

MARCH 2022

VFW Auxiliary

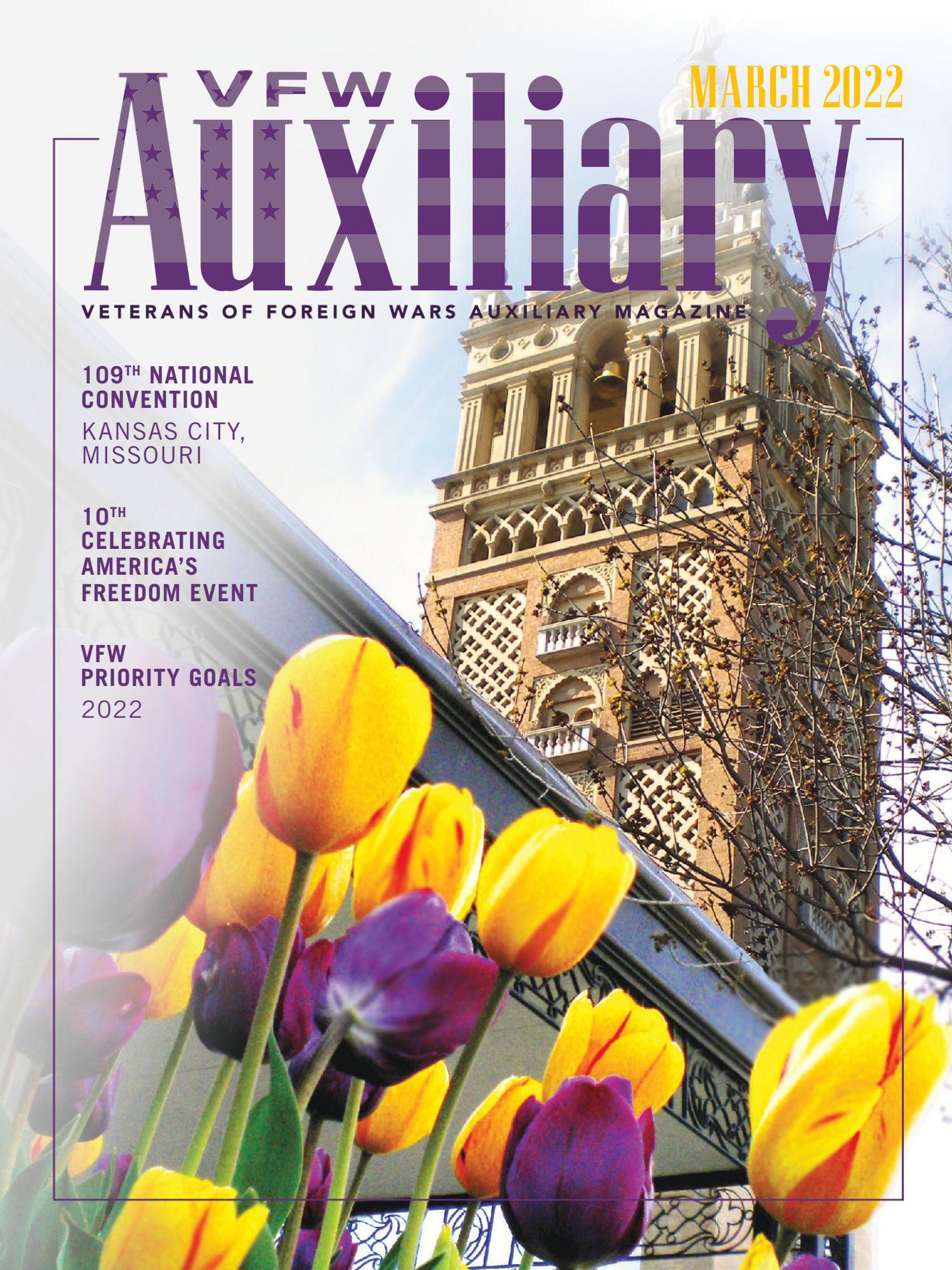
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY MAGAZINE

**109TH NATIONAL
CONVENTION**

KANSAS CITY,
MISSOURI

**10TH
CELEBRATING
AMERICA'S
FREEDOM EVENT**

**VFW
PRIORITY GOALS
2022**



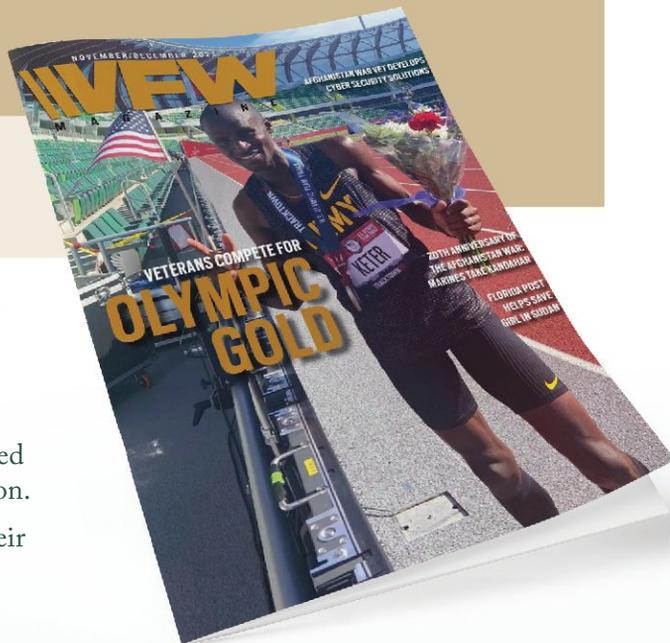
VFW AUXILIARY NEWS IN VFW MAGAZINE



Look for an article about a change in our Bylaws that allows non-citizens to join our organization in the March edition of *VFW magazine*.

In it, VFW Auxiliary National Secretary-Treasurer Ann Panteleakos expands on what this recently adopted Resolution means for membership and the organization.

The VFW also amended similar Bylaw language at their 108th National Convention.



DATES & DEADLINES

March

- FEB 27-MARCH 3 VFW Legislative Conference /(Virtual)Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Scholarship winners, Washington, D.C.
- MARCH 17 St. Patrick's Day
- MARCH 29 Vietnam War Veterans Day

April

- APRIL 15 Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest entries due to Departments
- APRIL 17 Easter

For Program awards deadlines for March and April, see the 2021-2022 *National Program Book* online at vfwauxiliary.org/resources.

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FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®



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About the Cover

A scenic view of the Country Club Plaza. The Plaza, designed in the 1920s to look like Seville, Spain, is the nation's first shopping mall.

CHANGE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS IN MALTA

Did you know you can update your mailing address in your MALTA profile?

Just log in to your account and click the “Edit” button (pencil symbol) by your address information. Then click on the word, “Edit” (top right) and enter your new address. After that, click the “Save” button.

That’s it!

Please allow one mailing cycle to begin receiving *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* at your new address. Many times, the mailing list— every member’s address, unless unsubscribed – for the most recent magazine issue arrives at the printer *before* you have changed your address in MALTA.

Members may also email National Headquarters at info@vfwauxiliary.org or call the main number, 816-561-8655, for additional help.

Note: Remember to contact the VFW National Home for Children to update your mailing address with them. Email info@vfwnationalhome.org or call 866-483-9642.

A change of address in MALTA will not update your address with the National Home.



get SOCIAL





*I'm so impressed
by how well
our Departments
are doing with
membership.*

Dear members—

It was just wonderful to see so many of you at our recent dual CAFE and Mid-Year Conference event in sunny Florida! We gathered for Celebrating America's Freedom at the Kennedy Space Center to pay homage to our nation's rich history of space exploration and all of the brilliant minds that made this possible - among them, female mathematicians and U.S. military veteran astronauts who became pioneers of the stars.

They truly inspire us to **Soar Above & Beyond** for our mission, just as they soared into the heavens "for the betterment of humanity," as NASA says.

I'm so impressed by how well our Departments are doing with membership. You're growing our Auxiliary puzzle piece-by-piece with retention and adding new members; so much so, that we are currently on track to reach 100% in membership by late April, and our retention goal of 98% as well. Keep up the great work that paves the way for a successful future for the VFW Auxiliary for many decades to come.

I'm also incredibly pleased with how many Auxiliary (and VFW!) members have supported my special project, Fund the Future. Your generous contributions will ultimately provide more scholarships to more students. I've even noticed a little friendly competition among Auxiliary and VFW members when it comes to donations.

In my recent travels, I've had the privilege of meeting with VAVS Representatives, Deputy Representatives and other volunteers who, despite the enduring pandemic, have found creative ways to continue to support our veterans in VA facilities and veterans' homes across the country. While I was still unable to connect with these veterans face-to-face, we were able to help with meals and other support projects. I was so moved by these experiences. I could just feel the compassion in these volunteers' voices.

I look forward to seeing you all in a few months, again in Kansas City, for our 2022 National Convention. Stay safe and well, and continue to support one another and our entire VFW Auxiliary and VFW family.

Loyally yours,

JEAN HAMIL
National President



*We want to
share news
from our
members.*

Dear members—

It's time to start thinking about National Convention again, and again we'll be on VFW Auxiliary Headquarters' home turf in the Heart of America, Kansas City.

We know many of you who were able to attend Convention in 2021 experienced K.C. after we had to pivot from Baltimore, but this time, we're planning to gather in the Show-Me state, so look for details in this issue about our hometown attractions, culture, foodie destinations and more. You might even hop the state border for some out-of-this-world barbecue just a few miles from downtown where Convention happens.

Stay in the know, because these days, you never know how things can change. We have learned that over the past two years.

- Visit our National website, its Resources page and our National Facebook page, regularly.
- Sign up for our free National E-Newsletter.
- Check the back of this magazine for your name and address. If it is incorrect, log in to your MALTA profile and update it.

Look for more news in this issue about upcoming National events and even a special offer from *VFW magazine*.

We want to share news from our members, too. If you have an original project or story idea, contact us at info@vfwauxiliary.org with "Magazine idea" in the subject line of your email. We're also always looking for stories that spotlight outstanding members and Auxiliaries (Member or Auxiliary Spotlight), beloved veterans (male or female, living or deceased) for My Veteran, and great photos that tell the story of Our History. See vfwauxiliary.org, Media, Magazine for print-quality photo-sending tips.

We look forward to seeing and hearing from you!

AMANDA COOK
Editor-In-Chief

VOLUME 83 NUMBER 5

Editor-In-Chief
Amanda Cook

Contributing Writer
Maria Royer

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.

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Change of Address

Forward address changes to: Circulation Department, VFW Auxiliary Magazine, 406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111. Be sure to furnish your old address and your Auxiliary number when requesting address change. To ensure accuracy, please clip and enclose your present address as printed on a recent copy of VFW Auxiliary Magazine. Or email info@vfwauxiliary.org.

Website

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, 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.

Giving to our veterans through the VFW (and Auxiliary) has been my passion for over 20 years. It is understanding the meaning of giving our time to our Programs, not only giving back to our veterans, but educating the next generation. I have served in numerous capacities, which has brought satisfaction to my life knowing I was a small part of something greater than myself. The Cancer Program was one I was most passionate about and always 100 percent involved in, knowing our veterans suffered from the disease. My heart, energy compassion and effort went into this Program. In March of 2020, I was diagnosed with terminal blood cancer and through a (Cancer Grant), help was given back to me. What was given out was given back! Giving back is what our Programs are all about and the realization is - because of what our veterans did for us, we have an obligation to give back to them.

May God always bless our country! May God always bless our veterans and I personally thank God for the VFW (Auxiliary) organizations!

JUDY QUINN
Gustine, Calif.
Auxiliary 7635

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

The editors of *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* want to know what you think about features and articles you see in the magazine.

Please email your letters to the Editor to info@vfwauxiliary.org, marked "Letter to the Editor," or send them to

VFW Auxiliary Magazine,
406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor,
Kansas City, MO, 64111.

MY VETERAN

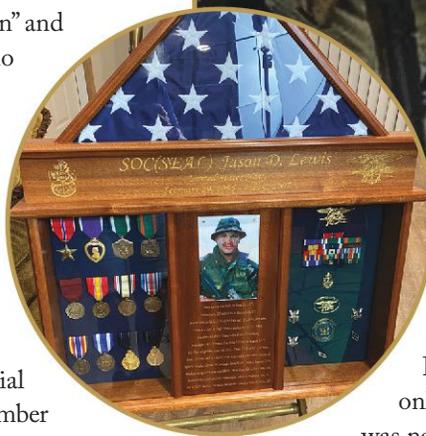
JASON D. LEWIS

Jean Mariano of Auxiliary 10201 in Brookfield, Connecticut knows what it means to make the ultimate sacrifice. Mariano's son Jason D. Lewis gave his life during Operation Iraqi Freedom. She lost her son in the fight for freedom, and now serves as Auxiliary President at the Post/Auxiliary named in his honor.

Lewis set his sights on becoming a Navy SEAL during his senior year in high school. His mother had concerns about his choice, but Lewis was determined. He enlisted in the Navy in 1996 and later became a member of SEAL Team 10. On July 6, 2007, Chief Petty Officer and Special Warfare Operator First Class Jason D. Lewis was killed in action in Baghdad, Iraq when an improvised explosive device detonated during a combat mission. He left behind his wife Donna and three children.

Mariano recalls her son as an "avid outdoorsman" and athlete, who served "with flying colors." Mariano continues, "He was proud to serve and protect and I am so proud of him. He achieved more in his 30 years than many people do in a lifetime." She describes him as "smart but humble" with a "personality that would light up a room."

In December of 2018, the members of Post 10201 unanimously voted to change the Post name to the Jason D. Lewis Brookfield Memorial VFW Post. The change officially took place December 13, 2018, and in August of 2019, a ceremony was held wherein a stone monument with a bronze plaque was unveiled. Mariano states that not only was the renaming an honor, but also appropriate, as the Post sits on Candlewood Lake where her son often enjoyed fishing.



Auxiliary 10201 was instituted on August 16, 2020 and Mariano was installed as its first President, a fitting choice not only because the Post/Auxiliary was named for her son, but also because of her dedication to veterans' causes. She states, "We are a solid Auxiliary that works hand in hand with the Post." ✦ MR

ABOVE: Jason D. Lewis, who was killed in the line of duty. Lewis' mother, Jean Mariano, is President of the Auxiliary connected to the Post named in her son's honor.

VFW MAGAZINE

THANK YOU AUXILIARY MEMBERS!

VFW has a special offer just for you!



★ Subscribe to **VFW** magazine for only \$1 per issue!

Enjoy a full year of **VFW** magazine for only one dollar per issue! That's right, for only \$10 a year you'll get 10 issues of VFW's award-winning publication delivered directly to your mailbox. Learn how VFW and Auxiliary members work together to serve their communities. Experience the many different ways VFW and Auxiliary members change the world for the better. What we do as a combined force of 1.5 million veterans advocates is a story that the public needs to hear and read.

Now, here's your chance to have those stories delivered to your mailbox 10 times a year at a deeply discounted rate. We hope to add you as a reader. Subscribe today.

To subscribe, call **1-833-839-8387** today and mention offer code **AUX2019** or email **MSC@vfw.org**.

* The offer code **AUX2019** is still valid this year, 2022.



2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION

KANSAS CITY

here we come...

Members will return to the Heart of America in 2022 for the VFW Auxiliary's 109th National Convention. This time, K.C. is officially on the books, and we have time to introduce you to all National Headquarters' hometown has to offer.

Kansas City is in both Missouri and Kansas (really). The nearly 2 million-resident area straddles the state line. While Convention will happen on the Missouri side at the Kansas City Convention Center, some nearby destinations are just a few miles away in the Sunflower State, like **Joe's Kansas City Barbecue**. We are also known as the New Midwest, City of Fountains and Barbecue Capitol of the World, and we're home to both Superbowl and World Series champions.

EARLY YEARS:

Kansas City was incorporated as a city more than 160 years ago.

It was the site of some intense Union/Confederate conflict during the Civil War – notably, the Battle of Westport, during which the Confederacy was defeated. *(source: Wikipedia)*

Post-Civil War, the area experienced unprecedented growth that included a City Beautiful movement, which gave way to an impressive network of parks and boulevards; a grand, new in 1914 Union Station and the opening of the nation's first shopping mall – the **Country Club Plaza** development. To this day, the



PAGE 9, FROM LEFT: A view of the downtown Kansas City skyline and the stunning J.C. Nichols Memorial Fountain on the Country Club Plaza, one of many beautiful fountains that earn Kansas City its nickname, City of Fountains. **PAGE 10:** One of the iconic shuttlecocks on the grounds of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. **PAGE 11, TOP:** The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Below, from left: The Kansas City Power & Light District downtown and Arthur Bryant's, a Kansas City barbecue institution. **PAGE 12:** Union Station at night; right, a newer addition to downtown - the Kansas City Streetcar.

high-end shopping district is a site to see in Kansas City, where visitors can stroll, dine and take in some retail therapy along streets designed to emulate Seville, Spain. In pre-pandemic times, every Thanksgiving evening, tens of thousands of people descended on the Plaza for a special annual tradition – the countdown to the holiday season when, with the flip of a switch, the entire area glimmers with miles and miles of Christmas lights.

Kansas City had a wild streak, led by the infamous 20th-century political boss Tom Pendergast, but his legacy also includes Depression-era construction of such amazing Art Deco buildings as the Kansas City Power & Light Building and Kansas City City Hall downtown.

OUT AND ABOUT IN KC:

According to visitkc.com – Kansas City's official tourism site, "this growing metropolis is a vibrant, creative community that prides itself on friendly, fun-loving people."

While the Kansas City metro area hugs the state line and is indeed in both Kansas and Missouri, you'll be spending most, if not all of your time on the Missouri side.

CULTURE:

If you are into the arts, visit the **Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art**, known for its extensive Asian Art collection among stunning African, American, European and sculpture exhibits and the museum's acclaimed Bloch Building expansion. Not far from "The Nelson" is the **Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art**. Dine on "artful cuisine" in a 15th-century Italian courtyard at the Nelson's **Rozzelle Court Restaurant** or nosh on delectable dishes from the Kemper's **Café Sebastienne** while surrounded by modern art. Several local companies offer great Segway tours of this area.





A striking addition to the Kansas City skyline is the **Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**, completed in 2011. The center, considered one of the world's most complex structures, was designed by lead architect Moshe Safdie and acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota. Its dramatic half-shell design features a lobby with 40,000 square feet of glass.

(source: Wikipedia)

SHOPPING/SIGHTSEEING:

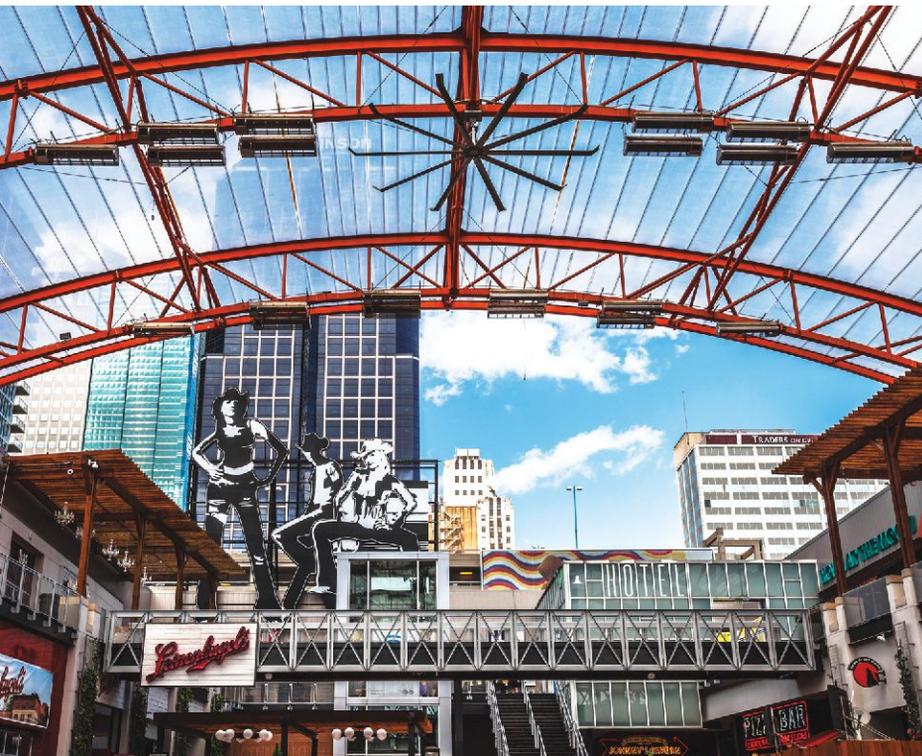
The aforementioned **Country Club Plaza** offers a wealth of shopping and dining. For more dining and nightlife opportunities visit Midtown's **Westport** "The Original Kansas City" district or downtown's **Power & Light District**. Another great part of town not too far off the Convention path is the **Westside**, that offers fun dining and a First Friday of the month art gallery experience.

For a dose of live jazz in a town also known for its celebrated jazz history, visit the **Green Lady Lounge** on Grand Boulevard, an elegant retro-lounge resplendent in red-only décor.

City Market is at the edge of the north/south dividing line of Kansas City. Shop its large farmers' market and vintage sale area. During the summer months, City Market is a nice place to grab a bite at a charming bistro offering local American comfort food, **Brown & Loe**; Asian, Italian or even Ethiopian fare for lunch. It's also a wonderful people-watching spot.

Some of these locations are now accessible by streetcar from downtown. Check out kcstreetcar.org for more details.

The National World War I Museum and Memorial: America's official World War I museum, which first opened in 1926, underwent a dramatic transformation, reopening in 2006 to continue its mission of being "dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community." Visitors enter the 32,000 square foot space by crossing a glass bridge above a field of 9,000 red poppies – each poppy representing 1,000 soldiers lost.





The monument extends from the subterranean exhibits to the skies - the memorial's 217-foot tower overlooks downtown K.C.

Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum:

Located in Independence, Missouri, east of Kansas City, the 33rd U.S. President's library/museum was the first presidential library to be created under the provisions of the 1955 Presidential Libraries Act. It was established to preserve the papers, books, and other historical materials ... and to make them available to the people in a place suitable for exhibit and research. Truman was the only U.S. President who served in combat in World War I. The library and museum are open Tuesday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Check trumanlibrary.gov before visiting.

WHERE TO EAT:

All that sightseeing is bound to work up an appetite, and lucky you, Kansas City just about has it all when it comes to dining.

When you think of Kansas City and food, what comes to mind first? Barbecue, right? We'll start there. After all, Kansas City is responsible for the world's largest annual barbecue competition.

A noteworthy barbecue joint worth visiting is in Midtown on 39th Street. It's called **Q39**. Treat yourself to the smoky goodness of everything from wood-fired

brisket, chicken and sausage to ooey, gooey mac and cheese or their unique white bean cassoulet. It's a bit of a trek, and be prepared to wait in line, but **Joe's Kansas City** on State Line Road is famous for well, everything barbecue. Their Z-Man sandwich is a must-try. For classic, old-school 'cue, try **Arthur Bryant's**, **Jack Stack Barbecue** and **Gates**. For fancier fare, visit the historic Union Station and dine at **Pierpont's**, an elegant local steak and seafood venue. For some amazing Italian, try **Garozzo's Ristorante** in Columbus Park, one of K.C.'s oldest Italian neighborhoods. Their tagline is: "Where chicken spiedini began!"

On the quirkiest side, try **Grinders**. It's not only known for its tater tot-topped pizza and Philly cheesesteak sandwiches, but is also a concert venue (Blondie performed there.) Also on the West Side is **Up-Down**, an arcade bar for grown-ups.

Folks from K.C.: Paul Rudd, Pat Metheny, Tom Watson, Count Basie, Jean Harlow, Thomas Hart Benton. 🍀 AC

FOR MORE INFORMATION
about Kansas City, go to visitkc.com,
Kansas City's official tourism site.



2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION SCHEDULE

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

FRI, JULY 15

10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Early Packet Pickup at Lowes Kansas City and Kansas City Marriott Downtown Hotels

SAT, JULY 16

8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open/Registration

10:00-11:30 a.m. Conference Meetings

Noon-1:30 p.m. 45-Plus Club Luncheon
(Reservations required)

5:30 p.m. Circle of Excellence Ceremony

SUN, JULY 17

8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open/Registration

8:30-9:30 a.m. Joint Memorial

10:00-10:30 a.m. First-Time Attendee's Meeting

10:30-11:30 a.m. Meet the National Line Officers

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Past Councilors' Club Luncheon

1:00-4:30 p.m. Programs Seminar

MON, JULY 18

8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open/Registration

8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Joint Opening Session

1:30 p.m.-2:15 p.m. Council of Administration Meeting

2:30-5:00 p.m. Auxiliary Opening Business Session

TUE, JULY 19

8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

8:00 a.m.-Noon Registration

8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Auxiliary Business Session

6:00 p.m. VFW Patriotic Celebration

WED, JULY 20

8:00 a.m.-Noon Exhibit Hall Open

8:30 a.m. Auxiliary Business Session

1:15-2:15 p.m. Treasurers' Training (*Department Only*)

2:30-4:00 p.m. Treasurers' Training (*Secretaries and Trustees*)

THURS, JULY 21

8:00 a.m. Flag Presentation

8:30 a.m. Officer Installation and Closing Session

4:00-6:00 p.m. Joint Reception for Commander-in-Chief and National President (*Ticketed event*)
Kansas City Marriott Downtown Hotel

POST-CONVENTION EVENTS

FRI, JULY 22

9:00 a.m. 2020-2021 National District Council Meeting, Loews Kansas City Hotel

6:00 p.m. National President's Celebration, Loews Kansas City Hotel

Note: This schedule is tentative. Please be sure to visit the National website and read the E-Newsletter for the latest updates.

REGISTRATION FORM

National Convention: Advance Registration \$25

45-Plus Luncheon *(Complimentary)*

Name Membership No.

Address City State ZIP

Department Phone Email

Check enclosed Money order enclosed Credit card

DO NOT SEND CASH.

Credit Card No.

Visa MasterCard

Name on card

Discover American Express

Billing address for card

City State ZIP

Expiration date

3-digit CVV code on back of card *(Visa, MasterCard, Discover)*

4-digit CVV code on front of card *(Amex only)*

This form and all payments must be received at National Headquarters by May 31.

No exceptions or refunds after this date.

DO NOT ENCLOSE DELEGATE LISTS WITH THIS FORM.

SAVE \$15!

Advance registration is \$25.

On-site registration is \$40.

Register in MALTA, pay with credit card (form above) or mail a check to:

VFW Auxiliary

406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor,
Kansas City, MO 64111

Attn: National Convention Registration

Registration must be received by May 31.

Registrations received after May 31 will be rejected.

Member must be present at time of registration to receive packet.

45-YEARS PLUS CLUB LUNCHEON

Have you been a member for 45 years or more?

Come join the 45-Years Plus Club at National Convention.

The luncheon will be at noon on Saturday, July 16 at the Convention Center.

Register online or fill out form (above) and mail to National Headquarters. Registration is required to attend.

Note: To register for the 45-Years Plus Club Luncheon, you must have been a member prior to June 30, 1977, and maintained continuous membership since that date.

10TH CELEBRATING AMERICA'S FREEDOM EVENT

FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL



A COMMON FIELD ONE DAY. A FIELD OF HONOR FOREVER.

Members will join incoming National President Jane Reape in Pennsylvania for the VFW Auxiliary's 10th Celebrating America's Freedom Event (CAFE) at a site where one tragic chapter in America's history came to a shattering end.

The event is scheduled for September 10 at the Flight 93 National Memorial where, on the morning of 9/11, a plane carrying 40 passengers and crew crashed into a field in Somerset County, killing all on board – terrorists with diabolical plans for an attack on Washington, D.C. and the extraordinary men and women who thwarted that attack against our Capitol.

We will gather to honor the passengers and crew who lost their lives in a fight against these terrorists and take in the gravity of this memorial, from the Tower of Voices, a 93-foot-tall musical instrument with 40 uniquely pitched chimes, one for each passenger who perished, to the Wall of Names to the Sacred Ground.

Find more information about the location at the Flight 93 National Memorial website: www.nps.gov/flni/index.htm.

Look for more details to come on the VFW Auxiliary's National website, in the E-Newsletter and future issues of this magazine. ✨ AC

Photo Credit: Tower of Voices photo: NPS Photo/C. Claycomb

What to do if you're having trouble receiving VFW AUXILIARY MAGAZINE



There are several reasons members may not receive or continue to receive their bimonthly mailings of *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*. Below is our best advice for problem-solving.

If you know a member who is having issues with their magazine delivery, please share this page with them!

- 1 Access your MALTA profile to ensure your mailing address is correct. Our printing company gets addresses (excluding those who've unsubscribed) for every member from our MALTA database. So, if your address is incorrect, you won't receive your magazine. You may update your own address (see page 3).
- 2 Are your dues paid? If not, you can be excluded from the magazine mailing list until you are in good standing.
- 3 Did you inadvertently unsubscribe? Check your MALTA profile. If "No Magazine" or "Do Not Contact" are selected, you will not receive the magazine. You can easily change this by clicking "Paper Magazine." Selecting "E-Magazine" will subscribe you ONLY to the e-version, not the paper copy.

Everything looks right, but I'm still not getting my magazine.

Sometimes this happens. For cost efficiency, we mail at a bulk nonprofit rate, which can result in our magazine being considered "junk mail."

So, if you've checked your MALTA profile, and everything is correct, next steps would be:

- Tell your mail delivery person you should be receiving this piece of mail.
- Notify your local post office.
- Sign up for **Informed Delivery**[®]. This is a free and optional notification feature that gives residential consumers the ability to digitally preview their letter-sized mail and manage their packages scheduled to arrive soon. (Source: USPS)

Visit informedelivery.usps.com to sign up. Informed Delivery[®] will let you know via email what mail is on its way to you, including *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*.

Our National magazine is mailed to every valid (and not unsubscribed) address in our MALTA membership database. We rely on USPS to deliver the magazine; therefore, HQ cannot fix any errors with mail delivery.

For those who live in multiple-member households or prefer reading *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* on their tablet, computer or smart phone, consider subscribing to the E-Magazine or accessing the digital version online at vfwauxiliary.org under Media, Magazine. 🌟 AC



The VFW has played an instrumental role in nearly every piece of veterans' legislation passed since the beginning of the 20th century. Everything the VFW does on Capitol Hill is with the VFW's Priority Goals and veterans' well-being in mind. With the strength of the more than 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary, our voice on Capitol Hill cannot be ignored!

2022

VFW PRIORITY GOALS

BUDGET

To fully fund programs for veterans, service members, and their families, Congress must:

- Reform the dysfunctional federal budget process.
- Authorize VA to receive reimbursements from TRICARE and Medicare.
- Never reduce one veteran's benefits to pay for another.

DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

To ensure veterans and their survivors have timely access to earned benefits, Congress and VA must:

- Pass comprehensive toxic exposure reform, including improvements to the claims process, to provide health care and benefits to all toxic exposed veterans.
- Consider treatment of presumptive conditions as a claim for disability compensation.
- Properly implement the modernized appeals process.

- Reinststate a pre-decisional review period for claims representatives prior to final ratings decisions.
- Require VA to accept private medical evidence in lieu of VA examinations.
- Update regulations and laws governing claims to account for digital claims processing.
- Improve the accuracy of disability compensation claims related to military sexual trauma.
- Increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits for survivors.
- Increase burial allowances to account for inflation and include spouses' information on all headstones.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

To ensure veterans succeed after leaving military service, Congress, VA, DOD, and DOL must:

- Conduct oversight of transition assistance program pathway attendance and ensure access to community transition resources.
- Improve education benefits through increased online student housing allowances, child care stipends, parity for Guard and Reserve members and elimination of delimiting dates.
- Enhance outreach and counseling for Veteran Readiness and Employment eligible veterans.
- Expand small business and entrepreneurship resources for veterans and military spouses.
- Expand preferences and tax incentives for hiring veterans and military spouses.
- Fund and track outcomes for career-focused training programs.
- Increase funding for HUD-VASH vouchers, grant and per diem payments and pilot programs to combat veteran homelessness.
- Authorize more than one adaptive automotive grant for disabled veterans.

HEALTH CARE

To ensure service members and veterans receive timely access to high-quality health care without increasing cost shares, Congress, VA, and DOD must:

- Reduce the number of service members and veterans who die by suicide to zero.
- Strengthen care and research for mental health and traumatic brain injuries.

- Require an assessment of Vet Centers to ensure adequate staffing, resources and funding.
- Improve programs and services for women and minority veterans.
- Research and effectively treat health conditions associated with toxic exposures.
- Eliminate copayment requirements for preventive health care, including medications.
- Research the efficacy of medical cannabis.
- Preserve the integrity of TRICARE.
- Properly implement VA and DOD health IT systems.
- Expand telehealth services.
- Expand nursing home eligibility, and long-term care options.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE

To maintain a quality, comprehensive benefits and retirement package that is the backbone for an all-volunteer force, Congress and DOD must:

- Increase military base pay comparability with private sector wages.
- Protect and improve on-base quality of life programs.
- Ensure that military housing is safe and free of toxic substances.
- End the military retirement pay and VA disability compensation offset.
- Ensure military family members are gainfully employed.
- Eliminate food insecurity in the military.
- Establish the Armed Forces University.
- Ensure equity of benefits for Reserve component service members.
- Improve stability and support for military families.

NATIONAL SECURITY, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND POW/MIA

To fully support service members, and protect our nation's citizens and interests around the world, Congress and DOD must:

- Expand partnerships with host nations and private/public organizations to achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
- Preserve the all-volunteer force.
- Ensure DPAA is fully funded to perform its personnel recovery mission.

CITIZENSHIP NO LONGER A REQUIREMENT FOR ELIGIBILITY

A change in VFW Auxiliary Bylaws opens the door for more spouses worldwide to join the nearly 500,000 members working on behalf of veterans and their families.

One such person is Hyun-Ju Garduno, who, for the first time in her 15-year marriage to husband and VFW Assistant Quartermaster General Marc Garduno, is now an Auxiliary member. For Hyun-Ju and others like her, this measure ensures spouses with citizenship outside the United States are recognized for volunteer work they perform for veterans - Auxiliary work done sometimes for many years - by welcoming them into the organization.*

These individuals share the same passion every other Auxiliary member has for serving veterans, service members, their families and communities.



A resolution to amend Sec.101-Eligibility was presented for vote and adopted at the 108th National Convention in Kansas City. This change removed the requirement that an individual must be a citizen of the United States or a United States national from VFW Auxiliary eligibility requirements. The VFW adopted a similar change to their bylaws in 2021.

AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2021, THE AMENDED TEXT STATES:

Membership in the VFW Auxiliary shall be limited to: Husbands/Wives; Fathers/Mothers; Sons/Daughters; Brothers/Sisters; Widowers/Widows; Grandfathers/Grandmothers; Grandsons/Granddaughters of persons who were or are eligible for membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

THEY MUST ALSO:

- Profess a belief in God.
- Be not less than sixteen (16) years old.
- Any current VFW member or any person eligible to join the VFW shall not be eligible to join the Auxiliary.
- Women who joined the Auxiliary prior to August 21, 2015 who are current members or are eligible for membership in the VFW shall be eligible for the Auxiliary so long as their membership remains current.



*From an article in the March edition of *VFW magazine* written by Janie Dyhouse. To read the full story and more VFW news, see page 8 of this issue for a special subscription offer from *VFW magazine*.

Electing DELEGATES & ALTERNATES

THINK—Before electing 2022 Delegates and Alternates for your District, Department and National Conventions, those present at the March, April and May Auxiliary meetings need to consider the following:

- Those members who have stated their interest in attending the upcoming District, Department, and National Conventions;
- Those members who have attended these Convention meetings in the recent past;
- Those members who are District and/or Department Officers and/or Chairmen;
- Those members who are the spouses of VFW Officers who will represent the VFW Post at these same conventions;
- In short, talk with your members and ask them if they are interested in representing the Auxiliary at District, Department or National Conventions.

Examples:

- Your Auxiliary Treasurer is the Department Legislative Chairman, so yes, he or she would attend both the District and the Department Conventions and should be considered to be elected as a Delegate or Alternate to the Convention meetings.
- You know that your Post Commander will be the only member attending the District and Department

Conventions; his wife, although she has not attended meetings regularly, she has traveled with him around the District and Department and therefore would be present at the Conventions so the Auxiliary would have at least one (1) Representative present.

Also, the Auxiliary needs to be familiar with the number of Delegates and Alternates to which it is entitled for District (**Section 303-1** Delegate and 1 Alternate for each fifteen (15) members in good standing or portion thereof at the time of election); Department (**Section 304- 1** Delegate and 1 Alternate for each thirty (30) members in good standing or portion thereof at the time of election) and National (**Section 305-1** Delegate and 1 Alternate for each fifty (50) members in good standing or portion thereof at the time of election).

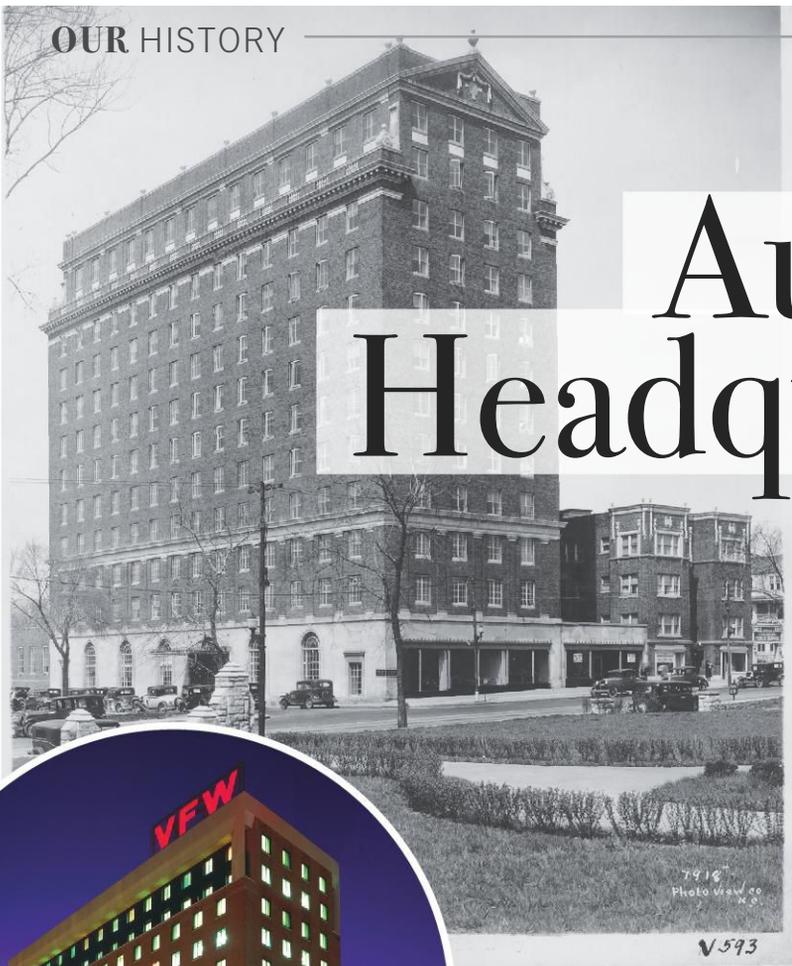
Following the elections of these respective Delegates and Alternates, it is the responsibility of the Auxiliary Secretary is to see that the representatives chosen by the Auxiliary reach their District and Department Secretary prior to those Conventions. The Auxiliary Secretary must input the Delegates and Alternates to National Convention in MALTA by no later than May 31 or mail, fax or email to info@vfwauxiliary.org the Delegates and Alternates names and membership ID numbers to the National Secretary.

The Auxiliary Secretary is responsible for reporting the Auxiliary's Delegates and Alternates to the District Secretary (District Convention) to the Department Secretary (Department Convention) by the respective deadlines and National Convention (National Secretary) or input the Delegates and Alternates into MALTA. Auxiliary Secretaries are encouraged to print out the list of Delegates and Alternates to verify that those entered were posted.

VFW Auxiliary Headquarters

It has served as the Headquarters of the VFW since 1930. A few years later, in 1932, Auxiliary Headquarters was established in the 12-story office building, where it remains to this day.

The VFW relocated to Kansas City in 1923, renting office space in various locations including the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building in Kansas City, Kansas. While the Auxiliary was encouraged by its parent organization to relocate to Kansas City beginning in 1924, it wasn't until 1932 that the then-Ladies Auxiliary made the move.



THE SKYLINE OF KANSAS CITY IS A FAMILIAR SITE TO MANY AUXILIARY MEMBERS.

As the location of VFW and VFW Auxiliary Headquarters, Kansas City is a second home of sorts for those who have often traveled to the City of Fountains. Although the city has seen many changes since the VFW and its Auxiliary first made Kansas City their home, one location has remained a familiar sight: the VFW building at Linwood and Broadway.

In 1925-1926, the structure was built in the Valentine district of Kansas City and originally named the Parson Building and later the Medical Arts Building.

The corner of Linwood Boulevard and Broadway Boulevard looks a lot different than it did in 1930. What is now the parking lot, parking garage and the VFW Centennial Plaza was once the site of an apartment building, several homes and a gas/service station. In 1975, the building underwent a major renovation, giving the façade its current appearance. The 10th floor Auxiliary offices have also received many facelifts over the years, most recently from 2010-2017 at the direction of Past National President and former National Secretary-Treasurer Jan Owens, including the addition of a media room.

These days, the structure is widely recognized as the VFW Building. The illuminated VFW sign is a beacon for veterans, Auxiliary members and Kansas City residents, shining a light on the work we do here, supporting veterans, service members and their families and communities throughout the country. ✦ MR

ABOVE: A recent photo of VFW and VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. Top: Headquarters in the 1930s.



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VFW and Auxiliary Headquarters through the years.



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