

The Missouri Bridge

2024-2025

General Orders

March/April

“The Bridge; The Road - Linked for Success”

President Amy Jo Lett

As the 2024-2025 VFW Auxiliary year comes to a close, we will celebrate the progress made through the communications in **The Missouri Bridge**, by “Bridging the Gap”, we have united Post & Auxiliaries, building a stronger foundation.

Soon, we step off the Bridge onto the 2025-2026 Road, Missouri’s **Yellow Brick Road**, led by President-Elect Patti Burge. This road continues the journey, guiding us toward even greater acts of service. With "Be the Reason a Veteran Smiles Today," we will take the Road on the other side of the Bridge, and pave the way for a successful future, one brick, one smile, and one act of kindness at a time.

Youth Activities – Lori Suiter

March 2-6 is Dr. Suess Read Across America Week. You can have auxiliary members go into a classroom to read or host a “Book Party” at your post home. Have veterans there to read, and have the children bring their favorite book to enjoy. You could provide craft activities, snacks and give away a patriotic book from the Patriotism Through Literacy Book List.

Don’t forget that Illustrating America Art Contest entries are due to the Auxiliary by March 31, 2025. Auxiliaries need to send the first-place winner from each grade level to the Department by April 15, 2025. Contest rules and entry forms are available at vfwauxmo.org.

Scholarship – Jenn Hoyt

Hello, I hope everyone is having a wonderful year and I am glad Spring is in the air. I want to say if you were not able to attend the Winter Council of Administration, we had a blast taking the winners of the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen to see the St. Louis Arch and to the Soldier's Museum. That evening we got all dressed up in our fancy clothes and had a beautiful banquet to recognize the winners and to announce the state winner.

Our next focus is to the VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest 2024-2025; deadline is March 31st. This scholarship recognizes young artists and encourages patriotism in youth. Next, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Missouri Past National President Scholarship deadline is April 15th. The Department of Missouri offers these two scholarships (\$1,800 and \$1,200) in honor of Mabel Tanner and Glenneta Vogelsang who served as National President to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary.



“Reporting Deadline Approaching Fast”

Program Coordinator- Judi Reine

Reporting, it’s that time of year to make sure you have reported all your activities by April 15, 2025. Review your minutes and treasurer's reports - if you held an event or made a donation you can report it.

It's always best to enter your reports as they happen, but it's not too late to add events from the past. Just be sure to enter the correct year (2024) in the date field for events that happened last year. If you have any questions or need help getting the reports online, you can contact Judi Reine (660) 287-1604 or Judi.Reine@gmail.com

Hospital – Karen Cypret

National Volunteer Week is from April 21-27, 2025. National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 and every year the contributions of volunteers have grown significantly with special events and programs scheduled throughout the week. Have you sent in your forms for the volunteer of the year yet?

This is a great way to recognize your hard workers in your auxiliary.

Operation Bottom Cover is still underway. Babies are being born all the time. Our Service members do not need to worry about how to diaper their babies’ bottoms. We still need all sizes. Newborn all the way up to size 6 Pull-ups.

“Buddy”® Poppy/ National Home – Brandy Young

Have you started planning your “Buddy”® Poppy display for Convention yet? Remember to read the National Convention “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest rules for categories, requirements and judging information.

The National Home celebrates 100 years of helping Veterans and their families this Spring. How will you help them celebrate? Will you purchase a VFW National Home Life Membership? Will you purchase a VFW National Home Tribute Brick? What about going on the VFW and Auxiliary National Home trip in October? What do you have planned?

Americanism – Sandy Prichard

Want to make an American Pie Parade Float?

Ingredients:

- Volunteers (as many as possible)
- Flatbed trailer for float
- Flags (the red, white and blue ones, of course)
- Beads
- Candy

Decorate the float and load up the volunteers. Let the veterans ride in the float and have volunteers walk with the float. Hand out flags, beads, and candy.

Stir it all up and you will have the best American Pie Parade Float ever!

Get your form filled out and send to me for the National Award for the Auxiliary that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about lesser-known patriotic holidays. I can’t wait to see what creative ideas you came up with.



Treasure/Secretary Corner – Jackie Davis

It is that time of the year to be electing your delegates for the District, Department, and National Convention.

- You will be receiving information from your District Secretary on your Delegates for the District Convention. One delegate/alternate for every 15 members and a fraction thereof.
- **At the end of March**, you will receive information from the Department Secretary on your delegates/alternates for the Department Convention. The fee is \$7.00 for each. One delegate/alternate for every 30 members and a fraction thereof.
 - It is the Auxiliary’s responsibility to make sure this is returned to Department even if no one from your Auxiliary goes to the Convention.
- Delegates/Alternates for National Convention are to be entered into MALTA by May 31st. One delegate/alternate for every 35 members and a fraction thereof. (At the 2024 Convention, the delegates/alternates changed from 50 to 35.)

Auxiliary Outreach – Kim Rudy

Spring is in the air and it’s the perfect time to work with other organizations. All it takes is passion, knowledge, adaptability, communication, and community engagement. Let your strategies simmer and develop! Outline your objectives, timelines, and resources with the other organization. Be organized and efficient but also allow room for improvisation. Embrace challenges and find creative solutions if any problems arise.

Learn about their organization; nurture these connections and let them enrich your outreach efforts. As you work together, show them what makes you want to move mountains for veterans and their families.

Have fun and be yourself! Passion is contagious, so let your enthusiasm shine through.

Ways & Means Convention

Baskets Districts – All

Grab Bags Each Auxiliary Bring 5

Do Not seal bags please!

Questions, Please Contact

Briana Borts 660-437-5514



Historian – Stephanie Leary**In Ant-ticipation: Ready to Win?**

Want to make some noise for your VFW Auxiliary programs? National is looking for the most outstanding social media promotion of VFW Auxiliary Programs! From Americanism and Buddy Poppy drives to Veterans and Family Support and Youth Activities, they want to see how you're engaging the public online. This award celebrates creative social media campaigns that highlight the impact of VFW Auxiliary programs. Find the award form on vfwauxmo.org and submit your best social media campaign example(s) by March 15, 2025, to Stephanie at dlearyous89@gmail.com for your chance at \$25 and a citation.

Just like ants working together, VFW Auxiliary and VFW members achieve extraordinary things for Veterans through teamwork. We're seeking nominations for the "Building Bridges: Most Outstanding Promotion Highlighting Teamwork" award. This award recognizes exceptional collaborations that benefit Veterans. Tell us about your joint project and how you promoted it (social media, newspaper, radio, etc.). Show us how your teamwork made a difference. Submit your report by April 15, 2025, for your chance to win \$20 for each membership group!

Contact us! dlearyous89@gmail.com | 573-337-9399



I've been so impressed with the work of the Auxiliaries, and I've really enjoyed keeping up with everything on Facebook, as well as reading your reports and newsletters. I hope I've been able to provide you with some helpful information for your position. ~Stephaine

Membership- Vicki Garcia

While our year is winding down, we must be vigilant in continuing our efforts to increase our ranks. Many of you have lapsed members or members lost to death. These are unfortunate circumstances we deal with on a yearly basis. However, we can control our efforts in recruitment. Using every opportunity that comes our way whether it be a membership drive, a post or auxiliary event, or people we come upon in our daily lives, we must be prepared and educated about our organization to relay our message and what we do. Having tools at the ready such as the new QR Code can quickly turn a passing encounter into an opportunity for recruitment.

Consider purchasing the new key chain at the VFW store that has the QR code on it or print it out on business cards to carry with you. We can no longer rely on just family members or existing post members as a base of recruitment.

We must also make sure that we clean up our rosters on a regular basis. Many times, we find out years later we have lost members to death. If we are in regular contact with our members, this should not happen. In the case of life members, it can be even more difficult. Be sure you attempt to contact life members at least once a year. Search obituaries on the internet annually to see if any members have passed away.

Deaths must be reported as soon as possible so that at the very least you can send a card of condolence to the family. Sending those condolences years after their loved ones passing can bring sadness once again to the family. If you think about it, collecting life dues payouts from National for someone who has passed is kind of like collecting a social security check for someone who has passed. So, let's all try to be honest and above board by actively researching our members to see if they have sadly passed away.

There is a resolution being proposed for this year's National Convention that if accepted by the National Resolutions Committee and passed would allow National to charge back for life dues payouts that were collected on deceased members if it has been over three years since their death. So, let's be proactive and make sure to stay on top of this and get your rosters clean now.

Legislative Advocacy – Monica Schroeder

Our advocacy and grass roots efforts play a crucial role in advocating for our Veterans legislative issues at both the state and national level. By actively participating in these efforts, we help ensure that veterans receive the support and recognition they deserve.

Rock the Rotunda, March 11 at the State Capital at 8:00 am. Hope to see everyone there. The VFW Action Corps is a network that allows members to stay informed regarding legislative issues and contact their elected congressmen and senators. When action alerts come out, please **PUSH THE BUTTON!!** Sign up by texting VFW to 50457.

Veterans and Family Support- Darla Nebel

Shout to our awesome auxiliaries. It has been an amazing year. Spring is coming into sight. Keep an eye out for craft shows, fairs, community events. Grab a spot and set up a table with information such as Veterans Suicide Awareness, Service Officers, Adopt-a-Unit, Unmet, MAP etc. You can find this information on Malta in the resources section.

We need to educate our community about our programs and services we provide for veterans and their families.

Thank you for all your hard work this year.

Auxiliary Calendar

District Conventions Meetings

- D18 Post 3009 April 5 @ 10am
- D9 Post 3987 April 6 @ 1pm
- D2 Post 5923 April 12 @ 11am
- D12 Post 6274 April 12 @ 12am
- D3 Post 10906 April 13 @ 1pm
- D14 Post 3404 April 13 @ 12pm
- D17 Post 2446 April 27 @ 1pm
- D5 Post 1000 April 27 @ 1pm
- D15 Post 7183 April 27 @ 12pm
- D6 Post 2591 May 4 @ 12pm
- D8 Post 6660 May 4 @ 1pm
- D7 Post 4207 May 10 @ 10am

Department Meetings & Events

June 11 -15, 2025 Oasis, Springfield

National Meetings & Events

National Convention August 9-14, 2025
Columbus, Ohio

**All-State Auxiliary Gail Huffman
District All-State Danetta Wakefield
Award Reminders**

- ✓ Attend District Meeting
- ✓ Conduct your meetings
- ✓ Plan a Joint Event with the VFW that will benefit Veterans.
- ✓ Report Projects on Website
- ✓ 990's filed with the IRS.
- ✓ 101%+ Membership in current Percentages for Max Points
- ✓ Send your Form in on Time

**Extensions, Mentoring & Revitalization-
Chief of Staff Janet Barlar**

I want to thank the Auxiliaries for their hard work supporting our Veterans this year. You have all done an outstanding job, and I am so proud of you! I asked the District Presidents to set up Mentoring Teams for their District, and they did. It is a tool that they can use in helping Auxiliaries who might need guidance or support. I'm happy to report that, currently, we have no Auxiliaries on suspension (Red)!

We have not been able to establish any new Auxiliaries, but there is still time to start a new Auxiliary. Just check with the unaffiliated Posts you might have in your District and see if they are interested in establishing a new Auxiliary. If you have questions or need help, please feel free to contact me.

Again, thank you for your continuing support of our Veterans! I wish you nothing but the best for the rest of the year and for an outstanding year next year! Love and Respect, Janet



Thank you all for everything you have done in our Programs! It has been one amazing Program Year! We will see you at Convention for all the Awards! A Big Thank You to all my Program Chairman and all those who make it all happen behind the scenes! Always, Amy Jo Lett- Department President

Roster Changes

March/April 2025

District	Aux	
2	2025	Secretary/Treasurer – Wendy Coffman Wendycpost2025aux@gmail.com
18		District Secretary/ Treasurer – Nancy Smith 6539 E Outer Rd, Norwood, MO 65717-9331 Nancy65.ns@gmail.co 417-766-2448
	3009	Secretary/Treasurer – Laura Pruett 110 Vine St, Mountain View, MO 65548 Lpruett91@icloud.com 417-247-5275
	4107	President – Tasia Perrin 556 State Road H, Elkland, MO 65644-8523 Tasia.perrin@yahoo.com 417533-4299
	4107	Secretary – Gail Dourlain 31551 Pelican Dr, Lebanon, MO 65536-8268 gdourlain@gmail.com 417-718-0195

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

January 14, 2025

OFFICIAL RULING – Property Ownership

At the 2024 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, the **VFW Auxiliary National Bylaw, Article IX, Sec. 920 – Property Ownership** was passed. To resolve any confusion, I have made this official ruling on the interpretation of this Bylaw.

As stated in **Sec. 920, B.**, *For the purposes of these Bylaws, personal property is defined as tangible and intangible property that is moveable, even if a small amount of disassembly is required to move. C., For the purposes of these Bylaws, real property is defined as land and permanent structures on the land.* Therefore, be it known that:

- Auxiliaries may own personal property, **per Sec. 920, A.**
- When personal property is placed in a VFW Post building, there shall be a clear understanding of who owns the property, how it will be used and disposed of if the VFW Post and/or VFW Auxiliary goes defunct.
- This understanding shall be in writing and signed by both the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary.
- Any items without a clear, signed statement of ownership and usage, will be the property of the VFW Post.
- Items donated to the VFW Post prior to the Bylaw change, are the property of the VFW Post, unless there is a previously signed document stating otherwise.
- Additionally, the Auxiliary may not charge the VFW Post rent to use items purchased by the Auxiliary that are kept at the VFW Post building (e.g., tables, chairs, etc.), unless a written agreement exists between the VFW Auxiliary and the VFW Post for the rental of these items.
- Any shed or building purchased by the Auxiliary and placed on the VFW Post property shall belong to the VFW Post and not the Auxiliary. The VFW Post as owner pays the taxes and insurance on such property. Any ad valorem tax or any other taxes are the responsibility of the owner of the property.
- The exception to this is that Auxiliary specific and/or Auxiliary branded items (e.g., Auxiliary Charter, Auxiliary Flags, Color Bearer Flags, Auxiliary Banners, Auxiliary Plaques, Auxiliary Awards, etc.) remain the property of the Auxiliary.

The goal is teamwork. We encourage all VFW Auxiliaries and VFW Posts to work together. Clear communication is the key.

By Order of

Brenda Bryant
National President
BB:AP: cb

UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®