

MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN

VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

WINTER 21/22



DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, KEVIN CONKLIN

First, congrats to all of our posts that have successfully navigated 2021. The pandemic has played havoc on our posts and our Comrades, but it has not stopped us from executing our mission of serving veterans and their families. As of this writing, Michigan remains 10th in the nation for membership, at over 90%. The work you are doing in the field is changing people's lives, and is inspiring

others to join in our mission. Our membership statistics show this. The VFW Department of Michigan has created a non-profit foundation arm of the Department that is named "VFW Charities of Michigan". In the past month alone, we have received a \$10k donation from another foundation to support Camp Trotter, and another significant donation from the Boyne City Smelt City Post 3675. As one of their last acts prior to turning in their charter, the post donated \$50,000.00 to VFW Charities of Michigan, with the goal of having these funds support our posts. These efforts are just the beginning, as we continue to grow the VFW Charities of Michigan, we will be able to scale our support of our Comrades in our communities across our great State.

In August, we faced a funding shortfall for the Department Service Office due to changes that were made to the State grants that fund the Michigan Veterans Coalition (MVC). The MVC is the partnership

between the VFW, Legion, DAV and VVA. The VFW, alongside our VSO partners, engaged the Governor and the State Legislature. Not only did our advocacy efforts prevent potential layoffs of our service office staff, but instead resulted in a \$2.2M funding increase for service office initiatives across the state, with \$1.3M going to the VFW, DAV, Legion and VVA's service offices of the MVC. I appreciate everyone that made calls and sent letters to the Governor and legislatures. Your efforts made the difference.

These efforts only highlight the impact our organization has on Michigan's veterans, and the need for your involvement in signing up for the Action Corps and in leading the fight for our Comrades on toxic exposures, veteran suicides and overprescribing and other critical issues facing veterans and their families. Your voice matters!

To the posts who have been doing a great job with community service and hospital reporting, keep it up! This reporting is not only for the IRS audits, but also legislatively and philanthropically. These numbers show the impact of the VFW, and everyone needs to know the difference you are making. Further, please get out into your community and show them what the VFW can do. The new members will show up. If you see someone wearing military gear, say "thanks for your service". This occurred recently at a Wendy's drive through, and as result we have a brand new Life Member of the VFW!

Please have a safe and successful 2022! God Bless you, our military and first responders!
Yours in comradeship.

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DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER, JOHN GRIFFITH

As this article is being written for the winter issue of the "Michigan Overseas Veteran", it is hard to believe that half of the 2021-2022 year is gone. As we enter the New Year, we should all take stock of the positive accomplishments of our Post, Districts and Department. Personally, I have been proud to serve as your Senior-Vice Commander under the leadership of Commander Kevin Conklin. Many of our members do not know what challenges the line officers and Staff face in administering the programs of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and for this reason it is important that some of the Department accomplishments be highlighted.

Recently the State of Michigan proposed to realign the way grant funding for our Veterans Service Offices was administered, the proposed changes would have resulted in greater bureaucracy and the loss of funding. This loss would have caused the termination of a significant number of Veteran Service Officers. Commander Conklin and our Department Adjutant/Quartermaster Derek Blumke, along with their counterparts with the Michigan Veterans Coalition, made up of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America and VFW, rallied to

the cause. Many hours of research, coordination, countless meetings and administrative efforts were conducted before a meeting with the Governor and her staff could be arranged to address the proposed changes. As a result of these efforts, not only was the funding not cut, but the Coalition realized an increase of 2.2 million dollars over previous state budgets.

Our Department Legislative Chairman Kevin Hensley recently represented the Department of Michigan VFW when testifying before congress on behalf of Burn Pit legislation. Kevin's expertise on the subject of toxic exposure is unsurpassed and he professionally represents the VFW as he works for presumptive benefits for veteran victims of respiratory ailments. Additionally, Kevin just testified before the Michigan State Legislature on the recent bill for 100% disabled veterans losing their property tax exemptions.

These examples of legislative efforts are illustrations why every member of the VFW needs to sign-up to the VFW "Action Corps". This is the simplest way to contact your senators and congressional representatives in support of pending legislation. A click or two in the Action Corp newsletter and a letter is generated in your name to these law makers letting them know your support.
.... continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Dept. Commander..... 1
 Dept. Jr Vice 1-2
 Dept. Quartermaster 2
 Dept. Jr. Vice 2
 Big 10 Delegate 3
 Dept. Legislative 3
 Dept. Chaplain 3
 National C of A 4
 Cootie Corner 4
 Dept. National Home 4
 Dept. Surgeon 4
 Dept Scholarships 4
 Aux. Dept. President 5
 Aux. Chaplain 5
 Aux. Outreach 5
 Aux. Secretary 5
 Aux. Americanism 5
 Aux. Family Support 6
 Aux. Buddy Poppy/Nat. Home 6
 Aux. Youth/Camp Trotter 6
 Post Reports 8-9
 District Reports 10-11
 National Legislative..... 11
 Aux. District Reports 12
 National VFW News 13
 Dept. Roster Updates 13
 Mid Winter Schedule 14
 Campaigns 15
 Dept. MOV 16
 TAPS & Form 16

DEPARTMENT SR VICE, JOHN GRIFFITH - CONTINUED

Our Department Staff recently established the “VFW Department of Michigan Charities”, a 501C (3) entity. Traditionally our posts are 501C (19) organizations not allowing for tax exempt donations. While donations and grants could be funneled through the VFW National 501C (3) entity, many Michigan corporations and foundations would not allow donations to be made outside of the state. With the establishment of the

“VFW Department of Michigan Charities”, post may now solicit funds and grants from Michigan organizations that can make donations earmarked for individual post through our department.

These are just a few of the ways your Department Staff is working to “Protect and Serve Veterans”. Most would agree that the Department of Michigan is on the right track as we look forward to 2022 – 2023.

DEPARTMENT QUARTERMASTER, DEREK BLUMKE



To say the VFW Department of Michigan has been riding a wave of success would be a dramatic understatement.

All of this success is due to one word: teamwork. In the past six months, we (we = our post members and officers, district leaders, Department staff and leadership, and all of our Auxiliary) have been fighting hard to serve our communities and to advocate for Michigan’s veterans.

We staved off potential layoffs of service office staff due to changes in the grant process for the Michigan Veterans Coalition. We took this challenge and turned it into an opportunity. We successfully advocated for a funding increase of \$1.3M for the Michigan’s Veterans Coalition, in turn allowing the VFW Department of Michigan to provide a significant salary increase across the board for our service office and an expansion of our services across the state. We changed things up dramatically for our Fall Conference, merging much of our training with the Auxiliary. The results have been paying dividends. We created the VFW Charities of Michigan and this has already resulted in a financial impact for posts across the State.

We are driving hard, because we have recognized that we are in a crisis. Until now the Afghanistan and Iraq generation of veterans had been slow to join our ranks. Until now. In the past several months,

we have seen a surge of these veterans coming to our posts and volunteering to support our mission. The withdrawal from Afghanistan was a disaster. We all recognize this. In this collective recognition, the Vietnam veterans came out in force to support the Afghanistan and Iraq veterans. They saw this story before, and this latest generation of veterans have felt this warm welcome and have found their home here in the VFW.

I say we are in crisis, because over the course of 30 years, we lost over 100,000 members and nearly 200 posts. Along the way, we never paused to do a strategic review to see if we are making ourselves attractive to future generations. The needs of this generation and those who will come after them, are the same. They need help getting jobs. They need help starting businesses. They need help supporting their families. And they need help transitioning to college or training programs.

We may still contract, but if we recognize the challenges of our customers (our veterans and their families of today, and tomorrow), our business model will thrive, as we are providing a true value add for our veterans. Today we have recognized the challenges veterans face, and the urgent nature facing the veterans community. There will continue to be challenges, but we will drive forward, and through the investments we are making in ourselves today, we will ensure the strength of our veterans community and the VFW for generations to come.



SOME SAY THEY’VE GOT YOUR BACK.

WE PROVE IT

DEPARTMENT JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER, RAY LOPEZ



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

As this year rapidly continues on, we have turned the corner into 2022. Most of our posts have moved forward in spite of the many challenges and have excelled.

It is ever important for posts to submit reports and work the programs. If assistance is needed with the reporting process, please

reach out to your District Commander, Respective Directors or Department. I also would encourage all members both elected and appointed to attend a Department training session when they are scheduled.

Mentoring must also be considered so knowledge is passed on to the next generation of leaders.

Let us not forget about recruiting new members. Every member should consider themselves a membership director. Membership should be a all hands effort!

We must also have on hand the current

National Bylaws. I would also encourage Posts to update their current Bylaws.

I would like to congratulate all the Posts that are 100% in reporting and actively recruiting new members. Your continued hard work and service to Veterans and the Community is a testament to your dedication to our great organization.

In closing, thank you for allowing me to serve as Your Department Jr. Vice Commander.

Please feel free to call if I can be of any assistance.



BIG 10 DELEGATE, NORM MAULDIN

Comrades, it has been my pleasure and honor to have served as your Big Ten Delegate. Su and I hope your holidays were merry

I want to thank you for the honor and privilege of being your delegate for the year, as all my obligations are complete. Please stay up to date with what's going on in the Big Ten through the Facebook page, VFW BIG TEN CONFERENCE, which is maintained by Dave Root.

was on fire with distension and division, he stepped up to help provide some calm for the benefit of the membership. During the year the Service Officers Committee needed a Past State Commander to step up, again he stepped up for the benefit of the membership and our service officers, who are our shining gems where the rubber meets the road. These are just two of many reasons I support Jerry Gorski. He has always been willing if able to step up and provide a helping hand, weather it was popular or not. He has proven he is not afraid of a conflict and is here to help resolve issues for the benefit of the membership and the organization.

and bright. During the Christmas season Michigan was number one in membership in the Big Ten, I hope we still are by the time you read this.

Remember, during the upcoming year, we as the Big Ten get to elect our next National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief for 2023-2024. Whomever we elect as the Big 10 Delegate at the Department Convention, will be casting their vote to represent you. We will be electing the future Commander-in-Chief to lead this great organization.

I wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

As your Big Ten Delegate, I must inform you that I was unable to attend the Big Ten Conference in South Dakota. Unfortunately, I came home from our Fall Conference, in Boyne Highlands with COVID. I was diagnosed the day before I was to get on the road for the Big 10 Conference. Upon finding out that I had COVID, I immediately contacted the Commander and let him know. That way our vote for the Big 10 Steering Committee election would be used by Michigan's delegation.

We have a Candidate from Michigan, who I feel is our best choice out of the four. When our department conference room floor

During the Conference, elections were held for next year's officers.

The Big Ten Conference Delegates (pictured right) elected to the Steering Committee are:



Don Lynch (Wisconsin) as the Big Ten Conference Chairman for 2021-2022.

Paul Arnold (Iowa) elected Vice Chairman for 2021-2022.

Erv Yoder (Ohio) elected Big Ten Conference Secretary/Treasurer 2021-2022.

Deborah Halter (Missouri) elected Big Ten Conference Chaplain 2021-2022.

DEPARTMENT LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

KEVIN HENSLEY

Nobody does more for Veterans

The VFW slogan, what does it mean to you? Currently the VFW supports over 47 veteran bills, with many that have veteran issues related to them, but not on the VFW radar. Why, I ask is this? Efforts to grant Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment(HBOT) to those veterans suffering from traumatic Brain Injury(TBI), efforts to help caregivers who take care of veterans to forgive student loan debt, because the caregiver program saves the Veterans Administration billions of dollars every year. Then we look at Toxic Exposure, and how we just held meetings with multiple Senators and Congressional Delegates to convince them all, of the importance of supporting or co-sponsoring H.R. 3967 the Honoring our PACT Act. While veterans exposed to toxins are still sick and dying as a result of toxic exposure, while we kick the can down the road and more veterans die as a we debate this issue. The silver lining in all this is that we the VFW get to discuss these issues, garner support and attempt to change the numerous veteran opinions, that nobody

cares about us veterans.

Lastly, we the VFW in Michigan are loading trucks, trailers and vans with disaster relief items for the state of Kentucky due to the devastation left by tornados that ransacked over 200 miles of towns, cities and counties. I'm so honored and proud that the entire state of Michigan VFWs have made a call to action to bring much needed supplies to the afflicted areas of Kentucky, along with the DAV, several non-profits, many hands have been involved to make this happen for Michigan to Stand United for Kentucky.

I'm honored to be apart of the Legislative Team for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Michigan, but we have a long road ahead to get legislation passed and implemented. We just lost two veterans who have advocated for toxic exposure and they leave behind a wife and children, who could have benefitted from Legislation being passed prior to their death and may have extended their quality of life. Here we are saying goodbye, and still fighting for legislation that seems logical and it's common sense to pass!

VISIT DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE TODAY
VFWMI.ORG



DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN, JAMES JOHNS

Our hearts go out on the passing away of Jennifer Smith Department Chaplain, she will be greatly missed.

Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

Once again, we find ourselves in the winter holiday season. Family friends and fellowship often enrich this special time of year. With gifts to buy, meals to make, cards to send, and/or trips to take there is certainly a great deal to do this time of year and it may seem overwhelming. Please give as you can to our Veterans, it can have a positive and lasting impact.

May God richly bless you this holiday season.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION, JERRY GORSKI

I want to first Congratulate the Patriot's Pen Students, Voice of Democracy Students and the Teachers of the Year at Post, District and State Levels, who entered in this year's Youth Program.

I also want to Congratulate the (12) District Patriot's Pen and (12) Voice of Democracy Winners and the Teachers of the Year, who will be at our Mid-Winter Conference Banquet in Kalamazoo, Michigan on January 29, 2022.

Lastly, I want to Congratulate the State Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year Winners. Also, Congratulations to the Posts, who sponsored them and will have the Traveling Trophy at their Posts.

The State Voice of Democracy Winner will be going on a "Washington DC Trip of a Lifetime" with (51) Other State Voice of Democracy Winners during the Legislative Conference in February/March 2022. During that trip, the 1st Place National Voice of Democracy Student will be chosen and will receive a \$30,000 Scholarship to a School of his/her choice. The National Patriot's Pen Winner will have already been chosen and will also be attending the "Washington DC Trip of a Lifetime" and will receive a \$5,000 Check. EVERY Voice

of Democracy State Winner will receive a Scholarship!

I am so Very Proud to have been chosen by National Commander-in-Chief Keith Harmon of OHIO to be the Chairman of the VFW National Programs Committee in July 2017 and be with the (52) State Voice of Democracy Winners and National Patriot's Pen Winner on the "Washington DC Trip of a Lifetime" in March, 2018 and also announce the Individual Winners on Stage on March 5th, 2018.

I am also Very Proud to have Stood Up and Fight to Save the "Washington DC Trip of a Lifetime" in 2019 and again in 2020, as Your National Council of Administration Member for 2019-2023. Our National Leadership wanted to Eliminate the "Washington DC Trip of a Lifetime" and replace it with a lesser trip to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I was the "ONLY" National Council Member in 2019 that stood up but I had the Majority of National Council Members and some National Officers behind me in 2020 to Defeat that Motion. I do not know what the future holds for this Great Youth Program but I will continue to fight for it, as long as I am Representing You!

Now, I would like to talk about MEMBERSHIP, one of my favorite topics. As of December 9, 2021, MICHIGAN is "still" in 10th Place in the Nation at 90.42%. That is Great! We need 3,392 New, Reinstated

and Continuous Members to Reach 100% by June 30, 2022. National is at 87.48%. National needs 129,603 New, Reinstated and Continuous Members to Reach 100% or 1,035,741 Members by June 30, 2022. Michigan is "now" in 1st Place in the Big Ten Conference at 90.42%. Minnesota is in 2nd Place at 90.40%. Wisconsin is in 3rd Place at 90.26%. WE CAN STAY IN 1ST PLACE in the Big Ten Conference up to June 30, 2022 with everyone's help. WE CAN DO IT! I KNOW WE CAN!

Please remember Past State Commander Mike Fineis 2019-2020 and State Chaplain Jennifer Smith 2020-2021 in your prayers. Both of them passed away in 2021.

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 again Michigan for Endorsing Me for National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief 2023-2024 representing Michigan. I will not let you down!

Thank you to Every Post and Every Auxiliary for supporting me and contributing to my campaign. If you would like to donate to my campaign, please send your donations to Su-jen Mauldin at 214 Endwell, Novi, MI 48377. Please make your checks to "Oakland County Council" and earmark "Jerry's Campaign."

Thank You and God Bless You.

COOTIE CORNER - ERIC BELL



Greetings, Comrades and Auxiliary Sisters and Brothers!

The Cootie Christmas Party for the children and families of the V.F.W. National Home

for Children went as scheduled. This is a Michigan Cooties/Auxiliary sponsored event. Many others participated to make it such a great time! Florida Cooties cooked lunch, Kentucky and Wisconsin Cooties brought stuffed animals for the children just to mention a few. Santa (Michigan Cootie) and Mrs.

Claus (Texas Cootie Auxiliary) were in attendance and had story time for the children.

"Cootie School"

In this section we will discuss some basic Cootie Lore and info. Here is a small "bite" of our history. World War I, trench warfare, our dough-boys were battling the enemy and the environmental conditions; rain, snow, mud and bugs, parasites to no end. Our true American spirit shone through and helped soldiers overcome this adversity with humor. Legend has it that the "cooties" would bite the legs of soldiers, causing them to stoop and scratch, just

before a shell exploded above them. Thus, saving their life. September 1920 the Military Order of the Cootie was formed, paying homage to the Specie Pediculi that "helped" soldiers through the war. More to follow, stay tuned, or just ask a Cootie. Look for a Cootie Bug on their shirt collar, close by the seams. Always try to touch the bug, it's for a good cause!

Always remember membership. The life blood of both the VFW and Military Order of the Cootie is membership. Without it, there would be no VFW or Cooties. Sign up a new V.F.W. member today!

"Keep 'Em Smiling in Beds of White"



DEPARTMENT NATIONAL HOME DIRECTOR

JAMES HUBBARD

Comrades, Sisters and Brothers, It was Great to be back together at Fall Conference with our First Joint Programs, By the time you receive this issue, Mid-Winter Conference will be behind us also, My favorite Conference because of the Students we recognize for their efforts to Promote Patriotism.

For all non members reading this we have a Joint Fundraiser for Our National Home that you can be involved in also not just members. It's the "Cash for Kiddo's" you can make a donation to your local Post or mail it to the National Home just in the

lower corner memo area write Cash for Kiddo's so it 's put in the right place..... When this Fundraiser was set Up Our intensions was for every Post, Auxiliary and District in Michigan to Support the Fundraiser Please make your Donations Today. Thank you for All your donations to date.

Or you can purchase a Life Membership for the Home it's available to members and non-members for a one-time \$50.00 ... another way to keep our Home supported.

Other ways you can support the National Home, that is if you're an on-

line shopper is use Amazon Smile , last quarter the Home received over \$5,000, Or if you shop at Kroger's use the Kroger Community Rewards program, go to krogercommunityrewards.com Group #79329 for the National Home. There is NO cost to you to, but our Veterans and their families benefit. I know from experience when we give and Help others it gives us three times the returns.

Congratulations to all our Students at Mid Winter and Thank you for your Support of Our Veterans and their Families at the National Home.



DEPARTMENT SURGEON

DON MARTINDALE

Greetings Comrades, I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year from my family to yours. Again, another difficult year to try to volunteer as we were used to doing, I know I miss volunteering at John Dingell VA.. We are just over the half way point in Commander Conklin's year. As of today we need 43 more posts to send in a hospital report to be 100% reported in hospital, I realize that this is a difficult time to try to volunteer at a hospital or clinic, but there are other ways to report hospital work. I need the District Commander's help on this one, I won't call your posts for you, you

need to do that, it is your responsibility to oversee your district. You appointed a hospital chairman, utilize that chairman, they aren't just sitting around looking pretty, they may want something to do, it would require only phone calls to achieve this undertaking. It shouldn't take over a couple hours all together. Remember if it has hospital, nursing home, visited sick friend at home, Gold Star Mothers, donated to cancer, donated to a hospital, donated to a nursing home, drove friend to the hospital, or nursing home, or Doctor appointment, Dentist appointment, dialysis appointment, it is a hospital report.

Please if you are reading this take this to your next Post meeting and inform your Hospital Chairman as to what needs to be included in a Hospital Report. I do not want to have any Post miss any reports because they do not know what to report. Report early and often, get your report to me any way you can, besides Turtle Express, that would take awhile. As always I will be more than happy to help any Post with hospital questions, just contact me.

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DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

EDDIE DANDRIDGE

Greetings Comrades, we the Department Of Michigan: Scholarship Team hope everyone enjoyed the Holiday Season with family, friends & hope all are doing well at this time.

We have been in communication with each other throughout the summer plus had several meetings at Department Headquarters in Lansing with the Office Staff trying to bring together our upcoming 2021-2022 Mid-Winter VOD/PP/TOY Award Program for 29 January 2022.

Thanks to Commander Kevin Conklin, President Stephanie Krueger & their staff, we've been able to move forward to accomplish the task they've given us to do.

We want to thank all the 2021-2022 VOD/PP/TOY participants for entering this year.

Without your involvement each year, there wouldn't be a VFW Scholarships Awards Program.

We had some hurdles to cross with some of our Post/Auxiliary, District/Auxiliary Chairman's having to be replaced mid-way through the year but we worked together & moved forward.

Things don't always go as they should & sometimes we have to make adjustments.

We thank All the Post/Auxiliary Commanders/Presidents, VOD Chairman's, Adjutant's, our VFW/VFWA Membership throughout our District's & Department for stepping up to support this Team Effort!

We couldn't do any of this by ourselves without your unwavering efforts & amazing support.

This Article is due to the MOV Editor 15 December 2021 & on the 17th of December 2021 the VFW/VFWA Staff, Department Office Staff & Department Scholarship Team will come together at Department Headquarters to make final decisions on this years Awards Program.

Thank you to this years VFW/VFWA Department Committee & State Judges for taking on the duties of judging this years VOD/PP/TOY Competition.

We All look forward to greeting this years 2021-2022 VOD/PP/TOY District's Winners as they check into the Radisson Hotel 28 January 2022.

We hope you enjoy the activities our Department Team has planned for you during your stay at the Radisson Hotel in Kalamazoo over the weekend.

We wish each one of you good luck going forward in our State VOD/PP/TOY Competition.

If you need to contact me State VOD Director:

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State VOD Asst. Director:
Rudy Wade - rudylvfw@gmail.com



AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT - STEPHANIE KRUEGER

It is hard to imagine that the current VFW and Auxiliary year is now past the halfway point. Soon we will be electing new officers and appointing new chairmen. But before that happens there is still much to be done.

Midwinter Conference is always a great time and this year we are together. Things have changed a great deal over the last 2 years, but as always we have been up to face this newest challenge. Things may look different at our local levels and we most certainly have lost great friends over the last two years, but as with all challenges, we take a breath and move forward. We need to always remember our mission of assisting veterans and their families.

November was the month of celebrating our veterans and we were pleased to highlight someone every day of November on our Department Facebook page. Sadly it was also the month we lost our dual VFW and Auxiliary member Jennifer Smith. Jennifer was in the middle of another term as the VFW Department Chaplain and she was serving as the Auxiliary Department Legislative Chairman, a position that was

close to her heart. She was a good friend & I will miss her.

January and into February are always busy times in the Auxiliary. We wrap up and present awards for the Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen and Teacher of the Year. National Midwinter for the Auxiliary is also a January event and is in Florida this year with the annual CAFÉ (Celebrating America's Freedom Event) visiting the Kennedy Space Center, a place I longed to visit as a child. The end of February and into March will find many of us on our way to Washington D.C. There our Department Voice of Democracy winner will join 51 others in visiting monuments, Arlington National Cemetery and find out where they placed. We will visit our congress people to discuss veterans' priority legislation and we will place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Before we know what happened we will be back home and preparing for the 2022-23 elections. Choose wisely and we never know what the future brings and need great leaders to help us on our paths. This has been a busy 6 plus months, but a great opportunity. The close connection with Commander Kevin Conklin has made it that much better.

Stay safe & healthy until we meet again.

AUXILIARY SECRETARY

SANDI ONSTWEDDER

The Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Headquarters Office is open and ready to answer any questions you may have about joining the VFW Auxiliary.

Hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at 517-487-3715.

When phoning in, you will find the Department Secretary and Department Treasurer eager to help in any way that they can.

If not, they will be willing and eager to put you on the right path to the right person to help you out.

AUXILIARY AMERICANISM CHAIR

BRENDA HILDERBRANDT

Americanism seeks to promote respect for the American Flag and foster allegiance to the United States and its customs and institutions. We can work together to promote the values of the United States, and to show respect to our Nations Flag.

We can do this by providing Flag Education in our schools and showing Flag Etiquette at Parades. We can Promote Patriotism by flying our Flag on America's Patriotic Days.

Those are what we all do every day as members of the Auxiliary, but did you know that some of the most Patriotic things you can do to show your American Pride: Standing for the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem, Voting in Elections: actively participating in the democratic process is an integral part of being an American, Serving on a jury: It might not be the most fun you can have while being patriotic, but it is a good way to serve you country. Staying informed on the news by

keeping up-to-date on current events is a way to better your community and country, Paying taxes: although it is probably the least favorite thing that Americans do every year, it is still patriotic, and last but not least is Joining the military: Polls show that serving your country is just about as patriotic as you can get! So, thank a Veteran for their service! Remember and honor our Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action (P.O.W/M.I.A.) for they paid for our freedom along with all our Veterans. Any way you choose to show your patriotism, do it proudly!

Don't forget to look for a VFW Post that has an active Auxiliary in your area. Then consider having your eligible family members join us and learn all our Auxiliary Traditions. We know that gaining new members and mentoring them will secure future leaders within our Auxiliaries.

Feel free to contact me at mrshildy@gmail.com

AUX CHAPLAIN

JANE DADY

To My Valentine, this is a love letter to you. For you are someone special who has changed the world for the better. You are loved and appreciated.

Since I care so much for you, don't worry about getting your needs met and don't worry about tomorrow (Matt 6:25-34). Just as I look after the little sparrow, so I will look after you (Matt 10:26-31). So give your burdens to me and let me give you rest (Matt 11:28). Talk to me when you're anxious and let me put you at peace (Phil 4:6-7).

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (Josh.1:9).

Peace be with you.

OUTREACH

CHRISTINE LEBRUN

So, what is the purpose of Auxiliary Community Outreach? Some may wonder why it is so important for Auxiliary members to get out there in their community when they have so much to do within our own organization and Auxiliary home. Well, ask yourself how we can grow, share what we do for veterans and their families, and get our names in our community if we stay in the boundaries of our own Auxiliary home. The vision for this program when it was created under Past National President, Sandi Onstwedder, was to encourage Auxiliaries to step out of our Auxiliary homes and support our community organizations. This act of service shows we care, shows we are willing to help out our communities in any capacity, but most importantly, provides us the opportunity to grow our Auxiliary community and expand the resources to support our Veterans and their families.



AUXILIARY VETERAN & FAMILY SUPPORT

NANCY VREDEVELD



I would like to give some information about the VFW Unmet Needs program. This time of year especially, with heating costs, as well as other expenses going up, there is help for our military families.

This program helps military families with unexpected financial struggles because of deployment or other military related activity or injury.

This program supplies grants up to \$1,500 to the veteran for basic needs as a grant, so no repayment is needed. Eligible items are household expenses, vehicle expenses, food, clothing, medical bills, prescriptions, glasses and more. When submitting and

approved, payment will go directly to the creditor.

There are some things not eligible, such as credit card bills, cable, internet, or a second phone.

The needs of our service members, veterans, and their families should never go unmet.

To learn more about the program go to the VFW National website. There you can see if you qualify, or someone you know qualifies. Check out Unmet Needs Eligibility Criteria and also Unmet Needs application.

AUXILIARY BUDDY POPPY & NATIONAL HOME

KATHY HUBBARD

Happy New Year Everyone. How time flies when you enjoy your enjoying yourself, It's hard to believe our 2021-22 year is more than half year over. I would like to thank Dept President Stephanie for having Confidence in me as Chairman, it just happens to be the Chairmanship very dear to my Heart that I LOVE!

This month is our Mid-Winter Conference where we will have our Buddy Poppy Contest as well as our students who participated in the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen along with our Great Teachers of the Year, it is such a pleasure to talk and visit with the students along with hearing the wining speeches. Remember these students are our Future Leaders.

Keep in mind Valentine's Day is fast approaching, What is your Auxiliary going to do for your Post Veterans Make Sure they realize How Much They are Appreciated.

Be sure to think outside of the box doing something you have never done before. Surprise Them!

Can't wait to read your Ideas. Be sure to include a Buddy Poppy.

Are you preparing for May Poppy Days? Be sure to order your poppies for the coming year. How do we order poppies? First ask your Post, and if they have placed their order already then call Department Office and get your order placed.

I would like everyone who owns a cell phone, please add the contact number for the VFW Helpline 1-800-313-4200 Keep in mind this is a Helpline not a hotline and open on weekends. Share this with any Veteran that may need help, your one act of Kindness can change or save a person's life. Remember, as a member of this Great Organization it's our goal to help and assist our Veterans. Thank you for caring!



AUXILIARY YOUTH ACTIVITIES & CAMP TROTTER

WENDI HALL

Supporting our Youth Activities supports and strengthens our future, by helping to teach our youth about pride, respect and honor towards our Veterans of the past, present, and future. Our youth may receive basic information in school but as VFW and Auxiliary members it should be our task to expand on their knowledge so that they fully understand the sacrifices made in the past to ensure their futures. Their responsibility and tradition of caring and honoring not just their family military members but all veterans will depend greatly on how they are taught today for adults of tomorrow. One way to do this is to recognize their efforts by a simple Thank You or presenting them with a Citation of appreciation or R.A.P coin (Random Act of Patriotism).

There are two contests the Youth can still participate in, the Red, White, and Blue Star Spangled Banner singing competition and the Illustrating America art contest, These both have a March 31, 2022 deadline to Auxiliary/Dist level. You can find all the specific details for both contests on the Department Auxiliary website under Youth Activities. Camp Trotter is planning to be open this summer so our kids can once again enjoy all that it has to offer, but we will have to see what type of possible Covid restrictions there might be. Regardless there are still plenty of things to do around the camp that need your physical and financial help so please continue to support the only VFW owned and operated children's camp right here in the beautiful state of Michigan on Bill's lake in Newaygo. You can also support Camp Trotter by purchasing life memberships for yourself or as a gift. But the children are the ones who really benefit from your generosity.



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★ ★ ★ POST REPORTS ★ ★ ★

POST 334 - LAKE ORION

On Friday, December 3, 2021, the Orion Veterans Memorial had a unveiling of the award from the Daughters of the American Revolution to the Orion Veterans Memorial in honor of the Tomb Of The Unknown Soldier. This award was presented at the 2021 Veterans Day Ceremony at the Kensington Church and is now displayed at the Orion Veterans Memorial by their Victory Garden. VFW Post 334 Honor Guard was in attendance to lead the group with the Pledge of Allegiance and participate in the unveiling.



Pearl Harbor Day at the Post. Prof. Emeritus Todd was a teacher, member of the National Association of Scholars and the Distinguished Flying Cross Society. Life member of our Post 334. Earned the D.F.C. as a gunship pilot in Vietnam while in the Army along with the Cross of Gallantry w/Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart. He was recognized as the Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year in a ceremony with President Obama.



POST 582 - ORTONVILLE



Community Ruck Sack Walk to raise money for VFW programs for needy family's pictured with Post CMDR. Dennis Hoffman. Post members leading the Ortonville Christmas parade through downtown Ortonville. Post members and group photo with Girl Scout troop 76460 and post members Carl Jeffrey, Cliff Filhart, Dennis Hoffman, Robert Huggins getting ready to place wreaths on 515 veterans graves at the 3rd annual Wreaths Across Ortonville.



POST 701 - LANSING

The post has started a fund raiser for the USS Indianapolis (CA-35) memorial. VFW post 701 life member and sole Michigan survivor Richard Thelen stated. "The first five days that we floated on the ocean after the sinking before we were rescued was a horrifying experience when I saw my fellow servicemen attacked by sharks, drown to death, drink the saltwater and die from dehydration.

By having a memorial in Lansing near the Michigan State Capitol Building will help people in this state realize and remember the sacrifices that myself and my fellow shipmates went through for this country.

The USS Indianapolis (CA-35) delivered the components for the Atomic Bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima Japan which eventually led to the end of World War II.

My fellow servicemen died not knowing they helped end the war."

There were 1,195 servicemen aboard the USS Indianapolis (CA-35) when it sank in 1945. Michigan had 98 the 2nd highest total number of servicemen aboard. Of the 98 servicemen, Richard Thelen was the last survivor living in Michigan.

The Michigan Veterans Memorial Park & Vietnam Monument is a public memorial, honoring those who have served in the United States Military. The USS Indianapolis (CA-35) monument site has been selected and approved by the State Of Michigan. The monument itself has been drawn up and approved and is awaiting for funds.

Heading up the project are Steve Hammond, post life member, and Carolyn Kidd, post quartermaster and life member. All funds remaining after monument is paid, will be split by VFW 701 and scholarship fund of Chuck Gwinn, the pilot who first spotted the survivors of the USS Indianapolis (CA-35) and imitated their miraculous rescue at sea.

Project and fund raising approved at 2021 Department of Michigan VFW Convention by 2021-22 COA.



Donations can be made to :
USS Indianapolis Memorial Fund
 c/o VFW Post 701,
 123 N. Rosemary St. / Lansing, MI 48917

POST 3701 - LAKEVIEW



Post Officers present flag and certificate of Adopt-A-Unit to the commanding officers of the 1073rd Maintenance Co.



Thank you to Safety First, Rod Carlson Masonry and Pat Carr for moving the naval gun mount to our new location!

POST 5065 - SHERIDAN

Sr. Vice Commander, Terry Dowdell, presented a 5x8 American Flag to Principal, Amy Frias, at Central Montcaim Elementary school for their flag pole. The Post also donated four 3x5 American Flags to their classrooms so they can say the Pledge of Allegiance.



POST 4090 - PORTLAND

On Tuesday, October 12th, members of VFW 4090, the VFW Auxiliary, and American Legion Post 129 donated and dedicated a new flag and flag pole to the city of Portland. The gift compliments the installation of a new riverfront splash pad for Portland's youth. The new flag and pole stand proudly in William Toan Park, next to the Veterans Memorial Bridge, downtown Portland.

"This flag and pole are dedicated to the children of Portland on behalf of all community veterans. Let it stand as a reminder of the sacrifices which were made in the interest of our nation, so our children may enjoy the same freedoms which we enjoy here today." - VFW 4090 Commander Dave



POST 6056 - SPRINGPORT

Wreaths Across America Ceremony with VFW Adams-Rockey & Auxiliary 6056 at the Springport Cemetery. Delivery of Wreaths by Meijer and unloaded by Commander Mike Michael Whittum Sr., President Corky Kidder Whittum, District 6 Commander Reinold Yahnka on Thursday 16 December. Wreaths were coordinated by Elizabeth "Liz" Little, Auxiliary 6056 Wreaths Across America chairperson. Guest speaker for the formal ceremony was VFW District 6 Commander Reinold E. Yahnka. Thank You" to the Boy Scouts Troop 4157, Cub Scouts Pack 4157, Springport High School Basketball Team for assistance in laying Wreaths on Veterans graves. Thank you to Zack Corbin, an Army Veteran that was there and volunteered to be a fill in on the ritual team. Jerry Riske, U. S. Army Veteran who placed the wreath in honor of the U. S. Army, Kip Laughlin, U. S. Marine Veteran who laid a wreath in honor of the U. S. Marine Corps, Dennis R Ryan, U. S. Navy Retired Veteran who placed a wreath in honor of the U. S. Navy, Howard Day, U. S. Army Veteran who placed a wreath in honor of the U. S. Air Force, Zack Corbin, U. S. Army Veteran, laid a wreath in honor of the U. S. Coast Guard, Bill Day, U. S. Marine Veteran who laid a wreath in honor of the U. S. Merchant Marines, and Cyndy Wright daughter of Korean War MIA Sgt. Kenneth Parker who has not come home yet, laid a wreath in honor of the 93,129 United States Servicemen and Women Prisoners of War or Missing in Action "POW/MIA". After the ceremony and wreath laying, everyone was invited back to the VFW for warm refreshments and homemade cookies. VFW Auxiliary members that assisted Diana Yahnka, Kim Pritchard, Kindra Yahnka, Richard Yahnka, Leona Keeler, Glenna Fugate, Jackie Goodman Merritt, Christina Yahnka



POST 9931 - BRIDGEPORT

At the annual Warm-a-Child winter coat giveaway, Post 9931 Sr. Vice Commander and Army Veteran, Evelyn McGovern poses with student volunteers from Saginaw Valley State University. This annual event proceeds winter coats to over 460 youth from 3-18 throughout Saginaw County.

This years event was again, a drive through project that once again a great success and well received by the families served. There were also basic household supplies donated from local stores.





DISTRICT COMMANDER REPORTS



DISTRICT 5 COMMANDER - SUE-JEN MAULDIN

Greetings to the Fighting 5th,

Our deepest condolences go out to the Smith-Matthews family in their loss of Chaplain

Jennifer Smith. Jennifer's dedication to the veterans of this great nation is unmatched and will be sorely missed. Rest in peace my friend, you stand relieved.

Wow, how quickly time has passed. The Gold Star Mothers Banquet was great. Thanks to Village Stinson Post 9021 and its Auxiliary for hosting the dinner and Mission BBQ in Troy for donating the food. Veterans Day was very busy for everyone. Norman and I had the privilege to honor some veterans at the Shorehaven Senior Living Facility.

Congratulations to James Coleman Post 6802 and Shafer-Rachelle Post 6782 celebrating their 75th Anniversary. A very special "CONGRATULATIONS" to North End - Sterling Heights Post 6250 celebrating their 100th Anniversary. It was very humbling presenting them with their certificates. I wish them much success in the coming years.

Congratulations to Hamtramck-Willock-Lubanski Post 4162 for reaching 105% and High-White-Milford Post 9914 for reaching 101.70% in membership. The following Posts need 10 or less members to reach 100%: 334, 1407, 1370, 2269, 2645, 3908, 4037, 5587, 6250, 6782, and 9222.

Members of the Fighting Fifth, I am asking you to help your Post by paying your annual dues early. It doesn't change your anniversary date. Another option is to pay for a Life Membership. If you can't afford it all at once, you can make monthly payments and pay it off in a year. Either way, it will give you peace of mind and not worry that your membership has lapsed. The best way is to go onto the National VFW website. If operating a computer is challenging, you can stop by your Post, the Quartermaster can help you.

Here are some reminders:

- Everyone should have ordered Poppies by now. If not, get your order in right away.

- Audits are due by January 31, 2022. They must have all three (3) Trustees' signatures. If for some reason you are unable to get one of the signatures, the Commander MUST submit a letter with the

audit explaining the reason the Trustee was unable to sign.

- 100% of the Posts are reported. I know you're doing the work so, please make sure you are reporting every month. It is a requirement not just for the VFW but also to maintain your non-profit status.

- Our next District meeting will be on February 20th at Fraser Post 6691.

- Past Commanders/Past Presidents Banquet will be held on March 26th at Warren Post 9021.

- Macomb County Council Meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of the month and Oakland County Council Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the month. Please check the "Calendar" on the District webpage: vfwmidist5.org to find the location.

I want to thank all our Posts and Auxiliaries for everything you do for our veterans, their families, and your communities. So many times things go unnoticed. I want you to know that I and the District Officers see what you do and appreciate it. YOU make our District shine!

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays. Stay safe and healthy!!!



DISTRICT 6 COMMANDER - REINOLD E. YAHNKA

We are halfway through the year and moving along very well as far as the Super 6th District goes. The Super 6th District is moving

forward with membership and as I write this the Super 6th District is at 90.47. We are behind last year's when we were setting at 95.95%. Keep working membership and seek out new members. Congratulations to the Post that have made 100% or more, 423 Ann Arbor 108.86%, 6462 Dundee 101.85%, 6464 Fowlerville 108.08% and 10194 Grass Lake 104.76%.

Get your members signed up for the VFW Action Corp so that they can be informed as to what is going on in the VFW. Read it at your monthly meetings and then report it on your monthly activity report. That way your Post will get credit for Americanism, legislative & POW/MIA. You need to sign up at least 5 for the Action Corp and then have your Post Adjutant report it on the All-American Dashboard.

Covi-19 and its variants are still with us and may be with us for many years to come. The VA is still giving vaccines to Veterans and family members for those that have not gotten the vaccine and also booster shots are available as well.

Thank You, for getting your Activity and Hospital reports turned in by the 10 of the month each month. The Super 6th District is 100% reported in both Activity and Hospital reporting. Keep up the great work and report everything that you do. We still have a couple of Post that need Youth activity projects, hours, and value. If you don't have a Scout pack to support reach out to one, then report it.

The District has had its challenges for many Post so far, but nothing that we could not overcome by working as a team. I appreciate you communicating with me and letting me know about problems before they get out of hand. The Super 6th has some great leaders and members that help make my job as the District Commander a lot easier. I am always here to help whoever and whenever. I make myself available to you any time.

There are still a lot of Post that need to make donations for the various VFW programs. You can use your relief fund money for these donations. By distributing Buddy Poppy's, you can raise money for your relief fund. So, make sure you have ordered Buddy Poppy's this year.

There are 9 Post, 423 Ann Arbor, 701 Lansing, 1138 Monroe, 1584 Adrian, 4093 Carleton, 6056 Springport, 6464 Fowlerville, 9656 Lambertville and 10194

Grass Lake that can make All-American this year. Pay attention to the All-American Dashboard and complete the required task. Community Service, VMS Donation, Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Membership, Social Media, Partnering Events and Action Corp. The 9 Post above have met the VOD/PP requirement and therefore only need to make the other requirements. Keep up the great work. Super 6th District is in the lead to have the most Post in the State to make All-American.

Let's stay safe and I hope to see everyone at the Super 6th District meeting on 23 April 2022 at the Monroe Post 1138, 400 Jones Avenue, Monroe, MI 48161

11:00 am - Memorial Service

12:00 pm - Lunch

1:00 pm - Meeting and Elections

Installation of Officers after meeting.

Thank You to the Super 6th District for endorsing and supporting me for my campaign for Department Junior Vice Commander.

It has been an Honor to be Super 6th District Commander and I am here to serve you and help you or your Post in any way I can. So please feel free to contact me at any time so that we can keep the "Super 6th District" "protecting and serving Veterans through growth".

Thank You, for all that you do.



DISTRICT 9 - LARRY THAYER

I hope everyone had Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

This article should be published before the Midwinter Conference so good luck to our District winners in the VOD and Patriot Pen, let's hope for a repeat of last year.

As of this writing we have 2 Post 100% or greater, congrats to 8964 Ovid and 2292 Edmore. We have 11 Post that need less than 10 members to achieve the 100% mark. It's every member's responsibility to be a recruiter. The members are out there, the majority of them just haven't been asked

yet. Everyone should have an application in their vehicle, you never know who you'll meet just pumping gas.

I hoping that by the time you read this we will 100% reported in Activities and Hospital. I talked to a Post last night who said they don't have a Hospital program so nothing to report. I asked them if they visit a sick veteran, of course the answer was yes, then report it.

Comrades we have lost 3 Post in the last few years. It wasn't because they had no money or anything like that. It was because no would step up and take a leadership position. One of the Post had over 100 members and when we tried to save them and called a special meeting we couldn't

get enough for a quorum. The reason I bring this up is because I don't want to see it happen again. I realize some of the members are older and can't but there is a large majority that can. "Many hands make light work" applies in this situation. Don't make your Commander or Quartermaster do everything, volunteer to help them out. If everyone helps a little I'm sure your Post will not only survive it will thrive.

If there is anything I or any of the Officers of the "Mighty Ninth" can do to help you just give me a call.

See you at Kalamazoo for Mid-Winter Conference.



DISTRICT 15 - BUD HUUKI

As I write this article it's hard to believe we're in the middle of December, 43 degrees and very little snow in the 15th District. We usually have snow banks you can't see over.

Our District Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen along with Teacher of the Year have been selected. Hannah Oommen, for VOD and Karissa Rautiola for P/P both sponsored by Post 6165 . Great job South Range. The Teacher of the year were Middle

school Cindy Twaizdzik, sponsored by post 3900 Calumet and High school Mark Ware, sponsored by post 6507 Chassell. I wish them during the Department judging. Thank you Carole and Jack Lillar for another outstanding this year.

Our membership seems to be lagging behind this year as of this article we're sitting at 87.50%. So you can see we need pay some attention with our membership before our Mid-winter meeting. One post needs only one member to be 100% several posts are 7 members or less to achieve their 100% banner for this year. Let's

start making contact with the unpaid to boost our district out of the Red. I'm not comfortable being in the rear of the bus.

On the positive side the District is 100% reported in Hospital and Activities reporting. That's great. Continue reporting monthly and hopefully at State convention some posts will receive some recognition.

Our Mid-winter conference will be held in Crystal Falls on February 13, 2022 Registration begins at 9:00 CST with some training and a break for lunch. The District meeting will begin promptly at 1pm. Hope to see 100% participation of our posts.



HELPFUL DEPARTMENT QUICK LINKS

- VFWMI.ORG/CONTACT
- VFWMI.ORG/VETHELP
- VFWMI.ORG/FORMS
- VFWMI.ORG/MOV
- VFWMI.ORG/JOIN

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

ANDY CONKLIN

Please read Kevin Hensley's article , Yesterday I took an 79 year old Vet to the VA to get his enrollment ID finalized by getting his ID card processed. I took him for his first physical and he remarked how well he was treated, and how thorough his exam was. Why am I writing this ? Well why are our Veterans waiting till their twilight years to sign up ? Are we as members doing our jobs by making sure our comrades get the Benefits "we earned" by getting the word out, and assisting getting them enrolled into the system. You don't have to be an Officer at any level to bring up

at a meeting or in casual conversation about the benefit of getting into the VA, please spread the word. I have heard our new Secretary of the VA Denis McDougal speak in person and was impressed by someone who has not served such sincerity and genuine enthusiasm. The VA welcomes us to report good bad or ugly any mistreatment at their facilities. I have seen the disciplinary process and the action taken by the VA to rectify a problem or situation, they take it very seriously. Kevin Hensley, Cameron Zbikowski and I in our positions as Advocates for this great organization

also take our positions very seriously, we put a great deal of effort and time into knocking on doors of our Legislators to get them to sponsor or support bills that benefit our country's Veterans. Not just for VFW members, but for all who have stepped up to serve this Country and earned the right to the handle "Veteran". So please help get all of our brothers and sisters to be aware of the benefits they have earned by encouraging them to get into the VA system, and you, get signed up to the VFW Action Corp weekly and pay attention Comrades!



AUXILIARY DISTRICT PRESIDENT REPORTS



**DISTRICT 6
PATRICK RICH**

As the holidays quickly approach more and more Veterans need our special attention. Too many Veterans

are living alone AND finding themselves short on money and long on outstanding bills. This is the perfect opportunity for our members to reach out and help. We cannot forget those that are homeless & could use a warm meal, coat, hat, gloves, and boots.

Often the holidays can be lonely and depressing for Veterans. Why not adopt a single Veteran and share your holiday events and meals with them? Another idea is to pass out homemade Christmas cards at a local shelter. Then, watch the smiles you receive in return.



**DISTRICT 8
NANCY
VREDEVELD**

Our next District meeting will be held on February 5, 2022. The Hostess Auxiliary is Henry Walters 2144.

Address : 175 W 8th St, Holland 49423

12:00 pm Audit
12:00 pm Registration
- no floor practice
11:00 am meal-Chef's surprise
12:30 meeting

No rep this month
For questions you may contact me at
Phone : 616-422-1403
e-mail : nvredeveld@hotmail.com



**DISTRICT 12
DIANA HERRICK**

Auxiliaries in Michigan are busily preparing for the Holiday Season, we are preparing dinners, purchasing gifts and assuring that no Veteran or Veteran's Family in our area is forgotten! We have mailed Christmas Cards to Deployed Veterans overseas, those stationed around the US, Veteran's Hospitals and long-term care facilities.

We must never forget those who served to assure our freedom. Holidays can bring loneliness to those who are forgotten, we have a duty to reach out to our Veterans during this Holiday Season, bringing joy and happiness to those who have given so much for each of us.



DISTRICT 13 - SHEILA PICKARD

This is the third time that I have served as District 13 VFW Auxiliary President. I have one son, five grandchildren, and

I live in Kingsley Michigan. I am 69 years old yet, I still work full time.

There are a total of nine Auxiliaries in the District. Each of these Auxiliaries work very hard on our programs.

Recently, our Voice of Democracy Student Entries and Patriots Pen Winners were selected. An Awards Banquet is going to be held in March of 2022 to honor these students.

The VFW/Auxiliary Fall Conference

recently held at the Boyne Highlands Resort, was awesome. There were joint meetings and trainings, I think everyone went home feeling the success of years conference. I hope that things continue to happen jointly in the future.

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas & the Happiest of New Year!



DISTRICT 15 - JUDY FELL

As I write this it's hard to believe we're in the middle of December, 43 degrees & very little snow in the 15th District. We

usually have snow banks that you can't see over.

Our District Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen along with Teacher of the Year have been selected. Hannah Oommen, for VOD and Karissa Rautiola for P/P both sponsored by Post 6165 . Great job South Range. The Teachers of the year were

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our district out of the Red Lantern area. I'm not comfortable being in the rear of the bus.

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NEWS FROM NATIONAL VFW

CONGRESS PASSES FY 2022 NDAA

The House and Senate passed the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (NDAA). This includes a 2.7 percent pay raise for service members, updates to the Uniform Code of Military Justice regarding sexual assault, and authorization to locate a Global War on Terrorism Memorial on the National Mall. Other important VFW-supported provisions included preservation and update of the Chaplains Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, the Troops to Teachers Program, the VET Rent Act, an ILER Study improvement, and the establishment of the U.S. Naval Community College. The NDAA now goes to the president's desk for signature.

NETWORK PHARMACY CHANGES COMING TO TRICARE

TRICARE has announced that beginning on Dec. 15, 2021, there will be changes to the retail in-network pharmacies. Express Scripts is the TRICARE pharmacy contractor with oversight of home delivery, military pharmacy, and civilian contract facilities. It is recommended that you contact your pharmacy to see if it will remain in network.

VFW FOUNDATION "STILL SERVING" GRANTS

The VFW Foundation still has plenty of grant funding to award to Posts and Auxiliaries through the StillServing and UTCH grant programs. The new slate of programs includes two new grants, the StillServing Community Volunteerism Grant and the StillServing Corporate Partnership Grant, in addition to the long-standing StillServing Community Support Grant. Posts and Auxiliaries may receive all three grants during the fiscal year for a total of \$3,500! StillServing Grants will remain open until July 31, or until all funding has been exhausted which typically happens in mid to late spring each year. The StillServing grant applications can be found attached and information about each opportunity is available at vfw.org/Grants

VOD/PP PATRIOT PEN REPORTING

As a reminder, be sure to have your post and district adjutants or commanders report your activities for VOD & Patriots Pen in the All American Dashboard. If you need assistance in accessing the All American Dashboard, call VFW HQ at 816-756-3390, and press 7

They will be able to assist you in accessing the All American Dashboard, and in getting your reporting completed. If your post or district does not complete this reporting, you will not get credit for these activities.

UNITING TO COMBAT HUNGER (UTCH) GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE

VFW Posts and Auxiliaries may receive up to \$5,000 in matching funds for cash donations made to local food banks. Posts and Auxiliaries can also donate food and will be awarded \$1 for every pound donated to a food bank. Each volunteer hour logged while serving at a food bank will earn an applicant \$1. A minimum combination of cash, hours and pounds of food donated totaling 500 is needed to receive a matching UTCH grant. The application is available online; additional information can be found at www.vfw.org/UTCH. Any questions regarding these grant programs can be directed to jcouch@vfw.org - Plenty of funding for all grants is still available, apply today!

CRITICAL NEED FOR BLOOD DONATIONS



The American Red Cross is experiencing the worst blood shortage in over a decade. The dangerously low blood supply levels have forced some hospitals to postpone major surgeries, including organ transplants. Your donation is desperately needed! Schedule an appointment by using the Red Cross app, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, or calling 1.800.RED.CROSS

DEPARTMENT ROSTER CHANGES

Post 671

New Quartermaster

Darwin Rose
PO Box 215, Dewitt 48820
517-303-6311

Post 1138

Commander Address Change

Alvin Bond
17 E. 6th St., Monroe 48161

Post 2233

New Quartermaster

Herman King
5282 Kensington, Detroit 48224
313-742-0539
hermanking0689@gmail.com

Post 2945

New Quartermaster

Kevin Doyle
92 Gaige St., Sandusky 48471
231-510-6729
doylekevin@yahoo.com

Post 3055

New Adjutant

Larry Steffenhagen
720 Grove Ave., Alma 48801
989-463-6776

Post 4187

New Adjutant

Vicki Felton
3418 Saxony Dr. N., Tecumseh 49286

Post 4187

New Quartermaster

8640 Pentecost Hwy., Onsted 49265
517-270-6703
kgpankow49@gmail.com

Post 5585

New Quartermaster

Colette Folliard
2840 Cowhy Rd., Riley 48041

Post 9656

New Commander

Larry Mortimer
8372 Lewis Ave., Temperance 48182
419-286-1467
patriotmodeler@gmail.com

Post 9656

New Adjutant

Henry Czupich
8253 Summerfield Rd., Lambertville
48144
419-466-3298
svc@vfw9656.org

Post 9656

New Quartermaster

Mark Vandenberg
8460 Fisher Rd., Ottawa Lake 49267
734-777-9863
mvandenberg69@gmail.com

43RD ANNUAL MID-WINTER CONFERENCE - KALAMAZOO JANUARY 27-30, 2022

THURSDAY JANUARY 27, 2022

Auxiliary Members welcome at all VFW Training Sessions

- 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Social Media Set Up Training & Workshop Prairies
Converting Social Media Followers to Active Members
(BRING LAPTOPS)
- 6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Hospitality Room - TBD
Dinner/Reception hosted at VFW Post 827
Shuttle Service provided

FRIDAY JANUARY 28, 2022

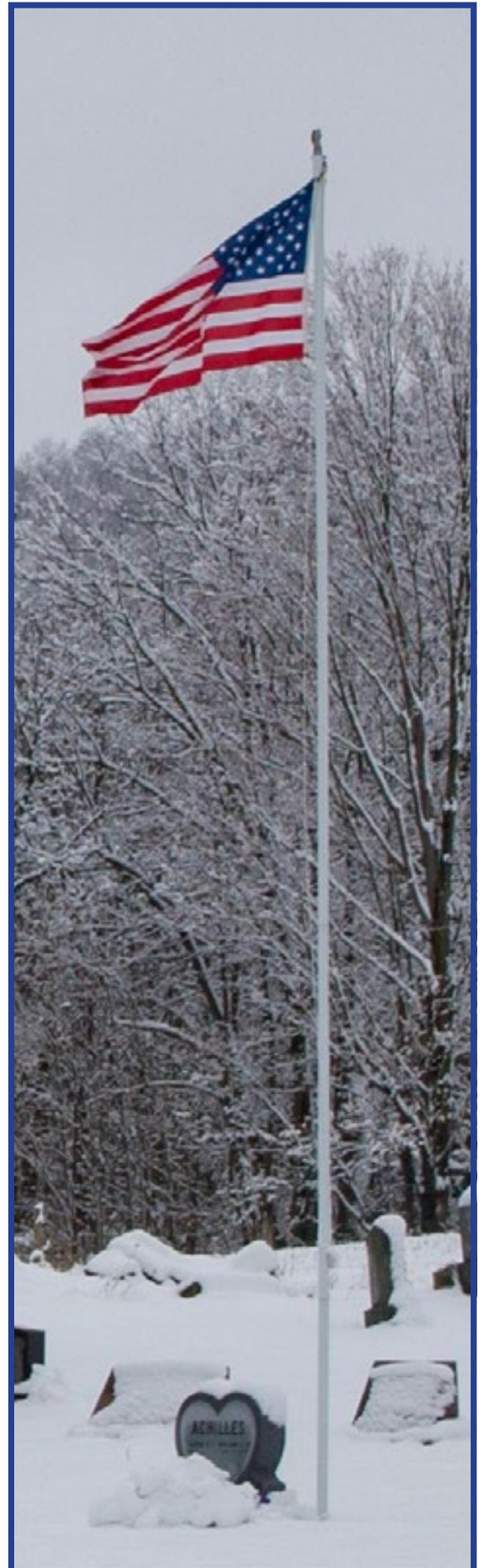
- 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Registration - Great Lakes 1-5
- 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Program Display tables - Great Lakes 1-5/Oaks

PICK UP PRE-PURCHASED BANQUET TICKETS
(Pickup at Auxiliary Registration)
- 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Quartermaster/Trustee Training - Prairies
- 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. How to set up/manage Post Finances - Prairies
- 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Adjutant, Dashboard & Protocol Training - Stone Theatre
- 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. District Senior Vice Commanders - Prairies
District Junior Vice Commanders - Stone Theatre
- 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
- 1:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Registration Re-opens
- 1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Line Officer Training (Cmdr, SVC, JVC) - Stone Theatre
- 2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. 990 Submissions & Inspection Training) - Prairies
- 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. Membership & Volunteer Recruitment) - Prairies
- 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. Post Service Officer Training) - Prairies
- 4:00 p.m. - 5 p.m. Legislative Action Training) - Prairies
- 6:00 p.m. - 11 p.m. Dinner & Reception Comstock) - VFW Post 6252
Shuttles provided
- 7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Department Hospitality Room (or event above)) - TBD

SATURDAY JANUARY 29, 2022

ALL BANQUET TICKETS MUST BE PICKED UP BY 11:30 A.M.

- 8:00 a.m. - 8:50 a.m. Council of Administration Breakfast - Meadows
- 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Registration - Great Lakes 1-5
- 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Program Display tables - Great Lakes 1 - 5/Oaks
- 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Council of Administration Meeting - Prairies
- 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Directors Reports - Prairies
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
- 2:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. VFW Aux. VOD/ PP Reception - Glens
- 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. VOD/ PP Students, District Cmdr. / Pres. - Meadows
Head table meet for line up
- 5:00 p.m. VOD/ PP Banquet - Arcadia Ballroom
(Tickets must have been purchased in advance)



**Dress Code for all training sessions
& C of A Meeting is Commanders
Black polo & khakis or grey slacks.
C of A Members to wear C of A attire.**

**Dress Code for VOD/Patriot's Pen
Dinner business/formal attire.**

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



★ ★ ★ ★

CAMPAIGNS

★ ★ ★ ★

JERRY GORSKI

Candidate for
National Jr. Vice
Commander-In-Chief
2023-2024



DON MARTINDALE

Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Surgeon
2022-2023



JAMES JOHNS

Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Chaplain
2022-2023



KIMBERLY NAPOLEON

Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Jr. Vice Commander
2022-2023



REINOLD YAHNKA

Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Jr. Vice Commander
2022-2023





**DESIGNER / EDITOR,
STACEY ROBERTS**

I am hopeful that this year will bring some positivity back into our lives and we can start being more

active in our communities again. The increase of photos and shared activities from Posts the last few issues has been great. Keep it up!

Next deadline = MARCH 15, 2022

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.



ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES

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

345 Redford

Bravo, Amador 97 Army/WWII
Schatz, Curtis M. 69 Army/Vietnam

796 Port Huron

Gonzales, Jose J. 95 Army/WWII

1454 Alma

Parks, Lyle 89 Army/Korea
Schuiling, John 88 Army/Korea

1519 Northville

Butler, James 99 Navy/WWII
Kleiner, Norman 100 Army/WWII
Patuano, Larry Sr. 75 Army/Vietnam
Vario, Vito 79 Army/Vietnam

1887 Menominee

Kienitz, Daniel C. 77 Army/Vietnam

2144 Holland

Jubin, Donald 91 Army/Korea

2292 Edmore

Herald, Raymond T. 89 Army Air Force/
Korea

3314 Arcadia

Danke, Gordon W. 90 Army/Korea
Sitter, Raymond L. 97 Army/WWII

3623 Cheboygan

Schellenberg, Dennis 77 Army/Vietnam

3676 Sault Ste Marie

Young, Clyde R. 90 Army/Korea

3701 Lakeview

Lofts, Larry 70 Army/Vietnam

4005 Corunna

Buchholz, Jerry H. 94 Army/WWII
Scripter, Lawrence 69 Air Force/Vietnam

4461 Lake Odessa

Farrell, Charles Sr. 94 Army/WWII
La New, David E. 79 Navy
Moore, Donald 71 Marines/Vietnam

6056 Springport

Richardson, Douglas 72 Army/Vietnam

6464 Fowlerville

Allison, Norman 90 Army/Korea

8846 Muskegon

Bethke, Paul G. 73 Army/Vietnam
Carl, Thomas R. 76 Army/Vietnam
Johnson, Carl G. 96 Army/WWII
Tompkins, Charles D. 81 Navy/Vietnam

9363 Flat Rock

Osequeda, Manuel 76 Army/Vietnam

9809 Saginaw

Green, Gerald Jr. 83 Army/Korea

TAPS FORM

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

Send completed form to:
VFW of Michigan

924 N Washington - Lansing, MI 48906
or Amanda@vfwmi.org

(Last Name)

(First Name)

(Age) (Date of Death)

(Post)

Branch of Service :

ARMY AIR FORCE NAVY
MARINE CORP COAST GUARD

Served in :

WWI WWII KOREA VIETNAM
GULF IRAQ/ AFGHANISTAN
OTHER OCCUPATION FORCES

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Send to : MOV@VFWMI.ORG

Postmaster - Please send address changes to
MOV Editor
924 N. Washington Ave, Lansing, MI 48906