

**98<sup>th</sup> Department Convention  
Department of Illinois  
Springfield, IL**

**Friday, June 10, 2022**

Department President Rhonda Borkgren asked everyone to rise for the posting of the POW/MIA flag by Jan Powers at 12:30 pm.

The 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention was opened by Cheryl Michel, Convention Chairman.

Good Afternoon and welcome to the 98<sup>th</sup> annual State Convention of the Department of Illinois Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. I am Convention Chairman Cheryl Michel and my Co-Chairman Susan Rolando. If at any time during this convention you need assistance please know that Susan and I will be seated to the right of the stage (your left) in the PDP section. Susan and I will also be roaming the room and you can stop us at any time to visit, answer questions, or assist in any way.

Please be courteous and turn off or silence your cell phones during the meeting. If you receive a call that you must take, please exit the room so as not to disturb those around you.

Except for a couple of programs, presentations will made on stage as we have done in the past.

There will be no Patriotic Rally again this year.

Printed program books will be distributed to those who ordered them. There are a few extras for sale on a first come first serve basis. All Auxiliary Presidents and Secretaries will receive one via email in PDF format.

The 2022-2023 t-shirts can be pre-ordered on Friday and Saturday. Those who previously ordered a polo shirt can pick them up Saturday after 12:00. If you would like to order a polo shirt please see Melanie Ecker or Tina Krueger as they are placing one last order. Please pay with cash or check only.

If for any reason you feel unwell, please visit the First Aid station in the back of the room which is manned by Tara Dillard.

It is now time to celebrate our very successful year of "Honoring Old Glory and Those Who Fight for It". We wish to thank you for all you have done and will continue to do for our Veterans. We wish you all a very enjoyable convention.

Would the Officers please retire for the Cross of Malta.

President Rhonda introduced Cheryl Michel, Convention Chairman and Susan Rolando, Co-Chairman.

Department President Rhonda Borkgren called the 98<sup>th</sup> Convention to order an asked all persons not members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary to retire.

President Borkgren explained that Dues Cards would be inspected Saturday after the lunch break prior to election of Officers and your badge will suffice until then.

Colette Bishop, Department Secretary called the Roll of Officers.

President  
Sr. Vice President

Rhonda Borkgren  
Marvie Wisniewski

Present  
Present

Jr. Vice President		Lynn Smith	Present
Secretary		Colette Bishop	Present
Treasurer		Linda Lorenz	Present
Chaplain		Cindy Watters	Present
Conductress		Diane Ahrens	Present
Guard		Danielle Krull	Absent
Chief of Staff		Paula DeDoncker	Present
Past National President		Colette Bishop	Present
Past Department Presidents			
Mildred Leff	Absent	Carolyn Gorin	Absent
Lillian Mayer	Absent	Cynthia Paris	Absent
Rosemary McMurchie	Absent	Janet Long	Present
Colette Bishop	Present	Linda Jackson	Absent
Linda Lorenz	Present	Rita Frank	Absent
Cheryl Michel	Present	Patricia Martyn	Present
Ruth Smit-Bigos	Present	Maureen Hayden	Present
Donna Walker	Absent	Jan Morrow	Present
Jo Lynn Altvatter	Present	Beverly Beyer	Absent
Diane Pencak	Present	Mercie Woolfolk	Present
Diana Rudeen	Present	Barbara Howard	Present
Samantha Schmidgall	Present	Mary Spindler	Present
Susan Parrish	Present	Billie Guthals	Present
Linda Armstrong	Present		
District 3 – President		Patricia Schoenbaum	Present
District 5 – President		Diane Ahrens	Present
District 6 – President		Diana Rudeen	Present
District 7 – President		Billie Guthals	Present
District 8 – President		Heather Pierson	Present
District 9 – President		Sarah Pfeifer	Present
District 10 – President		Lynda White	Present
District 11 – President		Susan Dorn	Present
District 12 – President		Susan Parrish	Present
District 13 – President		John Watters	Present
District 14 – President		Cheryl Miller	Present
District 15 – President		Pat Caraker	Present
District 16 – President		Irma Davis	Present
District 17 – President		Norma Janney	Present
District 18 – President		Vicki Gress	Present
District 19 – President		Mary Ellen Hollis	Present
Patriotic Instructor		Terry Adams	Present
Historian		Mary Spindler	Present
Assistant Conductress		Nancy Rieke	Present
Assistant Guard		Renee Mierop	Present
Color Bearer #1		Sheila Mysliwicz	Present
Color Bearer #2		Karen Scherer	Present

Color Bearer #3	Candance England	Present
Color Bearer #4	Laurie Sparwasser	Present
Flag Bearer	Michael Maruszak	Absent
Banner Bearer	Jan Powers	Present
Soloist	Isaac Rieke	Present

Department President Borkgren announced the following Pro Tem Officers: Linda Bopp, Flag Bearer and Mary Thomas, Banner Bearer.

Opening Services were conducted according to Ritual.

President Rhonda then asked Past National President Colette Bishop and the other National Officers in attendance to retire.

The Conductress, Assistant Conductress and the Color Team escorted Past National President Colette Bishop to the President's station where she was introduced and given a warm Illinois welcome. President Rhonda explained that our National Representative, Past National President Sandi Kriebel was not with us due to the death of a very close personal friend.

Department President Rhonda asked the Conductress, Assistant Conductress and Colors to escort our other National Officers to her station. Introduced were Billie Guthals, National Assistant Conductress and Susan Parrish, Big Ten Conference Conductress.

President Borkgren noted the next business in order was the Reading of the Minutes of the previous Convention and asked for corrections and/or additions. Colette said there were many corrections and the minutes were approved as corrected.

**Presentation of Convention Rules** - Janet Long, Chairman  
 Committee: Linda Armstrong and Cheryl Miller

Janet highlighted several items in the Rules especially that Delegate Registration closed at 10:00 am on Saturday and no Delegates will be able to register after the closing.

**It was moved by Colette Bishop and seconded by Susan Parrish to accept the Convention Rules - motion carried**

Janet thanked President Rhonda for this appointment on behalf of myself and my committee, Linda Armstrong and Cheryl Miller.

President Rhonda asked the Past Department Presidents to retire

Department Secretary Colette Bishop read the Convention Appointments.

**Event/Convention Chairman**  
**Co-Chairman**

Cheryl Michel  
 Susan Rolando

**Credentials**

**Registration Chairman**

Committee

Diana Rader

Sharon Ishmael, Bessie Bruce,

**First Aid Technicians**

Tara Dillard

**Convention Floor Rules Chairman**

Committee

Janet Long

Linda Armstrong, Cheryl Miller

**Presentation of Past Department Presidents**

**Chairman**

Committee

Marvie Wisniewski

Lynn Smith, Patricia Schoenbaum

**Presentation of Hospital Chairman, VAVS**

**Reps, Deps, Associate Reps and Deps**

**Chairman**

Committee

Mary Spindler

Jo Lynn Altvatter, Lynda White

**Presentation of Patriotic Organizations**

**Chairman**

Committee

Samantha Schmidgall

Cindy Watters, Vickie Gress

**Presentation of Gold Star Parents**

**Chairman**

Committee

Diana Rudeen

Mary Ellen Hollis, John Watters

**Memorial Address**

Paula DeDoncker

**District President of the Year**

**Chairman**

Committee

Ruth Smit-Bigos

Pat Martyn, Rosemary McMurchie

**Resolutions Chairman**

Committee

Maureen Hayden

Linda Jackson, Donna Walker

**Presentation of Flags and Banners**

**Chairman**

Committee

Diane Ahrens

Terry Adams, Nancy Rieke

**Presentation of Chief of Staff, District**

**Presidents and Deputy Chiefs of Staff**

**Chairman**

Committee

Mercie Woolfolk

Danielle Krull, Beverly Beyer

**Presentation of Department Chairmen**

**Chairman**

Diane Pencak

Committee

Barb Howard, Norma Janney

**Presentation of Auxiliary Presidents**

**Chairman**  
Committee

Billie Guthals  
Irma Davis, Sarah Pfeifer

**Presentation of 45+ Members**

**Chairman**  
Committee

Susan Parrish  
Mildred Leff, Carolyn Gorin

**Presentation of Pages: Presidents, Officers,  
Floor & Department Pages and Aide to  
National Representative**

**Chairman**  
Committee

Janice Morrow  
Lillian Mayer, Patricia Caraker and  
Heather Pierson

**Greetings to the IL VFW**

Rhonda Borkgren, Colette Bishop,  
Paula DeDoncker

**Presentation of Past Department Presidents -**

Marvie Wisniewski, Chairman  
Committee: Lynn Smith, Patricia Schoenbaum

With us were

Janet Long	Diane Pencak
Colette Bishop	Mercie Woolfolk
Linda Lorenz	Diana Rudeen
Cheryl Michel (2 terms)	Barbara Howard
Patricia Martyn	Samantha Schmidgall
Ruth Smit-Bigos	Mary Spindler
Maureen Hayden	Susan Parrish
Jan Morrow	Billie Guthals
Jo Lynn Altvatter	Linda Armstrong

Marvie had a slide presentation of all our Past Department Presidents with headlines and highlights from the year they were President.

**Communications** read by the Secretary

Secretary Colette read the announcements of candidates for National Officer (Jane Reape, President; Carla Martinez, Sr. Vice President; Brenda Bryant, Jr. Vice President; Ann Panteleakos, Treasurer; Lois Callahan, Chaplain; Donna Mills, Conductress and Joyce Bilyeu, Jeanette Garcia and Kim Harney, Guard).

President Rhonda asked the Chief of Staff, District Presidents and Deputies to assemble at the right of the stage.

**Presentation of Hospital Chairman, VAVS Representatives, Deputies and Associates and VA Hospital Administrators - Mary Spindler, Chairman**

Committee: Jo Lynn Altvatter, Lynda White

Our Hospital volunteers are some of the hardest working people in the organization.

They are known for their kind hearts and generous souls.

Most importantly, their work truly makes a difference in the lives of the veterans we serve. Volunteers keep giving back to those who gave so much for all of us.

Together, through their actions, the world is a little better place.

One Kindness, One Good Deed at a time.

Thank you for all you do.

Mary asked them to introduce themselves and tell us about their facility.

With us were Janet Long, Quincy VA Home; Gerri Anderson, LaSalle VA Home; Mercy Woolfolk and Diane Ahrens with Hines VA; Joanne York, Jesse Brown VA; Deb Guard, Illiana VA and Emma Sue Wienhoff, Jefferson Barracks.

Past National President Colette Bishop presented National Citations to the following Chairmen as they made their reports

- Americanism
- Auxiliary Community Outreach
- Buddy Poppy / National Home
- Chief of Staff / Extension
- Historian /Media Relations
- Hospital
- Legislative
- Membership
- Mentoring for Leadership
- Scholarships
- Veterans and Family Support
- Youth Activities

**Hospital** – Laura Knackstedt, Chairman

Good morning Sisters and Brothers,

I want to throw some figures at you from the hospital program.

Nearly 3800 volunteer hours by our members. Almost \$70,000 dollars spent on hospital projects. Over 600 members donated their time to the hospital program. In a year of yet again not be able to visit our Veterans in our facilities, you have found a way to get the job done. Thank you all for your hard work and support for this program.

On to the citations and awards

### **District Awards**

1. A Citation to the District Chairman who identifies and submits applications to Department for the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year Award by March 1, 2022.
2. A Citation to the District Chairman for being 100% reported in Hospital Donations and Pledges.

### **Auxiliary Awards**

1. A Citation to Auxiliaries donating to all 12 facilities the Department of Illinois sponsors. Donations must be at least \$1.00 to each facility.

**HANDED OUT AT THE C OF A IN FEBRUARY**

2. A Citation to all Auxiliaries making the required Hospital Pledge.

**HANDED OUT AT THE C OF A IN FEBRUARY**

3. Citation to every Auxiliary that provides outreach education about the Honors Escort Program. Criteria and entry form are (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to the Department Hospital Chairman by March 31, 2022.

**NONE RECEIVED**

4. A Citation and a Sewing Pin to each Auxiliary member that makes handmade items for any VA Medical Center, Illinois Veterans Home, local hospital or nursing home. Report must be submitted on the Sewing Pin Hours Report Form by March 31, 2022.

**BLENDIA WIENEN (AUX #2665 DIST 6), MELODY GERASYMCHYK (AUX #99 DIST 11 \*\*150 HOURS PINS ALSO),  
CATHERINE JAMES (AUX #2257 DIST 8 \*\*500 HOURS PIN ALSO), ESTHER WILLIAMS (AUX #6632 DIST 14  
\*\*3000 HOURS PIN ALSO)**

### **VAVS and Facility Representative Awards**

1. A Citation to VAVS, Deputy, Associate Representatives and Representatives at Illinois Veterans Homes that timely submit nine (9) monthly reports from July 2021 to March 31, 2022.

**DEBBIE GARD, MERCIE WOOLFOLK, DIANE AHRENS, JOANNE YORK, EMMA WIENHOFF**

**MARILYN CRAWFORD, GERRI ANDERSON, MAGGIE DAVIS, SANDY COLEMAN AND JANET LONG**

2. An Award and Citation to VAVS, Deputy, Associate Representatives and Representatives at Illinois Veterans Homes recruiting one or more regular volunteer by February 2022.

**NONE QUALIFIED**

3. An Award, VFW Auxiliary Pin and Citation to VAVS, Deputy, Associate Representatives and Representatives at Illinois Veterans Homes having volunteer hours as defined in the Hospital Program Guide (See Department website)

**DIANE AHRENS (150), MARILYN CRAWFORD (500 HOURS), DEBBIE GARD (2500 HOURS)**

4. An Award and a Citation to the winner of the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year Award.

**JOANNE YORK**

**Presentation of Chief of Staff, District Presidents**

**and Deputy Chiefs of Staff** - Mercie Woolfolk, Chairman

Committee: Danielle Krull, Beverly Beyer

Thank you, Madam President. Welcome Colette.

Now, that we are all on alert! The District Presidents, Chief of Staff, and Deputy Chiefs of Staff have had their IL Rescue Squad hats on all year, and it has been an exciting one. They have methodically planned how to contain fires, save many Auxiliaries from burning down, and created new ones for seeds to grow! And along the way they were "Honoring Old Glory and Those who fight for it" with everything in their fireman's toolbox. We thank all of you for a great job. We are happy to see that all of you have recovered from any injuries sustained.

First, Let's meet those brave District Presidents. Please come forward; give your name, District, and briefly tell us what fire equipment help you to keep the Auxiliaries in check.

District 3-Patricia Schoenbaum

District 6-Diane Rudeen

District 8-Heather Pierson

District 10-Lynda White

District 12-Susan Parrish

District 14-Cheryl Miller

District 16-Irma Davis

District 18-Vicky Gress

District 5-Diane Ahrens

District 7-Billie Guthals

District 9-Sarah Pfeifer

District 11-Susan Dorn

District 13-John Watters

District 15-Patricia Caraker

District 17-Norma Janney

District 19-Mary Ellen Hollis

Now, let's meet the daring Chief of Staff with her fearless Deputy Chiefs of Staff, who never hesitated to move in when smoke alarms were heard-saving Auxiliaries and establishing ones. Do you wonder what fire stories they have for us? Please come forward; give your name, position, state your fire equipment and how it benefitted the Auxiliaries and this great organization.

Chief of Staff Paula DeDoncker

Deputy Chiefs of Staff: Diane Pencak, Jo Lynn Altvatter, Laurie Lesperance, Mary Lee, and Janet Snow

Madam President, thank you for this appointment and a wonderful committee-Lynn Smith and Cindy Watters.

Finally, Madam President this is a love gift from all of us and it has been a great year!

Chief of Staff Paula DeDoncker was also presented with a gift from her District Presidents.

Department President Borkgren asked the District President of the Year Chairman and Committee to come to the podium.



**District President of the Year –** Ruth Smit-Bigos, Chairman  
Committee: Pat Martyn, Rosemary McMurchie

**Runner-up was Patricia Caraker, 15<sup>th</sup> District and John Watters, 13<sup>th</sup> District was the District President of the Year.** Ruth presented John with the Grossman-Tanner-Bishop Award (\$100.00) from the Past Department President's Club.

**Presentation of Patriotic Organizations –** Samantha Schmidgall, Chairman  
Committee: Cindy Watters, Vicky Gress

None were present

President Rhonda proceeded with the Memorial Services which were held in accordance with the Ritual with Isaac Rieke singing *The Wind Beneath My Wings*. The roll call of departed Sisters included:

Past Department Presidents

Frances Roche 1972-1973  
Nancy Adams 2004-2005

District 3	8
District 5	14
District 6	22
District 7	20
District 8	37
District 9	26
District 10	18
District 11	14
District 12	45
District 13	52
District 14	39
District 15	24
District 16	4
District 17	33
District 18	22
District 19	33
Non-District and Members at Large	22

The Memorial Address was given by Paula DeDoncker

Good Afternoon and thank you all for joining us in today's solemn ceremony honoring those who have passed before us.

25 years ago, I was asked to memorialize one of our most prominent members. Having only known her briefly I sought out more seasoned members for insight into her Auxiliary history.

I learned a lot about sweet Clara Nicholson, and I came also to learn the truest essence of our Auxiliary relationships. The amount of people reaching out in support was staggering, from across the great State of Illinois, and across the country.

It proved to me we are sisters and brothers.

And those that have gone before us, be they leaders, mentors, or everyday behind the scenes helping hands, have left us with quite the legacy.

The impact they have had on our lives is far bigger than we think. We still laugh, smile and sometimes cry over our memories. Our sadness and grief is the price we pay for having had them in our lives.

Age and time may have ceased for them, but we carry them with us always. Constant streams of support, our Auxiliary brothers and sisters lift us up as we fight through the darkness of our loss. Together we honor them through our actions. As our hearts beat faster when we take their empty chair, or our eyes seek them out in the sky asking why out of frustration, we continue their work, cultivating our Auxiliary relationships and working for our veterans.

We continue the journey. I'd like to read a poem expressing the journey.

I ask that we all honor the 433 members we have lost this year with a moment of silence to thank them for their part in our journey.

### **Life is a Journey**

Birth is a beginning  
And death a destination  
And life is a journey:  
From childhood to maturity  
And youth to age;  
From innocence to awareness  
And ignorance to knowing;  
From foolishness to discretion  
And then perhaps to wisdom.

From weakness to strength or  
From strength to weakness  
And often back again;  
From health to sickness,  
And we pray to health again.

From offence to forgiveness,  
From loneliness to love,  
From joy to gratitude,  
From pain to compassion,  
From grief to understanding,

From fear to faith.

From defeat to defeat to defeat  
Until, not looking backwards or ahead,  
We see that victory lies not  
At some high point along the way  
But in having made the journey.

Step by step,  
A sacred pilgrimage.  
Birth is a beginning  
And death a destination  
And life is a journey.

**Resolutions** - Maureen Hayden, Chairman  
Committee: Linda Jackson, Donna Walker

There were no resolutions submitted. **Maureen Hayden moved and Colette Bishop seconded to send a courtesy resolution to the hotel staff for their willingness to accommodate our needs – motion carried.**

**Buddy Poppy / National Home** - Angela Davis, Chairman

Good Morning Past National President Colette, President Rhonda, officers, delegates and members of the Department of Illinois, Auxiliary to Veterans of Foreign Wars assembled in Springfield for the Annual Convention.

Thank you, District Presidents and District Chairmen, for inspiring and supporting Auxiliaries about the “Buddy”® Poppy and the VFW National Home for Children programs at District Meetings. Thank you to the Auxiliary Presidents, Auxiliary Chairmen, and members for working so hard to get back into the schools and into the community to educate about these programs. The reports, notes and pictures received illustrate the passion you have for helping veterans and their families year-round in such fun and creative ways!

#### **DEPARTMENT AWARDS, not announced in the year end program book**

##### Auxiliary Awards

1. An Award and Citation to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of each part of the “Buddy”® Poppy / VFW National Home for Children program in their meetings. All parts of the program must include and reports due to the Department Chairman within 30 days of your meeting.

##### **District 13 Auxiliary 4226, Sarah Higginbotham**

1. An Award and Citation to Auxiliaries with the best community outreach of the “Buddy”® Poppy program through distribution, education, involvement, and publicity.

### **District 10 Auxiliary 1239**

2. A Gift and Citation to one Auxiliary in the downstate, upstate, and mid-state who have the most participation at Illinois Day at the VFW National Home.

**Downstate:**

**Upstate:**

**Mid-state:**

### District Awards

1. An Award and Citation to District Chairman with the best community outreach of the “Buddy”® Poppy program through distribution, education, involvement, and publicity.

### **District 15 Chairman Linda Jackson**

2. A monetary award and Citation to the District President with the most NEW Life Memberships to the VFW National Home.

### **District 3 President, Patricia Schoenbaum**

Thank you, President Rhonda, for the appointment and confidence in me this year.

**Officer’s and Chairman Reports** - Colette Bishop Chairman  
Committee: Cindy Paris

Colette noted that the Officer’s and Chairmen Book was available online on the Department website. She looked at all the reports and thanked everyone for a great job with their reports.

**Historian/Social Media** - Mary Spindler, Chairman

I will tell you that it was difficult to choose awards this year – I wish I could recognize everyone who did such a great job. One of the goals of this year’s program has been to more fully utilize social media, and that has happened in our Department. Additionally, the number of Auxiliaries that have a Facebook page has increased. To me, that is a successful year and I appreciate your participation in the program.

So, just let me take a moment to say thank you to all Historians and members who took that extra time to tell our story...the “Who, What, When, Where and Why” that is so important to the Historian Program.

The citations will be listed on the Department website, but I want to mention the Districts that achieved 100% reporting in the program. No doubt this was due to paying attention, and working with the Auxiliaires to encouraging reporting.

The 5 Districts 100% reported are: 3, 7, 13, 14, and 19. What a fantastic job!

1. An award to the top 3 Auxiliaries for the most outstanding Historian program. Must reach Department Historian by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. These are in no particular order.

**Aux. 3873, District 19**

**Redbud Aux. 6632, Dist. 14**

**Aux. 805, District 14 (Sharon Zinck)**

2. An award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding Facebook page. Award form required to be sent to Department Historian by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

**Coulterville Aux. 6865, District 14**

District Awards:

3. An award to the District Chairmen who publicize the Department President's Official Visit to their District (through the use of any media). Must be mailed to the Department Chairman by April 30, 2022.

**District 6, 2665**

4. An award to the District Chairman with the best coverage of the Historian/Media Relations program at District Meetings. Please send a copy to the Department Chairman after each promotion. Must be submitted to Department Chairman by April 30<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

**District 17, Mary Ann Davis**

Thank you, Rhonda, for appointing me to this position. It has been fun to be your Historian, and you have had a fantastic year all the way around.

**Americanism – Terry Adams, Chairman**

To Officers, delegates and members of the Department of Illinois, Auxiliary to Veterans of Foreign Wars assembled in Springfield for the Annual Convention. I submit the following report:

Auxiliaries Reporting # 148 = 100%

- 1) Number of Auxiliaries that conducted special programs on Patriotic holidays = 274
- 2) Number of American Flags presented (at least 2inches by 3 inches) = 14,355
- 3) Number of Auxiliaries that participated in POW/MIA programs = 87
- 4) Number of POW/MIA Flags presented= 675
- 5) Number of Certificates presented to business or citizens in recognition of their displaying the U.S. or POW/MIA Flags or other displays of American Pride=290
- 6) Number of Auxiliaries that recognized Blue Star Mother and Families; Gold Star Mothers and Families and Silver star Mothers and Families = 51
- 7) Number of Auxiliaries that conducted patriotic education in their community = 109

**DEPARTMENT AWARDS**

A.) An Award to the first-place winner in each age group in coloring contest:

Age 3

1. Gwen Yankey	St. Marys	Dist #14	Auxiliary 3553
2. Nathaniel Lovatto			Auxiliary 1377
3. Rylee Pilkington	Carthage Primary School		Auxiliary 5117

Age 4

1. Claire Wagner	St. James ECC	Dist 14	Auxiliary 7980
2. Jovi Jean	Mac Arthur ECC		Auxiliary 1921
3. Keegan Livingston		Dist # 17	Auxiliary 5762

Age 5

1. Gracelyn Geisler	Good Shepherd		Auxiliary 5691
2. Raelyn Wiegmann	Alhambra Primary School	Dist 12	Auxiliary 5694
3. Myka Bissey	FES	Dist 13	Auxiliary 3999

An Award to the 1<sup>st</sup> Place winner in each grade in poster contest

Grade 1

1. Austin Froemling	St. Marks School	Dist 14	Auxiliary 3553
2. Miguel Hernandez	Our Lady of the Snow	Dist 3	Auxiliary 2729
3. Cooper Dressler	Alhambra School	Dist 12	Auxiliary 5694

Grade 2

1. Watson Bloebaum	Rogers Elementary School	Dist 14	Auxiliary 6504
2. Emma Estabrook	New Boston Elementary School	Dist 8	Auxiliary 1571
3. Max Busacker	Highland Primary School	Dist 12	Auxiliary 5694

Grade 3

1 Gemma Schreck	Apollo Elementary	Dist 8	Auxiliary 1571
2 Elana Sheehan	Highland Elementary	Dist 12	Auxiliary 5694
3 Fiona Grogan	Rogers Elementary	Dist 14	Auxiliary 6504

Grade 4

1. Avelyn Janis	Bower Elementary	Dist 19	Auxiliary 8081
2. Julie Guglidai	St. John's the Baptist	Dist 19	Auxiliary 2801

Grade 5

1 <sup>st</sup> Place Givliana Beckett	Immanuel Lutheran	Dist 19	Auxiliary 2801
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An Award to the 1<sup>st</sup> place winner in each grade in Essay Contest

Grade 4

1. Jett Thomas	St. Joseph School	Dist 13	Auxiliary 4226
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- |                     |                           |         |                |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------|----------------|
| 2. Emma Rieckenberg | St. Marks Lutheran        | Dist 14 | Auxiliary 3553 |
| 3. Valena Bone      | Mulberry Grove Elementary | Dist 12 | Auxiliary 1377 |

Grade 5

- |                    |                                |         |                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1. Gabe White      | Coulterville Elementary School | Dist 14 | Auxiliary 6865 |
| 2. Isabella Alaniz | Kolmar School                  | Dist 3  | Auxiliary 5220 |
| 3. Jeter Duncan    | Albion Grade School            | Dist 12 |                |

B.) Award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion for the SMART/MATHER VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Program

**NONE SUBMITTED**

An Award to Auxiliary Chairman with the best POW/MIA program

**Laurie Sparwasser from the 14<sup>th</sup> District**

C.) A citation to each Auxiliary 100% reported in Americanism by December 31, 2021

Non-District: 3579

3<sup>rd</sup> District: 2729, 5079, 5220, 8821, 9773

5<sup>th</sup> District: 1293, 1307, 2298, 4308, 4600, 5040, 8043

6<sup>th</sup> District: 540, 2955, 3878, 5300, 5418, 9759

7<sup>th</sup> District: 454, 630, 886, 2608, 2857, 4826, 5520, 6750, 8350, 9789, 9961

8<sup>th</sup> District: 1422, 1571, 1921, 2301, 5083, 5117, 8078, 8890

9<sup>th</sup> District: 3883, 4079, 4668, 4999, 6634

10<sup>th</sup> District: 1239, 1379, 1756, 6408, 10302

11<sup>th</sup> District: 99, 4431, 4495, 4829, 6190, 6410, 6577

12<sup>th</sup> District: 1300, 1377, 2859, 3912, 5691, 5694

13<sup>th</sup> District: 2055, 2244, 4226, 4276, 4535, 8222, 9153

14<sup>th</sup> District: 513, 805, 1117, 2698, 3480, 3523, 6504, 6632, 6865, 7682, 7710, 7980

15<sup>th</sup> District: 1301, 2671, 3455, 3479, 5222, 7190

16<sup>th</sup> District: 311, 450, 2791, 9801

17<sup>th</sup> District: 1592, 1769, 2876, 3601, 4325, 4549, 5762, 7862

18<sup>th</sup> District: 367, 725, 1486, 5422

19<sup>th</sup> District: 503, 1197, 2164, 2801, 3873, 5768, 5815, 5819, 6791, 7446, 7452, 8081, 11018

These were all handed out at February C of A

An Award to the best District Chairman with best overall promotion of Americanism Program at a District Meeting.

**Nancy Rieke**

My Thanks to the District Presidents and their Chairmen for all their work during this year, the work of some of the individual Auxiliaries that really makes a difference. Americanism is alive and well in the Department of Illinois.

Thank you, President Rhonda, for the appointment and confidence in me this year.

### **Extension / Mentoring for Leadership** - Paula DeDoncker, Chairman

To Past National President Colette Bishop, President Rhonda Borkgren, Line Officers, and all here today, I submit the following report

The "Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary — Relationship Building for the Future" materials are vital in maintaining and growing our Auxiliaries. I'm happy to report that 142 of our Department Auxiliaries used these materials throughout the year, while 138 Auxiliaries also used other resources regarding mentoring from the National website.

Utilizing these resources led to 103 new members being reported as fulfilling the role of mentor, and 148 members being reported as returning member fulfilling this role. It brings a spirit of hope thinking that resources are being used and mentors evolving from them, so I thank you for that.

Awards will be announced for those that were qualified only.

The award for the best presentation of the Extension Program goes to their Auxiliary goes to **Doris Zobrist, District 12, Highland Auxiliary 5694**

Showing appreciation for our members is also an important key to an Auxiliaries continued success.

Throughout the year, 58 Auxiliaries were presented with Certificates of Good Health, and 219 members were recognized with a Good Job Award.

The Mentoring Award for the Auxiliary Chairman with the best presentation of the program goes to **Laurie Sparwasser, District 14, Metzger — Crooke Auxiliary 6504**, with the Award for best presentation by a District Chairman going to **Diane Hawk, District 7**.

Fulfilling the role of mentor/leader is paramount to an Auxiliaries continued success. Winning this award was **Debra Dickey, District 13, Leslie Edgar Etchason Auxiliary 3999**.

Also this year, based off the report received by the Auxiliary Chairman, Debra has also won the *Alberta G DeDoncker / Marie Lorenz Always Getting It Done Mentoring for Leadership Award*. Debra will receive a special cash award donated by the DeDoncker family in memory of two very special Auxiliary members.

I'd like to thank President Rhonda for this appointment. It's been a very rewarding journey riding along for the past several years. You have certainly made a positive impact on our Department and I am proud to be a part of your team.

### **Veterans and Family Support** – Diane Ahrens, Chairman

This year has been an honoring and humbling experience to serve as Veterans & Family Support Chairman for the Department of Illinois. To receive the reports and see what is happening within our State is encouraging.

145 Auxiliaries completed reporting in at least one part of the VFS Program. Auxiliaries have been honoring families with meals served following funerals, providing rides to doctor appointments, conducting food drives and deliveries.



Sixty-nine of our Auxiliaries have been sharing the Crisis Line Phone number to help prevent suicide and teaching the signs to look for to family and friends. These Auxiliaries will receive a citation from the Department via their District Presidents.

Auxiliaries reported in all three parts of the program (NVS, VMS, & other Veteran Support) by December 31 received citations at the February 2022 C of A.

An Award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the VFW Program presented to the Public thru media or presentation given to a civic, educational or other organization, submitted by March 31, 2022.

#### **None Qualified**

An Award to the District with the best Promotion of the VFW Program. Report submitted to the by March 31, 2022. Awards go to District 3, 13 and 19. These 3 Districts successfully had all of their Auxiliaries report in all of the Program Parts: National Veterans Service, Veterans & Military Support and Other Veterans & Family Support. Congratulations.

Thank you again for this Opportunity President Rhonda.

President Rhonda asked the 45+ Members to retire

#### **Youth Activities – Janet Kays, Chairman**

I would like to thank all of the Auxiliaries that helped educate our community youth in patriotism, loyalty, and respect for our veterans. Although there were many outstanding local programs and chairmen, I had to choose a few winners and I am going to announce those now.

1. A citation and award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Youth Activities Program goes to **Angela Davis of Batavia Overseas Auxiliary 1197 of District 19.**
2. A citation and award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Youth Activities program at a District meeting goes to **Diane Pencak of District 3.**

I want to also give special recognition to all of the Auxiliaries that had entries in the Red, White, and Blue and Illustrating America Contests. You had some very impressive entries. The winners of the Illustrating America Art Contest were

Grade Division K-2, Scarlett Mallott (age 6) from Discovery Home School Academy. This entry was submitted by Auxiliary 2164 of Wheaton. (Jenny Fox Chairman)

Grade Division 3-5 winner is Ava Barrett of Carolyn Wenz Elementary, submitted by Auxiliary 3601 of Paris.

Grade Division 6-8 winner is Laken Prisecaru of Chrisman Jr High School, also submitted by Auxiliary 3601 of Paris. (Chairman Alexis Daugherty).

There were two divisions for The Red, White, and Blue Contest.

For grades K-8, the winner was Erin Fischer, Jay Stream Middle School in Carol Stream Auxiliary 2164 of Wheaton sponsored this entry.

And Isaac Rieke, sponsored by Highland Auxiliary 5694, was the winner in the 9-12 grade division. (Nancy Rieke Chairman)

Each of these entries was forwarded to National and the winners of those contests will be announced at National Convention. (Keep your fingers crossed.)

Thank you again everyone and thank you Madam President Rhonda for an exciting and interesting year.

**Presentation of 45 year + Members -** Susan Parrish, Chairman  
Committee: Mildred Leff, Carolyn Gorin

Department President Rhonda, Past National President Colette and members here in attendance.

Behind me are our 45 year plus members, they are so tired. They have worked hard for our Auxiliaries and are still going strong. They are mentoring our new and younger members to take the reins and take our Auxiliaries to the next level. They long to work in the background and assist where needed. Their experiences are to go down in history.

At this time and in no order of years would like them to come up and introduce themselves and the number of years they have been a member. (We had a stage full of members)

Madam President, I thank you for this appointment.

### **Announcements –**

Secretary Colette announced that the drawings for the Membership Raffle would be held during lunch. Practice for the Installing Color Team will take place after the meeting today.

Flag and Banner Presentation practice will begin promptly after lunch tomorrow. Patriotic Artwork is at the back of the hall for everyone to look at.

We had a little time so President Rhonda accompanied by Past Department Presidents Billie Guthals and Linda Armstrong (backup singers) sang a version of *Help Me Rhonda* as their initiation into the Past Department President's Club. They received a rousing round of applause. We also practiced "Bobby's song".

### **Credentials Report – Bessie Bruce for Diana Rader, Chairman**

	Thursday (6/9)	Friday (6/10)
Auxiliary Presidents	30	0
Auxiliary Delegates	72	0
Department Officers	6	0

National Officers	0	0
Past Department Presidents	2	0
District Presidents	3	0
Appointed Officers	0	0
Guests	3	0
Total	116	0

Registered to Date: 116

Registration reports were given to the District President. If there are any corrections, please let Diana know.

President Rhonda announced the meeting will start at 8:30 am tomorrow morning.

The Bible was closed and the meeting recessed at 3:55 pm

### **Saturday, June 11, 2022**

President Rhonda asked everyone to take their seats and we would proceed with the 2022-2023 Membership Skit presented by Danielle Krull, Membership Chairman.

**Marvie:** Dr. Coat

**Danielle:** Dr. Coat

**PDP's:** Blazers or nice sweaters, and a clipboard (Case Managers)

**Line Officers:** Wine colored Scrub Tops and magazines (Waiting room/registration)

**Chief of Staffs:** Scrub Tops Navy Blue and a stethoscope (Nurses)

**District Presidents:** Red or Royal Blue Polo/collared shirts

Member: Help! Help! I need some Auxiliary Attention!

Danielle: Welcome to the Illinois Auxiliary Health System, ILA Health; I am your Chief Membership Doctor Dr. D., you are in the right place! Ready to meet your membership care team?

For starters meet our Chief Operating Officer Marvie. Marvie is making sure everything runs smoothly during her term as the head operations officer.

Next, let's have you register at our registration desk and our waiting room attendants will help you feel welcomed and clear communication given during your time as a member! Although you will not always have the same registration attendant We are all part of the success to ensure that interested and/or incoming members feel that sense of family and they are accepted into your Auxiliary.

All registered – Ready for your triage and member care?

Nurses come in and hand a large poster with hobbies, contact type, and talents.

We think you would benefit from one of our case managers:

They can help new or rejoined members discover their talents and applying them to our programs to keep them engaged and feeling included will keep them within your Auxiliary and thrive in aiding the future health of your Auxiliary.

Now, unless you have paid for the LIFE Term, you will get a visit from our Insurance officers YEARLY to keep up with your membership. These reminders may come July-November but are due EVERY YEAR by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

President Rhonda asked that the Bible be opened at 9:15 am

President Rhonda asked the Auxiliary Presidents to retire

**President's Pin Report** - Janie Crum, Chairman – No Report, Janie was ill at home

**Department Fundraising Report** - Annette Wooldridge, Chairman gave her report

President Rhonda asked the Conductress and the Color Team to retire and escort the Auxiliary Presidents to her station.

**Presentation of Auxiliary Presidents** - Billie Guthals, Chairmen  
Committee: Irma Davis, Sarah Pfeifer

Good morning Brothers, Sisters and friends. My Committee and I have the honor of introducing the Presidents of our Auxiliaries throughout the State of Illinois. These are the individuals who show honor to Old Glory by providing the daily leadership required to ensure that questions are answered, Programs are worked (and reported on), and that District and Department Officers are aware of activities and any concerns that would prevent Auxiliaries from being healthy.

Some are brand new to this role and some have dedicatedly served for many years. Whatever their history of service, I am proud to have them introduce themselves to you. I ask that each President come to the Podium and give their name, Auxiliary, years as President and any particular fact they would like to share about their Auxiliary.

President Rhonda, I, along with my committee of Sarah Pfeifer and Irma Davis thank you for this appointment and we appreciate the opportunity to thank all these individuals for their years of service.

President Rhonda asked the Conductress and the Color Team to retire and escort our Gold Star Mothers to her station.

**Gold Star Parents** - Diana Rudeen, Chairman

Diana introduced Betty Richards a Gold Star Mother and Life Member of Olney Memorial Auxiliary.

### Gold Star History

The term Gold Star family is a modern reference that comes from the Service Flag. These flags/banners were first flown by families during World War The flag included a blue star for every immediate family member serving in the armed forces of the United States, during any period of war or hostilities in which the armed forces of the United States were engaged. [f that loved one died, the blue star was replaced by a gold star. This allowed members of the community to know the price that the family had paid in the cause of freedom.

The United States began observing Gold Star Mother's Day on the last Sunday of September, in 1936. The Gold Star Wives was formed before the end of World War II. The Gold Star Lapel Button was established in August 1947.

Today, the nation recognizes the sacrifice that all Gold Star Family members make when a father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, or other loved one dies in service to the nation. Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day is the last Sunday of September and Gold Star Spouses Day is April 5. The strength of our nation is our Army. The strength of our Army is our Soldiers. The strength of our Soldiers is our families. The Army recognizes that no one has given more for the nation than the families of the fallen.

### The Gold Star

The star upon their service flag has changed to gleaming gold;  
It speaks no more of hope and life, as once it did of old,  
But splendidly it glistens now for every eye to see  
And softly whispers: 'Here lived one who died for liberty.

'Here once he walked and played and laughed, here oft his smile was known;  
Within these walls today are kept the toys he used to own.  
Now I am he who marched away and I am he who fell  
Of service once I spoke, but now of sacrifice I tell.  
'No richer home in all this land is there than this I grace,

For here was cradled manhood fine; within this humble place  
A soldier for the truth was born, and here, beside the door,  
A mother sits and grieves for him who shall return no more.

"Salute me, stranger, as you pass! I mark a soldier who  
Gave up the joys of living here, to dare and die for you!  
This is the home that once he knew, who fought for you and fell;  
This is a shrine of sacrifice, where faith and courage dwell.'

**Membership** – Danielle Krull, Chairman and Sarah Higginbotham, Co-Chairman

### **What a Membership year!!**

We have reached 100%+ as a Department which we have not done in many years! **Congratulations** Illinois, we worked so hard for this goal! We are proud of you Illinois, we are not done this year we still have until June 30<sup>th</sup> to continue this growth, this letter is not an end to the year but a summary of what we have done so far! Remember Membership never ends, when we quit on membership, we are quitting on the organization. National Membership Awards are in our favor this year because of how AWESOME we did, and we received most and reached them a lot earlier than the deadlines!

National Retain/Gain Goals:

- 135 Gain (New Members) by October 31<sup>st</sup> – **Reached on August 24<sup>th</sup>**
- 50% Retention by October 31<sup>st</sup> (3,010 continuous paid) – **Reached on September 22<sup>nd</sup>**
- 270 Gain (New Members) by January 31<sup>st</sup> – **Reached on October 27<sup>th</sup>**
- 75% Retention by January 31<sup>st</sup> (4,514 continuous paid) – **Reached on November 20<sup>th</sup>**
- 405 Gain (New Members) by April 30<sup>th</sup> – **Reached on December 17<sup>th</sup>**
- 90% Retention by April 30<sup>th</sup> (5,417 continuous paid) – **Reached on January 4<sup>th</sup>**
- 540 Gain (New Members) by June 30<sup>th</sup> – **Reached on February 19<sup>th</sup>**
- 98% Retention by June 30<sup>th</sup> (5,899 continuous paid). We are still trying to reach this goal but as of writing this we are almost to 95% retained and about 200 continuous members away!

As a Department Membership Team, we sent 897 Dues Reminders for a total of \$503.62 in postage. We bulked up on .55 stamps before the hike to .58, but quickly went through those and needed to replenish. Sarah and I luckily have some great little helpers at home who helped us fold and stuff these dues reminders; Big Thanks to Kayleigh, Jereme, Kennedy, and Rylee! We sent and posted 11 Updates and 1 congratulations blast as bulletins on our website and as E-Blasts, we made sure to keep everyone updated on everything going on as much as we could.

*“Strength of the team is each individual member; The strength of each member is the TEAM.”*

We posted 195 times on Facebook, I bet you “Facebookers” were sick of us! We raced District delivery trucks, went fishin’ for dues, and counted down to our 100%. Thank you everyone on social media for interacting and making this year so much fun for membership, we needed some fun after the past few years we had with covid setbacks and uncertainty.

We gave away over \$4,000.00 in Membership prizes and incentives and had a lot of fun and excitement doing it at the C of A’s along with our fun games used for membership reporting this year. We had some special appearances by our resident Dino, Shark, and Koala to get the crowd moving and excited!

A total of 131 Auxiliaries reported in Membership. Illinois Auxiliaries collected dues by phone (83), Emails (54), Letters (112), Face to Face (90), social media (21), and by other means (8); thank you for all the different ways used to retain our membership in Illinois. Dues Reminders were sent via mail by 107 Auxiliaries, email by 24 Auxiliaries, and through the reminder in Malta by 34 Auxiliaries. We had 60 Auxiliaries use Media to promote membership within their communities and we had 34 host membership trainings and drives.

Illinois total in Membership for Auxiliaries in 2021-2022; 318 Projects, 651 Total members worked membership for a total of 1,529 ½ hours and traveled a total of 1461 miles throughout the state for

membership. The Department Auxiliaries spent a total of \$4,578.59 on projects this year! This is amazing work by our membership teams.

We held many training sessions outside of our C of A's; these were done at the luncheons and visits by Sarah and I throughout the year. We enjoyed seeing everyone so excited about membership again and glad we could share some new tools and old tools that people forgot about! We had a total of 7 sessions including our C of A's. We need to continue this momentum through this year and rejuvenate and keep this growth in Illinois in future years to come. We have seen decline since 2017; let's not go back!!

*"Volunteers do not necessarily have the TIME; they just have the HEART."*

## **Department Awards**

### **For Individuals**

#### **"The Express Delivery" Award**

*New and/or rejoined members recruited from July 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022 and are received by Department Membership Chairman by June 5th, 2022 on the official form will receive the following based on members recruited:*

5 New/Rejoined members will receive \$20.00

- Candace England (5 members), Val Sudduth (7 members), Mary Cizek (7 members)
- *12 additional members did not fill out the required Department Program forms to be qualified for this award.*

10 New/Rejoined members will receive \$50.00

- John Watters (10 members), Carol Shutts (11 members)
- *3 additional members did not fill out the required Department Program forms to be qualified for this award.*

15 New/Rejoined members will receive \$75.00

- None Qualified

20 Plus New/Rejoined members will receive \$100.00

- Karen Scherer (48 members), Rhonda Borkgren (21 Members)

A VFW Auxiliary "swag bag" to one member in the Department who recruits the most NEW Life Members

- Karen Scherer (20 LIFE members)

*\*\*We had 204 Applications without recruiters, some of those I know were recruited by another member due to the forms that were sent to me for the winners. Please, please in future fill out the tops of your forms as you are missing out on prizes and commemorative pins from our National Team. These awards are exclusive to their specific years and are really cool to receive.*

## For Auxiliaries

### **"The Fast Delivery" Awards**

1. An Award of \$30.00 at each C of A to be chosen randomly from those Auxiliaries with any New Life Members or upgraded "subscription" Life Members within the time from the previous C of A.
  - **Awards were distributed at each C of A**
2. An Award of \$10.00 to each Auxiliary 75% in Membership by July 31,2021
  - **Awards were distributed at August C of A**
3. An Award of \$15.00 to each Auxiliary 85% in Membership by September 30, 2021
  - **Awards were distributed at October C of A**
4. An Award of \$25.00 to each Auxiliary 100% plus in Membership by December 31,2021
  - **Awards were distributed at February C of A**
5. A Citation to each Auxiliary reaching 100% in membership by May 31, 2022
  - Non-District: 2868, 3579
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> District: 2729, 5079, 9773
  - 5<sup>th</sup> District: 1293, 1307, 2298, 4308, 4600, 5040, 8741
  - 6<sup>th</sup> District: 2955, 5149, 5300, 5418
  - 7<sup>th</sup> District: 454, 630, 2608, 2857, 4826, 6750, 8350, 9789
  - 8<sup>th</sup> District: 1422, 2153, 2257, 5001, 5083, 5117, 8078
  - 9<sup>th</sup> District: 2470, 3883, 4079, 4668, 4835, 4999, 6634
  - 10<sup>th</sup> District: 1239, 1379, 1756, 6408
  - 11<sup>th</sup> District: 99, 4431, 6410
  - 12<sup>th</sup> District: 976, 1300, 1377, 2859, 3912, 5691, 7678
  - 13<sup>th</sup> District: 2055, 2244, 3999, 4226, 4276, 8222, 9153
  - 14<sup>th</sup> District: 805, 1117, 2698, 3480, 3553, 6504, 6632, 6865, 7682, 7710, 7980
  - 15<sup>th</sup> District: 2671, 3479, 4753, 5222, 7190, 9763
  - 16<sup>th</sup> District: 311, 450, 2791, 8141, 8283, 9801
  - 17<sup>th</sup> District: 1769, 2876, 4325, 4549, 5762, 7862, 10009
  - 18<sup>th</sup> District: 725, 1486, 5422, 5788, 6049
  - 19<sup>th</sup> District: 503, 1197, 2164, 2801, 3873, 5815, 6791, 7446, 11018

## For Districts

### **"The Speedy Delivery" Awards**

1. An award of \$100, will be shared by all Districts who reach 65% in membership by July 31,2021
  - **Awards were distributed at August C of A**
2. An Award of \$200, will be shared by all Districts who reach 75% in membership by September 30, 2021
  - **Awards were distributed at October C of A**
3. An Award of \$300, will be shared by all Districts who reach 95% in membership by December 31, 2021
  - **Awards were distributed at February C of A**



4. An Award to each District President who attains 100% plus in membership by May 31, 2022, with a special award to be presented at District President’s “Celebration”
  - **Correction to Award:** An Award to each District President who attains 97%+ in membership by February 1<sup>st</sup> with a special award to be presented at District President’s “Celebration” at VOD Weekend.
    - **Awards were distributed at February District President’s Dinner**

**Announcements** – Secretary Colette announced that you can register for the next 15 minutes – just knock on the back door of the registration area.

The Program Books for the 2022-2023 Auxiliary year will be available for pick up outside the meeting room over the lunch hour for those who ordered them. There are a few extra books available on a first come first serve basis.

A shuttle bus to the “Meet and Greet” tonight starts at 5:00 pm with the last bus at 10:00 pm back to the hotels.

Before she left, President Rhonda asked Danielle Krull to announce the Circle of Excellence Winners. President Rhonda, Past National President Colette Bishop and Chief of Staff, Paula DeDoncker then left to attend the VFW Meeting.

**Circle of Excellence** - Danielle Krull asked that the winners come to the stage to accept their awards or in their absence, the District President. Circle of Excellence bags were given to the following Auxiliaries

311	2257	4431	6634
454	2698	4549	6791
805	2729	4668	6865
1117	2801	4753	7452
1197	2876	4999	7682
1239	3455	5083	7710
1301	3480	5222	7862
1377	3523	5691	7980
1422	3553	5762	8078
1571	3873	5815	8821
1592	4079	6410	8890
1756	4226	6504	9773
2153	4325	6632	

Department Senior Vice President Marvie Wisniewski had us practice “Bobby’s Song” again and President Rhonda returned.

Senior Vice President Marvie asked the Conductress, Assistant Conductress and the Color Team to retire and escort Department President Rhonda to the altar.

Department President Rhonda was welcomed back to her Convention with a warm round of applause and Department Soloist Isaac Rieke sang a version of “*Help, Help Me Rhonda*”.

Department President Borkgren was escorted to her station where Department Secretary Colette presented her with a gift from all the Auxiliaries in the Department.

**Legislative** – Lynne Wilson, Chairman gave her report. She had no awards.

President Rhonda asked the Conductress and the Color Team to retire for the purpose of escorting Department Commander Bobby “Chief” Welch to the Altar. Department Soloist Isaac Rieke led us in a version of “*Popeye the Sailor Man*” which Bobby enjoyed.

The Commander was then escorted to the President’s Station where he was greeted with a warm welcome.

President Rhonda then asked the Conductress, Assistant Conductress with the Colors to escort the other guests to her Station.

President Rhonda asked Commander Welch to introduce those with him. Accompanying Commander Welch was Hal Roesch, Past National Commander and Phil Maughan, National Council Representative.

After all were introduced, President Rhonda asked each of them to speak.

Commander Bobby thanked us for the song, he noted he was a little worried but he really enjoyed it. He said it was great being with us and congratulated us on being 100% in membership with three new Auxiliaries. He also thanked us for helping them with their drive to reach 100%.

He noted he had good talks with Rhonda and enjoyed the hospitality of all our Districts and that the Auxiliaries made sure the Posts were doing right.

Commander Bobby asked Past National Commander Hal Roesch to say a few words. Chief Roesch said it was his honor to be with us and congratulated us on our amazing retention, being first place in National with 95% retained was an outstanding achievement. He mentioned our three new Auxiliaries and told us not to stop and keep working towards our mission of “Team Illinois”, the VFW and Auxiliary working together. He joked about Bobby’s song already being on iTunes.

Phil Maughan congratulated Rhonda on an outstanding year. He noted he had a new grandchild who is a future Auxiliary member. He thanked us for a great year and wished our Incoming Officers much luck in the new year.

Commander Bobby and President Rhonda exchanged gifts after which our guests were escorted from the room.

### **Auxiliary Community Outreach – Lynn Bankard, Chairman**

Report was read by Department President Rhonda. I want to Thank you for letting me be your Chairman for Community Outreach this year. This year we had 127 auxiliaries report which is 84.67%. We did 377 projects with 1409 Participates. We had 7961 hours of wonderful services to our communities statewide. We spent over \$51,641.00 helping our communities. We have served by feeding our First responders. Driving seniors to appointments, helping gather school supplies, Toys for Tots, Trick or Treating, working in Food Pantries, and many more wonderful things. I want to Thank all the Auxiliaries that participated in the Community Outreach. I know you will continue doing Great work into the 2022-2023 year. Thank you all for a wonderful year.

President Borkgren asked the Department Chairmen to assemble at the right of the stage

### **Scholarships - Laurie Sparwasser, Chairman**

Thank you all for making Illinois 100% reported in all parts of the Scholarship Program by April 15<sup>th</sup>. I know some auxiliaries still had difficulties getting into schools, but many of you found a way to get the information out and get entries for VOD, Patriot's Pen and Young American Creative Patriotic Art.

Young American Creative Patriotic Art - I had only 16 entries. I could have had as many as 150 – one from every Auxiliary. We need to do a better job of getting information to our high school art teachers to try to get students interested in this contest. I know they have a lot of contests that come their way, but hopefully we can get them interested in ours. Now for our winners –

1<sup>st</sup> place – from Aux. 1301, Madeline Deiters from Marion, IL. She won \$500

2<sup>nd</sup> place – from Aux. 5418, Joey Huizenga from Fulton, IL. He won \$350

3<sup>rd</sup> place – from Aux. 3873, Samantha Davidowski from Yorkville, L. She won \$150

I have pictures of all the entries in the back. These students do a great job. It is amazing the work they do.

Following are the awards for this year –

Auxiliary Award #1. A citation to each Auxiliary that participates in all four parts of the program by December 31, 2021:

**These certificates were awarded at the February C of A meeting**

Auxiliary Award #2 - A citation to each Auxiliary that donates to the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Escrow Fund:

District 3: None

District 5: Aux. 4600, 8741

District 6: None

District 7: Aux. 454, 2857  
District 8: Aux. 2153, 5083, 5117, 8078  
District 9: Aux. 3883, 4079  
District 10: Aux. 1756, 6408  
District 11: Aux. 99, 4495, 4829  
District 12: Aux. 1377, 2859, 5694  
District 13: Aux. 9153  
District 14: Aux. 6504, 6632, 7980  
District 15: Aux. 1567, 3455, 3479, 4753, 5222, 7190, 9763  
District 16: Aux. 9801  
District 17: Aux. 3601, 4549, 5762  
District 18: Aux. 367, 9545  
District 19: Aux. 503, 2801, 3873, 5768, 5819, 6791, 7446, 7452, 8081, 11018  
No District: None

Auxiliary Award #3. An Award and Citation to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Scholarship Program in the Auxiliary meeting. Reports must be received by the Department Scholarship Chairman within 30 days of the meeting and must include all four parts of the program each meeting.

**Nancy Rieke**

4. An Award and Citation to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Continuing Education Scholarship. Report must be received by the Department Scholarship Chairman within 30 days of the promotion, but no later than April 15, 2022.

**None Qualified**

District Awards

District Award #1 - A citation to the District Chairman if all auxiliaries in their District are reported in this program by December 31, 2021.

District 3  
District 7  
District 8  
District 9  
District 13  
District 14  
District 19

District Award #2 - A citation to the District Chairman if all Auxiliaries in their District are reported in all four parts of the Scholarship Program by April 15, 2022.

**All Districts Qualified**

3. An award and a citation to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Continuing Education Scholarship. Report must be received by the Department Scholarship Chairman by March 31, 2022.

**None Qualified**

4. An award and citation to the District Chairman with the best promotion and best idea for raising money and raising the most money for the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Escrow Fund. Report must be received by the Department Scholarship Chairman by March 31, 2022.

**None Qualified**

National Awards

Award #1 - Citation to every Auxiliary that promotes the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Scholarships Chairman by March 31, 2022.

I was extremely disappointed that I did not receive any entries for this award. I needed the form completed and sent to me by March 31, 2022. I had none to send on to National.

Thank you all again for a great year. Thank you, Rhonda, for this appointment. It was great working with you this year.

**Presentation of Department Chairmen** – Diane Pencak, Chairman  
Committee: Barb Howard, Norma Janney

Before Diane started her presentation all the Chairmen came up on the stage.

It is my honor, with my Committee, to present to you our Department Chairmen.

This bunch of individuals have gone above and beyond this year.

These Chairmen promoted their programs in many different ways. Information was available on our state website, sent thru bulletins, phone calls made, eblasts were sent, challenges were created.

No matter what type of weather, the program questions were answered and reporting was completed.

Let's have each Chairman introduce themselves and give them a well-deserved Thank you.

Diane then asked her Committee to come forward and introduce themselves.

Thank you President Rhonda for this appointment.

President Rhonda asked the Pages to come to her station.

**Presentation of Pages-** Janice Morrow, Chairman  
Committee: Lillian Mayer, Patricia Caraker, Heather Pierson

Jan Morrow presented the Pages and asked them to introduce themselves and tell us who they were a Page for.

The Bible was closed and the meeting recessed for lunch at 11:25 am to reconvene at 1:20 pm. The Flag and Banner Presentation will start at 1:00 pm

President Rhonda asked everyone participating in the Flag and Banner Presentation to retire.

**Flag and Banner Presentation -** Diane Ahrens, Chairman  
Committee: Nancy Rieke, Terry Adams

Diane Ahrens, Conductress conducted the Flag and Banner Presentation with the District Presidents and their Flag and Banner being introduced and any Past Department Presidents in their District. Terry Adams, Patriotic Instructor read a poem.

President Borkgren asked the Floor Officers to assemble at the right of the stage

**Presentation of Floor Officers -** Linda Lorenz, Chairman  
Committee: Susan Rolando, Cindy Paris

Linda asked the Floor Officers to join her on the stage.

Our Department Floor Officers are the backbone of so many things at these conventions. Without them, our convention would not be the same. I am going to ask them to introduce themselves as we recognize these individuals and their contributions.

The Conductress, Assistant Conductress and the Color team keep everything moving. They start the meeting, leading us in the Cross of Malta, bring in our guests and make the Memorial Service so much more meaningful.

Our Department Chaplain has a solemn job. She leads our Memorial Service and recognizes the death of each Auxiliary member.

Our Patriotic Instructor is there to bring in our Flag and remind us to teach patriotism throughout our communities.

Our Historian documents everything in pictures from our meeting and fin events, including the National President's visit.

Our Soloist adds so much to our meetings starting with the National Anthem, the Memorial Service and so much more. We are so proud to have this young man with us.

The Department Guard and Assistant Guard keep order at the door and announce our guests. They are the first people that you will see as you enter the meeting room.

President Rhonda introduced our National Representative, Past National President Colette Bishop and dispensed with reading her bio. Colette was given a warm welcome and President Rhonda invited her to say a few words.

As our National Representative, Colette reviewed the talking points she received from National. And mentioned National Convention in July.

Colette said that we had a nice meeting and that Rhonda did a great job!

She mentioned that no one knows floor work anymore because our Auxiliaries and Districts don't do floor work so our members don't have the opportunity to learn it the way we had in the past.

She then asked us think about who we were voting for in the elections and why.

Colette congratulated Marvie and wished her a successful year.

President Rhonda proceeded with her "Farewell Speech"

It's been a great year. At the beginning of the year I had meetings with all the line officers and said this is what I want to do, what do you think. Everyone agreed that it would be great to start off a Circle of Excellence for our own state. Here we are after the first year and 51 of our Auxiliaries are in the Circle of Excellence. I said and meant that, I didn't think we would do very good the first year, and you all proved me wrong. Here we are 100% for the first time since Colette was National President. The dynamic Duo did a great job on membership and so did all of you! I can't begin to tell you how proud I am of the job you did! Our Auxiliaries are amazing. You came out of Covid, and hit the road running! I can't tell you what it means that we were number one in the nation in member retention all year! That means we are keeping our members instead of them joining and then quitting! Let's keep that going!

Our Line officers, chairman, and District Presidents, did a great job of helping our Auxiliaries. That's why we're here, to help our Auxiliaries and that's what we did! We saved a few that we were told were done. We lost 4 that we just couldn't save. Then we got 3 new Auxiliaries. Hopefully we will continue to work on strengthening our membership and growing our great organization.

I want to thank my Auxiliary and my District for all you have done for me in the past 6 years. I couldn't have done it without you.

Let's continue what we started and make Marvie's year better than this year has been! That's what I feel it is all about. We should work to leave things better than we got them. Thank you everyone for all your hard work and good luck Marvie!

Secretary Colette presented Rhonda with her gift from the Auxiliaries.

**Final Credentials Report** – Diana Rader, Chairman

Saturday (6/11)

Auxiliary Presidents	6
Auxiliary Delegates	0
Department Officers	0
National Officers	1
Past Department Presidents	1
District Presidents	3
Appointed Officers	0
Guests	0
Total	11

Auxiliary Presidents	36
Auxiliary Delegates	72
Department Officers	6
National Officers	1
Past Department Presidents	3
District Presidents	6
Appointed Officers	0
Guests	3
Total Registration	124

TOTAL VOTING STRENGTH 381

NEEDED TO ELECT 191

TOTAL NUMBER REGISTERED 124

**It was moved by Linda Lorenz and seconded by Lynn Smith to accept the Credentials Report – motion carried.**

President Rhonda announced the Nomination of Officers. The Judge is Laura Knackstedt and the tellers are Heather Pierson and Renee Mierop.

Department President Rhonda announced nominations were open for the **Office of President.**

**Marvie Wisniewski** was nominated by Melanie Ecker (Tina Krueger read her nomination). Marvie accepted and was elected Department President by Acclamation.

Department President Rhonda announced were open for the **Office of Sr. Vice President.**

**Lynn Smith** was nominated by Jo Lynn Altvatter. Lynn accepted and was elected Department Sr. Vice President by Acclamation.



Department President Rhonda announced were open for the **Office of Jr. Vice President.**

**Cindy Watters** was nominated by John Watters. Cindy accepted and was elected Department Jr. Vice President by Acclamation.

Department President Rhonda announced nominations were open for the **Office of Treasurer.**

**Linda Lorenz** was nominated by Mercy Woolfolk. Linda accepted and was elected Department Treasurer by Acclamation.

Department President Rhonda announced nominations were open for the **Office of Chaplain.**

**Diane Ahrens** was nominated by Kate Makey. Diane accepted and was elected Department Chaplain by Acclamation.

Department President Rhonda announced nominations were open for the **Office of Conductress.**

**Danielle Krull** was nominated by Ruth Smit-Bigos. Danielle accepted and was elected Department Conductress by Acclamation.

Department President Rhonda announced nominations were open for the **Office of Guard**

**Terry Adams** was nominated by Maureen Hayden.

**Annette Wooldridge** was nominated by Nancy Spraker joined by Diane Pencak and Diana Rudeen. Diane Pencak spoke to Annette's qualifications.

After Diane Pencak spoke Linda Lorenz spoke to Terry's qualifications.

President Rhonda asked for the Bible to be closed for a short recess to caucus. The Bible was then reopened to continue with our Election.

During the Election for Guard, Annette Wooldridge conceded and President Rhonda announced **Terry Adams** was elected Department Guard.

President Rhonda thanked the Judge and Tellers for their hard work and dismissed them.

President Rhonda asked Marvie to announce her 2021-2022 appointments.

**2022-2023 DEPARTMENT APPOINTED OFFICERS**

<b><u>OFFICER</u></b>	<b><u>NAME</u></b>
<b>SECRETARY</b>	Tammy Napier
<b>CHIEF OF STAFF</b>	Paula DeDoncker
<b>DEPUTY CHIEFS OF STAFF</b>	Mary Lee

	Jo Lynn Altvatter
	Rhonda Borkgren
	Mercie Woolfolk
	Ruth Smit-Bigos
<b>ASST. SECRETARY</b>	Susan Rolando
<b>ASST. TREASURER</b>	Angela Davis
<b>PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR</b>	Janet Kays
<b>HISTORIAN / MEDIA RELATIONS</b>	Denita Ricci
<b>ASST. GUARD</b>	Iolanthia "Lynn" Wilson
<b>ASST. CONDUCTRESS</b>	Nancy Rieke
<b>COLOR BEARER #1</b>	Karen Scherer
<b>COLOR BEARER #2</b>	Rae Kipper
<b>COLOR BEARER #3</b>	Diane Hawk
<b>COLOR BEARER #4</b>	Donna Simon
<b>FLAG BEARER</b>	Brenda Wilson
<b>BANNER BEARER</b>	Mary Thomas
<b>SOLOIST</b>	Isaac Rieke
<b>MUSICIAN</b>	
<b>POW-MIA BEARER</b>	Marilyn Cox
<b>DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN</b>	
<b>REPORTS COORDINATOR</b>	Susan Rolando
<b>AMERICANISM</b>	Janet Kays
<b>AUXILIARY OUTREACH</b>	Cheryl Miller
<b>BUDDY POPPY / VFW NATIONAL HOME</b>	Sarah Higginbotham
<b>EXTENSION &amp; REVITALIZATION</b>	Paula DeDoncker
<b>GRAVES REGISTRATION</b>	Diane Ahrens
<b>HOSPITAL</b>	Laura Knackstedt
<b>LEGISLATIVE</b>	Lois Moore
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	Danielle Krull
<b>MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP</b>	Paula DeDoncker
<b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b>	Laurie Sparwasser
<b>VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT</b>	Jillian Jans
<b>YOUTH ACTIVITIES</b>	Barbara Sweger
<b>PRESIDENT'S PINS AND SHIRTS</b>	
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	Tina Krueger
<b>CO-CHAIRMAN</b>	Melanie Ecker
<b>FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE</b>	Laurie Lesperance
	Rosie Holguin

<b>EVENTS COORDINATOR</b>	Cheryl Michel
<b>WEBMASTER</b>	Colette Bishop
<b>DISTRICT PRESIDENT OF THE YEAR</b>	
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	Billie Guthals
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Jo Lynn Altvatter
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Patricia Martyn
<b>AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	Diane Ahrens
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Danielle Krull
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Terry Adams
<b>BUDGET COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	Diane Pencak
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Marvie Wisniewski
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Lynn Smith
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Cindy Watters
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Tammy Napier
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Linda Lorenz
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Paula DeDoncker
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Colette Bishop
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Rhonda Borkgren
<b>VAVS REPRESENTATIVES AND DEPUTIES AND VAVS ASSOCIATED REPRESENTATIVES AND DEPUTIES</b>	
<b>VA ILLIANA MEDICAL CENTER</b>	Deborah Gard
<b>Honorary Representative</b>	Gloria Nelson
<b>EDWARD HINES JR. VA HOSPITAL</b>	
	Mercie Woolfolk
	Diane Ahrens
<b>Honorary Representative</b>	Rose Lobb
<b>JESSE BROWN VA MEDICAL CENTER</b>	
	Joanne York
<b>MARION VA MEDICAL CENTER</b>	
	Lori Crites
	Marcia English
	Karen Robinson
	JoAnn Webb
<b>CAPTAIN JAMES A. LOVELL FEDERAL HEALTH CARE CENTER</b>	
	Judy Patterson
<b>JEFFERSON BARRACK DIVISION ST. LOUIS VA MEDICAL CENTER</b>	
	Emma Sue Crook-Wienhoff

	Sandra Sauget
<b>ILLINOIS VETERANS HOME AT LASALLE</b>	Gerri Anderson
	Linda Patterson
<b>ILLINOIS VETERANS HOME AT ANNA</b>	Marilyn Crawford
<b>ILLINOIS VETERANS HOME AT MANTENO</b>	Margaret Davis
.	Sandy Coleman
<b>ILLINOIS VETERANS HOME AT QUINCY</b>	Janet Long
<b>ILLINOIS VETERANS HOME AT CHICAGO</b>	Eleanore " Chi Chi" Skopek

President Rhonda announced a break before the installation and asked the Chaplain to close the Bible.

President Rhonda asked for the Bible to be opened and asked the Conductress with the Colors to retire to escort the Mistress of Ceremonies to her Station. After introducing Tina Krueger, she turned over the command to Install the Officers of the Department.

Tina welcomed all and proceeded with the Installation. Tina asked the Conductress and Assistant Conductress with the Color Team to retire and escort the Installing Officer to her station.

Tina welcomed and introduced Past Department President Diane Pencak, Installing Officer and turned the command of the Department over to Diane.

Diane thanked Tina and proceeded with the Installation of Officers. Diane requested that the Conductress and Assistant Conductress escort the Officers to the Altar and Colette Bishop, Department Secretary read the list of Officers to be installed.

The following Officers were Installed into Office for the 2022-2023 term

President	Marvie Wisniewski
Sr. Vice President	Lynn Smith
Jr. Vice President	Cindy Watters
Treasurer	Linda Lorenz
Chaplain	Diane Ahrens
Conductress	Danielle Krull
Guard	Terry Adams
Chief of Staff	Paula DeDoncker
Jr. Past Department President	Rhonda Borkgren
3 <sup>rd</sup> District President	Joanne York
5 <sup>th</sup> District President	Katie Makey

6 <sup>th</sup> District President	Diana Rudeen
7 <sup>th</sup> District President	Diane Hawk
8 <sup>th</sup> District President	Rhonda Borkgren
9 <sup>th</sup> District President	Sarah Pfeifer
10 <sup>th</sup> District President	Carol Shutts
11 <sup>th</sup> District President	Susan Dorn
12 <sup>th</sup> District President	Susan Parrish
13 <sup>th</sup> District President	John Watters
14 <sup>th</sup> District President	Kathryn Rowold
15 <sup>th</sup> District President	Patricia Caraker
16 <sup>th</sup> District President	Irma Davis
17 <sup>th</sup> District President	Norma Janney
18 <sup>th</sup> District President	Jennifer Piehl
19 <sup>th</sup> District President	Jan Bakes
Historian	Denita Ricci
Assistant Conductress	Nancy Rieke
Assistant Guard	Iolanthia "Lynn" Wilson
Assistant Secretary	Susan Rolando
Assistant Treasurer	Angela Davis
Color Bearer #1	Karen Scherer
Color Bearer #2	Rae Kipper
Color Bearer #3	Diane Hawk
Color Bearer #4	Donna Simon

Diane requested the Installing Conductress to escort President Marvie to her Station and the other Officers to their stations. Diane congratulated Marvie and thanked her for asking her to be her Installing Officer.

Mistress of Ceremonies, Tina congratulated Marvie and asked her say a few words.

Marvie said she was honored to serve as Department President for the upcoming year. She thanked Diane for being her Installing Officer and Tina for reading Melanie Ecker's nomination and for being her Mistress of Ceremonies. She proceeded to thank the members of her Auxiliary and Post, #5079 Chicago Bridgeport and the 3<sup>rd</sup> District for their support and all they have done for her.

She noted that she is looking forward to working with Commander Edwards for the "Team Illinois" year promoting Posts and Auxiliaries working together for our Veterans.

Marvie congratulated President Borkgren on an outstanding year.

After Marvie's remarks there were a number of presentations.

The Mistress of Ceremonies requested the Installing Conductress escort out-going Department President Rhonda to the Altar and to seek out Paula DeDoncker for the purpose of a presentation. Paula presented Rhonda with her Past Department President's pin and said she was very proud of her after which "Please Mr. Postman" was played. President Rhonda was then escorted back to the President's Station.

The Mistress of Ceremonies Tina asked the 2021-2022 Officers to resume their stations and turned the command of the Convention back to retiring President Rhonda for the closing ceremonies.

Past Department President Cheryl Michel presented Rhonda with a check from the Past Department President's Club for President Rhonda's special project.

Closing ceremonies were conducted and the Convention adjourned at 3:50 pm to reconvene at the call of the Department President.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jo Lynn Altvatter  
Department Assistant Secretary