

NOVEMBER 2025

# VFW Auxiliary

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY MAGAZINE

**NATIONAL CONVENTION**  
COLUMBUS, OHIO

**2025-2026**  
**NATIONAL GUARD**  
CYNTHIA DAVIS

**AUXILIARY**  
ACRONYMS

**ART IN THE**  
DARK







# IT'S TIME TO FILE YOUR AUXILIARY'S TAX RETURN!

Treasurers, please remember your 990-N (e-Postcards or other federal tax return) must be submitted to the IRS no later than November 15, 2025. This is important because it allows Auxiliaries to maintain their tax-exempt status. So, if you haven't already, take action to get this filed now to avoid problems later.

Please note that the IRS does not accept paper forms of the 990-N (e-Postcard).

Smaller charities that are eligible and choose to file the Form 990-N, Electronic Notice for Tax-Exempt Organizations (e-Postcard), must sign in to the IRS's modernized authentication platform using either a Login.gov or ID.me account, the current IRS credential service providers.

Form 990-N submissions may be made on the IRS website at <https://sa.www4.irs.gov/epostcard/>. There is no fee to file this tax return.

## DATES & DEADLINES

### November

- NOVEMBER 11 Veterans Day
- NOVEMBER 15 VFW Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Post judging complete
- NOVEMBER 27 Thanksgiving
- NOVEMBER 30 See the *2025-2026 National Program Book* for Membership awards deadlines

### December

- DECEMBER 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- DECEMBER 15 VFW Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen District judging complete
- DECEMBER 25 Christmas
- DECEMBER 31
  - Circle of Excellence goal: Paid Officers – Auxiliary Officers MUST have dues paid by this date
  - New Year's Eve

For more information on awards and deadlines, see the [2025-2026 National Program Book](#) in MALTA Member Resources.

# TABLE OF Contents

NOVEMBER 2025 • VOLUME 90 • ISSUE 2

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®



9

## Features

### 9 2025 National Convention

*Members traveled to the Buckeye State, Columbus, Ohio, for the VFW Auxiliary's 112<sup>th</sup> National Convention. This town is also the birthplace of our parent organization, the VFW.*

### 16 New National Guard

*Meet Cynthia Davis, who was elected as the VFW Auxiliary's National Guard.*

### 17 HQ will ACH you the funds next week and check MALTA to see your COE points.

*Say what? These are a few acronyms and terms commonly used by the Auxiliary. Find more in this article.*

### 19 Art in the Dark

*Dreadful weather and even a blackout didn't stop Auxiliary 2485 members and youth in Manila, Philippines from creating patriotic crafts for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.*



16



17



19

## In Every Issue

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 3 Get Digital         | 6 Reader's Voice   |
| 4 President's Message | 7 Member Spotlight |
| 5 Editor's Letter     | 21 Our History     |

## About the Cover

*Current VFW Auxiliary National President Lois Callahan walks down the aisle of honor at National Convention 2025 prior to being installed as our organization's most senior Officer.  
(Photo by Rae Holloway-Collins/Purple Star Photography)*

# "CHECK" ON YOUR FACEBOOK PHOTOS

## ARE YOU ENDANGERING YOUR AUXILIARY?

Recently, while seeking Auxiliary in Action photos to be shared on the VFW Auxiliary website, VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters uncovered a disturbing trend: VFW and VFW Auxiliary Facebook accounts posting clear images of checks to show evidence of their donations.

These were sometimes checks being held by the Auxiliary member as they are handed to the recipient, but sometimes, they were simply full uncovered images of the checks themselves. Most included fully visible routing numbers, account numbers, check numbers and signatures.

### And we knew we had to issue a warning.

Check forgery has gotten easier with the development of AI tools and advancing technology. A hacker, scammer or even a bored tech-savvy tween with an iPhone could easily create fake checks from just one picture of a real one. This could be used to "write" checks from the VFW or VFW Auxiliary's bank account, which could then be cashed or deposited on a mobile device without being flagged by the bank as they look real. Additionally, personal information on the check can be used to commit identity theft or other fraud.

If you would like to share photos of your Auxiliary members gifting a donation in the form of a check, there are ways to help protect yourself online. These include blacking out the numbers, though some digital editors can remove those blackouts and reveal the characters beneath, or cropping out the parts of the check that have important information on them. You could also hold it strategically for the photo, ensuring all bank and personal information is covered up, though this may be difficult.

Best yet, you could create for your Auxiliary a prop or marketing check (much like the huge ones used by the VFW when presenting the top awards for the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen) to use when gifting a donation, then simply hand the real check to the recipient in an envelope. While some places will print these for a fee, you could make your own using thick cardboard or even a whiteboard if you want a smaller size (like an 8"x10"). You could permanently print on the information you know won't change, like your Auxiliary (Post) name and number, then, when about to use, fill in the rest of the information, including the recipient name and amount. Take your pictures with these and post without worry! ★ NP



## get SOCIAL



Instagram  
[@vfwauxiliaryhq](#)



LinkedIn  
[VFW Auxiliary](#)



Facebook  
[vfwauxiliary](#)



Pinterest  
[vfwauxiliary](#)



YouTube  
[VFW Auxiliary National Organization](#)







“Always remember  
that what you  
do matters.”

Dear members —

Attending the VFW Auxiliary National Convention is always so much fun. Each year, I look forward to catching up with friends who feel like family, and getting to know new friends is always a highlight. This year, I hope you will join me in taking all the energy, excitement and ideas from Convention and carry them with us as we begin working, *From Sea to Shining Sea, Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*.

We're coming up on the holidays, a time of year that makes us think about family gatherings and giving – whether Thanksgiving or gift giving. I do want to encourage all members to take time to include our veterans, service members and Auxiliary and VFW extended family this holiday season when we celebrate. Holidays can be lonely for those who may be stationed far from their loved ones or those who may no longer have close friends or family to surround themselves with.

I know at my Auxiliary, 2278 in Hot Springs, Arkansas, a couple of my favorite wintertime activities are spending Christmas day visiting veterans and bringing them small gifts and cards; also Shop with a Cop – an event that unites at-risk children and local police and other first responders. The children can spend their \$100 (that is given to them) any way they want, but it's so interesting and heartwarming that we see some of them purchase food or gifts for their foster families.

This year's special project, the VFW Auxiliary Continuing Education Scholarship, is designed to help our members and their families improve their lives through the pursuit of educational opportunities. It is my dream to more fully fund this scholarship so that we can offer larger scholarship amounts per conference. To make a gift, visit your [MALTA](#) member account by selecting the “Make a Gift” tab, then choose National President's 2025-2026 Special Project.

Have you begun working on membership? The Bronze level award will pay \$200 to each Department reaching 95%+ in paid membership by November 30. That is this month! Let's see how many Departments reach this milestone.

Lastly, always remember that what you do matters. Every hour you volunteer, every Program you work and every veteran or family member you help contributes to the health of our communities. Your work is invaluable. Your efforts make a real difference in the world and for that effort, I thank you.

Be the Lighthouse in Someone's Storm.

LOIS CALLAHAN  
*National President*



*Give the gift of  
spending time  
with our veterans,  
service members  
and our extended  
Auxiliary and  
VFW family.*

Dear members —

While it might start to feel a little frosty in your neck of the woods now that all the fun trunk-or-treats you've hosted and cute little trick-or-treaters and have come and gone and the jack-o-lanterns we've carved are starting to lose their luster, it's not winter yet...but it isn't too soon to start thinking about the holidays.

Whether you're planning family feasts, Friendsgiving or plotting your perfect Black Friday itinerary, also consider how you could incorporate our mission into your holiday traditions. Maybe that looks like visiting a longtime member you haven't seen in a while and reading the magazine or National E-Newsletter to them. Or it could be making and delivering small gifts and holiday cards to hospitalized or nursing home-bound veterans.

The end of the calendar year can be a difficult time for our veterans and fellow members who might be alone or separated from loved ones. Remember to keep them in your thoughts and let that motivate you to take action. Give the gift of spending time with our veterans, service members and our extended Auxiliary and VFW family.

In this edition, you'll see how one Auxiliary member whose hospital stay after a serious accident was made brighter thanks to the kind words shared in hundreds of cards she received. Her experience motivated her to send thousands of cards to hospitalized veterans in her area; individuals, she noticed when she was in the hospital, who never received cards while she had received so many.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* that includes more National Convention coverage, a story about how our Philippines Auxiliary had to get extra creative to complete a patriotic project with youth and much more.

Stay tuned for the January edition, where we'll look ahead to two National events — Mid-Year Conference aboard the Celebrity Reflection with stops in Key West and Bimini and the Celebrating America's Freedom Event (CAFE) at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., both happening in February. We'll also share news about all we achieved for veterans and service members on the legislative front in 2025.

AMANDA COOK  
*Editor-In-Chief*

## VOLUME 90 NUMBER 2

**Editor-In-Chief**  
Amanda Cook

**Contributing Writers**  
Nicole Panteleakos &  
Kris Baker

**VFW Auxiliary Magazine**  
is published six times per year — January, March, May, July, September and November — by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary, 406 West 34th St., 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111.

**Editorial Office**  
Address all communications for publication to The Editor, VFW Auxiliary Magazine, 406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111, (816) 561-8655, Fax (816) 931-4753. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs must be accompanied by return postage and no responsibility is assumed for safe handling. Poetry submissions are not accepted. Or email [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org).

**Graphic Design**  
Braden Design  
[jaclynn@bradendesign.co](mailto:jaclynn@bradendesign.co)

**Change of Address**  
Members may change their own address or email address in MALTA. Or email [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org).

**Website**  
[www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org)

# READER'S VOICE



This is the space for comments regarding your *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*. Mail your submissions to National Headquarters or email them to [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org), marked "Letter to the Editor." We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. The opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor should not be interpreted as the opinion of the National Organization.

**FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF:** In the July 2025 edition of *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*, we brought you an article on the "Orphan Exchange of Evelyn Monaco."

This was a fun but difficult story to research, as most of the people involved have since passed on and the information in our archives didn't match some of the news coverage of the goodwill tour that sent National Home teenagers to Europe while welcoming World War II orphans as young as 14 to the United States, where they toured multiple states and met many VFW Auxiliary ladies and members of the press from New York to Chicago to Atlanta. This was known as Operation Freedom, or "Let Freedom Ring." The various articles featured a number of spellings of the names of the European youth, especially the boy from Greece (whose name was never spelled the same twice).

There were also discrepancies regarding the identity of one of the American youth, identified as Mike or George Van Loon, which have since been cleared up, and another young man from the National Home is listed only by his nickname. The night before the article had to be sent to the publisher, we received word from Headquarters staff attending the reunion at the National Home Centennial Celebration that answered some of our questions but also inspired new ones. We therefore made a last-minute

change to the article, changing the ending and labeling it part one. We intend to follow-up with part two – but we need your help.

There were 12 youth who participated in this program. They would range in age from 89-95 today. We do not know whether any are still living, but we know the odds are that some of them had children, grandchildren and other family, and that National President Evelyn Monaco may also have surviving family. We also know that some of your Auxiliary archives may include local news articles or radio show transcripts about this Orphan Exchange, dating back to 1950 (the year the Publicity Program was started, then simply titled Radio). If you personally knew Evelyn Monaco (New Mexico, dec. 1977), Mike or George Van Loon, "Whitey" Robinson, Peter Valek, Patricia Witherow, Dorothy Gray, Barbara Heaton, Irmegarde Remme (Germany), Konstantinos or Constantine Sothiros (Greece), Beatrice Li Donnici (Italy), René Gielis (Belgium), Margaret Graton or Craton (England) and Hubert De Lisle (Belgium) and are interested in being interviewed, OR if you have any information from your Auxiliary archives/Historian books about Operation Freedom/Let Freedom Ring, please contact us at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) with the subject line Orphan Exchange.

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

RENEE WHISNER AND  
ROSALIE "MIMI" TREADWAY

## A MISSION IN THE MESSAGES Florida Auxiliary continues Christmas card initiative for veterans

After serving in the United States Air Force for four years, Renee Whisner was searching for her next big achievement. Whisner, a member of Auxiliary 7721 in Naples, Florida, decided she wanted to be a master yoga and meditation instructor. She traveled to Rishikesh, India to take classes. While there she was in a car accident that caused a spinal cord injury that left her quadriplegic.

Her life was forever changed. Her mother, Rosalie "Mimi" Treadway, also a member of Auxiliary 7721, flew out to India to be with Whisner during the next several difficult months. Whisner could only move her head, which she turned to look over to her mother and asked, "What is my purpose?"

"You will have to find that out on your own," Treadway replied.

Whisner got a sign while still convalescing at the James A. Haley VA medical center in Tampa. After a costly flight back to Florida, Whisner accessed her VA benefits as she had to stay in the hospital for the next year. She received hundreds of Christmas cards from friends and family. The cards covered her walls and



**ABOVE:** Auxiliary 7721 member Renee Whisner, who served in the United States Air Force, passed away in 2023. Through her Christmas card project her mother and Auxiliary continue to keep her memory alive.

whenever other veterans passed by, they always stopped to look at them. The nurses told Whisner that none of the other veterans in the hospital were getting cards. She had found her purpose.

After returning to live at her parents' home, in September of 2020, Whisner created Mission Christmas Cards For Veterans. She contacted VA hospitals throughout Florida, with a goal of sending out 125 cards. She got help from 18 schools in Collier County and arranged for children to write greetings and draw pictures.



"The kids are so great, they include pictures and thoughts we would never think of," Treadway said. "Then we hear from their parents, and they say they want to get involved as well."

They surpassed the original goal and that first year sent out 3,100 cards. The following year Whisner and company were able to mail out 5,000 and then 10,000 the next.

"It was a dream of hers," Treadway said. "She often said to me, 'If anything happens to me, promise me you will continue the mission.' I told her I would in her honor."

On Christmas Day in 2023, tragedy would be the impetus for Treadway stepping in to take over her daughter's mission. On that day, Whisner passed away suddenly, just two weeks after she'd mailed out her Mission Christmas Cards For Veterans.

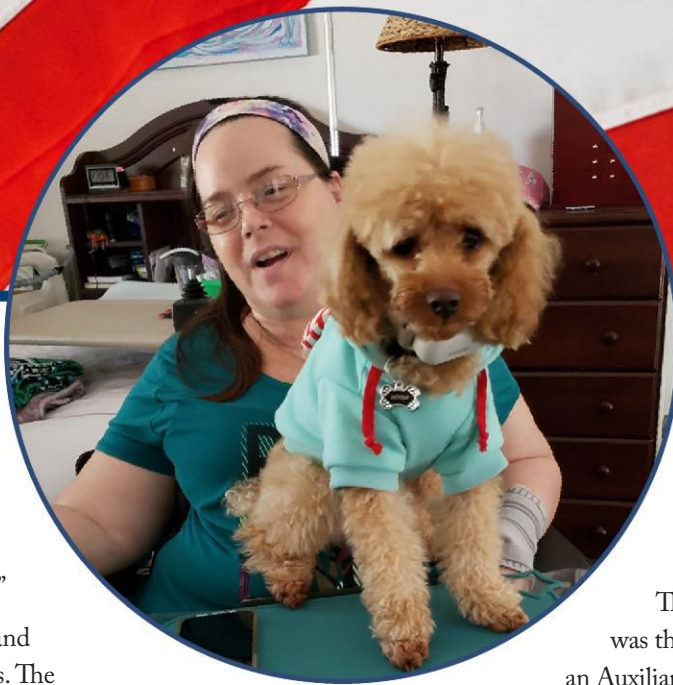
## TAKING UP THE MISSION

In the wake of her loss, Auxiliary 7721 came aboard to help Treadway keep her promise. They voted to adopt this initiative in August 2024 to continue personalizing cards to be sent out to the veterans. That year cards were mailed out to eight different states with more than 16,000 cards going out.

The process involves a volunteer calling each VA facility (hospital, nursing home or clinic) to see how many veterans reside there or visit. After a bed count is made, the Auxiliary always makes sure to include extras so no one is left out.

Treadway remembers one veteran who had just happened to stop by one of the hospitals and received a card.

"He called Renee crying and told her she saved his life," Treadway said. "He was lonely and depressed and thought



no one cared. Just one act of kindness meant the world to him. He was only 53 years old, and they kept in contact."

The next part of Whisner's dream was that every Department would have an Auxiliary take up this mission and send the VA facilities in their state Christmas cards.

"I do hope that other state Auxiliaries reach out and do send cards to make our veterans feel special for the holidays," said Betty Bailey, President of Auxiliary 7721. She has some advice for any Auxiliaries interested. "(You) need to plan ahead, purchasing discounted Christmas Cards for the VA facilities in their state, getting sponsors to support costs for special stamps, 3x5 cards/notes from children and to cover postage."

Treadway says she will be happy to talk to any Auxiliary about how to get started. For more information, members can email Betty Bailey at [bann652@aol.com](mailto:bann652@aol.com) or Mimi Treadway at [rosalietreadway@gmail.com](mailto:rosalietreadway@gmail.com).

Treadway wants to thank all the members who have helped this project continue to grow. She believes they are sending out between 27,000 and 30,000 Christmas cards this year. It took months of meeting every Monday to create this kind of success. She knows it helps to accomplish that purpose her daughter had been looking for.

"Renee's purpose in life was to help all our veterans have a smile on their face," Treadway said. "She was a proud veteran and served her country. And through this project, she still is." ✨ KB

---

**ABOVE:** After suffering a spinal cord injury, Renee Whisner, with support from her dog, Peyton Omaha, worked for years to gather as many Christmas cards as possible to send to VA facilities.

# VFW AUXILIARY'S 112<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION

## COLUMBUS, OHIO

National Convention's host city of Columbus, Ohio could not have been a better match for our organization's 2024-2025 theme of *From Our Roots to Our Branches, Extending Service to Our Veterans* because this town, founded in the 1800s where the Scioto and Olentangy rivers meet, represents the foundation of our very own family tree.

It is where our parent organization, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, "took root in 1899." We joined this family of service 15 years later, growing from a newborn organization of 47 members to a now wiser force multiplier of nearly 480,000 members advocating for veterans, their families and communities across the

nation and around the world. On the heels of last year's newest foreign-based Auxiliary in the Philippines (several of their members joined the Delegation at Convention in August), a new Auxiliary in Thailand joined our ranks. Their Treasurer visited Auxiliary and VFW National Headquarters in Kansas City in September. The latest foreign-based Auxiliary was instituted via Zoom in Paris, France. We look forward to the exciting work they will do to support our mission.

"It was very important for me to attend National Convention in Columbus, Ohio as our Auxiliary President and a Delegate," said Amie Myers, President of Auxiliary 2485 in Manila, Philippines, who traveled



**CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:** Jessica Ray, 2025-2026 Department President, represents Idaho as she joins her fellow Department Presidents during the Presentation of Colors. *(Photo by Rae Holloway-Collins)* Then-VFW National Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt presents then-VFW Auxiliary National President Brenda Bryant with the Medal of Merit at the Joint Opening Session. *(Photo by Bob Knudsen)* Danielle Springall of VFW Post 56 in Leavenworth, Kansas prepares to join the parade of Departments and gives away a little red, white and blue flare at the Patriotic Celebration. *(Photo by Amanda Cook)*





all the way from her home country. "I was able to meet the candidates and was proud to have the right to vote. During the five days I was at the Convention I learned a lot and it was an amazing experience. For a short time (on site) I gained many brothers and sisters that I can share and learn from. I'm encouraging all Auxiliary members to attend any Conventions in the future and not miss this experience. I had such a great time and I met a lot of wonderful people. I also learned a lot during Convention and I'm thankful to be part of the (111th) anniversary."

VFW Auxiliary 2024-2025 National President Brenda Bryant led the Convention with humor, heart and professionalism and called the experience of having served "incredible," noting the importance of the "positive difference we make in the world every day."

Bryant's many achievements during her year as Madam National President included a whopping \$350,000-plus contributed to her special project, Operation Bottom Cover. The funds and in-kind gifts helped military and veteran families struggling with the rising cost of baby necessities.

August's Convention stood on tradition and prepared members for the year ahead. Sessions, recognition, training and other offerings to the more than 1,300 attendees included the 45+ Members Luncheon, the Circle of Excellence ceremony, the VFW Patriotic Celebration, VFW Cornhole Tournament, VFW and Auxiliary Joint Opening and Joint Memorial Service, meetings, voting, elections, installation, the welcoming of guests, the announcing of National awards, Auxiliary Patriotic Art and VFW "Buddy"® Poppy displays, the Presentation of Flags, entertainment, gaming and a formal banquet.

This year, HQ brought the Patriotic Art winners – Young American Creative Patriotic Art, 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art and Illustrating America – to members digitally "on the big screen" in the exhibit hall, showcasing the top National entries in a slideshow that attendees could view at any time the hall was open. Deciding not to bring the art itself served two purposes; it kept the students' original pieces safe from possible damage in transport for the cross-country journey to the event and it solved the problem of student art being photographed and shared without permission. In case you missed it, you can find this year's National winners linked [here](#).



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:** Members from the VFW and Auxiliary enjoy the fun of the Patriotic Celebration. (*Celebration photos by Brittany Dymond Murray*) National Soloist Willia Watts gets members dancing, this time to the sounds of "Walking on Sunshine." Volunteer Captain Teresa (Terry) Singh surprises Bryant with a royal entrance.





National Convention launched with revelry and a “royal” entrance from Bryant at the Circle of Excellence Ceremony, during which Auxiliary and VFW members celebrated with the 41 inductees. These Department Presidents were recognized for their dedication to achieving key organizational goals.

Bryant also received a Circle of Excellence medallion. To learn more about the Circle and how your Department can join this elite group, see the [2025-2026 National Program Book](#) in MALTA Member Resources.

The National Programs Seminar, during which members heard from 2025-2026 National Ambassadors about their emphases this year, was the headliner event on Sunday. Get to know them and their visions for their respective Programs in the [National Program Book](#).

Monday morning at the Joint Opening session, then-VFW National Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt presented Bryant with the VFW's Medal of Merit.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:** Bryant and Lipphardt present Jacob Schick of One Tribe Foundation with the Better World Award that is presented to one person each year for their outstanding work that helps veterans and their families. Assistant Soloist Paul Salisbury of Connecticut welcomed Circle of Excellence inductees and guests with his rendition of “Let the Good Times Roll.” During another session later, he performed a song written by his brother. Members from the Department of Oklahoma celebrate at the Circle of Excellence ceremony.



"I am not only humbled but honored to receive this award today," Bryant said. "I am so proud of the work (our members) have done this year working with their VFWs. We have certainly shown Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes as we supported the VFW in their mission of Honoring the Dead by Helping the Living. My theme, *From Our Roots to Our Branches, Extending Service to Our Veterans*, was not mere words, they are how I feel about all of you. Our roots grow deep in this organization and together we stand tall and mighty. When the VFW and Auxiliary members work together, not even the biggest storms can knock us over. So, when Commander Al Lipphardt said, *Follow Me*, we became a force of nature. For the rest of my life, I will look at this medallion and smile, as it will remind me of all of you, of this incredible year and of the positive difference our members make in the world every day."

That evening, the VFW Auxiliary's Better World Award recipient, Jacob Schick, CEO of One Tribe Foundation, was among honored guests at the VFW awards banquet. Schick's organization is dedicated to creating a community that raises awareness and combats suicide by empowering veterans, law enforcement and first responders through traditional and non-traditional therapies. Schick himself is a third-generation combat Marine who survived a tank mine detonation with serious injuries including a partial loss of his left hand and arm, amputation below his right knee, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress (disorder). His experience led him to become a motivational speaker and founder of One Tribe Foundation. Schick addressed the entire VFW Auxiliary



Delegation with other Convention special guests on Tuesday morning. The Better World Award is presented annually to one person who makes a significant positive impact on veterans and their families.

Lipphardt, alongside Bryant, kicked off the Patriotic Celebration Tuesday evening with a healthy dose of humor, his trademark at festive events, donning an oversized Army helmet for comical effect before a colorful and high-energy parade of Departments commenced followed by a live band.

During Auxiliary business sessions, Program awards were announced and handed out to members across the nation who embodied the spirit of Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes. Additionally, the VFW Auxiliary welcomed speakers from the VFW National Home (including newly appointed "Buddy"® Poppy Child Lachlan\* and National Home Director Mike Wilson) and Patches Presfield, Supreme President of the Military Order of the Cootie. Bryant selected Children's Mercy's Hospital Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri to receive \$50,000 for their Cancer Research Institute.



**LEFT:** Lipphardt greets the Patriotic Celebration crowd with candor and humor. **ABOVE:** Cause for celebration and accidental twinning: 2024-2025 New York Department President Darlene Baker and 2024-2025 New Jersey Department President Denise Beckler unknowingly "twinning" their ensembles for Circle of Excellence. Said Baker, "Neighboring states do think alike. We had great fun showing off our attire." Making it even better, Beckler said, "was walking in together, as we're sister states, and enjoying the moment when people saw us and their reactions!"



"I picked Children's Mercy because for years I worked with children as a teacher. I watched so many children being misdiagnosed or having so many health issues," said Bryant. "I have also watched members of my family die due to cancer. So, when I heard of the amazing things Children's Mercy is doing for children, I knew it was the best place to go."

Additional cancer research donations went to The Jackson Laboratory.

In her final speech as National President, Bryant described her year as the most amazing experience she ever had. "There are so many of you that I want to thank for making this year outstanding, because it wasn't me that made it a great year – it was all of you. Thank you for being who you are and fighting every day to make life better for our veterans, our families and our communities."



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:** Kim Lewis, Department of Alabama Junior Vice-President, represents her state during the Presentation of Colors on the final day of Convention. Bobby Waddle, 2024-2025 Kentucky Department President, and Tanya Constant, 2024-2025 Mississippi Department President, were all smiles as they entered the hall for the Circle of Excellence Ceremony. Bryant accepts her Past National President pin from her Chief of Staff, Betty Arnold. Current National Chaplain Sandra Uzell escorts Lipphardt into the Auxiliary hall to address the Delegation.



During official business, members considered Resolutions and Bylaws changes.

- **Proposed Article XI-Discipline** ADOPTED AS AMENDED
- **Resolution No 1** - ADOPTED  
From Kentucky - Deceased Life Members
- **Resolution No 2** - ADOPTED  
From Dept of South Carolina - NDCMs
- **Resolution No 3** - ADOPTED  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 101  
Belief in God
- **Resolution No 4** - AMENDED & POSTPONED  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 210  
Meeting Confidentiality
- **Resolution No 5** - ADOPTED AS AMENDED  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 509  
Suspension-Revocation of District Charter
- **Resolution No 6** - NOT CONSIDERED DUE TO  
ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 7  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 809E  
National Vacancy
- **Resolution No 7** - ADOPTED  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 809E  
Option B National Vacancy
- **Resolution No 8** - ADOPTED  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 814  
Surety Amount
- **Resolution No 9** - ADOPTED AS AMENDED  
From National Resolutions Committee - Sec 915  
Dispensing of Funds

For full proposed Resolutions text and Proposed Ritual revisions, visit [MALTA Member Resources](#), National Convention.

Delegates elected Cynthia Davis, Department of Maryland, as National Guard. Read her story on page 16. All National Line Officers, led by National President Lois Callahan, were installed with all appointed Officers and newly elected National District Council Members. To learn more about 2025-2026 National Officers, find their bios in [MALTA Member Resources](#).

We've already set sail with this year's theme, *From Sea to Shining Sea, Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*, this year led by National President Callahan. To learn all about it and work our National Programs, check out the [National Program Book](#) in MALTA Member Resources.

During her acceptance speech after she was installed as National President, she said, "Always remember that what you do matters. Every hour you volunteer, every Program you work and every veteran or family member you help contributes to the health of our communities. Your work is invaluable. Your efforts make a real difference in the world and for that, I am eternally grateful. I thank you for your hard work, your dedication and your Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes. I'm excited to embark on this journey with you and I look forward to all that we will achieve together."

We hope to see you in Reno, Nevada July 24-30 for National Convention 2026! 🌟 AC

*\*Last name omitted for minors.*



**LEFT:** 2025-2026 VFW Auxiliary National Line Officers from left: Chief of Staff Karlene Beams, Conductor Janey Feher, Secretary-Treasurer Ann Panteleakos, Senior Vice-President Donna Mills, President Lois Callahan, Junior Vice-President Kim Harney, Chaplain Sandra Uzell and Guard Cynthia Davis. *(Convention photos in this story by Rae Holloway-Collins and Bob Knudsen)*



# 2025-2026 NATIONAL GUARD

## CYNTHIA DAVIS



For 2025-2026 VFW Auxiliary National Guard Cynthia Davis, joining the Auxiliary wasn't just a choice; it was a calling.

"It was rooted in service, legacy and a fierce commitment to veterans," the Maryland native said.

Davis first became acquainted with the VFW Auxiliary through its Hospital Program. Her brother, U.S. Army Cpl. and Vietnam War veteran Jerome Fleming, was a patient in the VA health care system.

"Through the outstanding care that my brother received, I was able to witness first-hand how caring and nurturing our VFW Auxiliary Hospital volunteers are," she said. "Through not only the medical care, but just as importantly the love and care he received from hospital volunteers from the VFW Auxiliary, I witnessed the spark of hope return to his eyes. Seeing my brother return to his former self touched my heart and sparked a desire in me to join this great organization to pay it forward to honor Jerome's service and to show respect and honor to our nation's heroes who sacrificed for us."

In 2023, Davis received the VA's National Advisory Committee (NAC) Volunteer of the Year Award, a testament to just how committed she is to the organization and the good work of its Hospital Program.

A Life Member of John and Samuel Tyson-Wilbert Walker Memorial Auxiliary 8509 in Baltimore, Maryland, she joined on the eligibility of her brother.

Davis has served the organization in many capacities, including as Auxiliary, District and Department President, National District Council Member #3 and National Membership Eastern Conference Coach.

She retired from the Social Security Administration after more than 39 years with them. She enjoys volunteering for the Auxiliary at Gilchrist Center, a VA Medical Center. She is a member of the Lady Patriots of Eastern Shore for Veterans and is the Supreme Grand Secretary for the Order of Eastern Star.

Serving in the first of five offices leading to National Presidency honors the legacy of her late brother, Davis said. She was inspired to campaign for National Guard by that legacy along with encouragement from family and fellow Auxiliary members.

"I am a natural communicator and I look forward to meeting many new members and learning their ideas and expectations for the future of our organization," she said. "I hope to share the emotional impact of our service to veterans in ways that resonate across generations." ★ AC



**TOP:** Cynthia Davis, 2025-2026 VFW Auxiliary National Guard.

**RIGHT:** VFW Auxiliary National Guard Cynthia Davis visits the Pearl Harbor Memorial on Oahu. She traveled to the Aloha State for Celebrating America's Freedom Event 2020.



# AUXILIARY ACRONYMS

**EVERY ORGANIZATION HAS ITS OWN INTERNAL LINGO, AND THE AUXILIARY IS NO DIFFERENT. BELOW ARE SOME TERMS THAT MEMBERS FREQUENTLY SEE, ALONG WITH EXPLANATIONS.**

## **ACH (AUTOMATED CLEARING HOUSE) –**

Electronic funds-transfer system that enables electronic transfers of money in the United States. The ACH network acts as a financial hub and helps people and organizations move money from one bank account to another. ACH transactions consist of direct deposits and direct payments, including business to business transactions, government transactions and consumer transactions. (source: Investopedia.com)

**AMBASSADOR** – The National Ambassadors are appointed annually by the National President. The Ambassadors communicate and promote National Program goals to Department (state) Chairmen and the membership at large.

**AUXILIARY** – The local unit of the VFW Auxiliary organization; also, the shortened term for all levels of the organization.

**BOOKLET OF INSTRUCTIONS** – Yellow pages within the Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual; a manual of internal policy and procedures for the Auxiliary (all levels).

**BYLAWS** – The Auxiliary's rules and procedures. The Bylaws include the purpose of the Auxiliary, membership criteria, how Delegates are elected, the duties of Officers at all levels of the Organization, information on the Organizational image and the discipline of members, among other topics. Available for purchase from the VFW Store. It is available digitally behind MALTA Member Resources.

**COE (CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE)** – A premier group of Department Presidents who have proven their leadership. The program replaced the former Outstanding Department President awards and gives every Department President the opportunity to achieve National recognition for the hard work of the Department. When a Department President achieves the Circle of Excellence, they remain in the Circle forever.

## **COA (COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION)- DEPARTMENT LEVEL**

– The Council of Administration approves the Department budget and the audit, proposes and approves expenditures outside Department Standing Rules, budget and Bylaws and represents the Department in all matters in the interval between Department Conventions. The Council of Administration of a Department consists of the Department President, Senior Vice-President, Junior Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Conductor, Guard, Chief of Staff, District Presidents (Auxiliary Presidents if no District) and the four immediate Past Department Presidents.

**DELEGATE** – An Auxiliary member elected annually by fellow members to represent their Auxiliary at the District, Department or National Conventions.

**DEPARTMENT** – The VFW Auxiliary National Organization is organized into 50 Departments, with one representing each of the 50 states. The Department is the liaison between National Headquarters and Auxiliaries and Districts and relays information to all levels.

**DISTRICT** – Geographic area within a Department. Districts are liaisons between Auxiliaries and Departments and relay information to both. The VFW determines District boundaries.

**FLOOR WORK** – Ritualistic movements performed on the floor during a traditional or contemporary Auxiliary meeting at all levels. Floor work is not done during a roundtable meeting.

**MALTA** – (Membership Auxiliary Leadership Technology Access) Our online membership system built specifically for the VFW Auxiliary. Also access MALTA via the MALTA app!

**NATIONAL DISTRICT COUNCIL** – The National District Council comprises Auxiliary members that are elected by the Department(s) (states) they represent and serve a single two-year term. The 28-member Council is the ruling body between National Conventions and the Council members are the voice of the members from the Department(s) they represent. The Council functions similarly to a board of directors or a board of trustees.

**PROGRAM** – Outline of resources designed to bring needed services, information and assistance to veterans, service members and their families and our communities. The National Organization has 11 Programs: Americanism; Auxiliary Outreach; “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home; Chief of Staff and Extension & Revitalization; Historian & Media Relations; Hospital; Legislative; Membership; Scholarships; Veterans & Family Support; and Youth Activities.

**PROJECT** – A task or event within a Program.

**RITUAL** – Activities unique to the Auxiliary, including how meetings are conducted, officer installations and special ceremonies, including the member initiation and memorial service.

**SOI (SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION)** – A training event put on by a Department or District near the start of each Program Year.

### **VAVS (VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTARY SERVICE)**

The VFW Auxiliary participates in the government-run program Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service. Along with the VFW, the VFW Auxiliary is a charter member of this Veterans Health Administration program, which began in 1946. The Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) operates one of the largest volunteer programs in the Federal Government, supplementing staff and resources in all areas of patient care and support. The VFW Auxiliary has been a part of this program since its inception in 1946. The mission of the VAVS is to provide a structured volunteer program under the management of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensated employees in cooperation with community resources to serve veterans and their families with dignity and compassion.





The lights went out during a Flag-making event for Auxiliary 2485, but that didn't stop the fun and learning. Parents held up their cell phone flashlights so the children making the Flags could carry on with their crafts.

# ART IN THE DARK

## AUXILIARY IN THE PHILIPPINES BRINGS AMERICAN CELEBRATIONS TO THEIR HOME

Rain beat down on the roof of the Post building in Manila, Philippines. Inside, Auxiliary 2485 President Amie Myers had gathered parents and volunteers together for a Flag-making craft activity for the local school children. Born in the Philippines, Myers had learned about the Flag when she was studying to become a United States citizen.

"When I passed (my citizenship test), I was very happy. I felt it in my heart," Myers said. "I made sure my first project as a newly elected President was to introduce the U.S. Flag and have the children make it."

On June 28, 2025, Myers hosted her Flag event and despite the dreadful weather outside, nothing was dampening the fun and enthusiasm of the kids inside as they showed off the Flags they were creating. Then the lights went out.

Myers says blackouts are quite common in the Philippines; she has experienced them several times this year. However, light is needed when sewing and crafting. The adults were ready to pack up.

"It was the children who wanted to continue and were excited to finish their work," Myers said. "Since we're



so used to blackouts here, everyone just carried on as usual, although it did get very hot.”

Parents held up their cellphones and used their flashlights so the children could finish their projects. Not exactly how Betsy Ross would have done it, but the enterprising spirit was the same. Even in the dark they were able to carry on.

“The children got a fun day of crafts, learned facts about the Flag and how it was made, and then they were displayed for all VFW members to see,” Myers said. “Everyone was very proud of them.”

A few days later the Auxiliary hosted a 4th of July celebration in the Philippines.

“Being a school day, some families couldn’t attend; it was a heartwarming sight, seeing the families who could join celebrate the United States’ Independence Day,” Myers said. “Everyone had wonderful summer fun despite the heavy rains that fell for most of the day.”

The local Boy Scout Troop also attended and was able to spend some time mentoring the children.

“This is our first year to hold these events,” Myers said. “Projects like these really bring us together as a community and highlight the nature of our people. We wish to have more events like this in the future for our veterans, their spouses and their children, most of whom have never been to the U.S. themselves.

Auxiliary 2485 in Manila, Philippines was instituted by National Chief of Staff Leona McDermott in May of 2022. Though a newer Auxiliary, one separated by many miles from most other Auxiliaries, Myers says they have the same passion for service as those in the States.



“I have seen first-hand the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform make to serve the nation,” Myers said. “I hope to bring the knowledge and experience I gained as a military wife to the table and help the other Auxiliary members any way I can.”

She also wants other Auxiliaries to know that distance is not such a problem either.

“I’m only an email away. I would like to share what we do at our Post and hope to learn from them too.” To reach Amie Myers and Auxiliary 2485, email [amiemyers@gmail.com](mailto:amiemyers@gmail.com). ★ KB



**ABOVE:** The 4th of July celebration in Manila, Philippines welcomed parents and children from the community to gather and get a sense of this uniquely American holiday.

# Our HISTORY

## FROM THE RADIO TO REELS: A History of VFW Auxiliary Publicity



When the VFW Auxiliary formed in 1914, the radio was still in its formative years. President Roosevelt's Fireside Chats were nearly two decades away and VFW Auxiliary success stories were documented primarily in local newspapers... if they caught the attention of editors. Members were encouraged to submit advertisements of upcoming events and recaps of past ones; if they were lucky, a reporter would attend to conduct interviews.

As the VFW Auxiliary grew and changed over the next several decades, so did entertainment and news media in the United States and beyond.

By the 1950 National Convention, Auxiliary membership had climbed to more than 300,000. While that was impressive, with more than 15 million veterans across the United States and a new war underway (Korea), there was much work to be done. Incoming National President Sue Ilg's recent predecessors had modernized the Auxiliary

when they did away with secret passwords, shortened rituals and lessened pageantry to appeal to younger members. She felt she could modernize, too, through entertainment, education and technology.

Thus, the Radio Program was born.

In 1950, around 95% of American households had a radio, which made it the ideal medium. Ilg's goal was for VFW Auxiliaries to produce their own "monthly radio broadcasts promoting the welfare of the country and its citizens" to "increase the organization's visibility within the community" (*Celebrate 75 Years: Ladies Auxiliary to the VFW*). Prior to World War II, radio stations were primarily operated out of big cities, but post-war, local stations cropped up in suburbs and small towns across the country. They had a lot of airtime to fill, which meant they were likely to give time to local organizations.

In 1952, the Program was renamed Radio-Publicity. That year, National introduced a new award for Department scrapbooks which were meant to include newspaper clippings, publicity posters, photographs and more. In 1953, the scrapbook was changed to a Press Book, solely including newspaper articles.

In 1954, "Radio" was dropped from the name of the Publicity Program, but the National organization's involvement in the world of radio had already started to expand. The focus was not simply on highlighting the VFW Auxiliary, but on providing patriotic education, similar to the Patriotism Through Literacy Youth Activities initiative. The first of these radio shows was entitled *The American Trail*. It aired in 13 parts in 1953, chronicling American history for a student



audience. The program won numerous awards and endorsements from 42 state governors; participants included President Eisenhower and singer Bing Crosby. The first episode centered on the creation of the United States Constitution, which was hotly debated ahead of the convention at which it would be officially adopted or rejected. (All 13 episodes are currently available for free on Old Radio World – please note that some terms used are outdated; these have not been edited for a modern audience.) Two years later, the VFW Auxiliary sponsored another radio show that was broadcast nationally on stations across the country. This one, entitled *The Man – and the Moment*, was all about heroes in American history; the National organization requested it be shared with local schools.

While the goal of radio shows such as these was not to recruit new members or teach the general public about our Programs and events, they helped to make the name Ladies Auxiliary to the VFW a familiar one to radio listeners of all ages, cementing the organization as part of the lexicon of American entertainment.

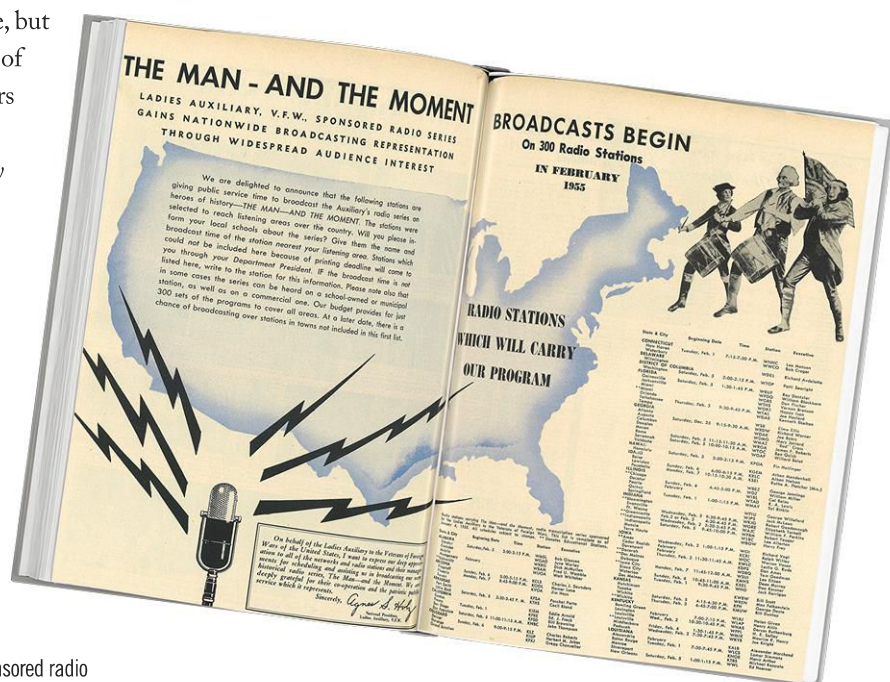
Meanwhile, the Publicity Program remained a semi-regular National continuing Program. Publicity focused on distributing information that promoted a positive image of the VFW Auxiliary, including leaflets that are similar to the Fact Sheets available behind MALTA member login today. Today, this is part of the Historian & Media Relations Program. The focus is not only on newspaper coverage, but promotion via the Internet, which allows for a variety of media to be used to reach members, potential members and the general public, from news articles to social media posts, from digitized archives of *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* issues to bimonthly new editions from the emailed E-Newsletter to hash-tagged photos.

One popular modern media that harkens back to old-time radio? Podcasts. These are audio recordings, though some incorporate video, that users stream directly from their computers, TVs, phones or even in their cars. These are typically series, not standalones. The VFW has an excellent podcast, *Still Serving*, that members can subscribe to on listening sites like Spotify

or watch on YouTube. (President Callahan was a guest on episode 49 of *Still Serving* in September, joining VFW National Commander-in-Chief Carol Whitmore for an in-person interview at the VFW office in Washington, D.C.) HQ Roundtable on Facebook Live is currently the closest to a podcast (or radio show) the National VFW Auxiliary offers, but as the organization looks to modernize much like President Ilg in 1950, there are plans in motion to digitize and offer streaming of even more content in the near future.

And then there are Reels. National Historian Kristin DiGiacomo (2025-2026) describes these to members unfamiliar with the medium as “full-screen vertical videos up to 90 seconds long... Reels allow you to add captions, stickers and backgrounds... use a range of filters... and more.” Reels can be posted anywhere but are best utilized by Auxiliary members who are on Instagram, Facebook or TikTok, where there is potential to reach millions of people otherwise unfamiliar with the organization. Auxiliary members have been sharing their Reels since the Program Year began using hashtags like #VFWAuxiliary and #VFWAux.

Technology has changed through the years, and the VFW Auxiliary has changed with it, from radio to reels, from press books to podcasts, and to whatever the future may hold. 🌟 NP



**THIS PAGE:** From the archives: A 1955 story features the Auxiliary-sponsored radio series. **PREVIOUS PAGE:** Mrs. Sue Ilg (National President of Ladies Auxiliary, VFW) on April 11, 1951. (Photo by Los Angeles Examiner/USC Libraries)

**NEW! TEAL TOTE** Auxiliary Emblem screened in teal on front pocket. 600-denier polyester. Zippered main compartment, front pocket with pen loop. Mesh pockets. 29½" shoulder straps. 20 x 14 x 4". Imported, decorated in the USA. 1076 \$14.00



**NEW**

**NEW! FIREWORKS PUZZLE** Makes a great holiday gift! 500 pieces. Finished size: 20 x 20". Average time to complete: 4-6 hours. For ages 7+. Made in the USA with non-toxic ink and recycled materials. 1247 \$20.00

**NEW**



**NEW! TUMBLER** Polar Camel, 22 oz. stainless steel with snap-on slider lid. Black with Auxiliary Emblem. 3160 \$20.00

**NEW! PATRIOTIC HEART NECKLACE** 1" charm on 17" chain with lobster claw. Soft enamel in silver plating. 1253 \$6.00



**NEW**



Front



Back

**NEW! KEYCHAIN** Elevate your recruiting! The QR code links to an overview of the VFW Auxiliary, and the Auxiliary Emblem is on the other side. 1" diameter ring. 3½" red silicone strap with VFW Auxiliary in black. Imported. 1096 \$4.00



**NEW**

**NEW! PATRIOTIC SCARF** 100% silk. 8 x 45". Imported. 1693 \$14.00



**NEW**

**NEW! BOOTS WITH FLAGS PIN** Antique gold tone finish. Double clutch back 1". 1697 \$3.50