is the time to lobby President Trump, writing to the White House to have it as part of his talks with President Putin, bringing home our POW-MIA's from Russia; over 23,000 are believed to have been held in Communist Russia after World War II; over 1,500 unaccounted for from the Korean War are believed to have ended up in Russian custody; and approximately 126

unaccounted for during the Cold War are believed to be in Russia. Write to President Donald Trump and ask him the next time he talks to President Putin to press him to act on this really important issue for the families of our lost (and mostly forgotten) POW-MIA families. Lastly, trade and tariffs are on the mind of President Trump, so write him to have Laos account for and bring home the 283 POW-MIAs held there and the 1,573 missing in Vietnam. We want these men brought home as well. As both a Vietnam War and Iraq War veteran, the POW-MIA issue has been a focus of mine in the VFW for over 40 years. If at all possible, go to the next Department Convention or at least see to it that your Post sends a representative. Take care, and God bless our Constitutional Republic.



DISTRICT 14 COMMANDER, DEAN MAKI

First of all, I'd like to thank Commander Napoleon and her administration for some particularly good training at the Mid-Winter Conference. I would also like to congratulate District 14 Voice of Democracy winner, Hazel Garvon, and Patriot's Pen winner, Tyler Rautiola, for doing well in the Department judging.

Also, we were honored to have Tiffany Nicholas chosen as the Middle School Teacher of the Year. As far as the Posts in our District are concerned, that is somewhat disappointing. Many Posts are behind in their audits, and many of you haven't reported yet this year. Please keep your audits current. Report your Hospital and Activity donations. And make sure that the Commander or one of his Officers attends the next District Meeting, which will be held on April 6th, 2025, at 10:00 am at VFW Post

3165 in Negaunee. This is our Spring Convention, where we will discuss By-Law changes and elect Officers for the ensuing year. Post Commanders may be removed and Posts suspended for not attending required meetings. Please do not let it come to that. The other Districts in the state are doing well recruiting new members. Please do your part and help the Department of Michigan achieve its membership goals. Hope everyone has a Happy Easter. And as always: Retain, Reenlist, and Recruit.



DISTRICT 15 COMMANDER, ARTHUR KREIVI

Well, here it is, Mid-Winter in the great white north of District 15, only three more months of winter left here. I would like to congratulate our Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy winners in the District. Patriots Pen Winners: 1st Place: Adayla Rautiola from Post 6165, 2nd Place: Briana Antilla from Post 3900, and 3rd Place: Rylan Larson from Post 6507. Voice of Democracy Winners: 1st Place: Caleb Kentala from Post 3900, 2nd Place: Felisha Coponen from Post 6165, and 3rd Place: Ozzie Nykanen from Post 3900. I hope to see those eligible

to enter again this year do so because I believe this is a great program that the VFW runs. I would like to remind all Posts, not only in my District but all Districts, that the number one way to recruit new members is to have your Post active and visible in your communities. I hope that the Posts that are getting these new members are showing the members why they belong in the VFW and what the VFW is all about. The VFW is 125 years young this year; let's keep it around for another 125 years and build our membership back up. I would like to give a shout-out to my post, CLK #3900, as this year they are doing a community service project by getting a sign made and installed at Lake View Cemetery in Calumet to call attention to the Veteran Section of

the cemetery known by the local veterans as Hero's Hill. They have a good start with this project, and the goal is to have it completed by this year's Memorial Day if the snow melts. I encourage other Posts to do something in the community that their Post is in for the community. VFW has a Day of Service in May, maybe a good time to do something, and it is a requirement for All American Post. I know I only have a couple more months left as your District 15 Commander, so let's get all our reporting done so that we are one hundred percent reported, all our inspections completed, our membership to 102% in the District, and have some of our youngest members move up in the positions in the Post and District.



ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES

LISTED BY POST NUMBER	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	SERVICE	WAR
422 Delton	Johnson, Jeremiah J.	37	Army/Iraq		
	Van Sparrentak, William	91	Navy/Korea		
822 Flint	Romanowski, Lawrence	95	Army/Korea		
827 Kalamazoo	Myers, John F.	79	Army/Vietnam		
1137 Watervliet	Appel, Joseph M.	92	Army/Korea		
1146 St. Clair Shores	Didur, John P.	90	Navy/Korea		
1527 Kalamazoo (Red Arrow)	Becker, William K.	93	Marines/Korea		
1855 Dowagiac	Leitz, Walter	97	Army/WWII		
1887 Menominee	Ebsch, Larry	93	Army/Korea		
2144 Holland	Brouwer, Kenneth J.	96	Navy/Korea		
	White, Gary	83	Army		
2272 Durand	Myers, Carlton J.	40	Army/Gulf		
2292 Edmore	Gares, David	77	Army/Vietnam		
2335 Mecosta	Karcher, Richard G.	91	Army/Korea		
	Spencer, Mirl M.	89	Army/Korea		
2406 Charlotte	DeVinney, Robert E.	100	Army/WWII		
2496 Alpena	Carriveau, Charles W.	81	Army/Germany		
2891 Crystal Falls	Dishaw, Norbert	99	Army/WWII		
3165 Negaunee	Arbelius, Blaine L.	81	Marines/Vietnam		
3314 Arcadia	Nowak, Joseph J.	75	Army/Vietnam		
3672 Albion	Lynn, Keith	76	Army/Vietnam		
3720 Swartz Creek	Burnett, Scott A.	57	Army/Gulf		
3724 Standish	Engerer, Robert W.	93	Army/Korea		
	Sczpekowski, Stanley	78	Marines/Vietnam		
3733 Fowler	Cartwright, Leonard	77	Army/Vietnam		
	Winsor, Carl J.	93	Army/Korea		
3775 West Branch	Koon, Stanley G.	94	Army/Korea		
4037 Troy	Hella, Jonathan S.	38	Marines/Kuwait		
	Whisnant, David P.	93	Army/Korea		
4073 Marshall	Claeys, Louis A.	80	Navy/Vietnam		
4090 Portland	Luscher, William	77	Army/Vietnam		
	Spitzley, Philip	95	Army/Korea		
4187 Tecumseh	Sisson, John T.	95	Navy/WWII		
4659 Shelby Township	Pohorily, Vladimer		Air Force/Vietnam		
	Goolsby, Howard	86	Navy/Army/Vietnam		
	Reiss, Donald	78	Army/Vietnam		
	Runyan, Robert D.	75	Army/Vietnam		
5857 Onaway	Pierce, Richard	88	Coast Guard/Vietnam		
6464 Fowlerville	Aghababian, Sarkis	96	Army/WWII		
8236 Flint	Motley, Benny	79	Army/Vietnam		
	Sillman, Raymond	79	Army/Vietnam		
8303 Lowell	Vanderwilp, John	74	Vietnam		
9455 Owosso	Zdunic, Jerry	82	Army/Vietnam		
15023 Lansing	Wendland, Bruce E.	94	Army/Korea		



AUXILIARY DISTRICT REPORTS

DISTRICT 5 PRESIDENT, DON MCNICHOL



Greetings from the 5th District! Congratulations to the Voice of Democracy and Patriotic Pen winners at the Mid-Winter Conference as they move on to the National competition. The Mid-Winter Conference was very informative. Finally, with the help of Kim Sloan, Kathy Sasse, and the audit team, after three years, the treasurer's books now balance. That issue is now in the past, and it's time to move on with our mission of helping our veterans. Congratulations to all for making the 5th District 100%. Important Dates: March 23rd at 1:00 p.m., PC/PP Banquet, Post 6782. May 4th at 10:00 a.m., District Convention, Post 5587. June 5th-8th, Department Convention in Kalamazoo. Remember to report all that you do. Membership is our lifeblood, so keep recruiting new members and guide them along. The District is always looking for members to fill offices and chairmanships to keep our District strong because we are "The Fighting 5th District." "Till they all come home."

DISTRICT 11 PRESIDENT, VICKIE BUSHONG



Wow, the end of the year is drawing near. It is hard to believe. Reminders: The deadline for reporting is April 19th, 2025. Elect your delegates for National, Department, and District (send the District delegate form to the District secretary). If they are not received, you cannot vote. Our next District Meeting is Sunday, May 4th, 2025, at VFW Post 1075 in Harrison. Registration is at 9:30, meeting at 10. After your elections, your report of installation must be sent to Department by June 30th, 2025. Please also send a copy to the new District President. As I have traveled through our District, it was obvious how hard everyone was working to serve our veterans. I was so proud of our Auxiliaries when District 11 reached over 101% in membership. This showed what teamwork can accomplish. Teamwork makes the dream work! While attending Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo, it was an honor to hear what our young people have to say. These students do a great job. Good luck to our first-place State winners at Nationals. In closing, thank you to all my Officers, Chairman, and the Members of District 11 for all of the support and dedication to serve and honor our veterans and their families. I would also like to thank our Department President, Jane Dady, for your leadership, mentoring, and believing in me. Congratulations to the incoming Officers and chairman. I pledge you my unwavering support to everyone. I will always be a text or phone call away. It has been an honor to serve as your District 11 President this past year. Together we will continue to accomplish great things for our veterans.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

CANDIDATE FOR DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN JR VICE COMMANDER 2025-2026



Ricky R. Young

Endorsed & Supported By:
 District 10
 Flint VFW Post 822
 His Family

CANDIDATE FOR DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN JR VICE COMMANDER 2025-2026



Ben Light

Endorsed & Supported By:
 Family, Friends, Colleagues
 District 4 & District 5 (home District)
 Post 1136 (home Post of PSC Ray Lopez), Post 4162,
 Post 4659 (home Post), & Post 6756 (home Post of PSC Harry Les Croyal)

CAMP TROTTER GOLF OUTING FLYER



VFW Camp Trotter for Children 19th Annual Charity Golf Outing



Sunday June 22, 2025

Village Green Golf Course

8 am – Registration
 8130 Bingham Ave. Newaygo, MI 49337 Ph: (231)652-6513

9 am – Shotgun Start

Cost \$80 per person/ \$320 per team include:

- *18 Hole Cart
- * Lunch at the Turn
- * Grilled Steak Dinner after golf on Sunday
- *4 Person Scramble
- * Team Placement Prizes
- *Door Prizes

Limited to 100 Players or 25 Teams

Golf Entry / Sponsorship Form

This form must be filled out and returned with all fees by May 31st, 2025

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Player #1 Name: _____

Player #2 Name: _____

Player #3 Name: _____

Player #4 Name: _____



Hole Sponsor \$80 (minimum): \$ _____

Golf Cart Sponsor \$25: \$ _____

I can donate products or gift certificates, please contact me. Cash Donations: \$ _____

Total Being Paid: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:

VFW Department of Michigan, and mail to Ricky Young 350 Rosemore Dr. Davison, MI 48423-1616

Sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Michigan

For more information contact Ricky Young at (810)569-2193, rickyrambo2928@yahoo.com
www.michigangolf.com/courses/newaygo/village-green-gc

Golfers please note: There will be a Department VTS for Post & District officers at Camp Trotter on Saturday June 21. Registration forms will be available soon. This would be a great opportunity to attend a VTS followed by a day of charity golf.

2025 STATE CONVENTION

May 28-June 1, Kalamazoo MI

VFW AGENDA

Wednesday, May 28	VFW Golf Outing	
Thursday, May 29		
8:00 am – 11:00 pm	Registration (Registration closes for lunch 11:00 – 12:30)	Fields
7:30 – 8:30	CofA Breakfast	Meadows
8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Program Display Tables	Great Lakes
8:30 am	Service Committee Meeting	Prairies
8:45 am	Budget & Finance Committee Meeting	Prairies
9:00 am	ByLaws & Resolutions Committee Meeting	Prairies
10:05 am	VFW Council of Administration Meeting	Prairies
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch on your own	
12:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Registration	Fields
1:00 pm	Joint VFW / Auxiliary Opening	Glens
5:00 pm -	Mandatory practice for Joint Memorial Service Required for Dept Line Officers & Dist Commanders	Glens
6:00 pm – 11:00 pm	Department Hospitality Room	8th Floor
Friday, May 30		
8:00 am – 11:00 am	Registration (Registration closes for lunch 11:00 – 12:30)	Fields
8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Program Display Tables	Great Lakes
8:30 am – Noon	Opening Session of 2025 Dept Convention	Prairies
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch on your own	
12:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Registration	Fields
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Convention Business Session Resumes Committee Reports	Prairies
3:00 pm – 3:25 pm	Suspend order of business – Opening of Nominations	Prairies
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Joint VFW / Auxiliary Memorial Service	Glens
6:00 pm	Joint Testimonial Commander Napoleon and President Dady	Arcadia Ballroom
Saturday, May 31		
8:00 am – 10:00 am	Registration	Fields
8:00 am – 2:00 pm	Program Display Tables	Great Lakes
8:30 am	Convention Business Session Resumes Committee Reports & Awards	Prairies
11:30 am	Reopening of Nominations Presentation of Candidates	Prairies
12:00 – 1:30 pm	Past State Commanders / Past State Presidents Luncheon	
12:00 – 1:30 pm	Lunch on your own / District Caucuses on your own	
1:30 pm	Convention Business Session Resumes	Prairies
6:30 pm – 10:00 pm	2025-2026 CofA Meeting promptly after close of Convention Celebration with Commander Reinold Yahnka & Department President Scheetz at Hotel	Kalamazoo 1
Sunday, June 1	DRIVE HOME SAFE	

VFW AUXILIARY AGENDA

Wednesday, May 28	VFW Golf Outing
Thursday, May 29	(Dress code – Jane’s Pink Shirt)
8:00 am – 11:30 am	Registration
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Registration
10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Auxiliary Council of Administration Meeting
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch on your own
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Hospital Booth /Camp Trotter
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Joint Opening
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Instruction to Pages
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Floor Practice
5:00 pm	Mandatory practice for Memorial Service (All Officers, District Presidents and anyone that is part of the service, if unable to attend, please contact the Dept. President)
7:30 pm – 8:30 pm	2025-2026 Pre Council of Administration Meeting
6:00 pm – 11:00 pm	Department Hospitality Room
Friday, May 30	(Dress code - Official look blouse/shirt and black pants/slacks)
8:00 am – 11:30 am	Registration
8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Hospital Booth/Camp Trotter
8:30 am – 5:00 pm	2025-2026 Auxiliary Program Pins available for pick up
8:00 am – Noon	Auxiliary Business Session Opens
12:00 pm – 1:15 pm	Lunch on your own
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Registration
1:15 pm – 2:15 pm	Presentation of District and Auxiliary Achievement Awards
2:15 pm – 2:45 pm	VAVS Representatives Meeting
2:15 pm – 3:00 pm	District Jr Vice Presidents meeting with Department Jr. Vice President Jason Manke
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Joint Memorial Service
5:45 pm	Joint Testimonial for Commander Napoleon and President Jane Dady Dress Code: suit/tie for men; cocktail attire for women
Saturday, May 31	(Dress code is official look blouse/shirt and black pants/slacks)
8:00 am – 9:30 am	Registration
8:00 am – 11:30 am	Photo Room
8:00 am – Noon	Hospital Booth/ Camp Trotter
8:00 am – Noon	2025-2026 Auxiliary Program Pins available pick up
8:00 am – Noon	Auxiliary Business Session Resumes
12:00 - 1:30 pm	Lunch on your own/Caucus
12:00 – 1:30 pm	Past State Commanders/Past State Presidents Luncheon
1:30 pm	Auxiliary Business Session Resumes
6:30 pm – 10:00 pm	2025-26 C of A Meeting promptly after close of Convention Celebration with Commander Reinhold Yanka and Department President Debbie Scheetz at Hotel. (Dress code is casual)
Sunday, June 1	2025-2026 Program Kickoff by Program Chairmen (This will count as a School of Instruction)

**DESIGNER / EDITOR
ALYSSA MCELFRISH**

Hello friends and happy Spring! Hopefully we are fully past the Winter weather, although knowing Michigan we probably aren't quite yet. I hope everyone is doing well and had a wonderful holiday season with your families. I plan on seeing you all at State Convention at the end of May. The next MOV deadline is shortly after that, so please keep that in mind if you would like to submit an article.

Next deadline = June 15, 2025

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.

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

Send completed form to:
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or Amanda@vfwmi.org

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(Age) (Date of Death)

(Post)

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We understand the unique bond you share with other veterans of overseas conflicts because we, too, have been there. No matter which conflict called you to service, we invite you to join us as we continue to fight for all that's good FOR VETERANS.



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