

Happy September VFW Auxiliaries! I am so excited for the fall season and the pumpkin spice everything, though I am the person that must wait until the first day of fall to partake in the first pumpkin spice latte! As we move into the latter part of 2026 I want to look back for just a moment at everything that has happened in the last two months. MIT was A LOT, but such a great opportunity to learn and share a vast amount of information. A big thanks to Amanda Granillo and Jeanne Madlangbayan from Humana for joining in the Auxiliary shenanigans! Even though Fall Conference fell on the Holiday weekend the VFW and Auxiliary still created a weekend packed full of learning, camaraderie, laughter, and a few tears. If you were unable to attend I suggest you look into the story of Capt. Ronald Forrester, his daughter Karoni Forrester was the keynote speaker at the Banquet and told us about her experience with DPAA bringing her father home. The entire story is also available on Youtube "Missing and Not Forgotten".

September is a busy month with Suicide awareness, Sept. 11th remembrance, and POW/MIA remembrance on the 18th. With the heaviness of all that it is important to find some up-lifting stories. Crystal McCarthy has asked me to share an up-lifting moment from US history. On September 7, 1813 the United States gets its nickname uncle Sam the name is linked to Samuel Wilson, a meatpacker from Troy New York, who supplied barrels of beef to the United States Army during the war of 1812 Wilson stamped the barrels with US for United States but because he was known locally as uncle Sam soldiers began referring to the grub as uncle Sam's the local newspaper, the Troy post, picked up on the story and uncle Sam eventually gained widespread acceptance as the nickname for– and personification of – the US federal government.

Remember that sometimes what we think are small actions like supplying soldiers with food can have a huge impact for many years!