

MARCH 2024

VFW Auxiliary

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY MAGAZINE

111TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

12TH CELEBRATING AMERICA'S
FREEDOM EVENT

VFW PRIORITY GOALS
2024



VFW AUXILIARY NEWS IN VFW MAGAZINE

Look for an article about how family members of VFW members can join our organization in the March edition of *VFW magazine*.

It's called, "VFW Members: We Want your Family to Join Us!" and also features the Auxiliary eligibility wheel and membership application. What a fantastic opportunity to reach prospective members! And who better to see it than family members of our veterans – that's who we are.



DATES & DEADLINES

March

For Program awards deadlines for March and April, see the 2023-2024 National Program Book online in [MALTA Member Resources](#).

MARCH 3-7 VFW Legislative Conference/Voice of Democracy Scholarship winners, Washington, D.C.

MARCH 17 St. Patrick's Day

MARCH 29 Vietnam War Veterans Day

MARCH 31 • Easter

- Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art contests, Illustrating America and Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!
- Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.

April

APRIL 5 Gold Star Spouses Day

APRIL 14-20 National Volunteer Week

APRIL 15 Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art contests, Illustrating America and Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!
- One winner from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the VFW Auxiliary District (optional) then Department (state) for judging.

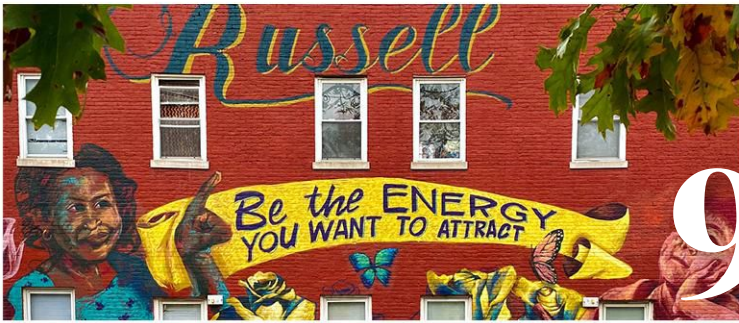
TABLE OF Contents

MARCH 2024 • VOLUME 87 • ISSUE 5

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®



9



15

VFW 16



17

Features

9 111th VFW Auxiliary National Convention

We'll meet in Derby City – Louisville, Kentucky. Read about attractions, history, dining and more.

15 2024 Celebrating America's Freedom Event

Join incoming National President Brenda Bryant at the VFW National Home.

16 The VFW's 2024 Priority Goals

Read about the issues we, along with the VFW, will be fighting for in the 121st Congress.

17 VFW Checkpoint

Want to catch up on the good work of VFW Posts and Auxiliaries? Sign up for VFW's E-Newsletter.

In Every Issue

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3 Get Digital | 7 Auxiliary Spotlight |
| 4 President's Message | 21 HQ Memo |
| 5 Editor's Letter | 22 Our History |
| 6 Reader's Voice | |

About the Cover

About the Cover: A race for the win at Churchill Downs in 2024 National Convention host city Louisville, Kentucky. Photo courtesy of Louisville Tourism.

QUESTIONS?

HERE'S THE BEST WAY TO SEND THEM TO US:

You have questions. We at HQ have or will find answers. The most direct digital line of communication for us to assist you is via our information email account, info@vfwauxiliary.org.

This is monitored every weekday. Once we receive your question or concern in this inbox, we either answer or route it directly to the appropriate staff member who will respond to you.

We do receive questions via Facebook, comments and DMs, and if we can answer them there, we will. However, many times we will refer you to info@vfwauxiliary.org, which serves as our hub for assigning inquiries to the correct staff member.

For example, if a member asks, "How can I learn more about Auxiliary scholarships and contests?" The Programs & Communications team responsible for monitoring and posting on social media can easily answer by providing the correct website link and referral to MALTA Member Resources.

However, if a member has a membership card concern, this will need to be addressed by the Accounting team, so best to send this question directly to info@vfwauxiliary.org.

Social media is not the same as our information email account as it is not our platform for fielding all questions. Info@vfwauxiliary.org is the best place to direct your questions so we can help you most efficiently.

get SOCIAL



Instagram
[@vfwauxiliaryhq](https://www.instagram.com/vfwauxiliaryhq)



LinkedIn
[VFW Auxiliary](https://www.linkedin.com/company/vfw-auxiliary)



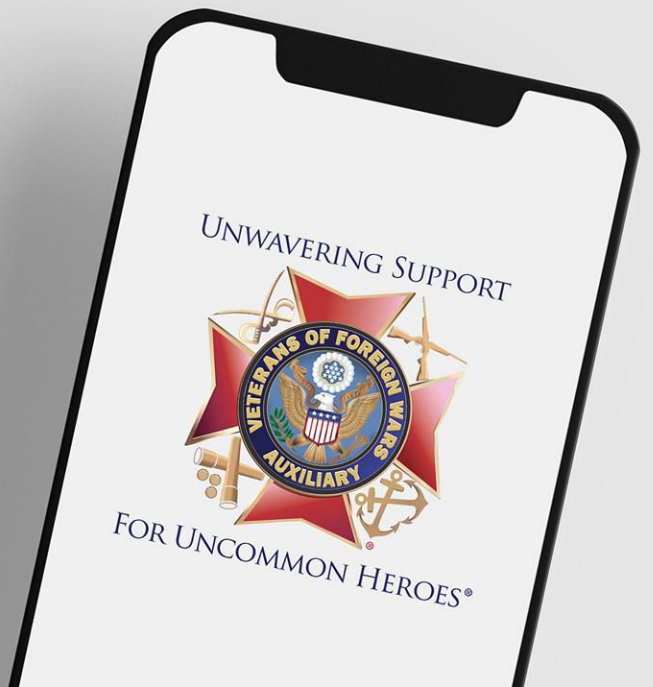
Facebook
[vfwauxiliary](https://www.facebook.com/vfwauxiliary)



Pinterest
[vfwauxiliary](https://www.pinterest.com/vfwauxiliary)



YouTube
[VFW Auxiliary National Organization](https://www.youtube.com/VFW-Auxiliary-National-Organization)





*Holy mackerel,
you are all
doing so amazing
this year.*

Dear members —

Membership is a key to this organization because without members, we would not be here. Holy mackerel, you are all doing so amazing this year. The goal is to increase our membership every year; not just for one, two or three years, but always. Continue to do those membership drives, but while you are at it, take information for all Programs to the table.

Thank you all so much for everything you do. Rain, shine, sleet or snow, you are always there for our veterans and their families. I truly believe that we the VFW and Auxiliary are one family. Recently I was notified by another organization about how an Auxiliary and VFW worked together as a team to get cards out during the holiday season. I was also notified that people in our organization travel hundreds of miles to help another sister, brother or comrade during a time of need.

I want to talk about two very important topics to me; our veterans and their families. We have several veterans in the VFW Auxiliary and most of them joined us because they wanted to honor someone in their family and are not eligible for the VFW. But do we think to recognize those veterans when we are at a meeting by simply thanking them for their service or giving them a card that says thank you? While they may not have deployed in a combat region, they are very important to this organization. They are one of the reasons we have a free country, because they served whether it be in combat or in support. We must also remember that we talk all the time about "veterans helping veterans," so whether you are a member of the VFW or the VFW Auxiliary, we all have a purpose in this great organization. I personally want to thank all of the veterans in the Auxiliary and for the hard work and dedication I see every single day whether I am home in my state of Utah or visiting your beautiful states. We need you, we love you and we are honored to have you with the VFW Auxiliary. I also want to thank all of the family members of the VFW Auxiliary because you work tirelessly serving as caretakers, teachers, mentors and friends to hundreds of thousands of veterans.

We cannot do this alone. You cannot win a battle with only one person, but together, you sure can win the war!

Thank you all, and many blessings for you and your families throughout the years to come!

Loyally,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carla J. Martinez". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

CARLA J. MARTINEZ

National President (Member first and foremost)



“*Looking ahead,
members will visit
Louisville, Kentucky
for National
Convention
July 27-August 1.*”

Dear members—

It was wonderful to see many of you in person aboard the Mariner of the Seas and exploring the Caribbean at National Mid-Year Conference 2024.

This is our opportunity to conduct business at the National Council of Administration Meeting, recognize achievements that will set our organization up for success and reconnect with one another. We enjoyed welcoming VFW and VFW National Home guests to our meeting and hearing from our five National Guard candidates as well as our National Ambassadors, who presented great SWAPs.

Look for more information from Guard candidates in upcoming editions of VFW Auxiliary Magazine and the National E-Newsletter as well as on social media ahead of the 111th National Convention in Kentucky where members will cast their votes for our newest National Line Officer in early August.

In this edition, we'll take a look at the VFW's 2024 Priority Goals, important issues that we, along with the VFW, work on for our veterans and service members through our relationships that influence legislators, lawmakers and government officials.

Also read about [MALTA](#), our membership database that is truly for the benefit of every member, and other stories about creative ways one Auxiliary gets youth engaged in Auxiliary scholarships and contests and a look back at a recent chapter in Our History.

Looking ahead, members will visit Louisville, Kentucky for National Convention July 27-August 1. Read more about this city, sometimes called the Gateway to the South, on page 9. Register online in MALTA or by mail beginning March 18.

We look forward to seeing you in Derby City!

AMANDA COOK
Editor-In-Chief

VOLUME 87 NUMBER 5

Editor-In-Chief
Amanda Cook

Contributing Writers
Nicole Panteleakos &
Skye Melcher

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.

Graphic Design

Braden Design
jaclynn@bradendesign.co

Change of Address

Forward address changes to: Circulation Department, VFW Auxiliary Magazine, 406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111. Members may also change their own address or email address in MALTA. 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.

I would like to compliment you and your staff on *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*. The January 2024 edition with coverage on the Celebrating America's Freedom Event, Member Spotlight, Spotting Spammers & Scammers and Portrait of a Veteran - Every Picture Has A Story, which included the history, was excellent. Thank you for continuing this educational and fun publication for all members.

KATHY SCHREIBER
Auxiliary 6414
 Riverside, Iowa

Additional feedback on the January 2024 edition's Portrait of a Veteran story:

I found (the article) fascinating and learned aspects about Gray Perry's life that were new to me. The story of how his portrait was found, preserved and relocated to a fitting home is a saga worth telling in itself. It was also interesting to learn about the portrait artist, whose biography is quite impressive as well. I look forward to sharing this story with friends who were also students of Gray Perry. Thanks again for this remarkable work.

CHARLES TURON, *retired music professor and former student of Gray Perry*

I wanted to thank you so much for the wonderful article in *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*.

SUSAN BERGER
Auxiliary 3233
 Sarasota, Fla.

This is just lovely. Thank you so much for your work on this and highlighting Gray Perry.

MARC J. HEBDA, BM, MM, ARCM
Director - Florida State Music Teachers Association
Treasurer - Florida State Music Teachers Foundation

Wonderful to see this article come to fruition!

DIANA DUMLAVWALLA,
 DMA, NCTM
Associate Professor of Piano Pedagogy
Florida State University, College of Music
President - Florida State Music Teachers Foundation

AUXILIARY SPOTLIGHT

GEORGIA



TOP AND PAGE 8: Local youth view their Illustrating America submissions, on display at Auxiliary 4346's inaugural ArtFest. **BELOW:** VFW Auxiliary 4346 Junior Vice-President Davey Black and Toccoa Elementary School art teacher Timothy Mitchell.

GEORGIA AUXILIARY Gets Creative to Raise Awareness, Get Youth Involved in Scholarships & Contests

Less than one year after joining Auxiliary 4346 in Toccoa, Georgia, Li'el Cohen ascended to the office of President and started down the road of revitalization for a small Auxiliary with few active members. The Auxiliary reached its 70th year since institution this year.

“Our Auxiliary needed to regroup and start growing (because) we were a little stagnant, and we needed more things we could do as a group,” explained Cohen, who began brainstorming a fundraiser in 2023 that would also raise awareness about the Auxiliary’s work with veterans within the community.

A longtime lover and collector of art, Cohen came up with the idea for “ArtFest,” an art festival that would not only raise the funds and awareness the Auxiliary needed, but would allow for local students to display their patriotic art beside professional and semi-professional artists selling their original works, in addition to art raffles and face painting. Through Auxiliary and Post connections, they were able to bring in a local food truck and have a coffee shop there to sell drinks to be enjoyed with snacks from the Auxiliary bake sale table.

Once they were set with inviting members, they looked for ways to involve aspects from a number of Auxiliary Programs.

Junior Vice-President Davelyn Black had the idea to incorporate art scholarships and youth contests into the event. This was particularly successful at an elementary school level, and they received 80 Illustrating America entries! These were displayed throughout the hall, which brought in many families so proud parents could see the works of their talented children and their peers hanging over the stage.

“It was a brilliant idea,” said Cohen. “It brought in people who ordinarily wouldn’t have come (and) they had a great day!”

Additionally, members displayed “Buddy”® Poppies on the tables of each vendor (23 signed up; the maximum allowable for the space) and American Flags were handed out to each child in attendance, tying the “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home and Americanism Programs into the event.

“But the biggest thing it really did is... building community,” said Cohen. “If you are not connected with the community you are in you are not going to be able to do very much. We are blessed with huge military support

(it's a military town) and... people are so giving and so anxious to help." Cohen noted that she and the Auxiliary connected with local business, schools and the town's chamber of commerce which helped with cross-promotion, and advertised the event mostly on social media, though they also had flyers and word-of-mouth.

Turnout was good, with at least 60 community members coming before the weather put a damper on attendance in the afternoon. "Everybody was pleased," said Cohen, who is confident they can make it "Even bigger" for the second-annual event. One thing the Auxiliary will do differently? The patriotic art raffle.

Next year, a few weeks before the ArtFest, the Auxiliary plans to participate in the town's Christmas tree decorating contest, at which the public will view each and vote on their favorite, with the winner taking home \$500. The Auxiliary will be asking artists to donate one handmade patriotic ornament for the tree, which members will then place along with red, white and blue lights and ribbon. Having their tree in the competition will raise more awareness about the Auxiliary and the best part is that the ornaments will then be the ArtFest raffle prizes!



The incorporation of multiple Programs and the community connections make the ArtFest an ideal type of event for Auxiliaries struggling to get the word out about what the Auxiliary does and the scholarships, contests and volunteer opportunities offered. If your Auxiliary is interested in an Auxiliary SWAP-style exchange of ideas and would like more information about how Auxiliary 4346 made their first-annual ArtFest work, Cohen says to please feel free to reach out to her; she's "happy to share." 🌟 NP



V F W
NATIONAL HOME

Thank you
for supporting our Veteran &
Family Resource Center



See Photos of the Center!

2024 NATIONAL CONVENTION

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

DERBY CITY

Members will head to bourbon country for the VFW Auxiliary's 111th National Convention, uniting in a city as famous for horse races, striking derby day hats and mint juleps as it is for its history, culture and people, including native son "The Greatest" heavyweight boxer Muhammad Ali.

We're meeting in Louisville, Kentucky along the Ohio River, a town that can be described as either one of the northernmost Southern cities or southernmost Northern cities. To us Northerners, it is "Louie-ville," while locals would probably call "Lou-vul" home.



HISTORY

However *you* say it, Louisville, established nearly two and a half centuries ago, was named in honor of King Louis XVI of France; at the time, his soldiers were aiding Americans in the Revolutionary War. Louisville's founding father was George Rogers Clark, an American military officer and surveyor from Virginia, in 1778.¹

Nineteenth century Louisville was a major shipping port that employed enslaved African-Americans, some of whom found a point of escape in neighboring free state Indiana. It was also during this era that steamboats, for travel and trade, ruled the Ohio River.²

THINGS TO DO

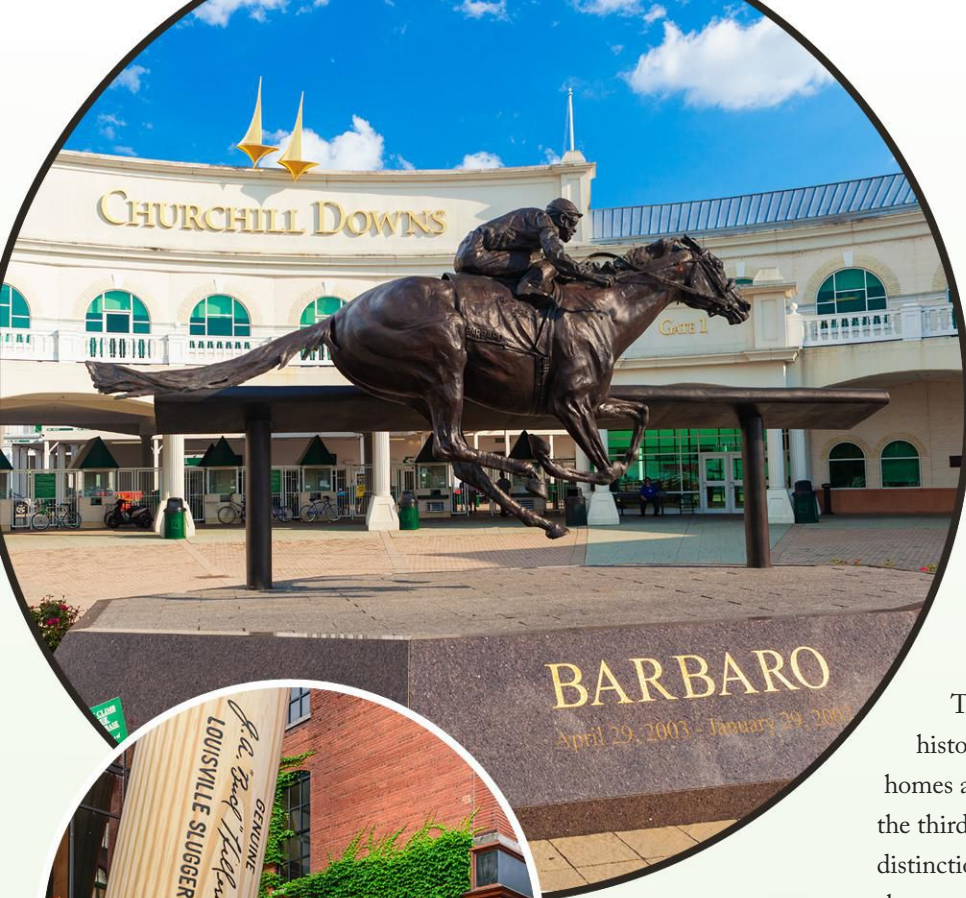
Today's Louisville blends old and new architecture and comprises many noteworthy neighborhoods, a few of which we'll highlight for their visitor appeal. Our members will stay in **Downtown Louisville** for Convention, a walkable district that, according to Go To Louisville, the city's tourism and marketing organization, offers something for everyone.



FROM TOP, CLOCKWISE:

Louisville's own drink – bourbon – featured at an Angel's Envy cocktail class. The famous Hot Brown sandwich. One of the many flamboyant hats worn by Kentucky Derby spectators. **NEXT PAGE FROM TOP:** Churchill Downs, home to the most exciting two minutes in sports. The Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory. **PAGE 12:** Stroll along Whiskey Row and Main Street, Louisville. **PAGE 13:** A vibrant night view of the Big Four Pedestrian Bridge. (Photos from Louisville Tourism and Getty Images)





“Whether you're interested in exploring the city's rich history and architecture, experiencing the local culture and cuisine, diving into a distillery experience or enjoying outdoor activities along the Ohio

River, there's no shortage of things to see and do. From the **Muhammad Ali Center** and the **Evan Williams Bourbon Experience** to the **Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory** and **Waterfront Park**, the area is home to a range of cultural attractions that are sure to please. Downtown Louisville is a must-do experience that offers a unique blend of entertainment, education and fun.” Also Downtown is the **Kentucky Center for African-American Heritage**.

Whiskey Row located downtown, is an area that “is re-inhabiting the original footprint that once served as home to the bourbon industry from the mid-to-late 1800s, while **Museum Row** is home to several notable museums all within a few blocks of each other.

Lining downtown Louisville's Main Street are some of the oldest buildings in the city, built between the 1850s and early 1900s. The Revivalist and Chicago School-style buildings with cast-iron facades are the largest collection, second only to SoHo in New York City. Named one of the best Main Streets in America, this downtown street is once again a thriving bourbon and culinary district and home to some of the city's most iconic attractions.”

The **Old Louisville** neighborhood is the largest historic preservation district solely featuring Victorian homes and buildings in the United States; it is also the third-largest district containing such architectural distinctions in the United States. Many modern skyscrapers are located downtown, as well as older preserved structures, such as the Southern National Bank building.¹

Other neighborhoods include **The Highlands**, Louisville's “original restaurant row,” **Shelby Park & Smoketown** for art and culture and Wyandotte for the famous **Churchill Downs**, home to the horse race in May also known as the most exciting two minutes in sports, the Kentucky Derby.

FOOD

For those who love local eats, you can't leave Louisville without indulging in a Hot Brown, a decadent open-faced sandwich of Texas toast, sliced turkey, crisp bacon and tomatoes nestled under a rich, piping hot Mornay (cheese) sauce. The dish was created at the Brown Hotel in Louisville in 1926.

Another legendary regional food comes from none other than Col. Harland Sanders, who began his business of selling his secret-recipe fried chicken from a roadside restaurant during the Great Depression. Today the chain known globally



LOUISVILLE

EST. 1778

as KFC is owned by Yum! Brands. If you're traveling by car, take a trip (163 miles) to the **Harland Sanders Café**, among the U.S. National Register of Historic Places and Sanders' original restaurant, in North Corbin for a little taste of Kentucky Fried history, and of course, chicken.

WEATHER

Louisville tends to be hot and humid during the summer, so pack accordingly for the outdoors (between 90 and 100 degrees) and also chilly days indoors at the Kentucky International Convention Center.

We look forward to seeing you

in Louisville in a few months for National Convention 2024 July 27-August 1! For more information about our host city, [click here](#). Don't forget to check our National website's [Events](#) page, social media and E-Newsletter for the latest information as we get closer to July. 🇺🇸 AC

¹Wikipedia: Louisville, Kentucky

²"Louisville's Steamboat Era" by Tim Talbott





2024 NATIONAL CONVENTION SCHEDULE

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

All meetings are held in the convention center unless otherwise noted. Times for various functions are subject to change. Meeting rooms will be posted closer to conference dates and are subject to change.

LS = Livestream

FRI, JULY 26

10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Early packet pickup at the Louisville International Convention Center (South Pre-Function-Main Concourse).

SAT, JULY 27

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)

1:30-2:30 p.m. Amwins Presentation

5:30- 6:30 p.m. Circle of Excellence Ceremony (LS)

SUN, JULY 28

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

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

10:45-11:30 a.m. National District Council Member Training

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

1:00-4:30 p.m. Programs Seminar (LS)

MON, JULY 29

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

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

1:30-5:00 p.m. Auxiliary Opening Business Session (LS)

TUE, JULY 30

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

8:30 a.m. - Noon Auxiliary Business Session (LS)(Last day for exhibits/registration)

6:00-8:00 p.m. VFW Patriotic Celebration

WED, JULY 31

8:30-11:00 a.m. Auxiliary Business Session (LS)

2:30-4:00 p.m. MALTA & Accounting Software Training (Open to all)

THURS, AUG.1

8:00-8:15 a.m. Presentation of Department Presidents with colors (LS)

8:30-11:30 a.m. Officer Election, Installation and Closing Session (LS)

3:00-5:00 p.m. Joint Reception for Commander-in-Chief and National President (Ticketed event), Convention Center

5:30-9:00 p.m. National President's Celebration hosted by the Department of Missouri, Hyatt Regency Hotel Louisville

POST-CONVENTION EVENTS

FRI, AUG. 2

9:00-11:00 a.m. National District Council Meeting, Hyatt Regency Hotel Louisville

JULY 31-AUG. 4 Military Order of the Cootie's Supreme Scratch, Marriott East Hotel Louisville

REGISTRATION FORM

National Convention: Advance Registration \$25

45-Plus Luncheon (Complimentary) **Year Member Joined**

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 a 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 27 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, 1979, and maintained continuous membership since that date.

CELEBRATING AMERICA'S FREEDOM EVENT 2024 VFW NATIONAL HOME

For the VFW National Home and the VFW Auxiliary, this coming Program Year will be a year to remember because it marks a century for this safe, nurturing environment for our nation's veterans and their families and just as many decades of our organization supporting the Home's wonderful work.

Members will join incoming VFW Auxiliary National President Brenda Bryant at the National Home this September for the 2024 Celebrating America's Freedom Event at a special community that has helped countless children and families in immeasurable ways.

Festivities include a parade of all Auxiliary Departments led by Bryant and incoming VFW National Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt, lunch and a tour of the campus during which National Ambassadors will share the history of the National Home.

CAFE is scheduled for September 7. Registration is \$40 per person and includes lunch and transportation to the Home (\$20 for lunch only). Register in MALTA from June 1 to August 7, and don't forget to bring spending money to shop at the National Home's store for clothing and souvenirs. Look for more details, including hotel accommodations, on our Events page of the National website or [click here](#).

There's more excitement in the months to come: The Home's official century birthday is January 7, 2025 and the Home's 100th birthday party will be June 28, 2025. [Click here](#) to learn more about their celebration events.

The VFW Auxiliary has been involved in the National Home in many ways since the very beginning, as vocal supporters, fundraisers and volunteers. The National Home became the Auxiliary's first continuing Program almost 100 years ago, as members recognized early on the need for such an endeavor.

In the wake of World War I, the VFW was adamant that no service member's child should grow up in an orphanage or institution, and the Auxiliary wholeheartedly agreed. The National Home was born of this desire to provide homes for these children - real homes, with comfortable bedrooms, inviting living rooms, plenty of food and happy holiday

celebrations, in an idyllic community with a pond for fishing, hills for sledding and beautiful shady trees, with its own hospital, nursery, playgrounds, fire department and room to raise a few farm animals.

The 42 single-family home community in Eaton Rapids, Michigan now welcomes whole families; each can live on campus for up to four years, during which time they have access to a number of services including child care, mental health care, job training and more.



TOP: National Home resident children of today enjoy playtime.
BELOW: Circa 1950's National Home resident children enjoy singing around the piano with their friends.



V F W
NATIONAL HOME





CHECKPOINT



Would you like to receive the
FREE Checkpoint e-newsletter?

Email your name and email address to magazine@vfw.org. Then watch your inbox for this newsletter — which is emailed 10 times a year — highlighting the good work of VFW Posts and Auxiliaries around the world.



VFW 2024

PRIORITY GOALS

*Delivering the promise to our veterans,
service members and their families.*

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.

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.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

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

- 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 to veterans eligible for the Veteran Readiness and Employment program.
- Ensure parity of VA and DOD education programs with other federal programs.
- Expand small business, hiring preference, tax incentives and entrepreneurship resources for veterans and military spouses.

- Increase funding for HUD-VASH vouchers, grant and per diem payments, and pilot programs to combat veteran homelessness.
- Conduct oversight of VA's Transition Assistance Program to ensure compliance with the law, and require the inclusion of accredited claims representatives.
- Eliminate red tape preventing effective use of education and employment benefits.
- Provide housing relief for surviving spouses.

DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

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

- Crack down on unaccredited claims consultants known as Claim Sharks.
- Study all toxic and environmental exposures and implement programs to ensure health care and benefits are provided to all exposed service members and veterans.
- Properly oversee and update the modernized appeals process and digital claims processing.
- Increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits for survivors.
- Improve the accuracy of disability compensation claims related to military sexual trauma.
- Increase burial allowances to account for inflation.
- Ensure that earned VA benefits are never offset by the use of other federal benefits.

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:

- Eliminate service member and veteran suicide by addressing both clinical and non-clinical needs.
- Strengthen care and research for mental health and traumatic brain injuries.
- Improve oversight of Vet Centers to ensure adequate staffing, resources and funding.
- Enhance programs and services for women and underserved veterans.
- Eliminate copayment requirements for preventive health care and medications.
- Research the efficacy of medical cannabis and other alternative therapies.

- Preserve the integrity of TRICARE.
- Properly implement VA and DOD health IT systems.
- Expand nursing home eligibility and long-term care options.
- Enhance services for veterans outside of the United States.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE

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

- End the military retirement pay and VA disability compensation offset.
- Protect and improve on-base quality of life and support programs.
- Eliminate sexual assault and harassment from the military.
- Increase military base pay comparability with private sector wages.
- Ensure that military housing is safe and free of toxic substances.
- Eliminate food insecurity in the military.
- Ensure equity of benefits for Reserve Component service members.

NATIONAL SECURITY, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND POW/MIA

To fully support the all-volunteer force, protect our nation's citizens and defend American interests around the world, Congress and DOD must:

- Ensure DPAA is fully funded to perform its personnel recovery mission.
- Expand partnerships with host nations and private/public organizations to achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
- Deter threats to our national security by supporting our allies in Ukraine, Israel, Korea and Taiwan.
- Ensure all service members who served in harm's way, to include foreign nationals, receive the recognition, care and benefits they have earned.
- Provide recognition and support for Afghan and Iraqi translators and allies.
- Award the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for operations in Eastern Europe.

DID YOU KNOW

MALTA, our membership database, was created for EVERY MEMBER to use. MALTA stands for Membership Auxiliary Leadership Technology Access. It is an online database in which members can pay their dues, change their addresses, convert to a Life Membership, find Auxiliary report forms, watch training videos, access Member Resources by Program, make a gift and much more!

From the initial announcement regarding MALTA in 2017: MALTA is a system designed with YOU in mind the whole time. Not only does National Headquarters want to be more efficient but we also want to engage with every member through MALTA.

Creating a login is easy! All you need is your member ID, your Auxiliary number and ZIP code.

Visit <https://malta.vfwauxiliary.org/Account/NewLogin> to enter your information. You can do this on a desktop computer, smart phone or tablet. You could also go to vfwauxiliary.org and look for "[MALTA Member Login](#)." From either web address, follow the instructions on-screen to get started.

Do note that although every member may use MALTA, lapsed members will be directed to pay their dues in MALTA and will regain full access once they become a member in good standing again. Also note that some areas of and actions within MALTA are restricted and only accessible to certain Officers, like Treasurers, but every member is entitled to everything else that MALTA has to offer.



**GET SIGNED UP
TODAY, AND START
*exploring!***

VFW AUXILIARY HOSPITAL *Volunteer* SERVICE PINS

Pins bearing the VFW Auxiliary emblem and designating the number of hours a volunteer has devoted to hospital work will be awarded to members in good standing who have volunteered a minimum of 150 hours under Auxiliary sponsorship

in any hospital. Only the pin or bar indicating the largest number of hours accumulated should be worn.

Applications for service pins – which acknowledge as many as 10,000 hours – are available online in [MALTA Member Resources](#), Hospital.



150 HOURS



300 HOURS



500 HOURS



1,000 HOURS



1,500 HOURS



2,000 HOURS



2,500 HOURS



3,000 HOURS



4,000 HOURS



5,000 HOURS



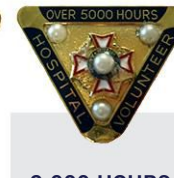
6,000 HOURS



7,000 HOURS



8,000 HOURS



9,000 HOURS



10,000 HOURS

Pins between 6,000 and 9,000 hours are triangular with an additional pearl for each 1,000 earned. A bar guard signifying 10,000 hours may be attached to this pin, and bar guards are available for each additional 1,000 hours.



SPONSORED HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER PIN

The sponsored hospital volunteer/student volunteer who volunteers a minimum of 100 hours under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship in any VA or non-VA facility is eligible to receive this pin from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. This award is for non-members and only one pin is awarded during volunteer's lifetime.



HOSPITAL RECRUITING CHARM

A charm from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters will be awarded to each member recruiting one or more volunteers between July 1 and May 31. These charms are available for both VFW Auxiliary members and sponsored hospital volunteer/student volunteers.

Note: Please apply for pins when accumulated hours are earned by volunteer. Applications for hospital volunteer service pins are available in MALTA Member Resources. Applications are to be prepared by the local VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman. All pins are available from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters at no cost to the Department, Auxiliary, member or non-member volunteer. If you have questions, please contact VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters at 816.561.8655 or info@vfwauxiliary.org.

HQ MEMO

THINK—Before Electing Delegates and Alternates for your 2023 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, they would likely 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, though she has not attended meetings regularly, has traveled with him

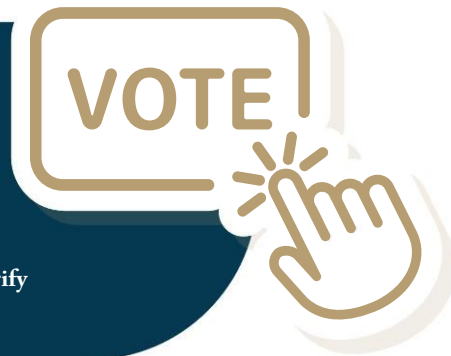
around the District and Department and therefore would be present at the Conventions so the Auxiliary would have at least one (1) Representative present.

Note that Delegates and Alternates to Districts shall be elected at a regular meeting of the Auxiliary held not less than 30 days prior to the District Convention at which District Officers are to be elected.

Also, the Auxiliary needs to be familiar with the number of Delegates and Alternates to which it is entitled for District (Section 302-1 Delegate and 1 Alternate for each fifteen (15) members in good standing or portion thereof at the time of election); Department (Section 303-1 Delegate and 1 Alternate for each thirty (30) members in good standing or portion thereof at the time of election) and National (Section 304-1 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 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 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) and 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. Once your Secretary enters you as a National Delegate or National Alternate, this will appear in your MALTA profile. Be sure to verify this by May 31 to ensure you have time if any issues need to be corrected.



Our HISTORY

GENERATIONS OF MEN IN THE AUXILIARY

At the 2015 National Convention, a change to the Bylaws would allow thousands of men who grew up in the Auxiliary to become Auxiliary members. Now one in every five members of our organization is male.



Violet Tharp, Department of Montana, became a member of Auxiliary 4099

in the spring of 1971. At this Auxiliary and Post, she would find friends and “adopted” grandparents for her children. She would serve as musician, Auxiliary President (1979-1981), District President and more, all while raising her children.

Once membership opened up to men, Violet purchased her son Tim his Life Membership.

“I purchased a Life Membership for Tim in the hopes the Programs would have more coverage in the schools where he worked,” Violet said. “To see him active locally has been very rewarding. He has such great organizational skills and can multitask to the point your head spins. He follows the Ritual and does not take shortcuts. His respect and courtesy to the members is only enhanced with his relationship with the Post, the community, and students. He not only makes me proud, but also his “additional moms and grandmas.”

Tim said the reason he loves the Auxiliary is because of service.

“It is all about service and helping others,” he said. “I love the beginning and ending parts of our Ritual where we remind ourselves that our only purpose as an Auxiliary is to serve veterans and their families. Too often, in many organizations, we get hung up with personal beefs, petty bickering, egos and power trips. There is no place for that in our organization as we are here to serve those who risked everything to protect the lifestyle and freedoms we enjoy as Americans.”

Everett and Cameron Erwin are both members at Auxiliary 10334 in Waltham, Massachusetts. Everett’s wife, Kelly, is a longtime member and Department “Buddy”® Poppy Chairman.



“Shortly after allowing men to join, I saw that I was eligible through my grandfather Edgar Page and his service in World War II,” Everett said. His son Cameron would later join the Auxiliary when he turned 17 under the eligibility of his maternal grandfather.

“I am all for progress and moving forward socially,” Everett added. “Not being a veteran myself, but I like being able to give back to those who served. I do get frustrated by some members who do not accept men in the Auxiliary. But overall, I am happy with it.”

Everett said that he is not as active at his local Auxiliary due to most events being during his work hours but is active at the District and State level. He is the Department Musician and unofficially, the Department technology guru.

Cameron has volunteered for District and State events with his parents. “I recently did a School of Instruction for District 18 where I taught them how to use their cameras to make a video and upload it to YouTube. It was a good experience.”

Everett said that he is glad Cameron has joined the Auxiliary. “I tried not to pressure him but the VFW and Auxiliary are very much a family affair... I think Cam has learned a lot about service to others through his time in Boy Scouts, and the Auxiliary is a way for him to continue that as an adult. He gets to see his mother serve as a Department Chairman (current Department Senior Vice-President) and witness her leadership.”

★ SM

**CLICK EACH ITEM
TO SHOP ONLINE!**



BLUE/WHITE POLO

88/12 polyester/elastane, moisture wicking. Ladies' V-neck placket. VFW Auxiliary embroidered in white on left chest. **Ladies' runs small.** Also in men's cut.

7923 Ladies' S-3XL \$55.00
7924 Men's S-4XL \$55.00



RED/WHITE POLO

60/40 moisture wicking polyester/cotton. Ladies' cut, stylized open placket, curved back yoke with center pleat. Also in men's cut.

7891 Ladies' S-3XL \$37.00
7892 Men's S-4XL \$37.00

PATRIOTIC ART

Thank your participants!



DRAWSTRING BACKPACK

Black polycanvas with drawstring, 18 x 14½".

1870 \$17.95

While quantities last.



SKETCH PAD

Spiral bound, black hardcover, 70 pages, 5½ x 8½"

1872 \$12.95

DOG TAG CARABINER

2" aluminum dog tag on a black carabiner.

1871 \$6.00



PIN Enamel with antique silver plating. Double post with rubber backs. 1¼".
1873 \$3.00



VFWSTORE.ORG



PONYTAIL CAP 100% cotton. Unstructured, six-panel, low profile. Makeup resistant, breathable wicking sweatband. Antique brass tri-glide buckle closure. Concealed ponytail opening. 7156 \$20.00



PONYTAIL CAP Elastic criss-cross ponytail opening. 100% polyester with leather US Flag patch. With "Est. 1899" on red tag. Adjustable hook-and-loop back strap. Imported. 7154 \$16.95



AUXILIARY MEMBER AND MILITARY VETERAN PIN 7/8". Rubber back.
1709 \$6.00



SUNSHADE Blue with silver lettering. Polyester. 60" x 28". Made in USA.
1234 \$12.95