

# BULLETIN – JANUARY 2024



**BILLIE GUTHALS, CHAIRMAN**

## **VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT**

First of all, I want to say a BIG Thank You to all auxiliaries who worked with me to ensure we were 100% reported by the end of December. Actually, we beat that deadline and were fully reported by December 10<sup>th</sup>! Great job all!! Now on to even bigger and better things for our veterans in 2024.

A new year is the time for resolutions to become a better version of ourselves. Will they last beyond a few weeks? I'll check back on that one. 😊 How about helping our auxiliaries become better, become stronger? Are there resolutions you can make to help your auxiliary become more aligned, or stay aligned, with the mission of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliary?

As we take time to look back and appreciate the opportunities we have had to serve our veterans, let's also look forward to seeing what we can add to our programs. Here are some things that other auxiliaries have participated in. This may give you ideas on how you can expand your veteran support and outreach in 2024.

- **Donations to:**
  - Maui Fire Fund
  - Operation Die Hard
  - Veterans & Military Support Program
  - National Veterans Service Program
  - Or other Veterans focused programs in your area
- **Creating awareness related to military suicides by:**
  - Discussing in your meetings
  - Purchasing suicide awareness pins from the VFW and distributing them to community members
  - Ensuring everyone is aware of the Veterans Crisis Line (988, press 1) or text to 838255.
- **Assisting with funerals for veterans**, as this may be our last way to show respect and honor to the veteran and their family.
  - Preparing a meal
  - Sending a card
  - Serving on honorary color team
- **Fund raising for veterans projects** as a way to increase awareness of needs and to provide helpful funds

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- **Volunteering** at a booth taking collections for veterans related projects or helping at a veteran Stand Down in your area.
- **Providing transportation to:**
  - VA facilities
  - Doctors
  - Other places where veterans need to go
- **Donating food to a local food pantry** that service area veterans or providing meals to veterans you know are in need.

These are just a few ways that others have reported helping veterans in Illinois. I encourage you to take a step outside of your comfort zone this new year and make a resolution to improve the lives of veterans and their families this year.

I wish you all a safe, happy, and healthy New Year!