

# MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN

# VFW

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

SUMMER 23



Then Sr. Vice Commander Ray Lopez and then Sr. Vice President Sara Manke paid their respects at the Convention Memorial Service



Newly elected State Commander Ray Lopez is receiving his hat from his wife Natalie



Newly elected Jr. Vice Commander Reinold Yahnka being congratulated by his wife, Diana, following his election



Newly elected Sr. Vice Commander Kimberly Napoleon addresses the Convention



Newly elected Quartermaster Barry Walter thanks the outgoing Quartermaster for his service to the Department of Michigan



State Commander John Griffith and Scouting Chairman Larry Thayer present Eagle Scout of the Year to Tyler Franzel



President Diana Ward and State Commander John Griffith pay their respects during the Convention Memorial Service

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Retiring Color Guard salutes the Commander



Department Auxiliary Conductor Jason Manke prepares the altar for the Convention Memorial Service



## DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, RAY LOPEZ

Greetings, Comrades, Brothers, Sisters, family, and friends. First, I would like to congratulate all the incoming Officers and Directors for 2023-2024! I look forward to working with everyone throughout the year with the mission of "Serving Those That Serve." Congratulations to all the Posts and Districts that achieved All-State and All-American honors this past year, along with our All-American Department Commander, John Griffith. Together, with the VFW Membership and the Department Auxiliary, we will be successful as a team in our continued support and advocacy for veterans in our communities throughout the state.

The Commander's special project for this year will be supporting cancer research. Virtually everyone has lost a close family member to cancer. As we all know, cancer has hit the veteran community extremely hard. I would encourage all newly elected Post/District Officers to attend a VTS. Please reach out to your District Commanders or any Directors, along with the Department staff, if you need any assistance. We work for you! Membership is a key component for our voice to be heard when we push our legislative priorities to our elected officials. We must continue our recruiting efforts while also retaining the members we have. And please don't wait until halfway through the year to recruit. In closing, it is a privilege and honor to serve as your Department Commander. Please don't hesitate to call. Yours in True Comradeship.

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DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER, KIMBERLY NAPOLEON

G r e e t i n g s Comrades! First, I'd like to thank you all for your support last year, and I look forward to serving as your Sr. Vice Commander for the 2023-2024 year. I am truly humbled and grateful to be part of Commander Lopez's Team and help support him in leading The Department of Michigan. I am a servant by nature, and I'm here to serve you. This is a Veterans Service Organization, and serving truly is what I do. After all, it's the only reason our organization exists! As you, or more aptly, we, embark on this year's journey, I look forward to actively engaging in your efforts to continue our mission of making a difference in the lives of those whom we will come in contact with as the opportunity arises. Please know that you are all appreciated for all that you do for our veterans, families, and the communities in which we live and beyond. Comrades, it's my belief that it takes special kinds of people to make a daily choice to serve others in such a selfless manner without expectation of compensation or praise. Our satisfaction should come from

knowing that, at the end of the day, we have made a difference in another's life. Remember, It's not about us! It's about those whom we serve. Keeping our purpose in mind, now that we've received Commander Lopez's theme, "Serving those who Served," Let's continue to move together as one unit while we embrace his theme of service. I believe the best is yet to come, and I hope everyone has a great year! In Solidarity and Service.



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.



DEPARTMENT JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER, REINOLD YAHNKA

C o m r a d e s , B r o t h e r s , a n d Sisters, thank you for electing me as your State Junior Vice Commander at the 104th State Convention in Kalamazoo. It is a true honor to serve you and our State Commander, Ray Lopez. I look forward to working as a team with Commander Lopez, Sr. Vice Commander Kimberly Napoleon, and our new Adjutant/Quartermaster Barry Walter to keep the Department of Michigan VFW moving in a positive direction. I encourage each and every Comrade to do the same. Whatever position you hold, always do your best. Take your position seriously, and if you need assistance in any way, do not hesitate to reach out and ask. Remember, the only stupid question is the one you don't ask. I would also like to congratulate all of the new Department Officers, Directors, District Commanders, Post Officers, and our new National Council of Administration

representative, Kevin Conklin. I would like to encourage all Comrades at every level to attend the Veteran Training Sessions (VTS), Post Meetings, District Meetings, and all Conferences and Conventions. The VFW is a unique organization, and we are constantly changing positions at some level every year. That is why it is important to attend all training when it is presented to you. And don't forget mentoring opportunities. You have the knowledge, and you should be proud to mentor those coming up behind you so that they can succeed, which in turn will help you succeed. I personally have had a lot of mentors along my path to the position that I hold now. Don't be afraid to reach out to those that you look up to and ask them questions. One of the most important things that I appreciated was receiving communications from those above me. When you are kept informed and pass that information on to those below you, it will make your job a lot easier. Thank you to Past State Commander John Griffith for making me your State Deputy Chief of

Staff and Interim State Inspector. This was one of the most rewarding positions and learning experiences that I have ever had. You appointed me to several assignments that allowed me to help a lot of Posts and Comrades throughout the state that needed assistance, and they were truly receptive and thankful for that. Lastly, the VFW Auxiliary is an integral part of our organization, and I want to thank Past State President Diana Ward for having a fabulous year. Congratulations to State President Sara Manke and her staff and my counterpart, State Jr. Vice President Debbie Scheetz. I am looking forward to working with the Auxiliary to do what has to be done for veterans and Auxiliary members alike. I encourage everyone to work together and be one team that moves both Departments forward in a harmonious relationship. Once again, thank you to everyone for electing me as your State Jr. Vice Commander. Let's make it a great year for State Commander Ray Lopez and State Auxiliary President Sara Manke!



**AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT, SARA MANKE**

I am so honored to be serving as the 2023–2024 Department President. This has been a dream of mine since I was a child, and I am excited to see what we can accomplish this year. Membership in both the VFW and VFW Auxiliary is very important. We always need new members, but even more importantly, we need to retain the ones we have. I would like to share the following with you on the value of one member: please read and ponder what is being said. I believe we all need to do better and value each member while being patient and, most importantly, kind!

**What’s the Value of One Member**

Author Unknown

Ten little members standing in a line. One disliked the President, and then there were nine. Nine ambitious members offered to work late. One forgot her promise, and then there were eight. Eight creative members had ideas good as heaven. One lost enthusiasm, and then there were seven. Seven loyal members got into a fix. They quarreled over programs, and then there were six. One dropped out and then there were five. Five happy members, not one a bore, till they fought over Bingo And then there were four. Four cheerful members who never disagreed, till one complained of meetings and then there were three. Three eager members, what did they

do? One got discouraged, and then there were two. Two tired members, our rhyme is nearly done, one joined a bridge club and then there was one. One faithful member, feeling very blue, met with a neighbor, and then there were two. Two earnest members each enrolled one more, doubling their number, and then there were four. Four determined members just couldn’t wait till each won another, and then there were eight. Eight excited members signed up, sixteen more. In another six verses there will be a thousand and twenty-four!



**AUXILIARY YOUTH ACTIVITY & CAMP TROTTER, EVELYN AVERY**

The countdown to summer fun has begun in the form of V.F.W. Camp Trotter! Young people have been enjoying the tradition of going to Camp Trotter since Ralph Trotter donated the property to the Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars in 1949. Ralph Trotter was a previous State Commander for the Department of Michigan VFW (1934–1935) and served in WWI. The Camp was originally called “VFW Buddy Poppy Camp”, and only had three buildings on the property. It was and still is the only VFW-owned and operated Camp in the United States. Many VFW and Auxiliary members have enjoyed the grounds and have helped shape Camp Trotter into what it is today. Their service continues to this day as we host yearly clean-up weekends, during which those members assist in preparing the Camp for summer. Camp Trotter’s success would not be possible without the help and support of the Michigan VFW and Auxiliary, and it is important to remember their service. Donations to the Camp to help with expenses can be sent to the VFW Department of Michigan in Lansing, marked “Camp Trotter General Fund”. You can also become a Lifetime member of Camp Trotter

with a \$50 Lifetime membership fee. Both forms and other information can be found on the website at [www.camptrtoter.org](http://www.camptrtoter.org). Camp operations run five weeks this summer for young people 7–12 years old (July 9–15; July 16–22; July 23–29; July 30–Aug 5; Aug. 6–12) at a cost of \$320 per camper. This includes an established realm of activities that will give the campers lifelong memories. Once again, you may visit the website listed above to see exactly what activities are planned for your camper. Maddy Schlossberg, VFW Camp Trotter Operations and Programs Director, invites you to attend Family Day at Camp Trotter on August 19, 2023. Come out and witness firsthand the beauty of Camp Trotter. Spend the day with your young person or just come to take a ride on Bills Lake on the Camp pontoon. Come remember what it’s like to have a good time in the outdoors and create more fond memories and better knowledge about nature, citizenship, and activities they find joy in. The Chairman of the Auxiliary Youth Activities Program will have a fun time this year promoting the programs for our young people. Through these programs we bring to school-age children and their leaders, we can promote veteran education and awareness. Here are just a few ways to get connected with Youth Activities:

- Patriotism through Literacy (“Reading is FUNdamental” and can be an interactive way to learn about our history; search for ways to educate through stories, etc.)
- Creating, sponsoring, and working with Youth Groups—engage Youth Groups in Auxiliary programs that involve service to our veterans
- Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations—award what groups do for our veterans
- Giving Patriotic Youth Awards—a way to reward participation and recognize individuals
- R.A.P. Cards—Random Acts of Patriotism
- “Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue!”—a singing contest for singing the National Anthem
- Illustrating America—an art contest to build patriotism for K–8th grade students
- Involving the Youth in ALL VFW Auxiliary Programs—building responsibility in our youth and educating the community on VFW Auxiliary Youth Programs.

Get started today and always remember, “Our Veterans are the Angels Among Us.”



**AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN, JASON MANKE**

This is the one position/office that I’ve been looking forward to serving in. I pledge my support to the Department Officer team and to the wonderful members of this state. I truly

look forward to continuing my visits to the Districts and meeting with everyone around the state. At any time, if I can be of service or help to any Auxiliary, please let me know. I’m going to conclude this report with a biblical quote.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 says, “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”

So, whether it be a spouse, family member, good friend, or even a caregiver, God has placed people in our lives to help us better see His goodness and love.





**DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN, JIM MUYS**

Well, another convention is over, and I hope everyone had a great time and learned some new information. I would like to thank the membership for having the faith to elect me as the

Department Chaplain for a second year. I will try to do the best job that I can. Any help needed or any suggestions that you have, please feel free to e-mail me, and I'll

try to help out in any way: (imamouse60@charter.net.)  
I would like to congratulate the new incoming leadership and wish them the very best for their year. We all need to stand behind them and give them our support. Any suggestions, I'm sure, would be appreciated as long as it's done in a positive manner. There is no room for hateful speech or talk, as this will only drag down what we are trying to build up for this great organization. We all need to work together to create the best organization for

the benefit of all of us. We all went through a lot to be eligible for this organization, so let's try to make it the best that we can. Congratulations to John and the team on having a great year and achieving 100% membership for the Department of Michigan, which is not an easy task to do. I hope this finds everyone well, and I'll be praying for all those who are feeling ill. Again, best of luck to the incoming leadership, and may you have a successful year. May God bless each and every one of you, and may God bless the United States of America.



**DEPARTMENT SAFETY DIRECTOR, JESSICA WRIGHT**

Greetings, Comrades, Sisters, and Brothers. It was great to see everyone at the State Convention! Year - e n d

Divisional awards were presented to the District Commanders for the 2022-2023 year. On June 9, 2022, I had the honor of presenting the 2022-2023 Public Service Officers of the Year Award. Awards were

presented to: Law Enforcement Officer LT. Chauncey Shattuck with the Ingham County Sheriff's Office submitted by Post 6132; Firefighter Jonathan T. Perkins with the Detroit Arsenal Fire Department submitted by Post 8465; and EMT Justin Todd with the Morton Township Fire Department submitted by Post 2335. The deadline for this year's submission for Public Service Officer of the Year is January 1st, 2024. The form is available on the Department website under the Safety

Program tab. At the June Convention, I turned the program over to Mark Drayton. I have no doubt that he will do great things with this program. It has been an honor to be your safety director for the past five years. I thank all the Past Department Commanders for the appointment as Director and for supporting me during their years as Commander.

Safety Director email: [ds@vfwmi.org](mailto:ds@vfwmi.org).



Commander John Griffith and Safety Director Jessica Wright presenting Lt. Chauncey Shattuck with his Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award.



District 10 Commander Thomas Webber accepts the Firefighter of the Year Award on behalf of Jonathan T. Perkins, presented by Commander John Griffith and Safety Director Jessica Wright



**BIG 10 DELEGATE, NORM MAULDIN**

Greetings to all, I hope everyone is doing well. It sure has been busy since May, and hopefully all of you finally got a chance to catch your breath and took time to enjoy the summer. I know Memorial Day weekend was a busy one. Congratulations to all the Posts that made All-American and/or All-State. Additionally, I would like to congratulate all

the newly elected Officers, and wish them well in the coming year. At the National Convention this year in Phoenix, Big Ten will be voting on the National Judge Advocate General. We have two candidates for this position: Jason E. Johns from Wisconsin and Doug Whitaker from Nebraska. At the Department Convention in Kalamazoo, I distributed bios for both candidates. I believe both of them are well qualified for the position. I take representing you, the membership, very seriously. I canvassed

the members at the Department Convention and requested that they tell me how they wanted me to cast my vote. Thank you to all who gave me their input. By the time you read this article, the National Convention will be over and the new National Judge Advocate General will be in office. I know whomever wins will represent the VFW well. I hope you are enjoying the summer and taking time for yourself to recharge and get ready for the new year. I will see you at Fall Conference.



**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION, JERRY GORSKI**

This will be my 17th and Final MOV article as your National Council of Administration Member. My four-year term of Office will end at the VFW National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, on July 27th, 2023. It has been an honor serving and representing the state of Michigan as your National Council of Administration Member for 2019–2023. Thank you for electing me to this very important position. My greatest achievement, as your National Council Member, was to save the Washington, DC, trip for our 52 Department Voice of Democracy Winners for two years in a row. Two of our Past Commander-in-Chiefs wanted to eliminate this trip because of the cost, but I convinced my fellow National Council Members in both years that this is the best VFW Youth Scholarship Program that we have and it should not be eliminated. We have the VFW money, including a large portion donated by Twisted X, to pay for it

every year. I hope future National Council Members after me will continue to oppose any motions to eliminate the Washington, DC, trip for our Department Voice of Democracy winners. There will be many more challenges facing our future National Council of Administration Members. I wish all of them the very best in making the right decisions for our VFW Organization and the Department of Michigan. I want to thank you for helping me get elected as your Big Ten Conference Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2017–2019. The five Delegates from Michigan, coupled with the Delegates from the other Departments in the Big Ten Conference, elected me to these two very important Big Ten Positions. Additionally, I want to thank you for electing me as your State Commander for 2016–2017. I enjoyed the many challenges that I faced my year. I enjoyed visiting every District and meeting their members because I got to meet a lot of great people. I drove 53,000 miles around the State of Michigan that year, including 10 trips to the Upper Peninsula. I hope to return to the UP many more times

in the future. Lastly, I want to thank my District 5 Members, who supported me in every position at Post, County Council, and District Levels. Without your support early on in my VFW Career, I would not have been so successful, so thank you. I would like to end by telling you that I was honored to present our World War II Army Lt. Nurse Irene Hosking with a Proclamation, from Commander-In-Chief Tim Borland and Adjutant General Dan West, at her 105th birthday on April 22nd, 2023, at VFW Post 4005 in Corunna, Michigan. Over 200 people attended her birthday celebration. God bless Irene. On page 40 of the June/July 2023 Issue of the VFW Magazine, you will find an article and pictures of Irene Hosking's 105th Birthday. Please read it. Thank you for all of the memories and VFW and Auxiliary friendships that I have made throughout my career with the VFW and the Department of Michigan. I will cherish each and every one of them. God bless all of you; God bless the Veterans of Foreign Wars; God bless our active-duty military; and God bless the United States of America.



**DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER, BARRY WALTER**

Comrades, I am honored to introduce myself to you as the new Adjutant/Quartermaster for the Department of Michigan. Thank you, Commander Ray Lopez, for giving me the honor of serving the Department of Michigan during your year as State Commander. I would like to welcome all the newly elected Officers at every level of the Department. Each of you has a vital role to play in the success of your Post, District, and Department. Success is measured in many ways. As an organization, success is measured in terms of membership at every level. Your success as a leader and our success as an organization will, however, ultimately be determined by how well we meet the needs of that membership. Are we keeping our members informed on issues of importance to them? Do they know our legislative goals in Michigan and Nationally? Do they agree with those goals? Are we listening at every level to their input and allowing them to share their voice? Are we using all the tools available to us to effectively communicate with our members? A major program of our organization is our Service Program, which strives to ensure that every veteran is receiving the maximum State and Federal benefits to which they are entitled. Together with our Michigan Veteran Service Coalition partners under the Michigan Department of Veterans Affairs Agency

and the Michigan network of County Veterans Service Officers, we are providing service in every County of our State. Every veteran in Michigan has access to quality assistance in applying for VA benefits. As a local leader, part of your responsibility is to assist your members in gaining access to those services. Know who they are and where they are, and get them into your Post to introduce themselves. At your Department office, we share those same responsibilities. We will be looking for new and more effective ways to communicate with every member. Email newsletters and social media will play an increasingly important role in that strategy as we continue to evaluate the effectiveness of our "old" ways of communicating. We don't have all the answers, and we are looking to you as leaders and members to help us. Can we incorporate every good idea? Of course not. But we can do a lot to improve; we all know that. One of the issues that is first on the hit list is getting more of our members who use email to give us their email address. Less than one-third of our members have provided us with their email addresses. So, we need your help! If you have not been receiving the monthly newsletter, "The Advocate", we probably do not have a viable email address for you. If you have changed your email address in the last several years, we probably do not have your current email. Please take a moment and fill out the contact update form in this issue of the MOV. Commanders, please duplicate the form and request your

members to do the same either through your Post newsletter or at Post meetings and social events. I believe that our members want meaningful and timely information, and whether we old folks like it or not, ways of communicating are changing. Please help us out. Lastly, this year will be an exciting one following two successive years of 100% membership and All-American State Commander honors. But you don't do what you do as members and leaders in your Post to earn honors for the State Commander. I hope that you do what you do every day in many small ways because you are finding ways to fulfill the Commander's motto this year: "Serving Those That Serve!"



★ ★ ★ POST REPORTS ★ ★ ★

**POST 334 - LAKE ORION**

On Friday, May 12th, 2023, VFW Post 334 had nine members attend Orion Oaks Elementary School, located at 1255 Joslyn Rd., Lake Orion, MI. To start the day, the kids had an assembly in the gym to kick off their Day of Service activities (Grades K-5). VFW Post 334 members were invited to sit in chairs that were lined up in front of the assembly and join them in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Jim Hubbard, Commander of VFW Post 334, spoke to the assembly about what the Post does for the Orion community. The kids and teachers then headed out to their classes while the Post members moved to the school cafeteria. A few minutes later, the 5th grade class and their teachers came marching into the cafeteria, bringing along a collection of board games. The kids sat down at the tables, with one to three kids per veteran, introduced themselves, and selected a board game to play with the veteran.

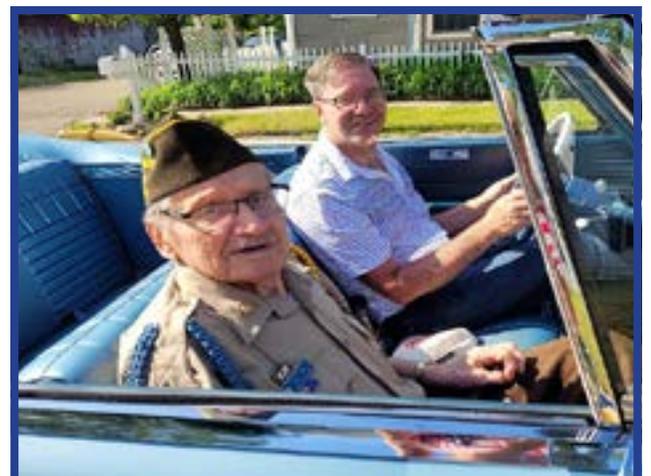
Over the next two hours, the kids played multiple games with the veterans while learning from them what they did for the community and about their military service. As time was running out, the veterans gave each of the 5th graders a small American flag, a patriotic bracelet, and a Health and Safety book. Everyone had a great time.

Contact: James Hubbard 248-496-1213 Pictures by Shelby Watts, 4th Grade teacher, Orion Oaks Elementary School (on Jim Muys camera) Picture 1: VFW Post 334 members: Commander Jim Hubbard, Chuck Haskin, Jim Munoz, Bob Mahan, Jim Muys, Dave Eastman, Larry Stockoski, Cindy Wright, Arsey Miller. Picture 2: Orion Oaks Elementary School students and teachers



**POST 582 - ORTONVILLE**

Post Sr. Vice Carl Jeffrey and CMDR. Dennis Hoffman presented plaques to Sean Duffy and Josh Bearss for sponsoring a Ruck Walk to raise money and awareness of needy veterans in the community. Memorial Day parade in Ortonville sponsored by VFW Post 582.



**POST 3701 - LAKEVIEW**



Post 3701 Honor Guard pauses and renders honors during the Memorial Day parade while the high school band plays the National Anthem.



Post 3701 honor guard passes by their new Post home during Lakeview's Summerfestcelebration.



Post 3701 members pose for photos during Buddy Poppy Days. Pictured L-R, Sr Vice Kenny Ybabez, Quartermaster Jessica Wright, Service Officer Sunni Haglund, Honor Guard Captain Russ Roberts.



Post 3701 members with students from Lakeview High School place flags at the cemetery before in honor of Memorial Day.

**POST 8846 - MUSKEGON**

Don Rea VFW Post #8846 successfully replaced its old worn out event sign with a new digital LED sign. The project was fully funded by its Officers, Post members, and private donations. DTE Energy supervisor Mike Matrone and the Electrician Daniel Sodini were instrumental in providing their time and labor for the completion of this project. We are extremely grateful to all who have contributed and look forward to many years of providing timely and necessary information on events to Post members and our local community.



COOTIE CORNER - ERIC BELL



Greetings, Comrades and Auxiliary Sisters and Brothers!  
The Grand of Michigan has been busier than a bee! First was the VFW Day of Service on May 6; then, cooking with a Veteran Podcast at the VFW National Home with Dave Rogers (Dept/Grand of Tennessee). Lastly, the Grand of Michigan nursing home visit during Grand Convention weekend in Fenton, MI.



Pictures below from L-R: (1) Grand Commander Nate Powell and his "Shiver of Sharks" completed the year strong, being awarded an All-Star Grand. (2) The Grand participated in many Memorial Day activities like the St. Clair Shores Memorial Day Parade. (3) Grand Commander Horace Frazier Jr., Grand President Cathy Vargo, and their "Dolphin Pod," are ready to tackle the new year!



Comrades and Auxiliary, what a remarkable State Convention we had! First and foremost, I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to the membership for passing and implementing Mental Health as a standing committee for our Department programs. This means all Posts and Districts around the state can now promote mental health materials and/or have the program presented for All-State points. It also means opportunities for fundraising so that we can strengthen the program going forward. If your Posts or Districts host Mental Health events such as the Mecosta Suicide Prevention Workshop, which is being held on September 16th, 2023, at the Mecosta VFW Post, you'll receive All-State points; or if you hold fundraising events to donate to the program. I personally want to give special appreciation to our incoming Quartermaster Adjutant Barry Walter, who was instrumental through his visionary mentoring with me, for helping

to make this a reality. To our outgoing State Commander John Griffith and our Quartermaster Adjutant Derek (Darryl) Blumke, working with you directly for the past few years has been the most rewarding time of my VFW tenure so far. Derek, not only is our Department in a more effective and efficient operational future, but the impact you've had regarding issues that are important to the membership is yeoman's work that is forever priceless. To our incoming Commander Ray Lopez, SR. Vice CDR Kimberly Napoleon, and JR. Vice CDR Reinhold Yahnka, I am excited to begin our journey of educating our Comrades and Auxiliary members about the signs of suicide and other mental health conditions that impact our daily lives.

Here are some upcoming events your Mental Health Director will be part of:

- August 3rd I will be the spotlight speaker at the Michigan Veterans Coalition meeting.

• September 16th is the Mecosta VFW Suicide Prevention Workshop.

To schedule the Mental Health or VMS Program to visit your Post or District you must fill out the proper request, which can be located on the Department Headquarters website at [www.vfwmi.org](http://www.vfwmi.org) > Resources > Forms > Request Department Officer. Mental Health materials are available, and thanks to your efforts, over 1,000 resources have been picked up since the Winter Conference. We have more bags, gun locks, PTSD information, and suicide awareness for seniors and those families struggling after a completed suicide. Many more resources will be available at the Fall Conference (September 29th-October 1st) at the Gateway Hotel in Flint.

You MATTER ALWAYS!

Remember HOPE (Helping One Person Everyday)



**WE WILL NEVER FORGET**



## ROLL CALL OF DEPARTED COMRADES

LISTED BY	POST NUMBER	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	SERVICE	WAR
<b>345 Redford</b>						
		Boomgaard, Frank		92	Korea	
		Lees, Donald W.		86	Army	
<b>422 Delton</b>						
		Hayward, William R.		97	Navy/WWII	
<b>796 Port Huron</b>						
		Crocker, David C.		80	Army/Vietnam	
<b>1519 Northville</b>						
		Brodzik, Ronald		90	Marines/Korea	
		Obidzinski, Leonard		90	Army/Korea	
<b>2053 White Cloud</b>						
		Sturgeon, Robert		72	Army/Vietnam	
<b>2144 Holland</b>						
		Huddleston, Dennis		88	Marines/Korea	
<b>2292 Edmore</b>						
		Oberst, Leo		96	Army/WWII	
<b>2998 Escanaba</b>						
		Van Drese, Clayton		90	Army/Korea	
<b>3293 Grand Ledge</b>						
		Nelson, Frank		90	Army/Korea	
		Rowland, John		82	Army/Vietnam	
<b>3314 Arcadia</b>						
		Barbera, Andrew		94	Army Air Corps	
		Edwards, George		90	Army/Korea	
<b>3672 Albion</b>						
		Mills, Harold		98	Navy/WWII	
<b>4090 Portland</b>						
		Lott, David		60	Navy/Gulf	
<b>4093 Carleton</b>						
		Calkins, Russell		78	Navy/Vietnam	
<b>4659 Shelby Township</b>						
		Chasney, Edward		100	Army/WWII	
		Gannia, Phillip		72	Army/Vietnam	
<b>6464 Fowlerville</b>						
		Bergin, Andrew		89	Navy/Korea	
		Knodle, Donald A.		96	Marines/WWII	
<b>6695 Plymouth</b>						
		Bresnahan, John		72	Navy/Vietnam	
		Overholt, Gene		99	Army/WWII	
<b>8846 Muskegon</b>						
		Groeneveld, Robert		73	Navy/Vietnam	
		Sebring, James R.		70	Air Force/Vietnam	
		Woodring, Lawrence R.		76	Army/Vietnam	
<b>9021 Warren</b>						
		Bialk, Richard		90	Army/Korea	
<b>9931 Bridgeport</b>						
		Floyd, Anthony		55	Persian Golf/GWT	



### AUXILIARY SR. VICE PRESIDENT, JANE DADY

I have a deep respect and abiding love for veterans. I often try to see how easy they are to recognize. It is as if veterans have identical tattoos that make them stand out. Looking at a crowd of people, I know which ones to approach and talk to. Usually I ask, "Which branch of the service were you in?" They always give an odd look but proudly blurt out Army, Marines, etc. Veterans are also well trained; they

don't realize it, but it's the way they carry themselves. They walk taller, prouder, and straighter than most people. They instinctively say "Sir" or "Ma'am" because military training has instilled good manners. Veterans are not shocked by anything; in difficult situations they will often display their military sense of humor. What is interesting to observe is that they will not willingly walk on grass; they will walk a mile out of their way as opposed to cutting across the grass to get to their destination faster. Veterans are also resilient, as the saying goes: "She sailed into

the storm, and when the wind did not blow her way, she adjusted her sails." But it is important to remember as well that you should not be afraid to seek counseling or a support group if your circumstances feel overwhelming. You are our nation's heroes. You risked your life, showing more bravery, selflessness, and determination than most people could ever imagine. I thank every one of you for all you have done and all you continue to do. I am only a drop in the ocean of people who care about and respect you. Stand easy. We are here for you.



### AUXILIARY SECRETARY, SANDI ONSTWEDDER

Welcome to the beginning of a whole new Auxiliary year. I am looking forward to working alongside Auxiliaries and their members to better accomplish the tasks of our organization. The Department President is going to be hosting a total of four Zoom-targeted trainings this year. The subject matter, dates, and times will

be posted by early August. We hope you will be able to join in. These trainings will not be about our chaired programs. Please plan to attend your first District Meeting this year. A School of Instruction will be held then. Official visits from all District Presidents will be different this year as they will be conducting trainings while being with your members. Our Department Fall Conference is going to be held at the Holiday Inn Gateway Center in Flint from September 27th to October 1st,

2023. Mark your calendars now so that you will be able to attend.



### AUXILIARY BUDDY POPPY & NATIONAL HOME

### PATRICK RICH

Hello everyone! I am thrilled to be your new "Buddy®" Poppy/National Home Chairman this year. As an alumni of the VFW National Home, I am happy to promote them. I do consider the National Home my home because my whole childhood was spent growing up and living there. As a child, we looked forward to Michigan Day at the National Home because it was the best. We would get to see all the Michigan VFW Post and Auxiliary Members from all around the state, and it made each of us children living at the home feel like we were celebrating with our extended family. Many Michigan VFW and Auxiliary Members came out year after year to see us and help the home in every way that they could. The

VFW National Home has flourished and grown immensely since I lived there. Yet still today, we try to encourage VFW Post and Auxiliary Members to come out and visit the home on Michigan Day. There are always activities planned for adults as well as children. I would love to see as many Michigan VFW and Auxiliary members come this year on August 6th, 2023. Take a tour of the grounds and possibly attend an open house. That simple experience will give you knowledge as you experience what we, as an organization, provide to keep the National Home the special asset it is today. There will be many activities that could use your help to ensure huge success, like fishing with the children, serving up ice

cream, and face painting. It truly ends up being a wonderful family outing. You can even bring along your friends and neighbors. The VFW National Home will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2025. Plans are underway to have many different celebrations and events throughout the entire year. Michigan should be very proud; we are fortunate to have the only VFW National Home in the country, and it's located in our own backyards. It is truly an amazing place in Michigan that is sponsored by the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliaries from all across our great nation. So put this date on your schedule: August 6th, 2023, 9:00 a.m. I hope to see you all there!

### AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIPS

### DENISE ARNOLD

Welcome to the 2023-24 Scholarship year. I am very excited to be this year's Auxiliary Chairman and to be working with VFW Chairman Mike Martin. We have some exciting changes happening within the Scholarship Program. This year's themes for the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen contests are as follows:

- VOD: "What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?"

- PP: "How Are You Inspired by America?"

It's important to get this information out early to schools, youth groups, and organizations for not only the Voice of

Democracy and Patriots Pen, but also the Patriotic Art 2D and 3D Contests. The Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen entries are due to the VFW Post by October 31st, District by November 15th, and to the Department by December 15th, 2023. Patriotic Art is due to the Auxiliary by March 31st, 2024, and to the Department Chairman by April 15th, 2024. In the Department of Michigan, we have moved the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year to be a part of our Scholarship Program. Please reach out to your schools, family, and friends and find a teacher who is

patriotic, encourages good citizenship, and promotes flag etiquette with their students. Nominate teachers from elementary, middle, or high schools. Nominations are due to a VFW Post by October 31st, 2023; the District by November 15th; and the Department by December 15th, 2023. More to come in our bulletins. The Continuing Education Scholarship is open to members, their spouses, or children over the age of 18. Its purpose is to provide financial assistance to further their education. Applications are due by February 15th, 2024. Remember, our youth are our future.



# DISTRICT COMMANDER REPORTS



## DISTRICT 5 COMMANDER - JERRY BESEAU

Hello Comrades, thank you for your trust, confidence, and support. It is truly an honor and privilege to be the Commander of the

Fighting 5th District. I will do my best to serve you honorably. Congratulations are also in order for our new Officers and Chairpersons. Along with our Posts, I believe we have a very strong team for the upcoming year.

I would like to acknowledge my primary mentors over the years: Su-jen Mauldin, Norm Mauldin, George Navarrette, and Gerald Gorski. Sharing their knowledge, experience, and wisdom has helped me move through the Chairs at Oakland County Council and the 5th District. I cannot thank you all enough!

Thank you as well to our Past Commander, Benjamin Light. You had a very good year, keeping our District in great shape! Membership at numerous Posts was 100% or better. Several Posts are vying for coveted All-State and All-American honors. Our Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teacher of the Year Programs, which are chaired by George Navarrette and Kathy Hubbard, have been very successful. Our Texas Hold'Em Fundraisers, Chaired by Su-jen and Norm Mauldin, were also terrific.

Our 2023-24 District 5 Key Programs are as follows:

1. Membership: The cornerstone of the VFW Organization. We must continue to be proactive when it comes to recruiting new members and retaining our current ones.

2. Voice of Democracy/Patriot's Pen/Teacher of the Year: Veterans working alongside America's youth and educators to instill a sense of patriotism and Americanism as well as the sacrifices that have been made for our freedom.

3. Activity and Hospital Reports: These reports verify our service providing charitable contributions to veterans and their families, active military and their families, and community members, both young and old. This information validates our Post's status as a charitable organization. It is essential for these reports to be submitted for the Post records.

Our 2023-24 District 5 Meetings and Convention are as follows:

1. 8/20/23 (Meeting): St. Clair Shores Post 1146 @ 10:00 a.m. (VOD/PP/ToY)
  - Business Session @ 1:00 p.m.
2. 12/3/23 (Meeting): Waterford Post 1008 @ 10:00 a.m. (Pearl Harbor Observed)
  - Business Session @ 1:00 p.m.
3. 2/4/24 (Meeting): Centerline Post 6756 @ 10:00 a.m. (POW/MIA Joint Membership)
  - Business Session @ 1:00 p.m.
4. 4/21/24 (Convention): Wixom Post 2269 @ 10:00 a.m.
  - Business Session @ 1:00 p.m.

I believe our 5th District has two very strong teams this year. Working together with our 5th District Auxiliary, led by Madame President Kathy Hubbard, we will have another great year!



## DISTRICT 6 COMMANDER MICHAEL WHITTUM

To Comrades of the Super 6 District, this is your new District Commander,

Michael R. Whittum Sr. I want to thank you for electing me, I'm very honored to serve. I'm new at this, so bear with me as we go through this year. I was Commander of the VFW Adams Rockey Post in Springport for three years, and I was a trustee for one year. I'm looking forward to learning and growing with you. We are all veterans striving to help other veterans and their families. Posts need to work on membership, community activities, hosting events, and youth activities. I have good Officers who are very capable: Senior Vice Clint Ward, Junior Vice Rex Murdock, and Quartermaster Dan Todd. We all want the best results for the Posts. Audits done on time and accurately, reports done, and 990s done before the deadline. I'll also try to do better on the MOV articles as we go through the year. I want to say congratulations to the new Department Officers: State Commander Ray Lopez, Senior Vice Commander Kimberly Napoleon, and Junior Vice Commander Reinold Yahnka. I hope you all have a great year!



## DISTRICT 8 COMMANDER - ROBIN BAILEY

First off, I am honored and proud to have been selected to represent all of you in the 8th District as your Commander

for a second time. I want to thank all who have supported me, and I will do the best that I can for all our members. I also wish to congratulate all of the new District Commanders and State Officers. As always, our push for this year is going to be membership. I know

everybody knows this and may be tired of hearing it, but it is the best thing that we can do for our organization. Getting new qualified members and retaining existing ones will only make us stronger as an organization. I understand that all of you are aware of the issue, and all I am doing is reiterating things to you that you may already know. If what you have been doing has not worked well to this point, you may consider trying something new in your recruitment planning process. I want everyone to know that my staff and I are available

to help you and your Post with any problems that arise or any questions you may have. If we don't have the answers for you right then, we will do research and get them back to you as soon as possible. I look forward to working with everyone at the Department, District, and Post levels this year. With all of us pulling together, I know we can make it an outstanding year!



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### DISTRICT 10 COMMANDER - RICKY YOUNG

Greetings, Comrades, Sisters, and Brothers of the tenacious 10th District. Thank you for electing me as your District 10 Commander for 2023–2024. I am looking forward to a great year working with all of you, and we are already off to a great start! The Department Adjutant/Quartermaster congratulated us on completing all tasks from last year. To start our year off on solid ground, here are some dates to keep in mind. VFW Post 822 will have a tent for Back to the Bricks in Flint, August 16–19. Also, the National Home Michigan/Ohio golf outing is August 4th, and Michigan Day at the National Home is August 6th.

Our District Meetings that are currently scheduled are listed below. Please bring a list of your Post and Auxiliary events to the Planning Meeting so we can all help spread the word. Also, just a reminder that the quarterly District Meetings include

VTS from 10:00–11:30, followed by lunch. The regular meeting begins after lunch.

- District Meeting - August 12th  
Caro VFW Post 4164  
1030 W. Caro Rd. Caro, MI 48723  
(989)673-4766
- District Meeting - November 4th  
Sandusky Post 2945  
850 S. Sandusky Rd. Sandusky, MI 48097  
(810)648-9003
- District Meeting - February 11th  
Lawrence W. Smith VFW Post 4139  
128 Daley Rd. Lapeer, MI 48446  
(810)664-9222

- District Meeting - May 11th  
TBD



### DISTRICT 11 COMMANDER TIM ARTIBEE

Greetings from the 11th District! Last year was a very productive year for the 11th District. We had two posts with All-American Honors and two with All-State Honors. Out of the two All-State Posts, Post 1075 in Harrison was the captain of the All-State team. The 11th was third in the Department for membership and had nine Posts at 100% membership. We will continue to work and grow.

**SOME SAY THEY'VE GOT YOUR BACK. WE PROVE IT**

## ★ ★ AUXILIARY DISTRICT REPORTS ★ ★

### DISTRICT 5 PRESIDENT - KATHY HUBBARD

Hello Auxiliary Sisters, Brothers, and Friends, I'm so excited for the coming year as District 5 President. I look forward to working with my partner, Jerry Beseau, as our District 5 Commander. We have been doing our best to make this coming year an informed one. Remember, at our August 20th District meeting, we will be having a 10 a.m. workshop on Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teacher of the Year entries. We want to make sure that every

Post and Auxiliary has every question answered and will have a wonderful experience with this great program for the youth in our communities. Seven years ago, I was District President for the first time, and since then, a lot has changed. But one thing is for sure: I have clear goals for this year, beginning with having all of our Auxiliaries represented at each District Meeting, making District Meetings informative by focusing on training and

making it worthwhile to spend a Sunday with us, making sure when you leave you have learned something new, keeping each meeting informative and fun at the same time, increasing attendance, and having each meeting be a nugget of knowledge for everyone. So, I look forward to seeing you or your representative on August 20th at Bruce Post #1146 at 10 a.m. for the workshop and lunch, with District Meeting following at 1 p.m.

### DISTRICT 6 PRESIDENT - TERI MONDAY

Hello, my name is Teri Monday. I'm from Monroe, MI and I have been a member of the City of Monroe VFW Auxiliary for forty-three years. I became a Life Member of our organization in 2009. I joined under my father, Von, who is a Korean War veteran. My mother and my two sisters are also Life Members of the Auxiliary, and I have always enjoyed being a part of this great organization. Recently, I had the great privilege of being elected to the Office of District 6 President for the 2023–2024

Auxiliary Year. I'm eager to work alongside all District members, while learning more about our organization as the year goes on. Here are a few of the upcoming events to look forward to:

Michigan Day at the National Home is August 6th, 2023.

VFW Camp Trotter Family Day (being held at camp) is August 20th, 2023.

Hopefully, you can plan to attend both events. Auxiliaries should always promote membership and inclusion within and

outside of our organization. Plan to mentor new members, including those that have been absent for a while, as our organization makes changes yearly. Please remember that we celebrate and honor all patriotic holidays throughout the entire year. That way, we will never forget the valiant men and women who stepped up to serve our country in the military. We will make it our goal to keep all veterans and their families our primary focus.



★ ★ **AUXILIARY DISTRICT REPORTS** ★ ★

**DISTRICT 8 PRESIDENT - BLANCHE BROWN**

I want to start by saying thank you to Diana Ward, the 2022-2023 Department of Michigan President, for your leadership this past year, and congratulations to 2023-2024 Department of Michigan President Sara Manke on your election to the presidency. District 8 Auxiliary will be having their next District meeting on August 5th, 2023, at the American Legion Boat and Canoe Club, 401 N. Park Rd., NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan, hosted by VFW #3941. The meeting will start at 12:30

p.m., and lunch will be at 11:00 a.m. The following day, on August 6th, it will be Michigan Day at the VFW National Home, which is located within our own District 8, in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. The VFW National Home provides a home and help to veterans, veteran’s families, and military children. A treasure right here in Michigan. Michigan VFW and Auxiliary members will be running activities for the residents of the Home. Fundraisers will be held, and donations in support of the Home will be

accepted. A luncheon will be available, and a short meeting will be held. Michigan and Ohio will be competing that weekend for bragging rights as to which state will be the largest donor for the Home. Go Michigan! In closing, I hope to see everyone at the Department of Michigan Fall Conference in Flint, September 28th–October 1st. There will be trainings provided by the Department Chairman, with great tools and experiences to learn from.

**DISTRICT 12 PRESIDENT - DIANA HERRICK**

District 12 is excited to announce that we have begun making plans to develop and form a unit called “Hands Across 12’s Auxiliaries”. This group of volunteers will help other Auxiliaries with dinners, burger nights, fish fries, etc., wherever extra hands are needed. I believe that this project can and will become contagious throughout our Department. Our main goal this year is to reach out to each of our Auxiliaries to provide training. It has come

to our attention that some auxiliaries are experiencing difficulties reporting issues. So, I recognize the need to necessitate a more hands-on approach to teaching our program. We have established a team of three (3) knowledgeable members who will visit each Auxiliary as many times as needed until the Auxiliary is comfortable and participates in reporting on a regular basis. We are doing many wonderful programs in every Auxiliary for our

veterans and their families, but we are not telling anyone about them. This year, we plan to see that change as we become more boisterous in communicating our vital importance to our organization! Our first District Meeting will be held on August 20th, 2023, at VFW Post #7727. I am looking forward to welcoming you all to our School of Instruction that day.

**DISTRICT 14 PRESIDENT - ANN BACKHURST**

Greetings from Ann Backhurst from Michigan District 14 in the Upper Peninsula. We would like to share our District Meeting dates, so if you would like to come and cool off in August, see snow in November, and quite possibly in April, y’all are welcome. On August 20, 2023, we will be meeting at

the VFW Post in Sault Ste. Marie, and on November 5, 2023, it will be at the Gwinn VFW Post. On April 19–20, 2024, we will travel to the VFW Post in Negaunee. An Auxiliary member in another Department who has been one of my mentors has given me a challenge, and, hopefully, the District

14 Auxiliaries will help answer the call to send ground coffee to the National Home for their monthly “Cup of Joe” event with veterans. This could be a report for your Auxiliary in Veterans and Family Support. More information will be shared by me in the future.

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

We understand the unique bond you share with other veterans of overseas conflicts because we, too, have been there. No matter which conflict called you to service, we invite you to join us as we continue to fight for all that’s good FOR VETERANS.



VFW  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

# VFW National Home Michigan Day Agenda - August 6th, 2023

## 3573 S Waverly Rd, Eaton Rapids, MI, 48827

### Family Fun & Activities

8:00am - 9:00am  
**Fishing Contest**  
 (Lake Romanis)

9:00am - 11:00am  
**Activities & Games**  
 (Community Center Lawn)

10:00am - 12:00pm  
**Ice Cream, Cotton Candy, & Popcorn**  
 (Community Center Cafe)

10:00am - 12:00pm  
**Guided People Mover Tours of Campus**  
 The Michigan Home is occupied  
 (People mover pick-up in front of Community Center Gymnasium)

10:00am - 12:00pm  
**Bingo for kids and adults**  
 (Auditorium)

**Coin Search**  
 (In sandbow area in front of Health & Education Building)

10:00am - Children 5 and under only  
 10:30 am - Children 6-8

**Pinatas**  
 (Playground in front of Health & Education Building)

10:00am - Children 6-8  
 10:30am - Children 5 and under only

11:00am - 11:30 pm  
**Bubble Balls activity**  
 (Community Center Lawn)

**\*\*Must be 57 inches tall to play\*\***

11:30am Warm Up for .1K  
 11:45am .1k Fun Run

### Program

Beginning at 12:00pm  
 (Community Center Gym)  
 Lunch to follow

**Welcome:** Executive Director, Mike Wilson

**Opening Prayer:** VFW Chaplain

**Flag Presentation:** Dept. Honor Guard

**Pledge:** Buddy Poppy Child

**National Anthem:** Audio

**Remarks:** Dept. Commander, Ray Lopez  
 Auxiliary President, Sara Manke  
 Board President, Annabelle Furgason

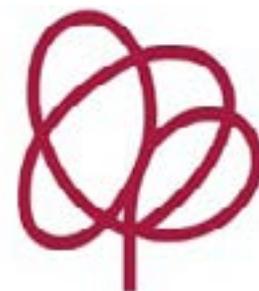
**Parade of Checks**

**Closing Remarks:** Mike Wilson

**Lunch Blessing:** Aux Chaplain

#### Menu

Hotdogs  
 Assorted Sides & Salads  
 Soft Serve Ice Cream & Drinks



V F W  
 N A T I O N A L H O M E



**DESIGNER / EDITOR  
ALYSSA LAWRENCE**

Hello all! I would like to thank you for welcoming me into the position of the MOV editor. A sincere thank you to VFW State Commander Ray Lopez and State Auxiliary President Sara Manke for trusting me with this process, and to the previous editor Stacey Roberts for helping to ensure a smooth transition.

**Next deadline = October 15, 2023**

Send articles for consideration to:  
**MOV@VFWMI.VET**

The mission of this paper is to provide 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.*

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

**CONTACT INFO UPDATE FORM**

Members, please print the form to be filled out.  
Return information is listed below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member number: \_\_\_\_\_ Post number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if changed in last two years): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently on active duty? YES \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return to:  
VFW Headquarters  
924 N Washington  
Lansing, MI 48906  
Or email to: [adjutant@vfwmi.vet](mailto:adjutant@vfwmi.vet)



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