

Hospital Promotion #1 | July 2023  
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I am truly honored to have been asked to be your Hospital Ambassador for the 2023-2024 Program Year.

I am looking forward to working with all of you during the upcoming Program Year, hearing about how each Department promotes the program and energizes volunteers to get involved while we all are.

***Banding together for Our Veterans.***

My name is Della Steege, and I am from the Department of Michigan. I live in a small town called Owosso, about halfway between Flint and Lansing if you are familiar with the Mitten state. Just a small place that is growing year by year. I have been a member of Corunna Auxiliary 4005 for 20 years, but my family has been a part of this Auxiliary for six generations. I have been married to David, my husband for 27 years, and we have two children, three grandchildren and two very needy dogs. I have eligibility to join the Auxiliary under my father, a Navy veteran, but I chose to join under my husband, a two-time combat veteran. He insisted I join before he deployed “in case something happened” to him while serving his second deployment to Iraq. His words were-they will take care of you if I get hurt or killed. I have had many veterans in my family, from my great-uncle George who served in World War II, to my uncle Dwight who was killed in action in Vietnam, my uncle Bob who served in Korea not to mention the many cousins who also served this great country, you see I'm not just a card-carrying member, I think I was born to be in the Auxiliary.

I have held multiple positions at my Auxiliary including Auxiliary President four times and I currently serve as Secretary and have three Chairmanships. I have been District 9 President twice and I was Department President during 2019-2020 when COVID began. I have also had four Department Chairmanships over the years, and I currently serve on the audit committee and as the VAVS representative for Aleda Lutz Veterans Medical Hospital. This hospital is an 81-bed facility, small, compared to many, I'm sure. but this facility cares for all veterans from the middle of the state north to the upper peninsula of Michigan.

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- VFW Auxiliary members have been working to meet the needs of hospitalized veterans in VA Medical Centers and other medical facilities since the organization's inception in 1914.

We play bingo, make sure they have coffee, and pass out personal care items and lap robes. Even the smallest act of kindness can change someone's day, it does not have to be expensive or time-consuming to put a smile on their face.




## Celebrating Non-Traditional Holidays




We will still celebrate Valentine's for Veterans, Memorial Day, Flag Day, and Easter, but occasionally let us throw in a little unexpected celebration for our veterans who are in hospitals and homes.

I want you to be creative, have some fun and be creative with our veterans and your time volunteering. Let's show our veterans some love on those unexpected days by using [www.nationaltoday.com](http://www.nationaltoday.com) for ideas for special, any day acts of kindness and love.

I hope this will assist you with planning daily or weekly unique events for our veterans.

\*\*July 19th -National Hot Dog Day 

\*\*July 20th -National Fortune Cookie Day. 

\*\*August 10th -National S'mores Day 

\*\*August 14th -National Navajo Code Talker's Day 

\*\*August 20th -National Bacon Lovers Day 

You get the idea, find something fun on the calendar, be creative and run with it. The possibilities are endless, I know there are so many creative volunteers that work in our hospitals and homes, and I cannot wait to see how you surprise our veterans.

### Volunteers-Who are they?

Any member in good standing can volunteer at a facility in the name of the VFW Auxiliary if the Auxiliary has approved that member to do so. Members can volunteer alone or with a group of members and non-members.



**Regularly Scheduled Volunteers:** Regularly scheduled volunteers are individuals who participate in the VAVS program on a regularly scheduled assignment under VA supervision.

**Occasional/ Episodic volunteers:** Volunteers are those individuals serving under the VAVS program who do not meet the requirements of regular scheduled volunteers. Individuals frequently volunteer with a group or organization on an occasional basis.

**Sponsored Volunteers:** Non-members of the VFW Auxiliary who wish to serve under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship and supervision can do so as volunteers at non-VA facilities. They must be interviewed and screened in the same manner as VFW Auxiliary members. Upon acceptance, sponsored volunteers are governed by the same ethics and rules prescribed for members.

**Student Volunteers:** These volunteers are under the age of 18 and must have written parental or guardian approval to participate in the VAVS program.

### **Qualifications, Assignments and Orientation**

A volunteer must:

- Have a willingness to accept Hospital standards, orientation, conduct and supervision.
- Possesses a clean and neat appearance.
- Be physically able to perform assigned tasks.
- Have a sense of responsibility, dependability, and stability on the job.
- Demonstrate a friendly, business-like approach to volunteer work, with honest sentiment and not sentimentally, maintaining the veteran's dignity and pride.

Many hospitals, medical buildings, nursing homes, hospice programs and veteran's homes have volunteer programs in place. Members should do their best to adhere to the guidelines given to them.

Soon the *2023-2024 National Program Book* will be available, please take the time to look over your Hospital Program Awards and your Hospital Year-End Report. It is vital that your chairperson reports all necessary items completed throughout the year. Pay close attention to awards and their deadlines.

If you have questions or need assistance anytime throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact me. And finally, thank you for all your continued support for our veteran patients and for promoting our much-loved Hospital Program.