

MICHIGAN
OVERSEAS VETERAN

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.
WINTER 20/21

On October 24, 2020 American Legion Post 46 and VFW Post 423 sponsored an Open House with reps from seven different veteran support agencies. Eight agencies and organizations were present to assist veterans and the families of veterans in a myriad of ways. From medical insurance to legal assistance to suicide prevention, PTSD assistance, and VA assistance to name a few. A quick stop by Congresswoman Debbie Dingle also took place.



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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, SCOTT GLOGER

This country has faced a challenging year. Veterans have faced a challenging year. The VFW has faced a challenging year.

In spite of the challenges thrown at us, the VFW has shown its grit. Our Comrades

have shown our communities that we are here to serve. We have seen much darkness in the past year, but we have countless stories of service that should make us all proud.

A few months ago, a recently homeless veteran called the Department asking for a ride to a job interview an hour from where he was staying. Two phone calls and a day later, fellow Comrade Gordon Shipley of St. Johns Post 4113 volunteered. Gordon knew nothing of this veteran, other than the veteran had served in the Army in Iraq, and was working to get back on his feet. It was a two hour round trip, in the middle of the pandemic, but that veteran got to his interview.

Another Comrade, Air Force Vietnam Veteran, Bob Bull from Graf-O'Hara Post 423, felt that our country could do more to recognize the service, and the recent passing of a local veteran who had earned the Medal of Honor in the Vietnam War. Comrade Bull contacted U.S. Senator Gary Peters and his local Congresswoman, Debbie Dingell. Over the following several months, he persistently "urged" them to rename the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center in this veterans honor, which drew the

support of the Department, the American Legion and other VSOs. In the Fall of 2020, a bill was introduced. It has since become law. The Ann Arbor VA will now be named the "Lt. Colonel Charles S. Kettles VA Medical Center".

While working on the renaming of the Ann Arbor VA, Comrade Bull led a group of other Comrades, along with the American Legion, to begin providing office hours two days a week at his home VFW Post. The goal of this was to help veterans in the community and for the Post to serve as a Veterans Resource Center of sorts. Since opening, the Post has helped veterans and their families get connected to service officers to file benefit claims; assisted in connecting veterans in crisis to health professionals at the VA; and has helped veterans in need of housing and food. They are expanding to serve three days a week.

In January, Adams-Rockey Post 6056 in Springport hosted a blood drive. In December, Henry Walters Post 2144 in Holland passed out 108 gifts to children; distributed holiday baskets to community members in need; regularly checked in on their senior Comrades who have been restricted to their homes due to Covid; and they provided rides to veterans so they could go grocery shopping, "as we have always done".

Stories like these are occurring every day in the VFW. We applaud all of the incredible efforts of our Comrades across our State. The VFW was built to serve. Our Comrades continue to serve. Together, we will be Veterans Moving Forward, serving forever.

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DEPARTMENT SR. VICE COMMANDER, KEVIN CONKLIN

Congratulations to all of the Voice of Democracy, Patriot’s Pen, and Teacher’s of the Year Award Winners. As I am writing this article the winners have not been announced but I am truly excited to hear what our future leaders have to share. I am hoping to have another National winner, or two. I am certainly disappointed we were not able to have our banquet to share these awards in person. We do have a responsibility to ensure the CDC guidelines and local policies are being followed. We do have a lot of great things happening throughout the Department even though the State of Michigan is continuing to thrust executive orders our way.

This has been a very difficult year for everyone one way or another. For some it has been medical issues, for others it has been financial and yet others are having both problems. We really need to step up and reach out a lending hand to each other. Please, don’t be too proud to ask for help. There are other ways we can help each other and this organization that I would like to discuss.

Serving veterans is what this organization is all about and also taking care of its employees. We are continuing to improve operations at Department by hiring a part time bookkeeper. Many of you already know Jan Pasmore. If you get a chance please thank her for stepping up and getting our books in order. I am confident that having a bookkeeper at the office will improve consistency year to year and allow the quartermaster to focus on other financial matters. I would also like to give a shout out to Amanda who has been the foundation of the office. Without her Department Headquarters would be in rough shape. I also cannot say enough great things about our Service Office and each of the employees there. The VFW Department of Michigan Service Office is second to none and we are truly blessed to have Comrade Joe Greene and his team. We are continuing to move the Service Office forward by making it a better place to work. Taking care of those that are taking care of veterans.

I look forward to seeing you all once again in person. Again, if you have any ideas of what we should be looking at for next year, please give me a shout. I am always open to try new or old things.



DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE, RAY LOPEZ

As we move forward during these unprecedented times, we have had to change and adapt to how we conduct our business.

Whether it be by virtual or social distancing, most posts and districts have adapted well with holding meetings according to our bylaws.

We are still required per national bylaws to conduct our quarterly audits as well.

If your post bylaws have not been updated for several years, I would recommend that your post take the time to do so. There are post bylaw templates on the Department website to help and assist you.

If I can be of any assistance, don’t hesitate to call me.

VISIT THE DEPARTMENT WEBSITE AT **VFWMI.ORG**



DEPARTMENT QUARTERMASTER, DEREK BLUMKE

In the quarter century following the close of World War II, the Veterans of Foreign Wars experienced explosive growth. This was due to the return of U.S military veterans after WWI, WWII, the Korean War, and further complemented by the military buildup for the Vietnam War. In 1970, veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces accounted for 47% of the U.S. population, nearly half of all Americans.

The representation of U.S. military veterans in the population today is now only 7% of all Americans. VFW membership has mirrored this population shift, through no fault of our own. Approximately thirty years ago, the VFW Department of Michigan boasted over 100,000 members. The number is now a little over 32,000.

Today, 80% of our Comrades are over the age of 65 years-of-age. When additionally factoring for the harms of Agent Orange, it is

possible we lose 30-40% of our membership in the next five to seven years.

Compounding these challenges is that the most recent generation of veterans has been slow to join our ranks. There are a variety of reasons for this. When the veterans of the War on Terror returned home, we never meaningfully asked these veterans and their families what they needed. Had we done so, we would have heard them tell us they needed help getting a job; starting businesses; transitioning to college; and assistance with childcare. These are all things the previous generations of veterans needed.

Currently, we are experiencing a contraction of our posts. This is natural. It was already occurring, but the pandemic has been a tipping point, accelerating this contraction at a rate that in other times would not be natural. Currently these closures are happening ad hoc, without a strategy and without regard for the gap they are leaving in the communities, where other VSOs also do not exist.

As the Department Quartermaster, it is

my duty to safeguard the financial health of the VFW Department of Michigan, today, and looking forward to decades to come. This is why I share these things. It is not, and cannot, take away from any of our incredible accomplishments over the past 120 years.

I share all of this, to ask for your feedback. What do you think the VFW should look like in the next 10 and 20 years? What do you think we should be doing? How many posts should we have? Where do they absolutely need to be?

The VFW led the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs; worked on the original GI Bill of Rights; fought for Vietnam Veterans harmed by Agent Orange; led the passage of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Today, we again fight for veterans exposed to toxins overseas, and for veterans being failed by the VA’s mental health system.

The VFW cannot merely exist, it MUST THRIVE, and I ask you to think of ways we can ensure we THRIVE and continue God’s work for a century to come.

VFWMI.ORG/CONTACT
VFWMI.ORG/VETHELP

VFWMI.ORG/JOIN
VFWMI.ORG/FORMS



DEPARTMENT JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER, JOHN GRIFFITH

Comrades it is hard to believe that, as I submit this article for the "Michigan Overseas Veteran" that we are halfway through our 2020-2021 year.

Our Jewish comrades are celebrating Hanukkah while many of us are looking forward to the festivities of Christmas and Kwanza. Most of us are looking forward to the coming of the New Year, hoping and praying that the recently developed covid-19 vaccines will help us to put the adversity of 2020 in the rear view mirror. Of course we are not out of the woods yet, and covid-19 will continue to impact, not only our nation but, our organization and the Department of Michigan for some time to come. Many of our Post and District meetings have been postponed or relegated to "Zoom" meetings, and we just received word that our "in person" Mid-Winter Conference, to include the VOD/PP banquet, has been relegated to "Zoom" meetings. Additionally, some of our members have lost loved ones and even members of our organization to this plague. While such news of course is disheartening, frustrating and disappointing, it is incumbent upon all of us to count our blessings and look forward to brighter days when we can once again come together in person to enjoy the comradeship that the Veterans of Foreign Wars affords us. Unlike pandemics of the past, such as leprosy in the Middle Ages, small pox, the Great Plague or more recently the Spanish Flu, today we have advance medical treatments and technology to help us overcome this pandemic. Also we have the modern technology, such as the telephone and computers, that allow us to meet "virtually" to carry on with our mission to "Move Veterans Forward".

As your Junior-Vice Commander, I am so proud to serve on the team with Commander Gloger, Senior-Vice Commander Conklin, the rest of the Command Staff, Council of Administration and Directors that have continued to carry on with their responsibilities under the adverse conditions of the "lock down" currently in place. We have continued with our National Training via "Zoom", and represented the Department at District meetings, both in person and via "Zoom". Inspector Randal Baldwin continues to review inspection reports, check audits

and provide assistance to our post on a daily bases. Judge Advocate Ray Lopez has assisted in the consolidation of posts and provided District and Post Commanders with insight into our by-laws and manual of procedure when controversies have arose. Adjutant/Quartermaster Derek Blumke continues to keep the day to day business of the Department on track and keeps the lines of communication open between the staff, our posts and the National office.

In the last issue of the MOV, Senior-Vice Commander Conklin made comment about utilizing the tools available to us on the Department and National websites. His comments bear repeating as we look toward the future. In order to keep the Department of Michigan "Moving Veterans Forward", Commanders and Staff at all levels need to utilize the technology available. If your post needs assistance in setting up "zoom" meetings or utilizing online training sessions, now is the time to contact our Adjutant/Quartermaster who has the resources available to assist you.

Since every member of our organization is a part of the membership team, now is the time to step up, adapt and overcome the obstacles in recruiting the lock down has imposed. Quartermasters have access to membership rosters of unpaid members at each post. Each post should have a cadre of members willing to make telephone calls or knock on some doors to perform "Buddy Checks" to find out if our comrades are in need of assistance. During these checks, dues and continuing membership can be discussed. Department can provide a list of "at large" members throughout the state. Efforts to contact these members should be made with an invitation to join your post.

Lastly I would again like to remind Post and District Commanders that the VFW Foundation has established the Post Pandemic Relief Grant Program. If your post is having financial difficulties because of the pandemic you are able to apply for a Post Pandemic Relief Grant. Eligibility requirements have been revised and application procedures are available on the National website.

As we enter 2021 let us keep a positive attitude and strive to preserve and strengthen comradeship among our members. If I can be of any assistance to you or your post please do not hesitate to call me. Please stay safe.

BUDDY POPPY DIRECTOR, TERRY DOWDELL



I hope everyone is staying safe and well. I know most Posts did not go out and do Buddy Poppy this past year. I had only one Post report their earnings to me and it

was past the deadline. Therefore, no plaques for Buddy Poppy were ordered. Please make sure that this year, 2021, you report your earnings to me by the end of May.

I haven't had many Posts in the Department that did not order Buddy Poppy. I know that some of the Posts have Poppies left from last year. Still, your Post should order the minimum of 500 Poppies or more each year. You receive credit for this and you help those in our veteran homes.

I hope that this COVID-19 gets over soon so that we can see all of our Comrades, Sisters and Brothers again at the State Convention in June.

Be safe and take care.

DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN, JENNIFER SMITH



Comrades, Sisters, and Brothers,

The past calendar year was rather challenging for many and remains burdensome.

Therefore, let us focus

upon the blessings we have with grateful hearts. May we please offer kindness unto others without hesitation as some are dealing with heartbreak and need, both overtly and in private. Philippians 2:1-4 (ESV): "So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

In addition to positive thoughts and applicable actions, would like to share that this year marks the centennial commemoration of a military memorial many of us hold in high esteem, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (11-11-1921—11-11-2021). As many of you know, the soldiers that have guarded the Tomb [since 1948] are members of the U.S. Army Old Guard's (3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment's) most elite and are known as 'Sentinels.' These men and women endure precision training, frequent testing, and when approved, stand watch 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in any weather. As someone informally associated with these patriots, could go on and on about their history, training, 21-step tradition, and stats, but will instead invite you to visit:

<https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Tomb-of-the-Unknown-Soldier>
and

<https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Changing-of-the-Guard>

The last Michigan Overseas Veteran (MOV) Chaplain's article pertained to traditions and innovation at all levels of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Specifically, that we need not be averse to new constructs that help use remain relevant and strong, but not by discarding positive traditions. In regard to past practice, the Tomb of the Unknown's Sentinels have shown us the dignity and solemnity of custom sustained by youth. Pertaining to optimization, hearing new ideas with open minds offers us the opportunity to grow. In other words, let us embrace tradition and innovation with discernment, faith, and humility, remaining open to the present and future without negating our honorable past.

Last, no word yet if the 2020-21 VFW National Chaplain of the Year contest is taking place but will inform you when updated. Until then, may your 2021 be abundant in joy. Psalm 27:1 (ESV), "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

May God bless you.



DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR, VERN BLAUWKAMP

I hope all have had a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. I am quite sure we are all glad that 2020 is over. Let us hope and pray that 2021 is much better.

Thank you for all the hard work being done on membership. As of December 15 we are tied for 17th in National standings. That is great! We already have 5 Districts over 90%. The 6th District, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th Districts. The 10th District is leading the way at 92.07%. Congratulations to all!

By the time you receive this issue the 9th District and the At Large District should be over 90%. The Department of Michigan should also be over 90%. We are on our way to reaching 100% by June 30th. We can do it!

Before this second wave started, we were renewing, recruiting new, and reinstating about 21 members a day. Once the second

wave started our numbers went down, understandably. Then the shut down came and it became even more difficult to find new members. So now what do we do? We retain the unpaid members and reinstate more of our past members. We have their names, addresses, and many phone numbers for those unpaid members we have let go. We now have more time to call and write letters to all those comrades that were once a part of our ranks. We have 921 members just from last year that we did not renew.

All Posts Quartermasters that have access to the internet can get their unpaid member list from the National website. If they are unable to get the list please email me or call me and I will be happy to get it for you. Let's make some more phone calls and mail some letters so we can be 100% once again. We are dedicated to the VFW and believe in the VFW. We can do it together! I have been trying diligently to increase our advertising at the Department level all year.

Congratulations to Post 7729 Muskegon for being the Department's first Post to meet all requirements for All-American including 100% membership! According to the Commander in Chief at Fall Conference, all Post that meet the requirements this year for All-American will be awarded. Not only the top 20 in each division as in years passed. This is an exciting opportunity for Posts that usually meet the requirements but have a hard time recruiting many new members each year.

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DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY DIRECTOR

BOB LUTZ

Greetings Comrades, I hope everybody is staying safe and healthy during this pandemic. I don't know about you but to me it's starting to feel like the movie Ground Hog Day!

There are a couple of things that I would like to touch base on, some new, some old.

- 1: **DO NOT** use the old handwritten forms, homemade forms or modify the ones available on the web site!
- 2: If you **MUST** hand write the forms please make them legible!
- 3: I have posts that are doing the online reporting, emailing me the report and sending it to dept. Best method is do the online report and be done with it. Do not send the same report in 2 or 3 different formats!
- 4: Posts are contacting me and saying that they have nothing to report because of the pandemic. I'm sure that if you have a Post home that you are still flying the American and POW/MIA flags. I'm also sure that you have some members flying flags at their home. Even during the pandemic there is **NO** reason not to be contacting our elected officials. In other words, there is **NO** reason not to report!
- 5: Again, put down the value of hall/meeting room when you donate it. Whatever you charge to John Q Public for use of your facility is what you can claim for the amount of donation!
- 6: This is the computer age like it or not and it isn't going to change. Please learn how to report on-line. In the not to distant future this will become the only acceptable method of reporting.

Again, I do not take hospital reports and they will NOT be forwarded to the Hospital Director

All the information about reporting is provided in the program section of the Department webpage. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me and if you leave a message please make sure that you mention the VFW(I've been getting tons of telemarketer messages) and I hope that everybody is in good health and staying safe.

activity@vfwmi.org / (586)924-4591

AUX. MENTORING, DIANA HERRICK

Mentoring for Leadership is a program about coming together to build on the foundation for the continued success of the VFW Auxiliary.

We must continue to build upon our strong foundation by mentoring, sharing knowledge and teaching the traditions of our Auxiliaries with all of our members. This Organization had-and has-many great leaders and mentors.

"By Honoring our Mission to Serve Veterans", helping our Brothers and Sisters to be more familiar with our traditions, we enable the VFW Auxiliary to become a stronger Organization that will last for generations.

Mentoring is based on relationships! No matter the different backgrounds and cultures members come from, they all have one thing in common: VETERANS. Start each relationship from that common ground and build it with time, patience and caring.

DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS DIRECTOR, GARY BROWN



As I am writing this newsletter to all of you, first I would like to say I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy so far as this Covid-19 has really messed up this year's

program for the Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen and Teacher of the Year.

I have seen an extremely low participation of students and teachers from within the districts this year and it is completely due to the Pandemic our State is going through and students not being able to go to school as they normally would have. But, for those students and teachers that made it through to department for judging, we had some great entries.

If you have or have not heard yet...this year the department will not be having a VOD Banquet as we would normally have and that is because of the safety requirements the Governor and the Health Department placed on the Restaurants. The Radisson Hotel was not able to hold the VOD Banquet due to the Covid-19 rules so, now the department will be doing our program on ZOOM.

As I am writing this newsletter to you, I have not been given complete details on how we will be doing our VOD/PP/TOY program via ZOOM yet...so, more is to come as we all wait to see. Hopefully when this is printed the decision will be put out to everyone.

I will tell you this...I am going to be wearing my TUX on this day so, it looks and feels like we are at the hotel and having an AWESOME Banquet and Awards Night as possible. I would also like to thank all the Posts and District Chairman & Auxiliaries who worked extremely hard to get these student and teachers judged and submitted to the department on time as my team really appreciated this.

So, as I am getting this sent off to the MOV for publishing...I hope everyone had a Very Merry Christmas and New Year.

AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**MARION BELLAIRE**

Do you happen to know of a Post or maybe have visited a Post that is unaffiliated with an Auxiliary? Have you approached them about having an Auxiliary?

There are many excellent reasons as to why the Post would benefit tremendously from having an Auxiliary. First, the membership of the Auxiliary would help to increase the number of advocates to fight for Veterans rights and benefits. Second, it would increase Program participation and help spread the word on "Voice of Democracy" and "Patriot's Pen Essay" contests. Third, it boosts the Post's visibility within the community by being involved in the various local activities which would, in-turn, open the doors to more members. Fourth, the Auxiliary could assist with the "Buddy Poppy" drive. Fifth, they would offer valuable assistance with all of the events held at the Post.

That's just a few ways it would benefit the Post. The cost to the Post is \$100.00 for the Auxiliary Charter Kit fee. The Post would have to take it to their membership and vote on it. Once it is voted on, and approved, it generally takes two to four months to get the Auxiliary up and running.

I have asked our members to always carry an application with them. You never know when you may come across a potential member. I also advise you to carry the "VFW Auxiliary Leaflet" with you so you can tell the potential member about the many great things we do, not only for our Veteran's, but also for the community as well. Our organization gives out cancer grants after one-year of continuous membership to those who are battling cancer. Deep friendships have been formed over the years as you work together with other members of the Auxiliary when you participate in fundraising events, hospital volunteering as well as event planning with other Auxiliary members. You will feel a great sense of fulfillment as you serve others and help our Veterans in hospitals, or overseas, as you send out care packages. There are Insurance benefits as well. There are discounted policies for life, health, accident, long term care and dental plans. The list goes on and on. So, let's get out and into all of our communities and spread the word about how great this organization is. Let's do it for our Nation's Heroes. They deserve it.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION, JERRY GORSKI**

The VFW National Council of Administration has been having many meetings via ZOOM due to COVID-19. At our last Zoom Meeting, we were told that the (52) National Voice of Democracy Department Winners and National Patriot's Pen Winner will not be having their Washington DC Trip in March 2021 due to COVID-19 Restrictions and Safety. Lynn Rolf, Director of VFW Programs is working on an alternate program for the Department Winners. As soon as I receive

word, I will get it out to the District Commanders. I also received an email today stating that as a direct result of the escalation of COVID-19 cases around the US, the Commander-in-Chief has decided that we will be holding a virtual National Council of Administration meeting to include Committee meetings and workshop to be held March 3 – March 7, 2021.

I now want to talk about membership. Membership is VERY IMPORTANT to ME and should be very important to everyone. On Monday, December 14th, 2020, I looked at Memstats on the VFW National mebsite. National was at 87.81%. National Membership total was at 917,875 members. Our goal is to help our Commander-in-Chief Hal Roesch achieve his goal of 100% by June 30, 2021. That is 127,369 additional members or a total of 1,045,244 members by June 30, 2021.

On Monday, December 14, 2020, Michigan was in 16th place out of 52 Departments at 89.34%. CONGRATULATIONS! KEEP IT UP! Michigan can achieve 100% by June 30, 2021.

In the Big Ten Conference, Michigan is in 4th Place at 89.34% out of 10 Departments. CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN! Minnesota is in 1st Place at 92.00%. Wisconsin is in 2nd Place at 90.31%. Nebraska is in 3rd Place at 89.41%. Michigan can be in 1st Place in the Big Ten Conference by June 30th, 2021. KEEP IT UP! WE CAN DO IT!

Michigan has 32,527 members. Michigan needs 3,878 members to achieve 100% by June 30th, 2021. WE CAN DO IT! MICHIGAN CAN ACHIEVE 100%!

I told you at our Fall Conference 2020, that I wanted to be transparent with all of you as your National Council of Administration Member representing YOU and the Department of Michigan. I have been communicating with our Department Council of Administration including every District Commander on a weekly basis. I hope every Post in the Department of Michigan is receiving my weekly emails from your District Commander.

I was told by our MOV Editor, Stacey Roberts, that I am limited to 500 words. I am at 498 words!! I wish I could tell you more!

Thank you again for electing me as your National Council of Administration Member representing YOU and the Department of Michigan for 2019 through 2023.

Thank you for supporting me and donating to my campaign for National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief 2023-2024. I appreciate every Post and Auxiliary helping me and supporting me. Please send your donations to

Su-jen Mauldin at 214 Endwell, Novi, MI 48377

Thank You All!

COOTIE CORNER, NATE POWELL

The Military Order of the Cootie (M.O.C.) is the Honor Degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America (VFW). One of its many special projects is supporting the residents of the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, MI. To ensure that no child in residence at the National Home goes without on Christmas Day, the Grand Commander of Michigan Russell Makowski, Sr. Vice Grand Commander Nathaniel Powell, Jr. Grand Commander Jennifer Heraty, and Grand Auxiliary President Josephine Miller delivered sixty-six \$50 gift cards, coloring books and crayons, and a check for \$1,056 for additional gifts and miscellaneous expenses to the National Home Executive Director Fred Puffenberger.

Due to COVID 19, the Grand of Michigan was not able to host the annual MOC Christmas Party, but there was still plenty of Christmas Cheer to spread around. Sixty-six children in residence at the VFW National Home will receive gifts cards, toys, coloring books and crayons making their Christmas just a little brighter, due in part, to the generosity of the Grand of Michigan Military Order of the Cootie and Auxiliary.

Thank you Military Order of the Cootie and Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary for your generosity.



L-R : M.O.C Commander Russell Makowski and M.O.C. Auxiliary President Josephine Miller hold coloring books and crayons donated by the M.O.C. Auxiliary 34 (Midland) while Executive Director Fred Puffenberger accepts a check from the M.O.C. Sr. Vice Commander Nathaniel Powell at the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, MI.



L-R : M.O.C. Commander Russell Makowski, M.O.C. Auxiliary President Josephine Miller, M.O.C. Jr. Vice Commander Jennifer Heraty, National Home for Children Executive Director Fred Puffenberger, and M.O.C. Sr. Vice Commander Nathaniel Powell pose for a group picture after delivering Christmas gifts for the children residing at the VFW National Home for Children.



POST REPORTS



POST 334 - LAKE ORION

On Monday, 23 November 2020, VFW Post 334 & Auxiliary donated 44 bags of food to the Oxford Senior Meals on Wheels. Included in each bag was:

Bag of chips, bag of Cheese-it, Ramen noodles, pudding cups, peanut butter, cheese crackers, peanut butter cookies, popcorn packet for microwave, rice crispy treat, bag of goldfish, V-8 juice, skinny popcorn bag, mini pretzels, granola bar, Belavida breakfast bar, can of tuna fish, can of chili with beans, spaghetti with meat balls, peach cup, chicken noodle soup, bag of oatmeal, fresh orange, fresh apple, cup of applesauce, chips ahoy, Keebler cookies, two cans of vegetables either green beans or corn, box of chicken and rice, box of macaroni and cheese, can of corn beef, and a can of tomato juice. The items were distributed equally throughout the bags.

Also on Saturday, 21 November 2020, VFW Post 334 & Auxiliary picked up 80 frozen turkeys that were donated by silent donors in Pontiac Michigan. These 80 frozen turkeys (between 10 and 15 pounds) and all the trimmings for a Thanksgiving dinner (rolls, gravy, corn, turkey dressing, potatoes and cranberry sauce) were distributed to:

35 packages to the VFW National Home for Children, 18 packages to the food bank at the Lake Orion Seventh-day Adventist Church, 6 packages to a homeless shelter in Pontiac and 21 packages to low-income veterans in Oakland County.

For further information, please contact Jim Hubbard, VFW Post 334 Commander at 248-496-1213. For Information on the Meals on Wheels in NE Oakland County, please call 248-608-0264 or visit their website at opcseniorcenter.org/services/meals-on-wheels



L-R : Auxiliary member Vicki Haskin, Auxiliary President Kathy Hubbard, Post Commander Jim Hubbard



Photos by Chuck Haskin

POST 582 - ORTONVILLE

Post 582 honor guard rendered honors at the Post Veterans Day ceremony and Boy Scout troop 139 performed a flag retirement ceremony. Dec. 12th post 582 and Girl Scout troop 76460 held a wreaths across Ortonville and placed wreaths on 572 veterans graves in the Ortonville. Post CMDR Hoffman and Sr. Vice Jeffrey give instructions on placing the wreaths and Post Surgeon Cliff Filhart with volunteers.



POST 1527 - PORTAGE

VFW 1527 was able to perform three community events before this current shutdown. We did a Trunk or Treat following all Covid guidelines at the time. We had 950 bags of candy and scheduled for 3 hours but in 1.5 hours we were out of candy and 1000+ families came through. We had multiple people stop and thank us for doing this for their kids.

We raised donations for Thanksgiving baskets for 12 families which included a turkey and fixings for a complete meal including the pan and bag. We have also raised donations for an equivalent Christmas basket for 14 families.

Looking forward to a new year so we can reopen and move forward to continue to helping the community and our fellow vets.



POST 2144 - HOLLAND

Despite the Covid-19 restrictions, VFW Post 2144 of Holland managed to still deliver some holiday cheer.

We had to cancel our annual Children's Christmas party but many of the children were still able to visit Santa during our Drive-Thru Santa event on December 13th. As the picture show, children of all ages came to see Santa! (Thank you, Hondo Robinson, for having a sense of humor.) We delivered over 100 toys to children in time for Christmas. We delivered food baskets for both Thanksgiving and Christmas by porch dropping them. Our kitchen volunteers keep serving up delicious dinners every Friday by carry out that have people calling 2 hours early to make sure that they get their dinners ordered on time.

I am so proud of the members of Post 2144 and our Auxiliary. They have taken what they have been given by the Covid-19 restrictions and they have done wonderful things with it. Our service to the Community of Holland and surrounding areas is well known and we continue to build on that reputation.

- Post Commander Mike Martin



POST 3701 - LAKEVIEW

The Annual Kid's Halloween Party was a little different this year due to COVID. Instead we held a very successful Trunk or Treat in the parking lot with candy, games and an online costume contest. We had over 100 kids attend. The first place winner was Grayson who dressed as an old man. Below is a photo of Post & Auxiliary members who attended and their children.

Instead of visits with Santa and passing out candy, our community held a last minute Christmas lights parade down Main Street. Many local semi trucks attended with decorated rigs. The Post participated by wrapping ourselves in red, white and

blue lights and holding a lit American flag in the parade. Pictured below L-R : Post Quartermaster Jessica Wright, Scarlett Hayden, Aux Treasurer Tabatha Sutherlin, & Post Commander Stacey Roberts.

It is also important to note that we have recently completed a merger with Six Lakes Post 5602. After a new election of officers, vote on Post name and number, all Lakeview 3701 officers remained in place, as well as the Lakeview name (Hough-Pontius) and number (3701). We are excited to welcome the new members and look forward to pushing forward together.

We also want to thank Doug Paulsen for

his 32 years as Six Lakes Post Commander and Dewey Murray for his 12+ years as Quartermaster.

Lastly we want to invite any members from Howard City and Sand Lake Post's that are now members at large to join us in Lakeview. We would be happy to have you. We are an active Post but do not overwhelm our members with duties. Bonus, we have FREE dinner after every meeting.

Contact us today, 989-460-8250

or fill out the online transfer form here

bit.ly/join3701

**POST 3941 - LIVONIA**

District 4, Livonia Post 3941 wants to announce the recognition of Eagle Scout, Zachary J Lukas. Zachary Lukas completed the requirements and fulfilled the community service during the Covid-19 pandemic and passed the review board virtually over the internet back in September. The Post wanted to recognize the efforts of Zachary during the year he achieved the great honor. The plaque and certificate was presented to Zachary in front of his family, Christmas eve, 2020. Great achievement Mr. Zachary Lukas, Troop 1061. Zachary is 15 years old and from Wyandotte. In photo to the right, Ray Boone Post 3941 Quartermaster is making the presentation.

**POST 10109 - GRASS LAKE**

On November 11th, 2020, District 6 Commander Reinold E. Yahnka attended a Veteran's Day ceremony at Withington Veterans Memorial Park in Jackson, Michigan. There he was recognized by the Jackson County Veterans Council as the 2020-2021 Jackson County Veteran of the Year.

Commander Yahnka was submitted for this award by Grass Lake VFW Post 10194 and American Legion Anthony Steble Post 252 Commander Rex Murdock.

Commander Yahnka was presented the award by Jackson County Veterans Council Vice Commander Dann Todd who is also a Past Post Commander of VFW Post 10194 and a Past Post Commander of American Legion Post 252.

Commander Yahnka was also awarded a handmade quilt from Quilts of Valor - To Honor - To Comfort thanking him for his service to our country. Quilt top was made by Barb B in Rives Junction, Michigan and Machine quilted by Vicki G. in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



★ CAMPAIGNS ★

<div>JENNIFER SMITH</div> <div>Candidate for Department Chaplain 2021-2022</div> <div></div>	<div>JAMES JOHNS</div> <div>Candidate for Department Chaplain 2021-2022</div> <div></div>	<div>BILL THICK JR</div> <div>Candidate for Department Judge Advocate 2021-2022</div> <div></div>	<div>BRUCE BRIDSON</div> <div>Candidate for Department Judge Advocate 2021 - 2022</div> <div></div>	<div>DON MARTINDALE</div> <div>Candidate for Department Surgeon 2021-2022</div> <div></div>
<div>JERRY GORSKI</div> <div>Candidate for National Jr. Vice Commander-In-Chief 2023-2024</div> <div></div>	<div>GARY BROWN</div> <div>Candidate for Department Sr. Vice Commander 2021-2022</div> <div></div>	<div>GARY GAMBLE</div> <div>Candidate for Department Jr. Vice Commander 2021-2022</div> <div></div>	<div>VERN BLAUWKAMP</div> <div>Candidate for Department Jr. Vice Commander 2021-2022</div> <div></div>	<div>RAY LOPEZ</div> <div>Candidate for Department Jr. Vice Commander 2021-2022</div> <div></div>



VFW RIDERS,
GARY GAMBLE

Are you a VFW
or VFW Auxiliary
member that enjoys
riding a motorcycle?

Would you like to learn more about how
to form a VFW Riders Group at your
post or in your District?

Please send an email or give me a call. I
will gladly help answer your questions and
help you get a VFW Riders group started.
Now is a great time to start the discussion
about forming a Post or District VFW Riders
Group over the winter months. That way
you can hit the ground rolling this spring
with your newly formed VFW Riders Group.
Having an active VFW Riders group is a great
way to get your VFW and Auxiliary members
together on a regular basis supporting VFW
events while enjoying the ride.

Please visit www.vfwmi.org and click
“About” at the top of the page. Then click
“VFW Riders” and learn more about the
VFW Riders.

Please look twice, Save a Life!
Call/Text: 313 575-6258 / Email:
Ggamble354@gmail.com

MIA UPDATE AS OF 12/18/20 FROM VFW ACTION CORP.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting
Agency announced two new identifications
and three burial updates for service members
who have been missing and unaccounted-
for from World War II and Korea. Returning
home for burial with full military honors are:

- U.S. Navy Fireman 1st Class Paul E. Saylor, 21, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Saylor.
- Army Pvt. Hillary Soileau, 23, was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, when American forces went on the offensive to clear Guadalcanal of Japanese Forces. Soileau was wounded on Jan. 14, 1943, during fighting on a group of hills nicknamed Galloping Horse. Following the battle, he could not be found. Soileau was declared missing in action on Feb. 3, 1943, and officially declared killed in action on Dec. 13, 1945.
- Navy Seaman 2nd Class Charles A. Jones,

21, of Harvard, Nebraska, was assigned to
the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was
moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when
the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on
Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained
multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to
quickly capsize. The attack on the ship
resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen,
including Jones. Jones will be buried in his
hometown.

- Marine Corps Cpl. Elmer E. Drefahl, 22, of Milwaukee, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Drefahl.
- Army Sgt. Billy V. Rodgers, 19, was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 31st Regimental Combat Team, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered.



DISTRICT COMMANDER REPORTS



DISTRICT 5 COMMANDER - EDDIE DANDRIDGE



To all 5th District Comrades, I wish good health to you and your families! I also want to thank all Post Commanders/Officers, Chairman,

often across the board in all your programs. We must never forget District & Department programs, that's why we're members of The Veterans Of Foreign Wars. If you have any questions, please contact any Officer/Chairman of any program, they are there to help.

This year is going by really fast but not without challenges, we've had to adapt to the way we communicate our business, with our families, with our membership & the way we communicate with each other. We will get through this together in due time.

Now as you know, Post nominations open in March 2021 & remain open until the Post is ready to vote. Post election of Officers shall be elected in April 2021. This is very important Post Commanders! Be sure you also elect your delegates & alternates during your Post

Election. Your delegate strength will be based on membership in good standing as of 31 March 2021.

Our District 5 Convention will be at Oxbow VFW Post 4156, 321 Union Lake Rd. White Lake Twp, MI 48386. At this Convention the membership will vote to elect Su-jen Mauldin District 5 Commander, Su-jen was Post Commander, Oakland County Council Commander, District 5 Quartermaster, Department Adjutant & many other positions. It is my hope when the time come to nominate & elect your incoming Officers, please help to mentor them. My parents always said to me, everyone needs assistance & some guidance to complete the task but working together as a team makes all the difference.

Until my next & last MOV Article in March 2021, Stay Well and Safe!

County Council Commanders/Officers/Chairman, District Officers/Chairman & our amazing membership, your continued high performance in your duties is 2nd to None. It is my great honor to be serving as District 5 Commander in this most difficult time. I couldn't be more excited to be working along side such a wonderful team. That's what we have here a team. Together an organization can move forward & progress it's agenda, it all about the organization!

I appeal to all, keep reporting on time &

DISTRICT 6 COMMANDER - REINOLD E. YAHNKA



This has been a different year for everyone, learning how to social distance, wear a mask and hope that you do not get the COVID-19

out with a vaccine for the COVID-19 and once everyone gets vaccinated, we might be able to get back to some normalcy soon. Continue to do what you must do to stay safe until the vaccine is available to the general public. Will be looking forward to the April 24 District 6 Meeting in Monroe hoping that we can have a face-to-face meeting, but if not, we will use Zoom.

Concentrate on membership and call those annual members to see if they are interested in a life membership or maybe they can pay their dues early to help the Post make 100 percent in membership. Even though we have been shut out of our Post we still have to do our monthly activity and hospital reporting in by the 10th of every month. Quarterly audits are still required and should be completed

and turned in on time.

Saturday, April 24, 2021 – Monroe VFW City of Monroe Post 1138, 400 Jones Avenue, Monroe, MI 48161

11:00 am – Memorial Service

12:00 pm – Lunch

1:00 pm – Meeting and Elections for

2021 – 2022, Installation of

District Officers after meeting

It is an Honor to be your District 6 Commander and I am here to serve you and help you or your Post in any way I can. So please feel free to contact me at any time so that we can keep the "Super 6th District" "Veterans Moving Forward".

Thank You, for all that you do.

reyahnka@hotmail.com / (517)-745-3705

virus. Along with all of that we still must adapt and learn how to carry on with our responsibilities to conduct VFW business the best we can. Hopefully, everyone has learned how to do ZOOM teleconferencing to take care of the business of your Post and District. The Mid-Winter was canceled, and everything was accomplished by Zoom meetings even the Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen and Teacher of the Year Awards presentation were done by way of Zoom. So now that they have come

DISTRICT 8 COMMANDER - MIKE MARTIN



Well, 2020 is almost over and I know that we are all anxious for that. It has been one for the record books. It has been extremely tough. We

the past but could no longer do. I remember when I permanently injured my shoulder a few years ago. At first all I thought about was the things I could not do. But after a while, thanks to my wife Clara, my attitude changed. I started thinking in terms of what new ways could I do what is used to do. There was a lot of trial and error, a lot of frustration, but I was finally able to do most of what I formerly could.

That is the attitude I have seen in the Great 8th District as well as many other Districts and Posts in the Department of Michigan. I have seen social distance Trunk or Treats, Drive-Thru Santa Visits, carry out meals and porch dropped holiday baskets. We have held our meetings either by social distancing or by Zoom. We are Veterans, we are VFW, and we figure out how to get things done. We lead by example with our actions and attitudes.

Let us keep that attitude going in 2021. Things are going to get better. This is the United States of America and we always survive and thrive. And as always, it will be the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who will lead the way. Our Posts will reopen, and it will be business as usual, but let us not forget how we pulled together in 2020. I know that the Great 8th District will.

I want to mention my District Adjutant Garry Goff and the others who made Christmas such a special time for the children of the National Home. Garry has a true passion for the National Home and puts in a lot of time doing everything he can for the Home, especially the children. They had to modify how they delivered the gifts, but they were able to pull it off despite all the restrictions. The smiles on the children's faces were true Christmas Cheer. Thank you, Garry, for all you do.

have all been touched in one way or the other by Covid-19. Some of us have experienced it firsthand and survived. Some of us have lost friends and family to the virus. I know I have. Some of us became unemployed or lost our business. Like I said, it touched everyone somehow.

But we as VFW Comrades, we stuck together. We worked hard to keep moving forward, as Dept Commander Gloger's motto states. We got creative on how to keep our Posts going. We got creative on how to come up with new ways to do things we had done in

**YOU FOUGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY.
NOW JOIN US IN THE FIGHT**

FOR VETERANS.



DISTRICT 9 COMMANDER - KIMBERLY NAPOLEON

Greetings Comrades, my last submission there have been restrictions placed, rescinded and reimplemented. Yet, you all remain

steadfast to the mission and have continued to work towards "Moving Veterans Forward." I strongly believe in Science and choose to lead by example through Vision, Integrity, Structure and Accountability. I've encouraged all that have contacted me to follow the guidance of MDPHS. There will be a brighter days ahead. I have enough faith and I'm just that crazy to believe and speak it into existence. It's my prayer that this message finds you all well.

We all have served during conflicts and have all overcome. Sure, we have lost some along the way, but things could be a lot worse. So we still have reason to be thankful.

It's hard to believe that we are halfway (75% by the time this goes to print) through the 2020-2021 year. We have made it through a tumultuous election campaign, a pandemic and at the time of this writing we have

been blessed with a new Coronavirus-19 vaccination developed in record time. No matter your belief, the light is beginning to shine and 2020, which has been indeed one for the ages is behind us.

Numerous obstacles have been placed before us, yet we were able to overcome the majority of them and laying the path to a successful future. There have been changes made to help us grow as an organization and become more efficient by way of virtual sessions such as "Membership Mondays", QM trainings and a couple of other topics. We have had to develop procedures to continue operations during the pandemic. You all have rose to the occasion and I'm grateful for your dedication and hard work. Please acquaint yourselves with the National State and local bylaws. To help us move forward, we are in the process of updating District bylaws to align with the aforementioned.

This indeed has been a year of change and challenge. I commend our Department Officers, District Officers and Committee Chairpersons for your perseverance to get the job done.

Many of the Posts have continued to

provide needed services to the numerous Veterans and the Veteran families within the surrounding areas. Your work is not in vain and in keeping with Veterans of Foreign Wars slogan, "No one does more for Veterans," you all have proven that no pandemic can stop America's finest Veteran Service Organization.

Many have formed lasting bonding collaborations in your efforts to partner with community based organizations to get the job done. I encourage you to build upon those relationships. I truly, truly appreciate all of your hard work and sacrifice.

With all of that being said, I'd like to thank my District line officers for all that you do. From bi-weekly Post check-ins to just being a listening ear when needed.

Post Commanders and Committee Chairpersons, please, please continue to get your reports in in a timely manner.

District Convention will be held on May 22nd

Wallace C. Schulz/Dwight A. McKinney Jr.
Bridgeport Post 9931

3615 South Towerline Rd. - Bridgeport
10am / School of Instruction 9:15am



DISTRICT 11 COMMANDER - BRUCE BRIDSON

Congratulations to all the Department of Michigan Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, and Teacher of the Year winners. I hope you and

your families are staying healthy and well during this Pandemic we are all facing. Let's continue to do our part for the VFW. Pray for one another during this pandemic, keep in contact with your VFW Brothers and Sisters, more than ever they need us now, we are Veterans, Veterans that help Veterans, and we will get through this together.

Sec. 217- Nomination, Election, Installation and Term of Office. Post officers shall be nominated, elected, and installed as prescribed in section 217 of the Manual of Procedure. Comrades please read page

69 of the Manual of Procedure to properly nominate, elect, and install your officers for the upcoming year. In addition get your Post-election reports into your District Commander, Department headquarters, and National, ASAP.

Membership: Unfortunately many posts throughout the state are still not at 100% in membership. Let's get out there and knock on some doors, meet your veterans whom haven't paid their dues, find out what they might need, or if they are still there.

Audits: Trustees read p. 72 (11) a, b, c, and d of the Manual of Procedures. Safe guard your Post! Reporting: Remember we are a nonprofit organization. Help protect your charter and nonprofit status by reporting what you do. If you are not sure if something is reportable, report it anyway. Donations: Cancer, National Home, Camp Trotter are

but three (3) of the sixteen (16) categories for your post to donate to. Remember we are a nonprofit organization. Help protect your charter and nonprofit status by putting funds into these worthy programs. To find out your status go to the Dept. website under reporting. Click on Donations and find out your status.

District Meetings: as stated in Sec. 218 k. (p.70) of the manual of procedures, Assure that the Post Commander or a representative attend all properly called District Conventions or meetings. District 11's next meeting will be February 7th at Coleman VFW Post if these Covid restrictions are lifted by then, and May 2nd at VFW Post #1075 Harrison. School of instruction will begin at 10:00am.

Comrades, in closing, I am seeking for your support, Please Vote for me as your next Department Judge Advocate. I look forward to seeing everyone again soon.



DISTRICT 14 COMMANDER - DEAN MAKI

Well comrades it's certainly been a horrible year thus far. We've not been able to host any veteran's events which involve the public. No face-

to-face visits with our Jacobetti Home for Veterans residents. No funeral rites, color guards, or cookouts. Hopefully this madness ends soon. It's extremely disappointing that we will be unable to enjoy the camaraderie and pageantry of the Mid-Winter Conference this year. On a happier note, the lower peninsula has more snow than we have so far this year.

Congratulations to our Voice of Democracy winner Brad Luce from Post 4573 in Ishpeming. The Patriots Pen winner also, from Post 4573

was Averie Vial. Good luck in the Department judging. Hopefully we will be able to honor them at the proposed District 14 convention next year scheduled to be held at Post 5670 in Gwinn.

Elections are coming up so if anyone wants to step up and become involved in any leadership positions, let us know as soon as possible. Also please continue to get your quarterly audits in on time. You need not conduct a meeting to do an audit. The QM and three trustees can perform this anywhere and still maintain social distancing. And continue to report volunteer hours and donations.

As always: Recruit, Retain, & Renew. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

DIST. 15 COMMANDER - JAMES PINTAR

If the Lord willing and the snow banks are not too high, our District meeting is scheduled for

14 February 2021
Crystal Falls post
Registration and lunch 11:30 am - 1 pm
District audit at 12.30 pm
Meeting starting at 1 pm

Our Posts have to start remembering and doing the acronym ARM.

AUDITS REPORTING MEMBERSHIP

Lets get it done and live up to our motto. Lead, follow or get the hell out of the way the mighty fifteenth is coming by.

★ AUXILIARY DISTRICT REPORTS ★

DISTRICT 4 PRESIDENT - DENI HUNTER

Performing our duties in the VFW Auxiliary is like tending to our gardens...

From planning space, plotting areas, preparing and fertilizing, researching and acquiring, monitoring and timing, sowing and planting, cultivating and nurturing, organizing and collecting, harvesting the rewards and then preparing to do it all over again the next term, our auxiliaries have their work cut out for them.

And, with new technologies and telecommunications, media and public relations, talking points and power points, releases and permissions, our auxiliaries are starting to feel the requirements and demands of all that is expected of us to do.

Along with Veterans and Family Support, our Auxiliaries promote and support Americanism, Community Outreach, Buddy Poppy and National Home, Historian and Media Relations, Hospital, Legislative, Membership, Mentoring for Leadership, Scholarships, Youth and Camp Trotter, Auxiliary Achievement, and Chief of Staff programs.

We are a busy lot and we can use all the

help that we can get. We are in search of volunteers who qualify to help.

Please inquire at any of our VFW Posts for further information.

Visit one of our many Auxiliary Family Freedom Festivals around the areas to have fun and to learn what we are all about.

Attend our commemorations for our Patriotic Holidays, our War Heroes and POW/MIA's, our Country's achievements and our losses, and recognizing our active duty service members and our veterans. You will surely be moved and touched by all that we do.

Please serve with us and help support us in any way that you can and reap the rewards of the garden that we have prepared for our own.

And, by the way, donations received from the distribution of our Buddy Poppies go to our relief fund for veterans in need.

Our garden can only be bountiful with your support. We are the VFW Auxiliary and we are proud of what we have produced.

Thank you, and May the Sun Shine Soft upon your Fields.

DISTRICT 5 PRESIDENT - AILEEN ADRAGNA

Are you an active member or a member in name only?

An active member comes to meetings, functions, programs, or other activities at the post home. An active member will write letters to legislative representatives at state and national offices. An active member helps veterans get to doctor appointments, go to the store or bank. An active member helps veterans who are hospitalized or in a nursing home. An active member will assist the president, officers, and chairmen in carrying out their duties.

A member in name only is one who joins the organization and ends their participation at that point. A member in name only could also be a senior who has been active in the past but is now limited either physically or financial and feels they can no longer participate in functions and programs. Maybe they are now in a nursing home. Maybe they are out of a job. Maybe they feel that what they do is unimportant/doesn't matter. Each individual has unique abilities.

Not everyone is destined to become the president on the first day. But each member has become a member due to a connection to someone who served in the military during a time of war.

Our connection to one another is that--our

loved ones who put their life on the line to protect and defend a belief that all men and women are created equally and are entitled to the freedom to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

So, are you a member just to have an extra card in your wallet? If you say you are an active member have you given or sent a written report to the auxiliary president so you actions can be included in the auxiliary reports to the department office? If you say you are an active member have you paid your annual dues for 2021 or have you considered converting to a life membership?

Stop and think about what you would be paying if you continued to pay, say an average of \$25 per year for the next ten years, that would be \$250.

Now the life membership fees for someone in their early fifties is about \$165. So now do you have that ready amount to pay now? Ask your auxiliary if they would allow you to pay a little each month until you have the required amount? Many auxiliaries offer to pay a portion of the life membership fee for you to change over to a life member. The benefit is that once you do this, you no longer need to worry about getting letters, postcards, phone calls, emails, text messages, etc to pay your dues.

DIST. 9 PRESIDENT - CARLEY RALEIGH

I hope many of you were able to attend the Mid Winter Conference on Zoom. The year is not over and membership is still top of the list. Continue to recruit, that is how we not only keep our Auxiliaries going, it is how we learn new ways to accomplish our goals.

New people = new ideas

By now, I should have met you all at an

inspection. Some were not done until after the first of the year but I still enjoy meeting with all my auxiliaries. Keep doing your programs and reporting what you are doing.

The end of the year is getting close, check your guide sheets.

District Convention is May 22, 2021 at Post 9931 Walter C Schultz-Bridgeport.

PUSHING FORWARD IN LEGISLATIVE

On Wednesday, December 16th, the House passed its final vote on passage of H.R. 7105, Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, which passed the Senate in early December and now heads to the president for signature. This legislation includes several VFW-supported bills that were pending in the 116th Congress.

- Most notably the Deborah Sampson Act, which would break the cultural barrier impacting women veterans by requiring VA to address privacy concerns and improve access, expand the amount of time new mothers are given to find health care coverage for their newborns, increase staff cultural competency, eliminate harassment and assault, and make other much-needed improvements to women veterans' health care. This forward looking focus legislation would also examine outcomes to women veterans' services by requiring studies and reports on barriers to receipt of care, gap analysis on services for homeless women veterans, the availability of prosthetics for women, and other topics.
- Would require VA to make Disability Benefits Questionnaires available for public use, again.
- Would lower the age from 57 to 55 to remarry without incurring penalties for surviving spouses receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
- Would modernize the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (SDVI) program.
- Would require VA to study incidents of cancer and other illnesses experienced by service members who served at the Karshi-Khanabad (K2) Air Base in Uzbekistan between Oct. 1, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2005.
- Would change the statutory definition of Vietnam veteran to include individuals who served in the Republic of Vietnam from Nov. 1, 1955, to Feb. 27, 1961.
- Would increase certain veteran funeral benefits and authorize VA to add spouses and eligible dependent children to VA-furnished headstones.
- Would increase from \$5 million to \$10 million the maximum amount VA may grant in a fiscal year to states and tribal organizations for maintaining veterans' cemeteries.
- Would call for the elimination of the 12-year limit on using Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits.
- Would require VA to create a database on its website to explain public institution requirements for in-state tuition.
- Would expand benefits and services for homeless veterans.
- Would create certain education, employment, and housing protections for veterans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The passage of this veterans' legislation package satisfies a number of VFW resolutions and legislative priorities regarding women veterans' health care, disability assistance and memorial affairs, and economic opportunity issues.

(Article from VFW Action Corp 12/18/20)


**DESIGNER / EDITOR,
STACEY ROBERTS**

Happy New Year! I am hopeful that 2021 will bring some positivity into our lives. This issue has been the smallest issue since becoming Editor. I understand that things have been different lately but I encourage you share what your Posts and Districts are doing! We want to hear from you.

The mission of this paper is to strengthen the efficiency of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Michigan by providing timely, pertinent and accurate information about the decisions and activities of the VFW at the Post, District and Department level; the relevant affairs of the State and Federal governments, and the decisions and activities of the national organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The paper is also the voice of the members. We welcome articles from all members. All articles should contribute positively to the welfare of the VFW and its members. We will accept no attacks on any member or leader of the VFW. We will accept a thoughtful discussion of all related issues and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the VFW and its policies. Articles more than 500 words may be rejected or returned for revision. **We reserve the right to edit all articles as we see fit.**

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Stafford Printing

**Articles for consideration
should be sent to:**

MOV@VFWMI.ORG

7901 Backus Road - Greenville, MI 48838

The news and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Michigan or the National Organization.

TAPS FORM

Comrades, please copy this form and use it for your TAPS report.

Send completed form to:
VFW of Michigan
**924 N Washington - Lansing, MI 48906
or Amanda@vfwmi.org**

(Last Name)

(First Name)

(Age)

(Date of Death)

(Post)

Branch of Service :

 ARMY AIR FORCE NAVY
MARINE CORP COAST GUARD

Served in :

 WWI WWII KOREA VIETNAM
GULF IRAQ/ AFGHANISTAN
OTHER OCCUPATION FORCES


ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES

LISTED BY POST NUMBER / LAST NAME / FIRST NAME / AGE / SERVICE / WAR
345 Redford

 Brown, Alan L. 76 Army/Vietnam
Wesanen, John E. Jr. 88 Army/Korea

607 Roger City

La Pointe, Roy 87 Army/Korea

1519 Northville

Merrow, Phillip F. 85 Navy

1887 Menominee

 Beyersdorf, Robert 99
WWII/Korea/Vietnam/Air Force
Cook, Robert A. 89 Army/Korea

2144 Holland

 Brink, Gerald J. 91 Air Force/Korea
Fierro, Thomas 94 Navy/WWII
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