



AUXILIARY NEWS ~ August 2026

The Official Communication of VFW Auxiliary Department of New York

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Dear Auxiliary Sisters and Brothers,

Buzzing into the 2026–2027 term as your Department President, I am filled with profound gratitude and excitement to serve alongside you. I'd like to give special thanks and recognize the Past Department Presidents & my advisor Sandy Flynn. Thank you for your guidance, lessons, and friendship. To my friend & mentor Lynne Loga for the beautiful nomination and for keeping me on the right path; to my husband for encouraging my passion and escorting me into my installation; to my family for the unforgettable installation surprise visit; and to my Auxiliary, Adirondack 2475 and District 3 for the continued, unwavering support. Lastly, Past State Commander Michael Hoag. It was an honor to have been installed by you...a memory I will cherish forever. Thank you.

A special thank you to the new Department Secretary Amber Sullivan. Truly appreciate you for stepping into this role and for everything you have done so far! Kudos to the budgeting team of Kim White & Judy Lefebvre for educating me on the process and securing an approved, balanced budget. To newly elected Department Guard Kim Cavallo, Congratulations! My best advice for your new journey (which was also given to me) is to "watch, learn & take notes."

OMTI was held in July this year and was very well attended. Thank you to OMTI Dean, Karen Dotson, PDP for a fun-filled, educational weekend. For clarity, the training was intended for all members wishing to deepen their understanding of our organization, not exclusively for officers.

To our Program chairs, I look forward to seeing how you will promote our National Programs to our Auxiliaries. For the first-time chairs, I have total confidence that you will do an amazing job! To the Auxiliaries, please read your Guidebook Programs thoroughly and stay diligent with deadlines so your auxiliary can take home an award at the next State Convention!

My Special Project, "**Helmets to Hives**", is a therapeutic beekeeping program that helps veterans manage PTSD symptoms, improve vital social connections, relieve everyday anxiety and foster long-term emotional well-being. Special Project Chair Lynne Loga and I challenge every auxiliary to create fun, engaging fundraisers to support this vital cause. Let's work together to make a major impact for our veterans!

There are some critical administrative deadlines I need to bring to your attention to be a healthy Auxiliary

- **July 31, 2026:** Deadline for all Treasurers and Presidents to be bonded via MALTA.
- **August 31, 2026:** Auxiliaries without completed bonding will be suspended.
- **September 30, 2026:** Donation Report Forms must be submitted to Kim White.



Thank you for your dedication, your service, and your trust. Let's make this a great year by

"Serving America's Heroes" because we stay "Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans"

Loyally, *Belinda J. Cole*, Department President

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Department President Belinda Cole

6 Beach Street ▪ Hudson Falls, NY 12839
518-260-1694 | bcolenyvfw@gmail.com

Department Secretary Amber Sullivan

2 Donna Lane ▪ Binghamton, NY 13903
607-245-6106 | amber.vfwa@gmail.com

Department Treasurer Kimberly White

1799 Fred Road ▪ Schenectady, NY 12303
518-275-7283 | kwhitewvt@aol.com

Auxiliary News Editor Deborah A. Fucina

980 Beach Road ▪ Cheektowaga, NY 14225
716-472-4784 | debbs95ss@verizon.net

PDP/OFFICER AUGUST BIRTHDATES

**21 – Denise
McHugh, PDP**

**28 – Nina
LeFrois, PDP**



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Aug 7 | National Purple Heart Day |
| Aug 13-16 | National President Donna Mills Visit
Lake George/Glens Falls Area |
| Aug 31 | Aux Presidents & Treasurers must be bonded. |
| Aug 31 | <u>DEADLINE</u> to submit Q2 (Apr-Jun) Audit to DNYA
Treasurer Kim White. |
| Aug 31 | <u>DEADLINE</u> to process Bond – or risk suspension. <i>If before JULY 31</i> , higher points given for the Circle of Excellence. |
| Sep 7 | Labor Day |

GENERAL ORDERS # 1 - AUGUST 2026 (Must be read at the FIRST meeting following receipt before being filed.)

1. Having been duly elected by acclamation and installed as Department President at the 101st Annual Convention held June 10-14, 2026 at the Marriott Hotel in Albany, NY, and working in accordance with the Bylaws and Ritual of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary, I, Belinda Cole, hereby assume command of the VFW Auxiliary Department of New York. All previous appointments are declared null and void and the new Officers and Chairmen assignments are now in effect.
2. Official communications intended for the **Department President** shall be addressed to:
Belinda Cole, DNYA President - 6 Beech Street - Hudson Falls, NY 12839.
3. Requests for rulings shall come through the VFW Auxiliary Secretary, by order of the VFW Auxiliary President, and shall bear the VFW Auxiliary seal. All requests must be in writing and addressed to the Department President who shall forward the request for a ruling to the National President.
4. The **Official Headquarters** for the **VFW Auxiliary Department of New York** is hereby declared to be located at: **1799 Fred Road - Schenectady, NY 12303.**
5. All mail intended for the **Department Secretary** should be addressed to:
Amber Sullivan, DNYA Secretary - 2 Donna Lane - Binghamton, NY 13903.
6. Checks intended for the Department of New York VFW Auxiliary shall be payable to **"VFW Auxiliary Department of New York (VFW Aux DNY)"** earmarked for the fund intended. Checks for Department business should be mailed to the Department Treasurer: **Kim White, DNYA Treasurer - 1799 Fred Road - Schenectady, NY 12303.**
7. Checks for specific projects or fundraisers should be mailed to the Program Chairman unless otherwise specified.
8. The VFW Auxiliary President shall countersign all checks drawn by the Treasurer. VFW Auxiliaries may possess debit cards but may NOT possess a credit card. The debit card shall be in possession of the Treasurer. The disbursement of money shall be upon motion made and passed at a meeting except for the transmittal of membership dues, which does not require a motion. Refer to Sec. 810A- Auxiliary President and Sec 813A Auxiliary Treasurer of the current Bylaws.
9. VFW Auxiliaries are reminded of the suggested donation of \$2.00 per member to the Cancer Grant Fund based on the Auxiliary membership quota as of June 30, 2026.
10. VFW Auxiliaries are encouraged to donate a minimum of \$0.10 (10 cents) per member for the VFW National Home "Health and Happiness" based on the June 30, 2026 membership quota. Treasurers may process this donation directly through MALTA or mail a check made payable to **"VFW Auxiliary"** earmarked **"Health & Happiness"** directly to: VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, 406 West 34th St., 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111.
11. To ensure compliance, any Auxiliary member designated to perform an official visit on behalf of the Department or District President is required to attend a School of Instruction within their respective District. All official visits must be finalized no later than February 15, 2027. Given the potential for severe winter weather, early completion of these visits is highly encouraged.
12. It shall be the duty of the Trustees to ensure that the offices of the VFW Auxiliary President and Treasurer are bonded with an indemnity company authorized by the National Headquarters or the Department as surety in a sum at least 1.25 the amount of funds and value of property for which, so far as can be anticipated, the VFW Auxiliary President and Treasurer may be accountable. Refer to Sec. 814- Trustees, Duties of (All Levels) of the current Bylaws.
13. The President shall hold the original bond for both the President and Treasurer. A copy of the President and Treasurer bonds shall be incorporated into the Minutes book.
14. Per VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters: There is no minimum age requirement for the bond to cover an officer. If a loss occurs, the bonding company may legally pursue indemnity against the person regardless of age. Therefore, any member in good standing is eligible to hold the office of President or Treasurer.
15. Presidents on all levels shall, within thirty (30) calendar days of assuming office, submit to the Commander of the corresponding VFW unit a financial report and membership count of their Auxiliary. Refer to Sec. 810- President, Duties of (All Levels) of the current Bylaws.
16. Auxiliary Treasurers shall, upon the death of an Auxiliary member, immediately enter the name and date of death in MALTA or send the information to the Department Secretary.
17. It shall be the duty of the Auxiliary Trustees to properly audit the books and records of the Treasurer and Secretary no later than thirty (30) days following the expiration of each quarterly period. Refer to Sec. 814- Trustees, Duties (All Levels) of the current Bylaws. Quarterly Audit report forms must be received by the Department Treasurer no later than sixty (60) days following the end of each quarter as follows: August 31st (April 1-Jun 30); November 30th (July 1- Sept. 30); February 28th (Oct 1- Dec. 31); May 31st (Jan. 1- Mar. 31, 2023). The quarterly Audit report form should be submitted to the Department Treasurer, Kim White, by USPS mail or scanned and emailed only. The Audit report form may not be sent via text message.
18. Auxiliaries should submit the 2026-2027 Donation Report Form by September 30, 2026, to the Department Treasurer.
19. All Department correspondence to the Auxiliaries is to be sent to the Auxiliary President. The Auxiliary President is an elected officer and is responsible for seeing that the correspondence is properly complied with. They have the authority to act on the correspondence if it is something that must be taken care of before their next Auxiliary meeting.

By order of:

Belinda Cole

Belinda Cole
Department President

Attest:

Amber Sullivan

Amber Sullivan
Department Secretary

Congratulations To All The Department Award Winners!!

The following awards were unavailable for the June Newsletter and were announced during the June 2026 Convention.

PRESIDENTS AND RUNNER-UP PRESIDENTS OF THE YEAR

Auxiliary President of the Year

GROUP 1: Amber Sullivan – Aux 7276 – D2
GROUP 2: Gina Rabideau Norton – Aux 3357 – D9
GROUP 3: Joan Russell - Aux 1374 - D2
GROUP 4: Frances Inslee - Aux 9592 - D10
GROUP 5: Lori Juskiewicz – Aux 7765 – D2
GROUP 6: Ruth Huber – Aux 8734 – D6

Auxiliary President Runner-Up

Steven Kemna - Aux 5681 - D6
Guy Hoffman – Aux 600 – D4
Pat Rabb – Aux 1017 – D6
Judy Lefebvre – Aux 309 – D9
Cyndee Butler – Aux 5913 – D2
Rodger Keenan – Aux 524 – D5

District President of the Year: Aurelia Taylor – District 6

District President Runner-Up: Lisa Kae Raplee – District 8

MEMBERSHIP ▪ Chris Leavor, Chairman

Brooklyn Bridge Award: Greatest Numerical Increase in Current Membership-Franklinville Aux 9487 (D6)

Blue Awards: Group 1-Aux 551 (D1) Group 2-Aux 8726 (D8) Group 3-Aux 6778 (D8) Group 4-Aux 7127 (D5)
Group 5-Aux 5913 (D2) Group 6-Aux 9487 (D6)

WAYS AND MEANS ▪ Charlene Carnright, Chairman

*** 9-Month Calendar Raffle Winner:**

\$200 – Jun: Aux 653 (D3)

*** Weekend Getaway:**

Gina Norton, Aux 3357 (D9)

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS

The following are corrections/changes that were reported after the Mini-Directory was distributed at the 2025 Convention.

📖 PDP Justine Robles-Address Correction: 111 South 3rd St., Apt.#1C, Brooklyn, NY 11249

📖 Department Chaplain Craig Keitel-New Email Address: craig.keitelvfwauxny@gmail.com

📖 District 9 President Jeff Platt-Email Correction: jpsaturn7@gmail.com

📖 Aux 358 (D3)-New Secretary: Mikayla Mahar, 142 W. Milton Rd., Lot 10, Ballston Spa, NY 12020•518-495-6878 ▪
mikaylamahar@yahoo.com

📖 Aux 8495 (D8) Secretary New Email: Robin Reininger reiningerrobin@yahoo.com

📖 Aux 6251 (D6) President New Address: Georgian Davis, Maryvale East Senior Apartments, 100 Moorman Drive – Bldg. 120 –
Apt. 101, Cheektowaga, NY 14225

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OFFICIAL VISITS ♦ PDP Irene Rohde, Coordinator
40 Schuylkill Court ▪ Carmel, NY 10512
845-661-6169 ▪ Imallard4@yahoo.com



Get on your mark, get set, and off to do Inspections!!

- ☒ Official Visits will be scheduled again this year by your District president. It is the District Presidents responsibility to either do the visit themselves or assign a qualified person to complete the Official Visit.
- ☒ As you know the filing of the 990N seems to be the biggest issue on the Official Visit form. The accepted date is required. This form will have accepted 990N right on the paperwork from the IRS.
- ☒ The deadline for all Auxiliaries to be inspected for the 26-27 Auxiliary year is February 15, 2027. Let's see who the first District will be to be 100% inspected & be awarded those BEE EYEGLASSES. Believe me, they are stunning!!
- ☒ If you have any questions, please call or email me.

Lovally, **Irene PDP**



PROGRAM COORDINATOR ♦ PDP Jackie Herbert, Chairman
P.O. Box 138 ▪ Campbell, NY 14821
607-527-1005 ▪ jackievwauxny@stny.rr.com



A new year for Program reporting has started! I'm happy to continue as your Program Coordinator this year and truly look forward to working with our Department Chairmen and each of you, our wonderful members.

You need to submit one report, plus a year-end report, to each of the Department Chairmen. Many Auxiliaries send monthly reports to the Program Chairmen. This helps with organizing the year-end reports and gives President Belinda an idea of who she chooses to give awards to at the end of the year.

NEW THIS YEAR – DISTRICT REPORTING!! the reports need to be sent to each Department Chairmen after your meetings by the District Chairmen or Secretary. President Belinda is also using District reporting to judge District President of the Year awards.

On the Department Website vwauxny.org, you will see the Program Coordinator's Report. Each District has their own page with a list of the Auxiliaries in the District. When Auxiliary Chairmen send a report to the Department Chairmen, you will see an "X" in whatever Program that has been reported. In this way, you can keep track of what Programs you sent reports to and what Programs you need to work on.

Auxiliaries need to have their reports to the Department Chairmen by the **1st of the month**. This gives the Department Chairmen time to gather all information for their reports for me which are due between the **5th to the 7th of each month**. If a program has donations/money, the Chairmen must reconcile with the Department Treasurer before credit is given. My deadline for the Department Website is the **10th of the month**.

Remember, if you don't see an "X" for a program you reported in, you need to call the Department Program Chairmen to make sure she/he has received your report. Do not call me as I cannot give you credit or change the spreadsheet.

Sometimes abbreviations are used:

- Veterans and Family Support – VFS
- Buddy Poppy – BP
- National Home – NH
- Health and Happiness – HH
- Department President's Special Project – Sp. Proj.
- Historian Relations – HR
- Mentoring/Leadership – M/L

Program Chairman's Report Form

D = Donations Received

P = Participation

N = Health & Happiness Donations

D/P = Donations & Participation

Grouped Together by Chairman

Programs will have either 1 or 2 columns. Some Chairmen need to separate donations and participation for their National Ambassadors. The "**D**" stands for **donations** received. The "**P**" is for **participation**, which means that you have reported; the "**N**" is for the **Health & Happiness** donations you report. A "**D/P**" column means the Department Chairmen **groups donations and participation together**.

For Official Visits you will see the DATE of the visit.

There are two columns for Membership. The 100% column is when your Auxiliary reaches 100%, you will receive an "X". The 100%+ states the actual percentage your Auxiliary is over 100%.

As we continue to be "**Busy as a Bee, Working Together for Our Veterans**" we are also "**Honoring America's Veterans**" by reporting! Let's strive to get the spreadsheet filled in with "X"s by Christmas!!!

Loyally, **Jackie, PDP**

WAYS & MEANS ♦ Cathy Howard, Chairman
9781 Welsh District Road ▪ Remsen, NY 13438
315-796-2428 ▪ cthoward1994@gmail.com



Greetings Members of the Great Department of NY VFW Auxiliary!

This year's Ways and Means Program is off to a great start with its first ever **Golf Tournament**, set for **August 8th** in **Lowville, NY**. Donations and sponsorships have been rolling in and we are gearing up for a fun day of golf, fellowship, and maybe even a little bragging rights! Hope to see you there!



There is also a lot happening at the upcoming Fall Conference September 18-19:

9-Month Calendar Raffle: The first \$100 drawing will be at the September Fall Conference, so be sure to send in your raffle tickets to Chairman Cathy Howard or bring them to Conference.

Shoot for the Green \$\$ Raffle: Tickets will be distributed to each Auxiliary at the Fall Conference, so be sure to stop by the Ways and Means table to pick up. All drawings will take place at the 2027 June Convention, where a total of \$5,000 will be awarded!

Scratch-Off Lottery Tickets: Each Auxiliary is requested to donate **\$10** in scratch-off lottery tickets to be raffled off at Fall Conference. *Will you be one of the lucky winners?*

Mystery Prize Raffle: If scratch-offs don't interest you, how about taking a chance on a prize raffle? Check out the Ways and Means table to see what you can win!

As you can see, there are many ways to support the Ways and Means Program – and that translates into more resources to support our Veterans, their families, and our communities!

Thank you for everything you do, as we stay... ***“Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans”***

Loyally, **Cathy**



SCHOLARSHIP ♦ Debby McCarthy, Chairman
13775 Leitchfield Road ▪ Eastview, KY 42732
270-765-9341 ▪ debramccarthy35@gmail.com



Greetings from Kentucky!!!

That's right, I'm back this year I will be your Scholarship Chairman. Please note, my e-mail has changed from last year so make the change or I won't get your information. My e-mail for Scholarship is **debramccarthy35@gmail.com**. Also, if anyone needs to mail me your reports, please allow a few extra days for the mail to get here. My mailing address is 13775 Leitchfield Road ▪ Eastview, KY 42732. I need your report by the 1st of the month so make sure you get it in the mail before the 1st!! There are some ideas I have to promote this program and with all your work and diligence we will have a great year. Mark your calendars for October 6, 2026. A ZOOM meeting is in the works for our Scholarship program. More information will be coming but for now, **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!** I want to be available, promote this program, ride the red carpet and have a great year. Don't hesitate to reach out, I will help you the best of my ability.

Busy as a Bee Working for Our Veterans

Loyally, **Debby**
Scholarship Chairman



Inspirational Message
from DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN
Craig E. Keitel



First, I would like to thank the Department for trusting me to fill the position as your Department Chaplin for this coming year. It is a great honor and privilege.

Please remember that **August 7th** is **National Purple Heart Day**, recognizing our service members who have been wounded or killed in combat. Please keep them in your heart and prayers on that day and every day.

Heavenly Father, With grateful hearts, we lift up those who have worn the uniform of our nation and answered the call to serve with courage, honor and sacrifice. We give special thanks for the brave Purple Heart recipients whose wounds bear witness to their devotion and selfless love for others.

Lord, surround these Heroes and all our Veterans with Your peace and unfailing presence. Strengthen those who carry visible scars and comfort those whose wounds remain unseen. Grant them healing, renewed purpose, and the assurance that their sacrifices are remembered and deeply appreciated.

Bless their families, who have stood beside them with steadfast love and unwavering support. May homes be filled with understanding, hope and unity. Guide our communities to honor and care for those who have borne the burdens of war and service.

Inspire us to live with the same courage, integrity and commitment demonstrated by these men and women. Help us to be worthy of their sacrifice by seeking peace, showing compassion and serving one another with humility.

May Your light shine upon every Veteran and every Purple Heart recipient. Fill their hearts with hope, their spirits with strength and their days with the comfort of knowing they are cherished, respected and never forgotten.

May the memories of those who gave everything be held in eternal honor, and may we always strive to preserve the freedoms they defended.

In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Loyally Submitted, **Craig E. Keitel**



VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT ♦ Kim Cavallo, Chairman
61-58 71st Street • Middle Village, NY 11379
516-458-3930 • kcavallo1920@gmail.com



Congratulations to our DNYA President Belinda, Line Officers, PDP's, all our Amazing Auxiliaries and their Members!!

I am truly honored to continue serving as your 2026–2027 Veterans & Family Support Chairperson and look forward to working alongside President Belinda and her team as we carry on the important mission of our Auxiliary.

The Veterans & Family Support Program remains focused on standing strong for our Veterans and their families through meaningful action. Please remember to donate generously using Donation Form 1 in your Program Guide before September 30th—your support makes a direct impact on the lives of those who have served.

"Trees for Our Troops" & "In Lieu of Cards" Order forms for Trees for Our Troops and In Lieu of Cards were included in the President's packets that were distributed at Convention or mailed out to you. These wonderful programs send trees and menorahs overseas to remind our service members that we are thinking of them during the holiday season.

Stop 22: Now is the perfect time to begin planning your Stop 22 events. These events raise awareness about veteran suicide and provide an opportunity for communities to come together in support. Whether it's a walk, craft event, workout, or any activity lasting 22 minutes, your efforts help spread awareness and raise funds for vital Veteran and Military Support Programs. Every event, no matter the size, matters.

I am excited to hear from Auxiliaries across our state and to read your reports highlighting the incredible work you do in your communities. Your dedication truly makes a difference in the lives of our veterans and their families. Thank you for all you do in service to our veterans.

"Serving America's Heroes" because we stay "Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans"

Loyally, **Kim C.**



“BUDDY”® POPPY ♦ Flora Becker, Chairman
201 Fall Street – Apt 114 ▪ Seneca Falls, NY 13148
315-521-2675 ▪ loveourveterans17@yahoo.com



It was wonderful seeing everyone at OMTI, and the trivia was a lot of fun. We learned about the “Buddy”® Poppy — its meaning of remembrance, how it’s worn on the left side as a sacred symbol, and that it was first introduced in 1922. We also covered MALTA resources and the four remembrance colors: red, white, purple, and black.

Summer is a great time for “Buddy”® Poppy drives at parades, fairs, carnivals, and even local businesses. Always wear your Auxiliary apparel so the community knows who we are. Anyone of any age can help distribute poppies — they are *not* sold but offered in hopes of receiving donations for the Relief Fund.

Let’s keep educating our communities about the meaning behind the “Buddy”® Poppy and honor those who gave their lives. Be proud, be visible, and be a busy bee — and don’t forget to smile while handing them out.

“Serving America’s Heroes” because we stay “Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans”



Loyally, **Flora**



NATIONAL HOME ♦ Karen Scheuneman, Chairman
126 Vista Drive ▪ Arcade, NY 14009
585-492-1994 ▪ wdstock90@yahoo.com



There’s a new buzz around the VFW National Home Program. It’s all because you’ve joined the hive!

Our Hive’s Mission

Together, we’re pollinating hope for active military, Veterans, and their families. Our work provides essential resources, opens doors to education, and builds the kind of community that keeps our colony strong. Your energy is the nectar that fuels it all.

Every Bee Has a Role

As part of this dedicated swarm, you’ll help organize events, fundraisers, and spread the word about the VFW National Home. No skill is too small — every worker bee makes the hive thrive. We are excited to see how your talents will help us grow.

How You Can Help the Hive Thrive: Health & Happiness Fund

The VFW National Home for Children operates without government funding — it runs on community support alone. That’s where your Auxiliary comes in.

Your donation to the Health & Happiness Fund directly supports:

Christmas Gifts for children on campus

Graduation Gifts to celebrate milestones

Maintenance of Auxiliary-sponsored Buildings

Emergency repairs & renovations

Hive Goal: Contribute \$.10 or more per member based on your Auxiliary’s June 30, 2026 membership quota.

Department Goal: 100% Auxiliary participation.

To donate by Mail or MALTA: see VFW Auxiliary Department of New York Guidebook for details.



Thank you for choosing to be part of this hive. Your commitment produces real honey – sweet, tangible support for VFW National Home. Together, let’s make this year count.

“Serving America’s Heroes” because we stay “Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans”

Loyally, **Karen**



PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL PROJECT ♦ Lynne Loga, Chairman
75A Main Street ▪ So. Glens Falls, NY 12803
518-796-7942 ▪ mybuddy2454@gmail.com

President Belinda (aka "B") has chosen the ***Helmets to Hives*** beekeeping program as her special project this year. Honeybees and Veterans share remarkable traits: discipline, regimented duties, and teamwork. Beekeeping serves as a proven, therapeutic tool to relieve anxiety, PTSD, and foster well-being while connecting veterans with civilians. Here is how YOU can get involved and help support this important initiative: Show your support by ordering ***Helmets to Hives*** custom shirts (short sleeve, long sleeve, or polo). **Orders and payments must be received by August 31st** to guarantee pickup at the Fall Conference in September. Please mail your order form and payment directly to me at the address above. We will be selling special coffee mugs during the Fall Conference for a \$10 donation.

Now hold onto your honey pots, it is time to create a little buzz across the State. President Belinda and I are issuing a challenge. We want to see who can come up with the most creative, unique, and successful way to raise money for our veterans through the ***Helmets to Hives*** project. The competition is officially on, and it is time to get buzzing! Show us why your Auxiliary is the most un-bee-lievable team in the State. I cannot wait to read your reports and see exactly how you are staying *Busy as a Bee Working Together for our Veterans!*

Shirt order form is located on Page 14 – Deadline August 31, 2026.

Loyally, *Lynne Loga*



AMERICANISM ♦ Rebecca Sweet, Chairman
540 West Mountain Road ▪ Queensbury, NY 12804
518-879-6735 ▪ sweetnana32003@yahoo.com

Dear Brothers & Sisters, I want to thank President Belinda for giving me the honor of serving as the Department Americanism Chairman. What a year to begin—our Nation's 250th Birthday! This is a moment to celebrate the courage, grit, and patriotism that made the United States the greatest beacon of freedom in the world.

Our founders and our first Veterans fought tyranny so we could stand tall as a free people. Their sacrifice gave us the heroes, symbols, and songs that still stir our hearts today. As we support the brave men and women who continue that fight, we must also teach our youth, and those who come here seeking freedom, what it truly means to be an American. Let us honor our Flag, our history, and the ideals that unite us as one Nation under God.

- Learn how to make a **Rocket Flag** by following the Department website <https://www.vfwauxny.org> or Facebook - DeptofNYVFWAux <https://www.facebook.com/DeptofNYVFWAux>.
- The first deadline will be **Wreaths Across America** on October 31, 2026.
- **REPORT, REPORT, REPORT** and read the Program Guidebook for more information.



Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans

Loyally, *Rebecca*

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS – Continued from Page 3

📖 VFW NY Headquarters – adjutantdny@vfwny.com

📖 **Mini Directory Corrections:** Jeff Platt-D9 President *email* – ipsaturn7@gmail.com;

Robin Ireland D4 President *address*: 29190 St. Route 3, Black River, NY 13612;

Jean Sabol D5 Deputy Chief of Staff *address*: 372 Hiawatha Rd., Owego, NY 13827;

Roberta Boone POW/MIA Flag Bearer *Phone*: C: 518-727-2082 *Post*: 518-584-9686 *Email*: bbertieboo@aol.com;

Sharon Connolly, PDP – *email* - connolly.sharon@ymail.com

Barbara Hodges, PDP – *email* - bbahodges@aol.com

Jackie Herbert, PDP – *email* - jackievfwauxny@stny.rr.com



FROM the DESK of the DEPARTMENT SECRETARY ♦ Amber Sullivan



607-245-6106 • amber.vfwa@gmail.com

Greetings, fellow members of the New York VFW Auxiliary! 🎉 Welcome to the New Auxiliary Year!

As a fresh face at the Department level, I am delighted to introduce myself as your new Secretary. I have the honor of stepping into this role following the remarkable Chris Leavor, who has moved on to join the Line of Officers. Chris has left me with enormous shoes to fill, and I am endlessly grateful for her support in making this transition as seamless as possible. A heartfelt thank you also goes to President Belinda for her trust in me to take on this position.

Staying Connected: The *Auxiliary News* is the official Department newsletter. Every Auxiliary President receives a free copy. The President's letter on the cover is an **OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION** from the Department President directly and is to be read in its entirety at the first meeting after receipt. If there are any General Orders or Special Orders, they also are required to be read. If you would like to receive an electronic copy, please email me so I can add you to our distribution list. Chris has graciously provided her list, and I will be expanding it to ensure everyone is informed. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I am here to help and eager to learn from each of you.

Communication Channels: All **COMMUNICATIONS** from **NATIONAL, DEPARTMENT, and/or DISTRICT** are **OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS** and are to be shared with your members. The cost of USPS mailing information is prohibitive so most communications will come via email. My primary method of disseminating information will be through the **District Presidents**. They will pass on communications to their respective Secretaries, who will then share it with their component Auxiliaries. This process is crucial, as it ensures that official communications are shared at your meetings. I've noticed that sometimes emails aren't reaching all our members, and I hope to improve this, but need the help of our District Presidents to accomplish this goal.

Embracing Our Journey: Thank you for your patience and kindness as I navigate my new role. I look forward to working with each of you. I am thrilled to be a part of the VFW Auxiliary "hive," where we all work together *"Serving America's Heroes"* and remain *"Busy as a Bee Working Together for our Veterans."*

Loyally, **Amber**



CANCER GRANT DONATION FUND ♦ Tracy Damato, Chairman

32 Old Oak Lane • Levittown, NY 11756

516-749-2890 • tracy053169@aol.com

The VFW Auxiliary relies on the continued support of our members to sustain the Cancer Grant Fund. Eligible members may apply for up to two grants in their lifetime, each valued at \$550. The Grant Application can be downloaded from the National Website, Department of NY Website, the Department of NY Program Guidebook, or by contacting me for help.

- **THE CANCER GRANT RAFFLE IS BACK!** A ticket for each Auxiliary member has been included in the President's Package. Three winners will be chosen at both the Fall and Spring Conferences. Donations made through MALTA will earn participation credits for the Cancer Grant Donation Fund; however, they do not qualify for raffle entries. Auxiliaries wishing to receive both participation credits and raffle entries should NOT enter the donation in MALTA but instead mail their donation and completed raffle ticket stubs directly to me.
- **FALL CONFERENCE:** Each Auxiliary is asked to bring a "Holiday Themed" Basket to be raffled.
- **SPRING CONFERENCE:** Auxiliaries are asked to donate a \$10 (or more) nationally recognized gift card and two (2) packages of 6 cookies, brownies, or cupcakes.
- **LUMINARIAS are back @ \$5 each!!** Luminarias are designed to honor loved ones touched by cancer & will be prominently displayed at the June 2027 Convention.

If you need help with donations or have questions, please contact me.

"Serving America's Heroes" because we stay "Busy as a Bee working Together for Our Veterans"

Loyally, **Tracy**



MEMBERSHIP ♦ Karen A. Dotson, PDP, Chairman
19 Calgary Lane ▪ Binghamton, NY 13901
607-648-9271 ▪ kdvfwaux@aol.com



As we begin our 2026-2027 Program Year, I am encouraging everyone to be a “busy bee” for our Membership Program. Membership is the backbone of our organization; therefore, in order for our organization (Auxiliary, District, Dept & National) to grow and continue serving our veterans and their families we need to invest in our membership.

One of the most frequently asked questions is eligibility for a potential Auxiliary member. In order for an individual to be considered for membership (outlined on the VFW Aux Eligibility Wheel), his/her eligible veteran:

- Must have honorable service in the US Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard).
- Must have served in any foreign war, insurrection, or expedition as reflected by one of the following:
 1. A VFW authorized campaign or service medal of the United States.
 2. Receipt of Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay, as verified by a copy of a Leave & Earning Statement (LES) issued by the US Armed Forces.
 3. Service in Korea for 30 consecutive/60 non-consecutive days after June 30, 1949.

The eligible veteran & the prospective VFW Auxiliary member must have a familial relationship within two generations; step, half & adopted family members meet the “two generations” standard set forth by the IRS. Proof of the veteran’s service to establish eligibility for membership rests with the applicant. Information on a veteran’s service record can be obtained by contacting the National Archives and Records Administration at: 1-866-272-6272 or online at www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/.

Just a quick reminder – **August Buzzing Bee Award**: Auxiliaries that achieve 75% in membership by August 31, will be placed in a drawing for \$50.

I look forward to working with all members this year as “busy bees” in support of our Membership program by **“Serving America’s Heroes” because we stay “Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans.”**

Loyally, Karen Dotson, PDP



YOUTH ACTIVITIES ♦ Lori Juskiewicz, Chairman
30 White Drive ▪ Milan, NY 12571
917-780-8229 ▪ lori@vfw7765.org *NEW EMAIL*



I want to begin by thanking President Belinda for choosing me to serve as this year's Youth Activities Program Chairman. It is an honor to support a program that helps our young people grow in Patriotism, Literacy, and Community Involvement.

This year we are introducing the **Lending Library** program to help place books into the hands of youth and encourage a love of reading. Please see the Department Guidebook for more information. Through Literacy, we continue to encourage reading that highlights American values and honors our Veterans.

We will also be promoting the **R.A.P. (Random Acts of Patriotism) Cards** that Auxiliary members hand out when they see youth demonstrating patriotic behavior. These cards can be printed by going into Malta>Member Resources>Youth Activities. Increasing youth involvement in Auxiliary activities remains a key focus. Their participation brings energy to our events and strengthens our connection to the community through Patriotism.

Please note that this year's **Illustrating America Art Contest** has an earlier deadline than in past years period. Be sure to check the Youth Activities section of the guidebook for specific dates and full program details.

Remember that reports are due the first of each month. If you ever have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to me. I am here to support you throughout the year.

“Busy as a Bee Working Together for Our Veterans.”

Loyally, Lori J.



HOSPITAL ♦ Marie-Aymee Fisk, Chairman
226 State Route 86 • Paul Smiths, NY 12790
513-354-3037 • makfisk@gmail.com



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

It is my honor to be your Hospital Chairman for the 2026-2027 year. I joined the VFW AUX under my father for was a Vietnam Vet - Special Ops. I have worked as a nurse in 2 VA Outpatient Health Clinics in Saranac Lake and Westport for the past 14 years. I consider it an honor and privilege to serve those who have protected our country. We serve about 1100 veterans. Our female Veteran numbers are slowly rising.

I am already receiving reports of service for our Veterans through money, books, clothing and other essential items. Give a Vet a ride to a medical appointment. It is important for our Veterans to know they are not forgotten. This is one way we show them our appreciation for their service.

The holiday season will soon be here, so start planning now for events, donations, cards, pictures and letters. Ask your local facilities that care for our Veterans for what they need. Let us show our love and support through small gifts of hats, scarves and mittens. Don't forget to get your community members involved. If you know someone who likes to knit, crochet or sew, ask them if they would be willing to make some items if the material is provided. Think outside the box.

Reach out to me with any questions or concerns. Perhaps your Auxiliary has an idea that you want me to share with others, and I will include that in my next article. I am available via email, text and phone. Don't forget to send me photos that I can put up on a board to display at conference. Remember to include your Auxiliary Post and District numbers and use the form that is in the Program Guidebook.

So, let's get ***Busy as Bees, Working Together Serving Our Veterans.***

Loyally, **Marie-Aymee K Fisk**



EXTENSION-REVITALIZATION-MENTORING ♦ PDP Ruth Huber, Chief of Staff
9511 Bucktooth Run • Little Valley, NY 14755
716-801-2003 • poofalina@yahoo.com

Welcome to a new and exciting year!! I hope your Auxiliary has heard from the representative who has been assigned to make the **Annual Official Visit** to your Auxiliary. The goal is to ensure that your Auxiliary is in good working order. To accomplish this, we rely largely on the President, Treasurer and Secretary to ensure that all the required documents are on hand and of course the Official Visit Form worksheet has been filled out. Please refer to the list of items you will need which was supplied when you received the worksheet and confirmation letter.

Mentoring and encouraging members are essential to building a strong, active, and welcoming VFW Auxiliary. Effective mentoring helps newer and returning members understand the purpose, traditions, and responsibilities of the Auxiliary while giving them the confidence to participate more fully. Encouragement creates a positive environment where members feel valued, supported, and inspired to use their talents in service to Veterans, Military families, and their communities.

The VFW Auxiliary's **Mentoring for Leadership** program emphasizes guidance, education, and inclusion as ways to develop future leaders and strengthen every level of the organization. In practice, this means welcoming members warmly, listening to their interests, helping them learn procedures and programs, recognizing their efforts, and giving them meaningful opportunities to serve. When members are mentored and encouraged, they are more likely to stay engaged, grow into leadership roles, and help the Auxiliary remain healthy, effective, and mission-focused.

Healthy Auxiliaries vs Struggling Auxiliaries-what category does your Auxiliary fall i

Loyally, **Ruth Huber, PDP**
Department Chief of Staff





LEGISLATIVE ♦ Tina Roberts, Chairman
1215 Crawford Road • Dundee, NY 14837
315-694-0326 • tinaroberts@frontiernet.net



Hello fellow Auxiliary Members!!!

It's the start of a new Auxiliary year and we need to get our seasoned and new members **educated** by reviewing the **VFW Priority Goals** which are updated every January and can be found on the vfw.org website. Click on Advocacy and select Legislative Priorities. You can also visit vfwauxny.org, click on Legislative and go to **2026 Priority Goals**. These goals will keep us **informed** of the key issues the VFW will be advocating on our Veterans' behalf: Budget, Health Care, Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, Education, Employment and Transition Assistance, Military Readiness and National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA.

- Sign up for the FREE **"VFW Action Corps Weekly."** This is a weekly email newsletter that will keep you informed about Legislation that is being introduced and/or passed. Links are provided for us to **participate** by taking action in contacting our local Senators and Representatives.
- **We have a VFW Action Alert: Tell Congress to Oppose Veterans' Benefit Cuts.** We need everyone to take action on this alert. Congress has introduced the Take Care of America's Veterans Act, which would codify previously proposed VA disability rating cuts for tinnitus and sleep apnea. This bill would cut Veterans Benefits to pay for other Veterans' benefits. **We cannot allow this. We need to make our voices heard today!!**
- **Let's get others involved by advocacy work:** We, as citizens, have an obligation to make our country safer and improve the quality of life for all of us. You can take action now by:
 - Call, write and speak to your Legislators
 - Study and share the VFW Priority Goals
 - Respond to the VFW Action Alerts
 - Keep current on pending Legislation (Federal and State)
 - Visit the VFW Legislative Resources webpage: <https://www.vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service>
 - Attend town hall meetings.

Remember reports are due to me the 1st of each month. I cannot wait to see how the Auxiliaries are going to support our Veterans this year with the Legislative Program.

Loyally, **Tina**



HISTORIAN / MEDIA RELATIONS ♦ PDP Lisa Raplee, Chairman
4259 State Route 226 • Dundee, NY 14837
607-368-1435 • lisavfwaux2425@outlook.com

Here we are getting ready to keep busy as a bee this year! This year I hope to see so many reports from all the Auxiliaries, as we will be offering year-end awards.

Did your Auxiliary take pictures of your installation? Did you receive awards at Department Convention and share it on your Auxiliary social media pages? Has your Auxiliary placed an article in your local newspaper? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then please send me a report and share all your good news! If you put something on your Auxiliary's Facebook page and want it shared on the Auxiliary Department page, then please tag the Department of New York VFW Auxiliary. You will see President Belinda's picture and the line officers.

As you see President Belinda making her way across this great State, be sure to document her visit with photographs and news articles. I will feature the pictures on our Facebook page as Madam President stays busy as a bee this year!

We also have a National Award this year that will award a citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions that creates the most unique digital record of their VFW Auxiliary history since being established and publishes it to a digital platform for future members of their Auxiliary. Entry forms can be found on MALTA, and I will also have them available on my table at Fall and Spring Conference.

Please keep **"Busy as a Bee Working for Our Veterans,"** as we continue to **"Serve America's Heroes"**.

Loyally, **Lisa Raplee, PDP**

TREASURER'S Checks & Balances ~ DEPARTMENT TREASURER, Kimberly White

Dear Members,

If you are a newly elected Treasurer, remember to file Form 8822-B with the IRS. This is how they know who to contact regarding any issues with your Auxiliary. Receiving and responding to any notices from the IRS promptly is crucial to maintaining your tax-exempt status.

As we move into Fall, there are some things to remember. Please understand that the integrity of our organization depends on your thorough and honest inspection of the eligibility qualifications listed on the new member applications. It is the responsibility of each Investigating Committee to know who is eligible for membership and who is not. Review the information provided in your Podium Edition for these qualifications. If you need help, please let me know. Make sure that all applications submitted are accurate, complete and legible. This will avoid errors that need to be corrected later. Also, you need to send payment of the per capita of \$20.00 per annual member with each application. I do not have access to deduct payments for anything from your bank account. All checks should be made payable to VFW Auxiliary Department of New York.

Donation Report Forms are due September 30th, so please get them in ASAP so we can proceed with dues notices. The first dues notice will be mailed at the beginning of October. Department is continuing to mail them only to Auxiliaries that contributed to the dues mailing fund on the Donation Report Form. We are assuming that if your Auxiliary did not contribute, you have mailed your own notices.

Remember that your 990 is due by November 15th. You can file this simple form at any time after July 1st. Do not wait until the last day! It is required of **ALL** Auxiliaries. Our National Organization has two very good instructional videos on their website. Please go to vfwauxiliary.org, login with your username, choose Online Auxiliary Academy. The 2 videos are: 990N ePostcard Instructions and IRS Form 990N ePostcard Guide.

Loyally, *Kim W.*

◆ AUXILIARIES IN ACTION ◆



Auxiliary 7545 (D6) donated \$600 to Rainie's Foster Closet in North Tonawanda, NY, which is a volunteer, donation-based, non-profit organization providing aid to their foster care communities. With that as the foundation, their mission is to help clothe Foster and Kinship families while following their belief all children should experience love, respect, and kindness while living in a foster care home.

2026 ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION ◆ ALBANY, NY



DEPARTMENT OF NY VFW AUXILIARY SPECIAL PROJECT SHIRT



T-Shirts (Front Logo) – Small, Medium, Large, X-Large = \$25.00. 2XL, 3XL, 4XL = \$30.00

Long Sleeve – Small, Medium, Large X-Large = \$30.00. 2XL, 3XL = \$35.00 (4XL not available)

Unisex Polo - Small, Medium, Large X-Large = \$30.00. 2XL, 3XL, 4XL, 5XL = \$40.00

Submitted by _____ District# _____ Aux# _____
 Phone _____ Email _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____

T-Shirt/Long Sleeve/Polo (T-Shirts ONLY available in Womens/Mens-Please Specify)	Size (S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL)	Quantity	Price	Extended Price
(Ex) Womans T-Shirt	L	2	25.00	50.00

Send completed form and checks made payable to:
Dept of NY VFW Auxiliary earmarked “Special Project” to:
 Lynne Loga, 75A Main St., South Glens Falls, NY 12803

Shirt order deadline is August 31, 2026

"Secret Trauma: What was once my Secret Trauma is now my Spoken Truth"
by Bridgette Rose (aka Rose Cooper, PDP)



Have you read PDP Rose Cooper's new book, *"Secret Trauma: What was once my Secret Trauma is now my Spoken Truth"*? You can order it on Amazon.com.

Rose extends her heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported her book by purchasing it, reading it, and offering thoughtful feedback.

PRESS RELEASE: *In Secret Trauma, author Bridgette Rose reveals a deeply personal journey through abuse, resilience, and the power of turning pain into spoken truth.*

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, March 22, 2026 /[EINPresswire.com](https://www.einpresswire.com)/ -- In her deeply moving book, *"Secret Trauma: What was once my Secret Trauma is now my Spoken Truth"*, Bridgette Rose delivers a powerful and unfiltered account of survival, healing, and self-expression. Through a combination of personal reflection and poetry,

Rose transforms her lived experiences into a message of strength and empowerment. What began as a life that felt stable and ordinary took a devastating turn after Rose joined the United States Navy. Shortly after marrying and welcoming her son, she found herself facing a reality she had never known before, one marked by physical, sexual, and financial abuse. The trauma extended beyond her own suffering, as her infant son was also subjected to harm, intensifying the emotional weight of her experience.

Rather than remaining silent, Rose turned to writing as a means of survival and healing. Poetry became her outlet, allowing her to process pain, confront difficult memories, and reclaim her voice. Through her words, she shares not only the depth of her trauma but also the resilience that carried her forward.

Secret Trauma stands as both a personal testimony and a source of connection for readers who may have faced similar experiences. Rose's honesty creates a space where difficult truths can be acknowledged without judgment. Her work highlights the importance of speaking out, breaking cycles of silence, and finding strength through self-expression.

Secret Trauma Shares a Courageous Story of Survival, Healing, and Finding One's Voice

◆ SAVE THE DATE ◆

Aug 13 – 16: *National President Donna Mills Visit*

Aug 15: *Noon – 6 PM - Celebrate America's Freedom with DNYA Belinda Cole and NP Donna Mills – \$20 per person - VFW Post 2475 ▪ 30 Cooper Street ▪ Glens Falls, NY*

Sep 18 & 19: *DNY VFW & Auxiliary Fall Conference ▪ Marriott Hotel, Albany, NY*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO
JUNIOR PAST DNYA PRESIDENT JUSTINE ROBLES (2025-2026)**



A heartfelt congratulations to our Junior Past DNYA President Justine Robles for an exceptional year of service!!

You championed teamwork, encouraged new ideas, and supported every member with kindness. Your leadership created a year filled with progress, pride, and purpose.

Your commitment to excellence, thoughtful decision-making, and steadfast support of our programs have set a high standard for all who follow. We appreciate you more than words can say.

VFW AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK

Deborah A. Fucina, Editor ♦ *Auxiliary News*

980 Beach Road ▪ Cheektowaga, NY 14225

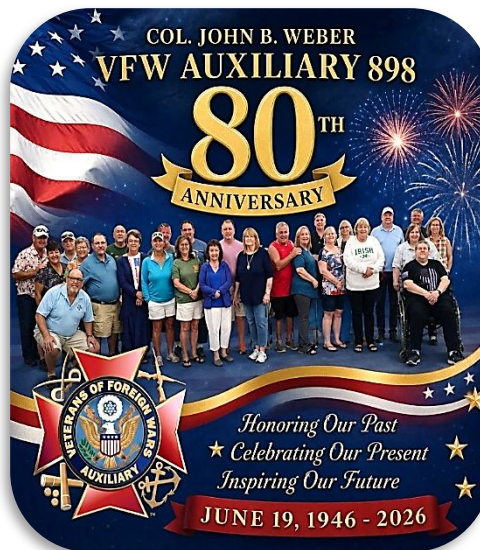
The *Auxiliary News* is published six times a year:
August, September/October, November/December,
February/March, April/May, June.
Deadline for submissions is the 1st of the previous
month.

September/October articles are due August 1st



Celebrating 80 Years!!

***The Col. John B. Weber VFW 898
Auxiliary celebrated 80 years of
service, dedication, and
commitment to Veterans,
Active-Duty Military, their
Families and the Community on
June 19, 2026.***



***Auxiliary 898 was
instituted on June
19, 1946 at the VFW
Weber Post 898 in
Lackawanna, NY.***

**CONGRATULATIONS
VFW 898
AUXILIARY!!**