



District 5 – President		Katie Makey	Absent
District 6 – President		Diana Rudeen	Present
District 7 – President		Diane Hawk	Present
District 8 – President		Rhonda Borkgren	Present
District 9 – President		Sarah Pfeifer	Present
District 10 – President		Carol Shutts	Present
District 11 – President		Jennifer Hunter	Present
District 12 – President		Doris Zobrist	Present
District 13 – President		John Watters	Present
District 14 – President		Kathryn Rowold	Present
District 15 – President		Patricia Caraker	Present
District 16 – President		Irma Davis	Present
District 17 – President		Norma Janney	Present
District 18 – President		Jennifer Piehl	Present
District 19 – President		Jan Bakes	Present
Past National President		Colette Bishop	Absent
Past Department Presidents			
Carolyn Gorin	Absent	Lillian Mayer	Absent
Cynthia Paris	Absent	Rosemary McMurchie	Absent
Janet Long	Present	Colette Bishop	Absent
Linda Jackson	Absent	Linda Lorenz	Present
Rita Frank	Absent	Cheryl Michel	Present
Patricia Martyn	Present	Ruth Smit-Bigos	Absent
Maureen Hayden	Present	Donna Walker	Absent
Jan Morrow	Absent	Jo Lynn Altvatter	Present
Beverly Beyer	Absent	Diane Pencak	Present
Mercie Woolfolk	Present	Diana Rudeen	Present
Barbara Howard	Present	Samantha Schmidgall	Absent
Mary Spindler	Absent	Susan Parrish	Present
Billie Guthals	Present	Linda Armstrong	Absent
Rhonda Borkgren	Present		
Patriotic Instructor		Janet Kays	Present
Historian		Denita Ricci	Present
Assistant Conductress		Nancy Rieke	Present
Assistant Guard		Lolanthia “Lynn” Wilson	Present
Color Bearer #1		Karen Scherer	Present
Color Bearer #2		Rae Kipper	Present
Color Bearer #3		Diane Hawk	Present
Color Bearer #4		Donna Simon	Present
Flag Bearer		Brenda wilson	Present
Banner Bearer		Mary Thomas	Present
POW-MIA Bearer		Marilyn Cox	Present
Assistant Secretary		Susan Rolando	Present
Soloist		Isaac Rieke	Present

Pro-Tem: District 5 Sr. Vice President Tracy Trendle

Opening ceremonies were conducted according to the Ritual; after which President Marvie declared the convention open for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it

President Marvie asked our National Representative, Past National President Dixie Hild to retire to the

back of the room.

The Conductress, Assistant Conductress and the Color Team escorted our National Representative Dixie Hild to the President's station where she was introduced and given a warm Illinois welcome.

National Representative Dixie commented on how beautiful the Flag and Banner presentation was and how she is looking forward to having a wonderful time at our convention.

President Marvie noted the next business in order was the Reading of the Minutes of the previous Convention. They have been posted and emailed. When asked if there were any corrections to the minutes, none were heard. Therefore, the minutes will stand approved as written.

**Presentation of Convention Rules: Chairmen: Colette Bishop  
Committee: Rhonda Borkgren, John Waters**

Madam Department President, Madam Past National President, all members, delegates, everyone. We have no rule changes from last year. Everything has stayed the same. The Committee did want to add a rule to the Convention Rules that every time your phone goes off, you are to pay \$10 and it would go to the National Home Playground Project.

**MOTION: Rhonda then moved that we accept the Convention Rules as they are along with the new rule being added that when a person's phone goes off, they are to pay \$10 to go towards the National Home Playground Project; seconded by John Watters; there was no discussion; Motion Carried.**

**Resolutions Chairman: Janet Long  
Committee: Linda Armstrong, Donna Walker**

Good Afternoon Past National President Dixie Hild. Welcome to Illinois. Madam President Marvie, Officers, Delegates and members here assembled.

There were no resolutions submitted; however, Chairman Janet have a courtesy resolution that reads:

Whereas, the City of Springfield, Illinois, the Wyndum Hotel, the Abraham Lincoln Hotel have provided many courtesies to this Convention and have made many efforts to ensure comfortable and successful Convention.

Be it resolved that the Department of Illinois, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary express it's appreciation for all the courtesies and efforts.

And be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Senior Catering Manager at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Amber Payone, and the Mayor of the City of Springfield, Ms. DeVerger.

Submitted June 9, 2023 by the 2022-2023 Resolution Committee and the Department of Illinois Convention.

Chairman: Janet Long  
Member: Donna Walker  
Member: Linda Armstrong.

**MOTION: Chairman Janet then moved that we accept this resolution; seconded by Sr. Vice**

**President Lynn; there was no discussion; Motion Carried**

Chairman Janet thanked President Marvie for the appointment and for her committee.

President Marvie asked the Past Department Presidents to Retire to the outer hallway.

**Announcement of Convention Appointments** by Assistant Secretary Susan Rolando:

**Events/Convention**

Chairman

Co-Chairman

Cheryl Michel Convention

Diane Pencak

**Recorder of Minutes**

Susan Rolando

**Credentials & Registration**

Chairman

Committee

Diana Rader

Bessie Bruce

Kathy Cumbee

Sharon Ishmael

**First Aid Technician**

Pam Wolf

**Presentation of Flag and Banner Chairman**

Committee

Danielle Krull

Nancy Rieke

Jennifer Piehl

**Convention Rules Chairman**

Committee

Colette Bishop

Rhonda Borkgren

John Watters

**Resolutions**

Chairman

Committee

Janet Long

Linda Armstrong

Donna Walker

**Presentation of Past Department Presidents**

Chairman

Committee

Lynn Smith

Cindy Watters

Norma Janney

**Presentation of 45+ Year Members**

Chairman

Committee

Mercy Woolfolk

Samantha Schmidgall

Patricia Caraker

**Presentation of Chief of Staff, District Presidents  
& Deputy Chiefs of Staff**

Chairman

Committee

Barb Howard

Maureen Hayden

Terry Adams

**District President of the Year**

Chairman

Committee

Billie Guthals

Jo Lynn Altvatter

Patricia Martyn

**Presentation of Hospital Chairman,**

**VAVS Representatives and Deputies**

Chairman  
Committee

Susan Parrish  
Diane Hawk  
Sarah Pfeifer

**Presentation of Gold Star Families**

Chairman  
Committee

Diana Rudeen  
Irma Davis  
Doris Zobrist

**Memorial Address**

**Officer and Chairmen’s Reports**

Chairman  
Committee

Paula DeDoncker

Ruth Smit-Bigos  
Katie Makey

**Presentation of Department Chairmen**

Chairman  
Committee

Diane Pencak  
Rosemary McMurchie  
Jennifer Hunter

**Presentation of Department Floor Officers, Pages,  
and Aide to the National Representative**

Chairman  
Committee

Jo Lynn Altvatter  
Lillian Mayer  
Jan Bakes

**Presentation of 2023-24 Auxiliary Presidents**

Chairman  
Committee

Mary Spindler  
Kathryn Rowold  
Carol Shutts

**Greetings to the VFW Department**

President  
National Representative  
Past National President  
Department Chief of Staff  
Chairman  
Co-Chairman

Marvie Wisniewski  
Dixie Hild  
Colette Bishop

**Events/Convention**

Cheryl Michel Convention  
Diane Pencak

**Recorder of Minutes**

Susan Rolando

**Credentials & Registration**

Chairman  
Committee

Diana Rader  
Bessie Bruce  
Kathy Cumbee  
Sharon Ishmael

**First Aid Technician**

Pam Wolf

**Presentation of Flag and Banner Chairman**

Committee

Danielle Krull  
Nancy Rieke  
Jennifer Piehl

**Convention Rules Chairman**

Committee

Colette Bishop  
Rhonda Borkgren  
John Watters

**Resolutions**

Chairman  
Committee

Janet Long  
Linda Armstrong  
Donna Walker

**Presentation of Past Department Presidents**

Chairman  
Committee

Lynn Smith  
Cindy Watters  
Norma Janney

**Presentation of 45+ Year Members**

Chairman  
Committee

Mercy Woolfolk  
Samantha Schmidgall  
Patricia Caraker

**Presentation of Chief of Staff, District Presidents  
& Deputy Chiefs of Staff**

Chairman  
Committee

Barb Howard  
Maureen Hayden  
Terry Adams

**District President of the Year**

Chairman  
Committee

Billie Guthals  
Jo Lynn Altvatter  
Patricia Martyn

**Presentation of Hospital Chairman,  
VAWS Representatives and Deputies**

Chairman  
Committee

Susan Parrish  
Diane Hawk  
Sarah Pfeifer

**Presentation of Gold Star Families**

Chairman  
Committee

Diana Rudeen  
Irma Davis  
Doris Zobrist

**Memorial Address**

**Officer and Chairmen's Reports**

Chairman  
Committee

Paula DeDoncker

Ruth Smit-Bigos  
Katie Makey

**Presentation of Department Chairmen**

Chairman  
Committee

Diane Pencak  
Rosemary McMurchie  
Jennifer Hunter

**Presentation of Department Floor Officers, Pages,  
and Aide to the National Representative**

Chairman  
Committee

Jo Lynn Altvatter  
Lillian Mayer  
Jan Bakes

**Presentation of 2023-24 Auxiliary Presidents**

Chairman  
Committee

Mary Spindler  
Kathryn Rowold

**Greetings to the VFW Department**

President	Marvie Wisniewski
National Representative	Dixie Hild
Past National President	Colette Bishop
Department Chief of Staff	Paula DeDoncker

President Marvie asked the Conductress, Assistant Conductors with the Colors were asked to retire and escort the Past Department Presidents to her station.

**Presentation of Past Department Presidents: Chairman: Lynn Smith  
Committee: Cindy Watters, Norma Janney**

Chairman Lynn welcomed National Representative Dixie to the Department of Illinois. She had the honor to present the Past Department Presidents, who have led our state to many victories. They are still working even though their year is complete. They are like the energizer bunny. We turn to them for guidance, mentoring and moral support. What can be said, Thank you for all the work you are doing and will keep on doing.”

The Past Department Presidents then introduced themselves and stated what year they were president.

Janet Long	1996-1997	Diane Pencak	2011-2012
Linda Lorenz	1999 - 2000	Mercie Woolfolk	2013-2014
Cheryl Michel	2002-2003 & 2012-2013	Diana Rudeen	2014-2015
Pat Martyn	2003-2004	Barb Howard	2015-2016
Maureen Hayden	2006-2007	Sue Parrish	2018-2019
Jo Lynn Altvatter	2009-2010	Billie Guthals	2019-2020
Beverly Beyer	2010-2011	Rhonda Borkgren	2021-2022

Chairman Lynn thanked President Marvie for this appointment and for her committee, Jr. Vice President Cindy Watters and 17<sup>th</sup> District President Norma Janney.

The 45+ members were asked to step to the right of the stage.

**Presentation of 45+ Members: Chairman: Mercie Woolfolk  
Committee: Samantha Schmidgall, Patricia Caraker**

We have some proud members here on the stage so let’s give them a big round of applause. Before these 30 45+ members introduce themselves, I would like to share some facts with you about these dependable, dedicated team members.

I asked the Districts and Auxiliaries to give me how many 45+ members they have. Some did and some did not. However, I was able to trace to a total of 434 out there in our Organization of 45+ and there are probably many more. These ladies are worth their time. What they have continued to do is encourage us and we love that. Many of these ladies probably had the pleasure of joining our former Jr. Girls Unit.

Here is an interesting tid-bit that someone told me and it proves that they love this Organization and they are continuous in this Organization. There are several members in their 70s and there are some in their 90s who are continually active and attend meetings, makes potato salad for their Auxiliary’s fish fries. In many cases, it is truly a family affair. There is a family lineage with over a combined 180 years of service, which includes mother, 2 daughters and daughter-in-law. I understand more family members

reaching the goal of 45+ members. One District was identified as having no 45+ members. I thank the Auxiliaries and Districts who responded to my request for information regarding their 45+ members.

You will notice that everyone has a little bag in their hand. At the end, I will tell you what it is all about. There is a positive initiative about everything. I would like each one of you to come forward, give your name and your years of service.

Mercie thanked President Marvie for this appointment. It has been fun tracking everybody down that I could and thanked her for a wonderful, Samantha Schmidgall and Patricia Caraker. She introduced her Committee then went on to explain what the little bags were all about - her positive bags. One 45+ member would read the front and another would read the back of everything positive.

President Marvie thanked the 45+ members for the Love gift.

**Communications by Assistant Secretary Susan Rolando:**

- Thank you card from the family of Mary Frank (Lois Moore)
- Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of the Illinois Veterans Home at LaSalle for the donation of their Fish Fry Luncheon on Good Friday
- If anyone has lost a ring, see Events Coordinator Cheryl Michel

**Presentation of Chief of Staff, District Presidents & Deputy Chiefs of Staff:**

**Chairman: Barb Howard**

**Committee: Maureen Hayden, Terry Adams**

Madam President Marvie, Past National President Dixie Hild and the membership here assembled. It is my honor to present to you your Army of Helpers. Some have helped start a few new recruiting stations better known as Auxiliaries. Many have tried to save a recruiting station from closing and some have saved existing stations by staying afloat. They have had their boots on the ground and marching all over the state per your orders. Helping your 16 divisions by promoting our programs, understanding the rules and By-Laws of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. After this Convention, some will retire with honors and some have re-enlisted for 1 more year. I know you wish them all well in whatever path they have chosen and know that they will be successful in whatever they do.

Marvie, thank you for giving me this appointment along with Past Department President Maureen Hayden and Guard Terry Adams as my Committee.

I would like for your Army to introduce themselves along with their rank.

**District President of the Year Presentation: Chairman: Billie Guthals**

**Committee: Jo Lynn Altvatter, Pat Martyn**

President Marvie, Past National President Dixie Hild, I am so excited. You know we already have the great group of District Presidents and sometimes it's necessary to call out a few of their outstanding efforts this year that you all have. My Committee is Jo Lynn Altvatter and Pat Martyn. I will say the Committee and I were very pleased with the communication and the reporting of the District Presidents this year. Most District Presidents, at a minimum, completed the year end report and many provided information throughout the year. Your involvement and your instruction you provided to your Auxiliaries lead to a successful year for our Department in working our Programs, reporting and making donations. I want to thank all of you for your leadership. As we reviewed all of the materials received this year,



actually 4 District Presidents particularly stood out and I would like to ask these Presidents to come to the podium. They are in order of Districts. District #3 President Joanne York, District 13 President John Watters, District #14 President Kathy Rowold and District #19 President Jan Bakes.

This year we will be recognizing 2 District Presidents with certificates of Honorable Mention and a small gift. In addition, we will also be recognizing one District President Runner Up for the year and our District President of the Year. I would like to ask Pat Martyn to come up to provide information on our Honorable Mentions and present these gifts.

Honorable Mention certificates are not here right now but they will be. They will be presented to District #3 President Joanne York and District 19 President Jan Bakes. Through Joanne's reporting on her submissions of communications through District #3 Secretary Jean Maritta, it was evident there was a great deal of love and communication to all their Auxiliaries. Similarly, District #19 Jan Bakes, along with District #19 Secretary Shirley Vega, ensured the Committee Members received timely meeting minutes. In her year end report, Jan provided numerous photos telling the story of her District's journey this year. Thank you to Joanne and Jan for everything you have done this year.

Communicated by Jo Lynn Altvatter, now comes the really hard part. Two District Presidents lead the way this year in communicating to this Committee on a consistent basis. The District Presidents Rowold and Watters, along with their Secretaries, sent emails to not only to notify us of concerns but how they rectified the situations. These individuals demonstrated their exceptional caring and problem solving abilities throughout the year. I am very proud to award a check for \$50 and a Certificate to the 13<sup>th</sup> District President John Watters.

Chairman Billie announced the District President of the Year Kathy Rowold, District #14. I would just like to say that Kathy and her Secretary, Laurie Sparwasser started off with a bang. I received my first of many informational contacts within a few weeks of Convention when she assumed her new role as District President. Frequently I would go to my mailbox and find a large envelope with a packet of folders, photos and information on what all of her Auxiliaries in her District were doing. I am honored to present this check to you in the amount of \$100 for District President of the Year. Past Department Presidents were asked to stand up. All of our Past Department Presidents presented District President Kathy with a Love Gift from them for all of her achievements.

District President Kathy - Thank you so much for this honor. Thank you to the 14<sup>th</sup> District, you are the ones who made this possible. I love each and everyone of you. I know I hounded you to get things in and helped you to get things in. I couldn't have done this with you. Thank you to the 14<sup>th</sup> and thank you to the VFW Auxiliary - thank you for this honor.

Chairman Billie: All of you will be receiving certificates before the close of Convention. Marvie, I want to thank you for this appointment and for providing the Committee members JoLynn and Pat.

### **Presentation of the Circle of Excellence: Department President Marvie Wisniewski**

For all of you guys that did the work, I am so happy. We had so many Auxiliaries that were there. I just want to thank each and everyone of you for the work that you've done. So, we are going to ask that if you are actually in the room to come up here as your name is called to receive your Circle of Excellence. Everyone was showed what the Circle of Excellence members were going to get. The President and Treasurer will be receiving a shirt which reads "Circle of Excellence 2022-2023" and they will also receive their banner for their flag to take home with them. If the person is not in the room, the District President will come up and accept. The recipients are:

District #3 2729	District #13 4226	District #14 7710
District #3 5079	District #13 4535	District #14 7980
District #3 5220	District #14 805	District #15 5222
District #3 9773	District #14 1117	District #15 7190
District #8 8078	District #14 2698	District #17 2876
District #8 8890	District #14 3480	District #17 5762
District #9 4668	District #14 3523	District #17 7862
District #10 755	District #14 3553	District #19 2801
District #10 1239	District #14 6504	District #19 3873
District #12 1377	District #14 6632	District #19 5825
District #13 2244	District #14 6865	District #19 6791
District #13 3999	District #14 7682	District #19 7446

President Marvie each and everyone who worked so hard to get to the 245 points to get the Circle of Excellence.

**Recess:** President Marvie announced there will be a 10 minute recess before we begin the Memorial Service. Chaplain closed the Bible.

Convention resumed with the Chaplain opening the Bible.

### **GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT - Diane Ahrens**

Number of death Notices received since February 9, 2023 C of A	45
Number of Memorial Cards since February 9, 2023 C of A	29
Number of notices over 60 Days	04
Number of notices without next of Kin	15
Number of deceased members to date including MALTA Notices	443

It has been an honor to be the Department Chaplain for the 2022-2023 Year for President Marvie.

PDP 1				
D-3 14	D-5 17	D-6 43	D-7 32	D-8 23
D-9 20	D-10 14	D-11 10	D-12 31	D-13 48
D-14 36	D-15 27	D-16 12	D-17 40	D-18 13
D-19 28	Non-District 5	At-Large 29		
Total Deaths 443				

Respectfully submitted, Diane Ahrens

<b>Gold Star Parents:</b>	<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Diana Rudeen</b>
	<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Irma Davis</b>
		<b>Doris Zobrist</b>

The Gold Star family is one that has experienced a loss of a loved one - an immediate family member who died as the result of military service. Those who have died on duty leave behind parents, siblings, spouses and children. Those left behind are recognized as Gold Star Families.

According to a 2019 USO official site article, there have been more than 16,000 American troops who died in non-combat circumstances and some 7,000 “died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars along” since 9/11 as well as thousands of Gold Star Families who lost loved ones in both World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and other conflicts.

Evolution of the Gold Star: A tradition dating back to the First World War, military service flags were flown by military families. These flags included blue stars for every family member who served in uniform. Families who had loved ones who died in the line of duty would have the blue star replaced with a gold one. The gold star was and is a sign that the family has made the ultimate sacrifice and families often had more than one gold star on their flags.

As time went by, the use of the gold star in this way extended to lapel pins and buttons; they are awarded to family members by the military services. In 1947, Congress approved an “official Gold Star Lapel Button”, which formally recognizes service members who lost their lives in combat. A Gold Star lapel button (awarded to next-of-kin) was created in 1973. This version symbolizes active duty service members “who lost their lives in non-combat operations” according to Navy military. Gold Star honors are typically presented to the next-of-kin during the service member’s funeral.

Honoring Gold Star Families: Gold Star families are honored in several ways each year including:

- The last Sunday of September is designated Gold Star Mother’s Day
- The last Sunday in September is also Gold Star Family Day
- April 5<sup>th</sup> is Gold Star Spouses Day

I now want to read a poem to all of you reflecting a mother that lost her son and reads this every Memorial Day.

I still get teared up  
Homecomings play  
with my mind  
Wishing it would get old  
But it lays so heavy  
A mother’s window  
Dawn’s the star of  
GOLD  
I so get the day off  
I so get the ULTIMATE cost  
I don’t get how my mind is lost  
I don’t know how my emotions  
Get stuffed  
One day at a time  
Is what they say  
But it’s harder for that Mother  
On Memorial Day  
I still get teared up  
Combat Medic an a Scout

In their Bradly  
Waiting for the crew  
Apache took it for a BMP  
An took it out  
That brings out the  
Anger in me  
Wishing it would get old  
But it lays so heavy  
A mother’s window  
Dawn’s the star of  
GOLD  
Take this time to remember  
The GOLD stars of every  
Service member  
Who paid the ULTIMATE cost  
And for the family’s forever lost  
Greater love has no one than this:  
To lay d own one’s life for one’s friends  
John 15:13

Today we honor these family members at our Department Convention and we have a token of love to give to each one of you.

Gold Star Family Member that was present asked to say a few words: Hello, my name is Karen Hirstein. I am a Gold Star Sister. I lost my brother in Korea, July 25, 1950. I never met my brother and they just recovered a body that was identified a couple days ago. My parents weren’t notified of my brother until 1953 and the worst part was six months later they buried my sister. So my family has went

through a lot during this time. It really means a lot when you thanks to all those Gold Star family members.

### **Presentation of the Graves Registration Book, Draping of the Charter and Memorial Service**

The Conductress was asked to retire, with the colors, for the Presentation of the Graves Registration Book. After the book was presented, the President asked the Conductress to retire with the colors for the Draping of the Charter. After the Charter was draped, we all sang one verse of “Nearer My God to Thee” lead by our Soloist Isaac Rieke. A prayer was said by the Chaplain and then the President instructed the Conductress and Chaplain to prepare the Altar for the Memorial Service which were held in accordance with the Ritual. Soloist Isaac Rieke sang “You Lift Me Up”. The roll call of departed Sisters included

#### **Past National Presidents**

Marion Watson, 1981-82  
Glenneta Vogelsang, 1984-85  
Sandy Germany, 2005-06  
Helen Harsh, 1994-95

#### **Past Department Presidents**

Mildred Leff, 1975-76

District 3	14
District 5	17
District 6	43
District 7	32
District 8	23
District 9	20
District 10	14
District 11	10
District 12	31
District 13	48
District 14	36
District 15	27
District 16	12
District 17	40
District 18	13
District 19	28
IL Non-District	05
Members At Large	29

Total as of 04/30/2023: 443

**Memorial Address** was given by Paula DeDoncker:

Good Afternoon and thank you for joining us today in our solemnity to honor those who have passed before us.

Throughout our lives we make many friends along the way who, in a sense, become a part of our family. And with our family there comes a time when, with much sorrow, we have to say good bye.

Washington Irving reminds us, “There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but

of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, deep contrition and unspeakable love.”

Unspeakable love. A love born from the way our lives were touched, how we were inspired. How our lives were altered by having them in it. They changed us, getting us to think more openly, laugh and cry harder, or even argue with them. But most of all we remember the welcoming smiles, the devious grins and the warm hugs.

Our Angels, when suddenly we feel braver. When we welcome the silence that beckons us with open arms and gives us the safest place to fall, our memories. Memories to carry us until we meet again, to push us to share our best selves to leave our legacy. To be able to share this anthem:

Let it be said that when I reach the end of this life, I can look back and say what a beautiful ride it was.

That when I run out of time, my heart is full and I hold no regrets and by the mark I have, that I was her in more ways than one.

Let it be true that even when I failed, I still learned and I tried hard enough to walk away smiling. That somewhere between my first sunrise and my last sunset, I saw my fair share of rainbows.

Let it be known that while I was here, I found hope somewhere, even when I was empty. And just along the edges where rivers spill into oceans, I threw words across the deep, hoping they would keep long enough to be found by someone who needed them.

Let it be so that for every time I was too afraid to dance, somehow I will get another chance and I won't be afraid.

Somewhere in this life I used my whole heart to write my story and even if no one reads it, it was mine and it was beautiful.

Let it be known that while I was here it was such an honor to know you and love you.

And let it be so that when I leave I will carry a part of you with me.

Thank you.

President Marvie asked for the Registration and Credentials Report.

**Registration and Credentials Report: Chairman Diana Radar**

As of today:	243 Auxiliaries
	3 Department Officers
	2 Past Department Presidents
	<u>2 District Presidents</u>
	250 Total

**Announcements: Assistant Secretary Susan Rolando**

Mary Ann Croke a Happy 81<sup>st</sup> Birthday



them to come up, introduce themselves and tell us which home you volunteer at and tell us one special thing that m=stands out for you this past year.

Chairman Susan asked Department Hospital Chairman Laura Knackstedt to come forward.

### **Hospital Report: Chairman Laura Knackstedt**

To our National Representative, Past National President Dixie Hild, to National Hospital Ambassador Mary Spindler, Past National President Colette Bishop, Past Department Presidents, Officers, Delegates, and members here assembled for the 99<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary, Department of Illinois, in Springfield, Illinois, we submit the following supplemental reports"

I wanted to thank everyone for their support of the hospital program. Over 599 members volunteered over 3558 hours and spent over \$66,000 dollars on projects and donated items for our Veterans. In a year that we were still not allowed into most of our VA facilities this is a great accomplishment. Now on to the awards:

### **Auxiliary Awards**

1. A citation to each Auxiliary that participates in the Hospital Program by December 31, 2022.  
**District 3: 2729, 5079, 5220, 8821, 9773**  
**District 5: 1293, 1307, 2298, 4308, 4551, 4600, 7448, 8741**  
**District 6: 2665, 2955, 3878, 5149, 5418, 9759**  
**District 7: 454, 630, 2608, 2857, 4826, 5520, 6750, 8350, 9789, 9961**  
**District 8: 1422, 1571, 1921, 2153, 2257, 2301, 5001, 5083, 5117, 8078, 8890**  
**District 9: 2470, 3883, 4079, 4602, 4668, 4835, 4999, 6634**  
**District 10: 755, 1239, 1756, 4763, 6408, 10302**  
**District 11: 99, 4495, 4829, 6190, 6410**  
**District 12: 976, 1104, 1300, 1308, 1377, 2859, 3912, 5691, 5694, 7678**  
**District 13: 2055, 2244, 3999, 4226, 4276, 4535, 8222, 9153**  
**District 14: 513, 805, 1117, 2698, 3480, 3523, 3553, 6504, 6632, 6865, 7682, 7710, 7980**  
**District 15: 1301, 1567, 2671, 3455, 3479, 4753, 5222, 7190, 9763**  
**District 16: 311, 450, 2580, 2791, 8141, 9801**  
**District 17: 1592, 1769, 2876, 3601, 4325, 4549, 4598, 5762, 5975, 7862, 10009**  
**District 18: 367, 725, 1486, 5422, 5788**  
**District 19: 503, 1197, 2164, 2801, 3873, 5768, 5815, 5819, 6791, 7446, 7452, 8081, ,**  
**AOL: 2868, 3579, 7186, 9284**
2. A citation to Auxiliaries donating to all 13 facilities the Department of Illinois sponsors. Donations must be at least \$1.00 to each facility.  
**District 3: 2729, 5079, 5220, 9773**  
**District 5: 1307, 4308, 4551,**  
**District 6: 540, 2665, 3878, 5149, 9759**  
**District 7: 454, 630, 2608, 2857, 4826, 6750, 9961**  
**District 8: 1571, 1921, 2257, 2301, 5001, 5083, 8078, 8890**  
**District 9: 3883, 4079, 4668, 4999,**  
**District 10: 755, 1239, 1756, 6408, 10302**  
**District 11: 99, 4431, 4829, 6410**

District 12: 1300, 1308, 1377, 2859, 5694  
 District 13: 2244, 3999, 4226, 4276, 4535, 8222,  
 District 14: 513, 3553, 6504, 6865, 7980  
 District 15: 1567, 2671, 3455, 3479, 4753, 5222  
 District 16: 450, 2791, 8141, 8283, 9801  
 District 17: 1592, 1769, 2876, 3601, 4325, 4598, 5975, 7862, 10009  
 District 18: 5422, 5788  
 District 19: 503, 1197, 2164, 2801, 3873, 5768, 5815, 5819, 6791, 7446, 7452, 8081, 11018  
 AOL: 3579, 9284

3. A citation to all Auxiliaries making the required hospital pledge.

District 5: 1293, 1307, 2298, 4308, 4551, 4600, 7448, 8741  
 District 6: 540, 2665, 2955, 3878, 5149, 9759  
 District 7: 454, 630, 2608, 2857, 4826, 6750, 8350, 9789  
 District 8: 1422, 1571, 1921, 2257, 2301, 5001, 5083, 8078, 8890  
 District 9: 3883, 4079, 4668, 4999, 6634  
 District 10: 755, 1239, 756, 6408, 10302  
 District 11: 99, 4431, 4495, 4829, 6190  
 District 12: 976, 1300, 1377, 2859, 5691, 5694  
 District 13: 2055, 3999, 4226, 4276, 4535, 8222, 9163  
 District 14: 513, 805, 1117, 2698, 3480, 3523, 3553, 6504, 6632, 6865, 7682, 7710, 7980  
 District 15: 1301, 1567, 2671, 3455, 3479, 4753, 5222, 7190, 9763  
 District 16: 450, 2580, 2791 8141, 9801  
 District 17: 1592, 1769, 2876, 3601, 4325, 4549, 5762, 5975, 7862  
 District 18: 367, 5422, 5788  
 District 19: 503, 1197, 2164, 2801, 3873, 5768, 5815, 5819, 6791, 7446, 7452, 8081, 11018  
 AOL: 7186, 9284

4. A 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 entry form to the Department Hospital Chairman by March 31, 2023.

**\*\*none qualified\*\***

5. 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 Pins Hours Report Form by March 31, 2023.

**\*\*no new pins to hand out this year but I wanted to acknowledge Esther Williams from District 14. Esther has received the 3,000 hour pin and is well on her way to the 4,000 pin. Esther worked 684 hours this year making lap robes and wheelchair bags for the Veterans at Jefferson Barracks. Great job Esther!!!**

6. An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with best promotion of the Hospital Program in the Auxiliary meeting. Reports must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2023.

**This award goes to Karen Hirstein of Auxiliary 755 in District 10**

## District Awards

1. A citation to the District Chairman who identifies and submits applications to the Department for the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year Award by March 1, 2023.  
**Emma Wienhoff District 14 and District 15**
2. A citation to each District Chairman who has 100% of his/her Auxiliaries in the District reported in the Hospital Program by December 31, 2022.



**Unfortunately I do not have the names of all the District Hospital Chairman but the Districts are 3, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 19**

3. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Hospital Program in a District Meeting. Report must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2023.  
**Emma Wienhoff District 14**

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

1. A citation to VAVS, Deputy, Associate Representatives and Representative at Illinois Veterans Homes that timely submit nine (9) monthly reports from July 2022 to March 31, 2023.  
**Deborah Gard, Mercie Woolfolk, Joanne York, Emma Wienhoff, Gerri Anderson, Maggie Davis and Janet Long**
2. An award and citation to VAVS, Deputy, Associate Representative and Representatives at Illinois Veterans Homes recruiting one or more regular volunteers by February 2023.  
**\*\*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).  
**Gerri Anderson 300 hours**  
**Emma Wienhoff 1000 hours**  
**Joanne York 1000 hours**  
**Maggie Davis 2500 hours**  
**Deborah Gard 3000 hours**
4. An Award and citation to the winner of the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year Award.  
**Marilyn Crawford**

As many of you know we lost a great volunteer, Marilyn Crawford, this year. Marilyn dedicated many years and hours to the Veterans at the Veterans Home in Anna. We would like to present this plaque to be hung in Crawford corner at Anna. Marilyn, you will be greatly missed.

Thank you Marvie for this appointment.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Hospital Participation Award presented to Laura Knackstedt, Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

Department President Marvie thanked Laura for being Hospital Chairman expressing what a fantastic job she has done.

Chairman Susan asked her Committee to come forward and introduce themselves. She then asked all the Past Department Presidents to please rise. On behalf of the Past Department Presidents presented President Marvie \$100 for her Special Project.

**Presentation of Department Chairmen:                      Chairman: Diane Pencak**  
**Committee: Rosemary McMurchie Jennifer Hunter**

Our Department Chairmen have worked tirelessly night and day to promote their programs. They may have called you or shared information on Facebook, put information on our Department website or by

emails so that you make every deadlines.

We would like to say Thank you!

“T” is for teamwork to get the work finished

“H” is the hours spent answering calls or questions on their program

“A” is all members working together to exceed our goals

“N” is for no task was too hard

“K” is the chairmen’s knowledge and love of their program

“Y” is for helping fill out year-end reports

“O” is for outstanding work they have accomplished

“U” is for understanding the needs of our members

Chairmen, please come up and tell everyone your name and your Chairmanship.

Committee member Jennifer introduced herself. Diane thanked President Marvie for this appointment.

### **Report of Veterans and Family Support Chairman: Chairman: Lisa Rivera**

Good morning Madam President, Special Guests, Past Leadership and all members here assembled:

It was my honor to serve as Dept. Veterans & Family Support Chairman this year! It was a year filled with precious moments, special events, wonderful activities and creative fundraisers. The pictures sent to me and those posted on social media told stories of how much we care and love our Veterans, active military, their families, our homeless veterans, and caregivers, and the joy had by all during these events. Many posts held joint events to raise funds to hold packing parties to send goods and support to troops overseas, and a few auxiliaries adopted bases. We ended the year with total monetary donations and/or value of donations and goods and services provided to Veterans, service members and families in the amount of \$106,463.14 – and I must send a special shout out to District 7 that sent a total amount of \$24,233.00 in coupons to bases in Guam, Belgium and Germany because we need to support our military anywhere and everywhere

You all worked very, very hard this year and made it look easy. That is the goal of this program and the Department of Illinois achieved that goal with the help of all of you. Your boots were on the ground and it showed.

While everyone worked to the best of their ability, some went above and beyond and today we honor those with awards to show how much they are appreciated so let’s get started:

### **DEPARTMENT AWARDS:**

#### **Auxiliary**

1. A citation to every Auxiliary that is reported in all parts of the Veterans and Family Support Program by December 31, 2022. Since there are many parts of this program, the winners are listed in the Program Book. Most are but a few were not, but please make reporting a priority.

2. An award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding activity and/or event that supports Veteran, military and family caregivers. Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Entry forms must be sent to the Department Veterans and Family Service Chairman by March 31, 2023

**Sequoia Auxiliary #4551, District 5; submitted by Diane Stahl.**

3. An award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding activity and/or event that increases awareness of homeless Veterans. Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Entry forms must be sent to the Department Veterans and Family Service Chairman by March 31, 2023.

**Don Cherry Auxiliary #5083, District 5;** submitted by Rhonda Borkgren

4. An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Veterans and Family Support Program in the Auxiliary meeting. Reports must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2023.

### **District Awards**

1. A citation to each District Chairman who has 100% of his/her Auxiliaries in the District reported in all parts Veterans and Family Support by December 31, 2022.

**#3 #8 #10 #12 #13 #14 #19**

2. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Veterans and Family Support Program in a District meeting. Report must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2022..

**Laurie Sparwasser, Auxiliary**

**FINAL REMARKS:** I want to congratulate all the winners today and to please remind everyone to strive to be 100% by December 31<sup>st</sup> and to utilize the program materials and resources available on the website. I know we can do better.

Thank you Madam President for this appointment. Madam Secretary Tammy and Boss lady Susan for all their help. It was an honor to be a part of your Boots on the Ground team this year.

Enjoy the rest of the convention and have a wonderful safe Summer!

Thank you.

Lisa Rivera, VFS Dept. Chair

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Veteran and Family Support Participation Award presented to Lisa Rivera Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

President Marvie thanked Lisa for stepping in and doing a wonderful job.

### **Report of Americanism: Chairman Janet Kays**

Thank you President Marvie for allowing me to work with your great team this year. You've all heard the saying "You are never too old to learn." I am proof positive that this adage is true and believe me I learned a lot about Americanism this year. The best part is, I have had a lot of fun doing it! Many of the auxiliaries have done such a good job with their programs and projects too that all I can say is thank you.

I really think I should add that when my three judges were working at picking the best coloring pictures and posters their biggest complaint was "What do you mean we can only pick one for each category." We definitely have some budding artists and authors with patriotic souls across the state.

I would like for these Chairmen to come forward to receive their awards

### **Auxiliary:**

Chairman with the best promotion of all parts of the program: **Chery Miller, Red Bud Aux District**

Auxiliary who was chosen to represent Illinois as the best Patriotic Events:  
**Chelsea Maynor of Murphysboro Auxiliary**

Her pictures and documentation were submitted to our National Ambassador for judging at the National level.

### **District:**

Chairman with the best promotion of all parts of the program: **Melanie Ecker, District 3.**

These students will be receiving McDonald's gift certificates as the winners in their age groups for each of the 3 contests.

For the coloring contest: **3 year old Easley Kolb sponsored by Lawrenceville Aux.;**  
**4 year old Iris Meyer sponsored by Waterloo Aux.;**  
**5 year old Nora Bartnick also sponsored by Waterloo; and**  
**Charlotte sponsored by Villa Park Aux.**

For the poster contest: **1st Grade Penelope Rivera, sponsored by Calumet City Aux.,**  
**2nd grade Lorelei Rehkemper, sponsored by Highland Aux., and**  
**3rd grade Harper Quinn, sponsored by Guthrie Pierce Aux. of**  
**Beardstown.**

For the essay contest: **4th grade Olive Gress, sponsored by Highland Aux., and**  
**5th grade Hannah Norgaard, sponsored by Highland Aux**

I feel very lucky that I have gotten to know even more people in the VFW Auxiliary this past year. I want to say this again. Thank you everyone for all that you do.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Americanism Participation Award presented to Janet Kays Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

### **Report of Auxiliary Outreach: Chairman Cheryl Miller**

Good morning. Being a first-time Department Chairman I was more than a bit nervous at the start and I just want to thank everyone who helped me get going with the reporting spreadsheet and all the rest,

Department Secretary Tammy and Susan especially for all your formatting help as Word is not my friend.

I really enjoyed talking or emailing with so many members across the state and hope that I was able to help with your questions. With Auxiliary Outreach still being a fairly new program, it seemed there was still some confusion about it.

For National Awards there will be citations issued to 13 Auxiliaries who partnered with another organization within their community, followed the criteria and submitted an entry form to the Department Chairman. They are **311, 2164, 4308, 4549, 4551, 4668, 5083, 5220, 5694, 5762, 6632, 7190 and 7452.**

Congratulations and thank you for your entries.

### **District Awards.**

1. A citation will go to 11 District Chairmen with all Auxiliaries in their District 100% reported in Auxiliary Outreach by 12/31/22  
This includes Districts **3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18 and 19.**
2. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Auxiliary Outreach program in a District meeting goes to **Susan Rolando, District 12.**

### Under **Department Awards:**

1. There were 132 Auxiliaries qualified to receive a citation for being 100% reported by 12/31/22. They are listed in the report book so you can see them there.
2. The Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Auxiliary Outreach program in an Auxiliary meeting goes to **Cindy Watters, Olney Memorial Auxiliary 4226, District 13.**
3. An award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding community partnership with another organization. There were some very good entries for this, and I want to thank all of you for the hard work you did in this program for your communities. The award goes to **LaSalle Auxiliary 4668, District 9, submitted by Barb Sweger.**

**132** Auxiliaries, **817** members with a total of **8961** hours put their “Boots on the Ground” and volunteered for Auxiliary Outreach to better our communities across the state of Illinois. Thank you all for making our presence known and possibly attracting new members to our organization.

Thank you, President Marvie, for appointing me to this Chairmanship and placing your confidence in me.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Auxiliary Outreach Participation Award presented to Laura Knackstedt, Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

### **“Buddy”® Poppy / Nation Home: Chairman Sarah Higgenbothom**

Thank you President Marvie for this appointment. I loved every minute of it! Thank you to each Auxiliary member that worked hard this year to distribute Poppies and educate your communities about

both programs. I am so proud of you!

This year you conducted 251 Poppy Drives with your Posts and 90 without your Posts. There was a total of 68,564 “Buddy”® Poppies distributed at these drives. 57 Auxiliaries utilized the “Buddy”® Poppy resources on the National VFW Auxiliary website and 33 Auxiliaries used the Resources available for the VFW National Home. \$6,303.85 was donated to the VFW National Home Health and Happiness fund and an additional \$9,321.41 was donated to the VFW National Home General Operations fund. If you were at the Council Meeting, we have \$5,069 in our National Home playground project fund. Yesterday, President Marvie and myself, along with the VFW were pleased to receive a check for \$5,000 for the playground project. I talked to Past Department Command Brad Gould and they are donating \$1,000. And then I talked to Department Quartermaster Joe Bartley and they got around \$6,000. However, we do not want to stop now. I am pleased to say that 73 Auxiliary members are now Life Members of the VFW National Home. You purchased 12 Tribute Bricks and 2 Auxiliaries became Home Front Heroes for the year. Your Auxiliaries completed 456 projects involving 1,169 members. The total hours worked was 3,031. Total miles traveled was 10,654. Finally, the total dollars spent on both programs this year was \$18,149.75. You all know how this really works. That’s not really the true numbers because not everyone reports, so you know it’s bigger than that. Make sure you report everything next year to the Department Chairman who she/he can report even bigger numbers.

### **Auxiliary Awards**

1. A Citation to all Auxiliaries that participated in both programs, “Buddy”® Poppy and VFW National Home for Children and are reported by December 31, 2022.

**Citations were printed and distributed at the February Council of Administration Meeting.**

2. A Citation to all Auxiliaries that promoted the purchase of a Life Membership to the VFW National Home for Children and report is by December 31, 2022.

**Citations were printed and distributed at the February Council of Administration Meeting.**

3. A Citation to all Auxiliaries that donated 25 cents or more per member to Health and Happiness based on their June 30, 2022 membership total by December 31, 2022. Donation must be reported to the Department Chairman.

**Citations were printed and distributed at the February Council of Administration Meeting.**

4. An Award 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 be included and reports are due to the Department Chairman within 30 days of your meeting. Report must be submitted by April 15, 2023.

**Bronda Hubler, Auxiliary #6632, Red Bud VFW**

5. An Award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the most outstanding event that demonstrated how the “Buddy”® Poppy program and the VFW National Home for Children impact each other. Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to the Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home for Children by March 31, 2023.

**No entries submitted.**

6. An Award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the most outstanding community education about the "Buddy"® Poppy and VFW National Home for Children. Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2023.

**No entries submitted.**

7. 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. Report must be submitted by December 31, 2022.

**Downstate: Auxiliary #4226 Olney Memorial VFW**

**Upstate: Auxiliary #2801 Villa Park VFW**

**Mid-State: Auxiliary #2857 Kankakee VFW**

### **District Awards**

1. A Citation to the District Chairman whose Auxiliaries are 100% participated in both programs, "Buddy"® Poppy and VFW National Home for Children program and are reported by December 31, 2023.

**Citations were printed and distributed at the February Council of Administration Meeting.**

2. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of each part of the "Buddy"® Poppy and VFW National Home for Children program in their meetings. All parts of the program must be included and reports are due to the Department Chairman within 30 days of your meeting. Report must be submitted by April 15, 2023.

**Bronda Hubler, District 14**

Again, President Marvie thank you for this appointment.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Buddy Poppy & National Home Participation Award presented to Laura Knackstedt, Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

**Report of Extension and Revitalization:** Chairman Paula DeDoncker -

This year was a great year for Mentoring for Leadership and for Extension. We lucked out with a lot of Auxiliaries and saved a couple. Unfortunately we lost a couple. Some of them were through no fault of their own with some of the Posts having a hard time as well.

It's time again for us to reflect on the past year and reward those who continue through their efforts with the promotion of two of our most important programs.

We'll start with the Extension and Revitalization Program.

An award to one Auxiliary member who assisted the Department Chief of Staff in nurturing/strengthening a struggling Auxiliary and utilized Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation in their efforts.

**Mary Lee**

An award to one Auxiliary Chairman with the best presentation of the Extension & Revitalization Program. To qualify, the Auxiliary Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman within 60 days of the presentation but not later than April 15, 2023.

**Lisa Manuak Aux 4668 LaSalle**

An award to the District Chairman with the best presentation of the Extension & Revitalization Program. To qualify, the District Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman within 60 days of the presentation but not later than April 15, 2023.

**Sarah Higginbotham**

### **Mentoring for Leadership - Paula DeDoncker**

An award to the Auxiliary that hosts the most outstanding activity or training to show members how to find and train mentees. A required entry form and criteria can be found at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). The entry form is due to the Department Chairman by March 31, 2023.

**Aux 4668 LaSalle**

An award to one Auxiliary Chairman with the best presentation of the Mentoring for Leadership Program. To qualify, the Auxiliary chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman within 60 days of the presentation but not later than April 15, 2023.

**Kathy Rowold Dist. 14**

An award to the District Chairman with the best presentation of the Mentoring for Leadership Program. To qualify, the District Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman within 60 days of the presentation but not later than April 15, 2023.

**Cheryl Miller Dist 14**

Thank you all for your hard work throughout the year and good luck for a successful 2023-2024!

Past National President Dixie Hild presented a National citation to Department Chief of Staff Paula DeDoncker for Participation in the Auxiliary Extension & Revitalization Program and a citation for Participation in the Mentoring for Leadership Program.

President Marvie wanted to turn the Upstate, Midstate and Downstate luncheons into also honoring our Mentors. After reviewing the nomination forms that were submitted, the Mentors chosen are:

**Upstate: Lisa Rivera**  
**Midstate: Barb Sweger**  
**Downstate: Laurie Sparwasser**

President Marvie took those 3 to selected judges who would choose the Mentor of the Year. We are honoring Terry Ann Calabrese today with the Mentor of the Year Award. The award goes to:

**Lisa Rivera**



All three of these who were nominated were well deserving and want to thank each of them for they work they do and continue to Mentor. Thank you.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Extension & Revitalization Participation Award presented to Paula DeDoncker, Chief, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos. She also presented Paul a National Citation for her participation in the Mentoring For Leadership.

**VFW Visit:** At this time, President Marvie, Past National President Dixie and Chief of Staff Paula went to visit the VFW.

**Historian: Chairman Denita Ricci**

Good morning and welcome everybody. I am the Historian/Media Relations Chairman and it's been an awesome year; keeping what everyone is doing, taking pictures and making memories for President Marvie and making memories for each of your Auxiliaries.

It has been a teaching experience to have a personal view of what everyone is doing. I have also met wonderful people along the way.

I want to thank all the District President who encouraged their Auxiliaries to report in this program; and thank the Auxiliary Chairmen who sent me links to their Facebook page, mailed all newspaper articles and sent in pictures.

There were citations issued for all Auxiliaries that reported 100% in Historian/Media Relations by December 31<sup>st</sup>; those are in your packets.

To give you a little sample of what everyone did - 371 projects were reported with 654 members participating; total hours were over 1,688; the number of miles driven to promote our program through Historian/Media Relations is 1,262; with a total of 8,836.

The Auxiliaries that utilized Historian materials from the website were 41 while 81 used the Media Relation resources that were available on the website as well. 48 posted newsletters; 47 had their own Facebook page; 47 had a joint Facebook page with their Post. Several Auxiliaries had their own website while 33 Auxiliaries shared a website with their Post.

**Auxiliary Awards**

Most Outstanding Historian/Media Relations report. A citation was going to be submitted by a National and sent directly to these Auxiliaries. I would like to recognize the ones that submitted the report to me:

- District 3     Hometown Murray #9773**
- District 5     Lake Villa Memorial #4308**
- District 11    Oren L. David #99**
- District 12    Bond County #1377**
- District 14    Metzer-Crook #6504**
- Red Bud #6632**
- Coulterville #6865**
- District 15    Saline #3479**
- Jackson #7190**

**District 17 Ghere-Pullen-Reinhimer #7862**  
**District 19 Villa Park #2801**  
**Judd Kendell #3873**

The award that was sent to Nation for the most outstanding Historian/Media Relations report was from:

**District 15 Jackson #7190**

The Auxiliary Historian with the best promotion of the Historian/Media Relations Program at an Auxiliary meeting. There were several that qualifies but the best one is:

**District 9 Cheri Archdale #4835 Martin-Courtney**

### **District Awards**

A citation for each District President and District Chairmen that were 100% reported in Historian/Media Relations by December 31<sup>st</sup>. They are:

**Districts 3 8 12 13 14 19**

An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of all parts of the Historian/Media Relations Program. To qualify, the District Chairman must send a report to the Department by April 15, 2023.

**None qualified**

I am so impressed with what all the Auxiliaries did with the "Boots on the Ground" Program and to get the word out about who we are and what we do. It was a successful year out of the grips of Covid and it was wonderful seeing people hosting events again. It won't be much longer before we are 100% into the hospitals and be able to promote our programs with the Posts.

I just want to express to Marvie & Lynn that it's an honor to be "Boots on the Ground" Chairman and I am forever changed by this appointment.

Sr. Vice President Lynn asked the Conductress and Assistant Conductress retire and go outside the room. The Hospital Chairman is to retire with them.

Conductress and Assistant Conductress escorted our guest into the room.

**Veteran Senior Home Administrator:** Sr. Vice President Lynn introduced Angela Simmons. She was the Administrator at Anna Veterans Home and now she is Senior Homes Administrator over the 5 Veterans Homes we have in Illinois. Would you give her an Illinois welcome. She was then asked to say a few words.

Thank you for that welcome. On behalf of the nearly 1,200 dedicated employees of IDVA, thank you for your incredible service across the nation and right here in Illinois, serving over 600,000 Veterans and their families. We're grateful for your support through financial contributions and countless hours of volunteer time that you have allowed our homes to offer all the programs needed and events that enrich the daily lives of our care.

Our mission is that Illinois choice for Veterans and the National leader in Veteran Advocacy and services - IDEA sets the standards for community Veterans and their families with all the benefits and they earn

to empower them to thrive.

Since Director Prince arrived over two years ago, he has lead this team through financial change beginning with a 6-point plan. He restructured senior leadership, hired professionals in key roles, elevated communication and culture, modernized technology and made effective prevention his highest priorities. These enhancements are changing the way IDVA is doing business.

IDVA has launched into a 4 year strategic plan to build on the success of the 6-point plan. It begin with our guiding principles: teamwork, excellence, accountability and motivation. We are committed to 3 priorities: 1) Our People. Recruiting , hiring and retaining talented professionals in a supportive environment or engaged in meaningful work. 2) The Veteran Experience. Ensuring that Veterans across the State receives support from our Veterans Service Officers and those living in our residential homes receive the highest level of customer service. 3) Operational Excellence: IDVA will deliver the highest level of service to Veterans through our systems that are effective and efficient. Under these three priorities, we identify specific actions that will allow us to achieve these goals. Task forces made up of IDVA staff are responsible for these areas have been created to execute this plan.

FY2023 is coming to a close and we don't have data from the past year yet. We can look at FY2023 numbers and provide an overview. Our Veteran Service Officers assisted over 15,000 Veterans and filed over 17,000 claims. Security \$3,462,915.00 in claims. That is a 38% increase. Illinois Veterans were provided the opportunity to train at 1,118 approved training facilities. It also approved 596 on the job training facilities for Veterans, military service members and their families. We awarded over \$932,000 in grants to advance Veterans programs through the Veterans cash lotteries. If you are ever out and buying lottery tickets and see the Veterans Cash lottery, that comes from IDVA.

Shifting to the Veterans Homes, 4 of the 5 homes are currently undergoing some level of construction. The Chicago Home was opened a year ago January and has just recently been completely accredited by the USDVA as an official state Veterans home. Meaning we can fully open this building, the 200 bed private room facility. The \$230,000,000 Quincy project is well underway and is very exciting.

The Auxiliary VFW is a pillar to the Veteran community and are leaned on for the experience, insight, and support.

Thank you for this opportunity.

### **Legislative: Chairman Lois Moore**

I would like to thank President Marvie for giving me the opportunity of being a Department Chairman. As some of you may know, this past year has been one challenge after another, but I want you to know that I did my best in getting the job done. I would like to thank all of the Auxiliaries for getting the reports filled out and sent in. After reading all the reports, it was really awesome to see the number of Auxiliary members who are all so involved in fighting for our Veterans rights. That is what we are here for and the Department of Illinois does make a difference in getting our voices heard. So again, thank you Marvie for this Chairmanship.

I now submit the following supplemental report:

#### Auxiliary Awards:

Award #1 - Certificates to each Auxiliary that was 100% reported by December 31<sup>st</sup> are listed in the Officers Report Book. (total of 120 Auxiliaries)

Also as stated in the Officers Report Book, there were no Auxiliaries qualified for Award #2 due to no entry forms received for the most outstanding consistent partnership and/or communications with young adult civic and/or political groups. This also resulted in there being no Auxiliaries eligible for any Legislative National Awards.

Award #3, An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Legislative Program in the Auxiliary meeting. Reports must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2023. The winner is:

**Janeth Mogg - Auxiliary 6504 - District 14**

District Awards:

Award #1 - Certificates to each District Chairman that was 100% reported by December 31<sup>st</sup> are listed in the Officers Report Book. (total of 6 Districts)

Award #2 - An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Legislative Program in a District meeting. Report must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2023. The winner is:

**District 3, Laura Hogan**

Thanks again Marvie and everyone else who helped me get reported in this program.

**Scholarships: Chairman Laurie Sparwasser**

Congratulations, Department of Illinois Auxiliaries. You were 100% reported in all parts of the Scholarship Program this year. I am proud of the hard work you all do for this program.

The Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen winner information is in your convention book, so I will not repeat that information here.

Continuing Education – I received information stating the Department of Illinois had only 2 eligible entries sent into National and neither was a winner of this award. All Auxiliaries really need to push this Scholarship a little harder so more entries are sent in.

Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest – This information is in your convention book also, but since I need to hand out the awards to the Auxiliaries with the winners, here it is again. Could someone from the winners Auxiliaries please come up and get the award for their student.

I received 27 art entries and 3 3-Dimensional entries at the Department level. This is the most I have ever received.

The art winners are: **1<sup>st</sup> place – Alyssa Jones of Jones Homeschool Academy, sponsored by Clifford E. Johnson Auxiliary #9759 in Loves Park, IL., District 6. She won \$500.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> place – Kyra Newton, Gibault High School, sponsored by Metzger-Crook Auxiliary #6504 in Waterloo, IL. in District 14. She won \$200**

**3<sup>rd</sup> place – Quinn Stallord, Highland High School, sponsored by Highland Auxiliary #5694 in Highland, IL in District 12 and won \$100.**

For the first time this year, 3-D art was judged separately and has separate awards.

The winners are – **1<sup>st</sup> place – Stormy Willis of Lincoln Community High School, sponsored by Cronin Broths. Auxiliary #1756, in Lincoln, IL., District 10 and has won \$500.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> place – Viviana Alba of Bartlett High School, sponsored by Bartlett Auxiliary #11018 of Bartlett, IL. District 19 and won \$200.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> place – Payton Howatt of Victor J. Andrew High School, sponsored by Johnson-Phelps Auxiliary #5220, in District 3 and has won \$100.**

### AWARDS AND CERTIFICATES

#### **Auxiliary Awards**

1. A citation to each Auxiliary 100% reported in all four parts of the Scholarship Program by December 31, 2022

These citations were given out at the February C of A meeting

2. An Award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding promotion of and/or participation in the Patriotic 3-Dimensional Art Contest. Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to the Department Scholarship Chairman by March 31, 2023.

I received 3 entries this year and the winner is  
**Jackson County VFW Auxiliary 7190**

3. An Award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of all parts of the Scholarship Program in the Auxiliary meeting. To qualify, the Auxiliary Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman by April 15, 2023. Monthly reports are strongly encouraged.

**Nancy Rieke, Aux. #5694, Highland**

#### **District Awards**

1. A citation to each District President and Chairman 100% reported in all parts of the Scholarship program by December 31, 2022

<b>District 3</b>	<b>District 6</b>	<b>District 7</b>	<b>District 8</b>	<b>District 10</b>
<b>District 11</b>	<b>District 12</b>	<b>District 13</b>	<b>District 14</b>	<b>District 15</b>
<b>District 16</b>	<b>District 17</b>	<b>District 19</b>		

2. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest Escrow Fund. To qualify, the District Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman by April 15, 2023. Reporting immediately following District Meetings is strongly encouraged.

**None Qualified**

3. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of all parts of the Scholarship Program. To qualify, the District Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman by April 15, 2023. Reporting immediately following District Meetings is strongly encouraged.

## Joyce Cavins, District 14

Thank you, President Marvie for your confidence in me to do this program. I really enjoyed it.

**Return from VFW Visit:** Conductress and Assistant Conductress with the colors were asked to retire and escort President Marvie to the Altar. Soloist Isaac sang "Time of Your Life". President Marvie was then escorted to her station.

### **Youth Activities: Chairman Barb Sweger**

Hello to Past National President Dixie, Department of IL Officers and my fellow members of the VFW Auxiliary for the Department of Illinois.

We had 7 entries for the Get Excited for Red White & Blue Singing contest: 4 in the K-8 Grade Group & 3 in the 9-12 Grade group. Congratulations to Ashlynn Campbell from Auxiliary 7190 who took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the K-8 Grade group and will be getting a \$50 award. Molly Fehrenbacher from Auxiliary 4226 took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the 9-12 Grade group and she will be getting \$100 award. Thank you to 2164, 4226, 4495, 6504, 6632 and 7190 for getting those entries to me. It was great listening to all the entries and I was really glad I wasn't personally judging the entries. The judges asked me if they had to be Simon Cowell or just go with their gut ~ I said only use your gut please!

We had 13 entries in the Illustrating America contest – 2 entries in the K-2, 4 entries in the 3-5 and 8 entries in the 6-8. Congratulations to Macy Maynor from 7190 took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the K-2 Grade group and will be getting a \$10 McDonald Gift Card. Wren Schuster from 5694 took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the 3-5 Grade group and will be getting a \$10 McDonald Gift Card. Jereme Higginbotham took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the 6-8 Grade group, he will be getting a \$50 award. Thank you to 2164, 4226, 4495, 5694, 6504, 7190, 8081 and 9773 for getting the entries to me. Again, I was glad I wasn't judging as there were many talented entries. The entries will be put on display after the break. Please pick up your winners before you leave today.

We had 5 auxiliaries that had both a Get Excited & Illustrating America entry and I would like to thank 2164, 4226, 4495, 6504 and 7190.

Johnson Phelps Oak Lawn 5220 presented the most outstanding Veteran grave beautification activity/event.

Thank you to Districts **3, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14** for being reported 100% by 12/31.

For the next awards, please come up if your name is called I have a small gift for you.

The Auxiliary chairman who best promoted Illustrating America was Kathy Smertene, Auxiliary 5220.

Kathy Rowold was the Auxiliary chairman with the best promotion of Patriotism Thru Literacy.

Nancy Rieke from Auxiliary 5694 had the best complete Youth Activities promotion in an Auxiliary meeting. She sent me a report/newsletter every month!

Finally, the Auxiliary chairman with the best promotion of Get Excited for the Red White & Blue was Chelsa Maynor, Auxiliary 7190. Chelsa also helped to bring District 15 the award for the Best Promotion of Youth Activities in a District meeting.

Marvie, thank you for asking me to be a part of your year! I have had a wonderful time and would like to present you with this gift.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Youth Activities Participation Award presented to Barb Sweger Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

The Historian/Media Relations, Legislative and Scholarship Chairmen were asked to returned to the Podium. Past National President Dixie presented each of them with their citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Participation Award for their participation in these programs, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos

**Membership: Chairman Danielle Krull.**

Our 2022-2023 Convention was member care and support was Hands that Serve-Heart that Care and the Department needs to continue to gain Membership stat by putting our Boots on the Ground for our Veterans. We can't flat line now our momentum to grow in our numbers in Illinois. As of my report, we have not yet completely accomplished our mission. But, we are only about 100 members away from this mission. I have heard a lot of people have recruited a lot of people this weekend. We are not done. We have until the end of this month to reach our 100%+ for Marvie. This helps with the Circle of Excellence Points; it also helps with money that comes to our Department.

A lot of my awards have already been given out because I give mine out throughout the whole year. But what I do have is a lot of Recruiters; We have a total of 664 Recruited members. However, 124 of them had no Recruiter listed at all. Our Recruiter Awards start at 5 so you always should put your Recruiter information on the membership application first.

<b>Auxiliary 2244</b>	<b>Amy Shields - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 1197</b>	<b>Ashley Schmidt - 6 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 3601</b>	<b>Billie Gene Thomas - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 6632</b>	<b>Bronda Hubbler - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 7190</b>	<b>Chelsa Maynor - 6 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 4226</b>	<b>Cindy Watters - 8 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 1461</b>	<b>Elizabeth Costa - 6 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 3999</b>	<b>Erica Abner - 7 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 2244</b>	<b>Gena Rose - 9 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 6504</b>	<b>Janeth Mogg - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 1117</b>	<b>Janice Schmidt - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 755</b>	<b>Karen Heusack - 6 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 6632</b>	<b>Kathryn Rowald - 7 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 7980</b>	<b>Kathy Dunn - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 7678</b>	<b>Kymberli Ragusa - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 630</b>	<b>Laurence Mindy - 6 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 9763</b>	<b>Linda Dagner - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 3999</b>	<b>Lorraine Rector - 5 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 4549</b>	<b>Mary Spindler - 6 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 2055</b>	<b>Melissa Shaw - 5 members</b>

Each of these are a part of that 5-9 members recruited. They each received \$20 today and they each received a pin from our National President for recruiting 5-9 members. (Membership Program will resume after the Department Commander's visit.)

**Department Commander's Visit:** The Conductress with the Colors were asked to retired to and escort

our Department Commander to the Altar. Soloist Isaac sang a version of "I Did it My Way". Conductress then escorted the Department Commander to the Department President's station. Conductress then escorted Past National Command-in-Chief John Stroud. to the President's station.

Commander Edwards thanked the Auxiliary. If I get a little emotional it's because I believe in you. Without you, we have no organization. Without you, an intrical part of what we do each and every day at our Posts and Districts and throughout the Department we would ceased to exist. I am here to tell you today that this journey that we are on is to rebuild to where Illinois will thrive again for future years to come. When Marvie and I first met coming out of the pandemic we had a mission to revitalize our Department. In all of my travels it has been for you and our organization. One team, one fight for our common goal ; support families and our Veterans. I could have done it without your support. Everywhere I went throughout the organization, they heard me preach. But by the good graces of our Lord that he leads us forward and he chooses us to be his voice in our organization to carry us on into the future and our younger generation. Thank you for helping the Department achieve 100.47% as of this morning. We are now letting the community know what we do and why we do it and for whom we do it. He then thanked us for the song and how much he enjoyed it.

Past National Commander-in-Chief Stroud said how much he loves coming to Illinois. He acknowledged Past National President Dixie and Diana Rudeen who, when he was National Commander-in-Chief, was #11 of his Johnny's Angels. He went on to thank the Auxiliary for their efforts in Cancer Research because he is a three time cancer survivor and thanked the Auxiliary for their work in that area. As he was going through the National chairs, he shared with his Commanders one sentiment as my priority is I will not guarantee success if you work hand in hand with the Auxiliary in all your projects and programs, but I guarantee failure if you don't. Thank you, I love you.

President Marvie presented Commander Bobby with a gift and a gift from the Department of Illinois Also told him she had put out a challenge to all of our members to work on your UnMet Needs project; our special project to work together. We are giving your UnMet Needs an additional \$4,427. Commander Edwards reiterated the fact that the VFW would not make it if it wasn't for the Auxiliary. Have a great Convention, let's go forward, let's continue to march, May Good Bless everyone!

The Conductress with the Colors escorted Department Commander Edwards and Past National Commander-in-Chief Stroud from the room.

### **Membership Chairman Danielle to resume her program.**

President Marvie called Membership Chairman Danielle back up to her station to proceed with her program.

Next we will proceed with the 10-14 recruiting new or rejoin members. They will be receiving \$50 each.

<b>Auxiliary 3523</b>	<b>Brandon Lake - 10 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 5952</b>	<b>Jenny Roderbach - 10 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 5691</b>	<b>Shelly Stewart - 12 members</b>
<b>Auxiliary 1308</b>	<b>Susan Parrish - 10 members</b>

Recruiting 15-19

**None Qualified.**

However we have a member who recruited 22 members and will receive \$100.

<b>Auxiliary 4226</b>	<b>Karen Scherer</b>
-----------------------	----------------------



## **Auxiliary Award**

7. An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Membership Program. To qualify the Auxiliary Chairman must submit a report to Department Chairman Danielle by April 15, 2023. Monthly reports are strongly encouraged.

### **District 14 Auxiliary 6632 Bronda Hubler**

It was between her and another member. The amount of pictures I received from just these two members was probable over 40 pictures between both of them of recruiting booth and of recruiting events. I also have to give a "shout out" to Chelsa Maynor because she also does a ton of stuff. Just remember, we are not done.; we still have a couple more days. Does anybody have any additional dues to hand in today? Any new member applications need to be in the mail to Department Treasurer Linda so that she can have them all processed by the end of the year.

Thank you Marvie, I have had so much fun for a second year.

Past National President Dixie presented a citation award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary Membership Participation Award presented to Danielle Krull, Chairman, Department of Illinois for your participation in this program, 2022-2023. Signed by National President Jane Reape and National Secretary Ann Panteleakos.

**Humana:** The Conductress retired to escort our guest, Tim Delaney from Humana, to the President's station.

Good Morning...my name is Tim and I am the hired comic to roast this lady. Just kidding - I am Tim Delaney with Veterans Executive for Humana. As you all know, we have a table at all the Auxiliary conferences. We do a whole lot in the Veterans community but I still feel it's never enough. There is always room to do more in the Veteran communities; we always will. The little competition that was going on; when it came to the end; the Auxiliary surpassed what the Post collected. Tim went on to say that they work well with the Auxiliary because they are so energetic and passionate about the Veterans. Thank you for all you do. What was raised, we are donating to the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Downs Mission. This is local food pantry that we will be donating the food to. The winner of the Yeti will get the grant money for the United Combat Hunger Camping.

### **Department Fundraising Report: Chairman Laurie Lesperance**

Good Morning to all. The Lottery Raffle Fundraiser was a great success! As with anything first time tried there were a few hic-cups and bumps; but all worked through. A total of \$8,900.00 was turned in from ticket sales. Total disbursements to winning ticket holders was \$3,800.00; leaving \$5,100.00 net profit. This was a fun, simple fundraiser - easy to sell. I was very pleased with the final outcome.

Thank you President Marvie for putting your trust and responsibility in me to make this a success.

.President Marvie asked the Chaplain to close the Bible.

In order to put a P in front of my DP, at this time President Marvie performed her initiation to a variation of "These Boots are Made for Walking". *These Boots are made for walking and that's just what they'll do, and every day our Veterans are fighting for you. Are you ready Boots, start walking.*

Events Coordinator Cheryl asked if there was a Jean Goodrich in the room. Jan Bakes participated over at the VFW Gold Star booth. Was selling tickets for a shirt and hat. Jan Bakes won and took the shirt and Jean Goodrich won the hat. Was wondering how we might get it to her.

**Recess :**President Marvie announced that we are going to have a ten minute break. We will then bring the Road Home over here so we can present them with their check. After the Road Home, we will start the first two rounds of nominations and then we will break for lunch so you can caucus.

**Convention Resumed:** President Marvie asked the Chaplain to open the Bible.

President Marvie reminded that when the Chaplain is in motion to open/close the Bible, you don't need to run to your seat; just stop where you are at. There will be no doors opening during this time.

The Conductress with the Colors were asked to retire to escort the representative from Road Home to my station.

**Road Home:** It is my great pleasure to introduce Alejandra Hernandez. Road Home was my special project this year. Before Ms. Hernandez says a few words, I would like the following individuals to come up on stage.

**District 3, a representative from Auxiliary 5079**  
**District 3, District President**  
**District 5, District President**  
**District 11, Auxiliary 4829**  
**District 14, District President**  
**District 17, Auxiliary 3601    Auxiliary 4325**  
**District 18, Auxiliary 725**  
**District 19, Auxiliary 7446**

The reason why I invited all of them up here is to let you know that each one of these here, Districts and Auxiliaries, have donated more than \$500 for this Special Project. On behalf of the Department of Illinois, to the Road Home, will be receiving a check in the amount of \$18, 332..26

Hello ladies. I am Alejandra Hernandez. I am a Marine Corp Veteran. Thank you all for your efforts in collecting all of this money that will go towards our organization. We have been around for 9 years. We are part of the Warrior Care Network. So the Warrior Project also helps with funding. The real cool thing about our program is that we help all Veterans from all eras and all discharge statuses. So, I am really proud to be here to accept the check and if you have any questions, I will be around to answer them for a bit. I really truly appreciate all that you do.

President Marvie said that Road Home donated to us these sweatshirts which will be giving to all of these standing up here for their donations.

President Marvie asked Chaplain Diane to come to her station.

Last year when we left and we knew that Marvie was doing the Road Home for her special project, Diane said that her son works for Tandy Leather. They were promoting ongoing cutting out leathers that were going Columbus VA where they were doing an art display. The thought then came to mind that we could do leather feathers for Road Home because feathers represent freedom and flight. Katie was the one who put this together and my son was more than happy to help with the leather and in getting the tools and everything to be able to do this across the state. A lot of you participated and we appreciate that with donations and helping with them. We have some of the key chains done already and we have

121 to give them to pass out to the Veterans as they are finishing their program and just as a reminder that we are here for them.

President Marvie thanked everyone in this room for making the donations to Road Home because it does take care of our Veterans and their families and hoping this will be a good donation to keep them up and running.

**Announcements by Assistant Secretary Susan Rolando**

Membership Booth will be drawing today at 1:00 and there are still prizes left from yesterday's drawing.

If you are involved in the Membership Skit be ready by 1:00

Happy Birthday to Brenda Wilson, our Flag Bearer celebrating her 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday a week from today.

We have a member in attendance who is 100 years young; Helen Pengiel, Auxiliary 2801 Villa Park

**Credentials report - Diane Radar**

Thursday		Friday	
Auxiliary Presidents	23	Auxiliary Presidents	12
Auxiliary Delgates	85	Auxiliary Delegates	43
Line Officers	3	Department Line Officer	1
Past Department Presidents	2	Guest	<u>1</u>
District Presidents	<u>2</u>	Total	<b>57</b>
Total	<b>115</b>		

Today (Saturday)	
Auxiliary Presidents	8
Auxiliary Delegates	8
Total	<b>16</b>

**A grand total of 188**

Voting Strength:		
Thursday:	Delegates & Auxiliary Presidents	243
	Department Officers	3
	Past Department Presidents	2
	District Presidents	<u>2</u>
	Total:	<b>250</b>
Friday	Delegates & Auxiliary Presidents	91
	Past Department President	<u>1</u>
	Total:	<b>92</b>
Today (Saturday)	Delegates & Auxiliary Presidents	<b>16</b>

**Total Voting Strength: 358 1/2 of that is 179 + 1 = 180**

**Diane Radar moved the Credentials Report be accepted; seconded by Past Department President Beverly Beyer; no discussion; motion carried.**

**Nomination of Officers:**

President Marvie announced the Nomination of Officers. The Judge is Billie Guthals; Tellers are Janet Long and Maureen Hayden

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

**Lynn Smith** was nominated by Jo Lynn Altvatter. After two calls for nominations, the nominations will remain open until after lunch.

Department President Marie announced nominations were open for the **Office of Senior Vice President**

**Cindy Watters** was nominated by John Watters. After two calls for nominations, the nominations will remain open until after lunch.

Department President Marie announced nominations were open for the **Office of Junior Vice President**

**Diane Ahrens** was nominated by Tracy Trendle. After two calls for nominations, the nominations will remain open until after lunch.

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

**Linda Lorenz** was nominated by Jan Bakes. After two calls for nominations, the nominations will remain open until after lunch.

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

**Danielle Krull** was nominated by Ruth Smit-Bigos (read by Paula DeDoncker). After two calls for nominations, the nomination will remain open until after lunch.

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

**Terry Adams** was nominated by Maureen Hayden. After two calls for nominations, the nomination will remain open until after lunch.

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

**Chelsa Maynor** was nominated by Diana Dagner. **Michael Maruszak** was nominated by Deb Kirby. After two calls for nominations, the nomination will remain open until after lunch.

Department President Marie announced nominations were open for the **Office of National Council Member Area 5**

**Rhonda Borkgren** was nominated by Paula DeDoncker. After two calls, the nominations will remain open until after lunch.

President Marvie announced that nominations will remain open until this afternoon.

**Lunch Break** President Marvie announced that we will break for lunch and we will return at 1:30pm. When you return, you must have your actual Membership Dues card; your badges will no longer suffice.

President Marvie asked the Chaplain to close the bible. We are recessed until 1:30pm

Convention resumed at approximately 1:30pm.

### **Presentation of the 2024 - 2025 Membership Skit: Chairman Rhonda Borkgren**

Announcer: Here we are, the beginning of the 23/24 Auxiliary year. We find out Department President Lynn has been caught up in a tornado of getting her year ready. She is as lost as Dorothy, her house has landed on the Wicked Witch of the West.

Danielle: You landed your house on my sister. You killed her. I will get you now, My flying monkeys and I will stop you. You can't do it that way! We tried that, it won't work. This is the way we have always done it!

Flying Monkeys: Stand around and gossip. Talk about the house falling and it being Lynn who did it,

JoLynn: You and your Flying Monkeys are the reason members come in the front door and go out the back. We need to be welcoming and friendly. She has no control over that landing on your sister. Lynn, here are the ruby slippers. They are for you to wear. They are yours now. And all of you, if you can't be nice, go away. Come back when you can be nice and friendly.  
(Flying Monkeys and Danielle leave.)

JoLynn: Dorothy, you have the power to make it happen. Good Luck. Remember to always be kind.

Lollipop Guild runs out and sings follow the yellow brick road and collect those dues!

Announcer: Lynn, you need to follow the yellow brick road; it leads to the Circle of Excellence!

As she walks on the yellow brick road, she meets the scarecrow.

Lynn: Hello Ms. Scarecrow.

Cindy: I am going to find the Wizard of Oz to get a brain. Why don't you come with me. We can ask the Wizard how to get you to 100% and into the Circle of Excellence and get me a brain! If I have a brain, I will know how to sign up lots of members to the VFW Auxiliary.

Announcer: Together Lynn and the Scarecrow follow the yellow brick road, looking for the Wizard of Oz.

Diane: walking up to Lynn and Cindy

Who, who are you? I am a Lion. If I were king of the Auxiliary I would demand all eligible people join the VFW Auxiliary.

Lynn: If you need courage, maybe you should come with me and the Scarecrow to find the Wizard of Oz. I am looking for 100% in membership, and the Scarecrow is looking for a brain. Maybe the wizard

can help you find courage!

Diane: That would be great! I will go with you,

Announcer: Off they go down the yellow brick road looking for the Wizard of Oz. As they walk along, they spot a Tinman.

The Scarecrow, Lion and Lynn all ask, who are you?

Lynn: We are going to find the Wizard of Oz. The Scarecrow needs a brain, the Lion needs courage and I need 100% in membership.

Susan: If i had a heart, I could teach everyone to love the VFW Auxiliary. I need a heart!

Lollipop Guild and Munchkins (Dist and Past Department Presidents): Jump out laughing and having fun,  
All signing Follow the Yellow Brick Road, Collect those Dues! They walk up to the front where Terry is standing.

Terry: Halt, what are you doing here?

In unison, they all yelled: WE ARE HERE TO SEE THE WIZARD!

Terry: Nobody, but nobody not no how,

Cindy: But we have Lynn here and she is the Department President of Illinois. She needs to get home to Auntie Em and into the Circle of Excellence.

Terry: The witches Lynn? Oh great! I will talk to the Wizard, we will let her enter; follow me.

Paula (Wizard): You, my dear, have the power to do whatever you want. To get to the Circle of Excellence you need to be 100% in membership. Make sure all applications are completed fully. Send them into your treasurer immediately. Get all your annual dues paid in MALTA as soon as possible. You will get to 100% if you do all that. Be sure you report all deaths as soon as they happen, Don't hold them until the end of the year. If you turn in a bunch of deaths at the end of the year, you will lose. You all have the power to help Lynn get into the Circle of Excellence. Go now, go to Auntie Em!

Susan: I'd give my heart to our members! I put my whole heart into recruiting new members too!

Cindy: You don't need a brain to know the way to 100% in membership is retaining our membership!

Diane: It doesn't take courage to INVITE a friend to join the VFW Auxiliary. We just need to include all our friends and invest in our future.

Lynn: Thank you all for your help and friendship. Look, there's Auntie Em! She's with all of our Auxiliaries, the heart of our Organization!

Announcer: Working together, we will be 100% in membership; just like Lynn got home to Auntie Em!

Susan:

**Presentation of the 2024-2025 Auxiliary Presidents:**

**Chairman: Mary Spindler  
Committee: Patricia Caraker  
Carol Shutts**

On behalf of Mary Spindler, who is Chairman of this Committee, she would like for me to read this on her behalf as she is not able to be with us because she has been appointed as National Rep to the Department of Kansas for their Convention. Mary says.....I would like to be her with all of you today to thank the Auxiliary Presidents who work so hard all year long. Whether you are a first time President or have served multiple years, you deserve to be recognized for all your hard work. The Auxiliary is the most important part of our Organization because that is where most of the hard work gets done. Auxiliary Presidents - you are the true foundation of our Organization and without you we would not exist. Thank you for all you do.

**V** is for Veterans we serve  
**F** is for the friendships we make  
**W** is for the work you do

**A** is for an awesome Organization  
**U** is for your unwavering support  
**X** is for the reporting on the X-Sheet  
**I** is for the inspiration you provide  
**L** is for the love you have for Veterans  
**I** is for the important work you do  
**A** is for advocating for Veterans  
**R** is for reporting the important work you do  
**Y** is for you-YOU!

Each Auxiliary President was then asked to come forward, give their name, their Auxiliary number and how many years they have been a President.

To Incoming Department President Lynn, these are your Auxiliary Presidents. If you've noticed, some are new, some are experienced. All Auxiliary Presidents, everybody in this room has a lot of experience, so don't wait to ask questions and REPORT.

Patricia Caraker and Carol Shutts thanked President Marvie for this opportunity.

Incoming Department President Lynn - To all my incoming Auxiliary Presidents, welcome to the team. We're going to do great - don't worry about it and if you every need anything, just call Marvie, Jo Lynn -- No!, You can call me anytime. Thank you very much.

President Marvie asked all the 2022 - 2023 Auxiliary Presidents to stand. These are the ones who served with me and I want to thank each and everyone - you all did a great job

**Presentation of Department Floor Officers, Pages and the aide to the National Representative:**

**Chairman: Jo Lynn Altvatter  
Committee: Lillian Mayer  
Jan Bakes**

I am not going to make the Floor Pages work, so I am going to ask everybody that is part of the Floor Team to come up on the stage with me including all Pages.

While we are all here hooting and hollering the achievements of our Auxiliaries and Districts, we have a group of individuals whose boots are firmly on the ground in doing their jobs and, I might add, a fine job it is.

Our Color Team, lead by our Conductress and Assistant Conductress have been opening, escorting and will soon be closing this Convention.

Our Flag Bearer, our Banner Bearer our POW/MIA Bearer, along with our Patriotic Instructor diligently doing their jobs while our Soloist has provided us with the entertainment we need to keep us awake.

Our Chaplain presided over our Memorial Program and has blessed us with prayers thanking God for the job we've done and will continue to do along with praying we will get home safely.

Our Guard and Assistant Guard have made sure we have all of our badges and official dues cards and no one is allowed to enter without the Department President's approval.

Our Historian has documented President Marvie's year along with the functions of our Auxiliaries and Districts so we have a history of all that has been done.

Our Pages have fulfilled their duties by seeing to the needs of their Officer along with allowing the Color Team much needed time of the floor.

And our Aide to the National Representative has done a fine job making sure that Past National President Dixie Hild is enjoying her stay in Illinois.

Now it's our time to applaud their efforts and jobs well done. Please come forward to introduce yourselves.

President Marvie, I want to thank you for this appointment and for my exceptional Committee, Jan Bakes, 19<sup>th</sup> District President and Past Department President Lillian Mayer.

President Marvie commented on what an amazing job the Floor Team has done this weekend.

President Marvie introduced our National Representative, Past National President Dixie Hild by reading her bio. National Rep Dixie was given a warm Illinois welcome and President Marvie invited her to say a few words.

**National Rep Dixie** stated that she thoroughly enjoyed the Convention. I do bring greeting to you on behalf of our Auxiliary National President Jane Reape. National President Jane wants to commend every single Auxiliary member of all the truly wonderful work you have done with ***Hands that Serve; Hearts that Care*** this year to improve the lives of all Veterans, service members, their families and the communities. And that you have done here in Illinois I can't believe the awards that you handed out. I can't believe what the amount of hours; the amount of money - \$18,000 - unheard of. Of course, I come from a small Department. I only have 4,000 members. It's hard to imagine some of the numbers I heard this time.

National Rep Dixie went over the talking points she received from National. She thoroughly went over all the Resolutions that will be voted on at National Convention. She mentioned how well National President's Special Project - 3D Patriotic Art - has done; how National is working on the National VFW Auxiliary Magazine becoming strictly a digital magazine yet trying to find an affordable way for those members who cannot access the online magazine a printed copy. She also talked about the National Convention, July 22-27, 2023 in Phoenix, AZ. National Rep Dixie stressed the importance of reporting deaths when they occur and suggested Auxiliaries go through their Life Members at least every two years to make sure none of them have passed away.





President Marvie asked for a final nomination for the **Office of Jr. Vice President**. Hearing no further nominations, **Diane Ahrens** was nominated, she accepted and was elected Department Jr. Vice President by Acclamation.

President Marvie asked for a final nomination for the **Office of Treasurer**.. Hearing no further nominations, **Linda Lorenz** was nominated, she accepted and was elected Department Treasurer by Acclamation.

President Marvie asked for a final nomination for the **Office of Chaplain**. Hearing no further nominations, **Danielle Krull** was nominated, she accepted and was elected Department Chaplain by Acclamation.

President Marvie asked for a final nomination for the **Office of Conductress**. Hearing no further nominations, Terry Adams was nominated, she accepted and was elected Department Conductress by Acclamation.

President Marvie asked for a final nomination for the **Office of Department Guard**. Hearing no further nominations, the names of Chelsa Maynor and Michael Maruszak were put into nomination. Following a Roll Call vote, the Judge announced **Michael Maruszak** was elected Department Guard. President Marvie asked Michael if he accepted; he accepted and President Marvie then announced that Michael Maruszak was elected Department Guard.

President Marvie asked for a final nomination for the **Office of National Council Member Area 5**.. Hearing no further nominations, **Rhonda Borkgren** was nominated, she accepted and was elected National Council Member Area 5 by Acclamation.

President Marvie announced the elections closed. Judge and Tellers were dismissed.

President Marvie asked President-Elect Lynn Smith to come us and announce her 2023-2024 appointments:

Chief of Staff	Jo Lynn Altvatter
Assistant Secretary	Susan Rolando
Assistant Treasurer	Mercie Woolfolk
Historian	Mary Spindler
Patriotic Instructor	Janet Kays
Assistant Conductress	Nancy Rieke
Assistant Guard	Janie Crum
Color Bearer #1	Candance England
Color Bearer #2	Lois Moore
Color Bearer #3	Chelsa Maynor
Color Bearer #4	Laurie Sparwasser
Flag Bearer	Donna Simon
Banner Bearer	Karen Schreer
POW/MIA Flag Bearer	Chris Breyne
Soloist	Isaac Rieke
Events Coordinator	Cheryl Michel
Webmaster	Colette Bishop
President's Pins & Shirts	Chairman - Patricia Caraker Co-Chairman - Janet George Co-Chairman - Diann Dagner

Reports Coordinator	Susan Rolando
Veterans & Family Support	Billie Guthals
Americanism	Janet Kays
Auxiliary Outreach	Cheryl Miller
Buddy Poppy/VFW National Home	Sarah Higginbotham
Extension & Revitalization	Jo Lynn Altvatter
Graves Registration	Danielle Krull
Hospital	Laura Knackstedt
Legislative	Janet Long
Membership	Rhonda Borkgren
Co-Chairman	Paula DeDoncker
Mentoring for Leadership	Barb Howard
Remembrance	Michael Maruszak
Scholarships	Laurie Sparwasser
Youth Activities	Barb Sweger
Fundraising	Laurie Lesperance
Audit Committee	Chairman: Danielle Krull Committee: Terry Adams Michael Maruszak
Budget Committee	Chairman: Pat Martyn Committee: Lynn Smith Cindy Watters Diane Ahrens Linda Lorenz Marvie Wisniewski Colette Bishop Tammy Napier Jo Lynn Altvatter
District President of the Year	Chairman: Ruth Smit-Bigos Committee: Diane Pencak Mercie Woolfolk
Deputy Chiefs of Staff	Mary Lee Marvie Wisniewski Paula DeDoncker Nancy Rieke

**Recess:** After a 10 minute recess, the Installation of Officers began. President Marvie asked the Chaplain to close the Bible.

**Convention resumed** with President Marvie asking the Chaplain to open the Bible.

**Installation:** Mistress of Ceremonies - Jo Lynn Altvatter                      Installing Officer - Janet Long

Following Installation, President Lynn Smith said a few words. Five years ago I was elected Department Guard. I pledged to do my best and every year after that. I now stand before you telling you I will do my best but only with your help. Remember, we are a team. Together every Auxiliary member is on this team. Just because I hold the title of Department President doesn't mean that I am above you. I am a member just the same as you. I want us to strive to make this Department better and stronger than others. So if we can put our petty jealousies, personality differences aside and remember we are here for our Veterans. I would like to thank my Auxiliary 5522 Vienna and District 15 for the support and confidence they have in me. To my family for their love and support. They are not with me today

because of work and baseball games. To my VFW family, so I am not really alone without family -- I have you. You are my family. To Janet George who has been a friend of mine since we were 5. Our parents were in the same Auxiliary and Post and we grew up together. To Jo Lynn Altvatter, my roomie and the one who tries to keep me in line and she guides me and is one of my mentors. My theme is Be A Warrior. Along with our National President Carla's theme Banding Together for Our Veterans. If we put this together, we will be able to move mountains. So Warriors, the time is now to show the world our great work, love, devotion to our Veterans. Thank you.

Mistress of Ceremonies Jo Lynn asked the Installing Conductress to escort the Jr. Past Department President to the Altar for the presentation of her Past President's Pin. She then asked the Installing Conductress to seek out Melanie Eckert who will present Jr. Past President her pin. Jr. Past President Marvie was then escorted back to the President's station.

Mistress of Ceremonies Jo Lynn asked if there were any presentations for Lynn, followed by presentations to Marvie.

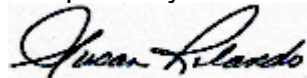
Farewell words from Marvie: I have had a great year. Without you guys I'm not sure how I would have made a full year. Every District has made me feel at home. To Mary Lee - thank you for a place to sleep. To Nancy Rieke - you keep me laughing all the time and it's just been wonderful. I really have felt at home in every single District. I keep telling you that I am coming back for the fun stuff you invited me to because I don't have an official title any longer and I can just have fun and kick back with all of you. Thank you to each and everyone of you for everything you have done to make this year truly filled with more memories that I can ever imagine. Thank you all.

Mistress of Ceremonies Jo Lynn thanked everyone for staying through the Installation and asked the 2022-2023 officer to return to their stations for the closing ceremonies. The gavel was returned to President Marvie.

President Marvie asked if there was anything further to come before this Convention. Hearing none, the business was concluded. Officers were asked to present themselves at the Altar for the closing ceremonies.

Closing ceremonies were held in accordance with the Ritual. The 99<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention is now closed; to be reopened at the call of the Department President.

Respectfully Submitted,



Susan Rolando, Assistant Secretary  
IL VFW Auxiliary - Department of IL