



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Department of Maryland



FROM CHIEF of STAFF CATHY GISTEDT Be *A Force For Veterans* in AUGUST

Getting Things Done...Check It Off!



Each of my mailings will include a list of reminders for auxiliaries and districts. They are *friendly reminders* but they really do need to be done. Presidents, we need you to check each off.

- ✓ Officers have paid dues for 2025 – 2026.
- ✓ Bonds are paid for President and Treasurer.
- ✓ 2nd Quarter Audit and Checklist were sent to Department Treasurer Jackie Kimball.
- ✓ Standing Rules are approved or developed.
- ✓ Appointments are scheduled at your local schools to promote Scholarships contests.
- ✓ Reports for work in June and July are sent to each Department Program Chairman.

If you need assistance completing any of these reminders, contact me. Keep your Auxiliary healthy.

Conducting Good Meetings

What words would you use to describe a good meeting? Most will say: *ORGANIZED*, *PRODUCTIVE*, and *FAST*. Meeting only once each month, auxiliaries must accomplish a lot without chancing low attendance at meetings because members think the meetings are too lengthy. So, what can we do to conduct good meetings?

1. Be prepared. Have an agenda reminding you of what needs to be covered for each meeting.
2. Redirect members who are holding side conversations back to Auxiliary business by pausing for their attention and then using the gavel if necessary.
3. Require officers not making a meeting to contact you so pro tems can be appointed. Before meetings, clarify the responsibilities for any pro tems to help meetings run smoothly.

PREPARED = PRODUCTIVE



Be open to change. After all, Cinderella is proof that a new pair of shoes can change your life.



If an auxiliary changes the date, time, or location of its regular meeting, notification must be sent within 10 days to all of its auxiliary members and to the District, Department, and National Secretaries.

(Section 210 – Meetings Regular and Special)



TAKE THIS CHALLENGE

Let's help our VFW National Home to recruit more National Home Life Members by raffling off a Life Membership at your next meeting. Sell 50 chances for \$1 each to pay for the membership. You'll have a Life Membership at no cost to your Auxiliary or District and this membership will help our National Home to continue to assist veterans and their families. Then report this to the National Home Chairman. Be a *Force* for our National Home!

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From Cathy Gistedt, Chief of Staff Be *A Force For Veterans* in AUGUST p2

Is Program Reporting Important?

The VFW Auxiliary is obligated to report annually to Congress to keep our charter. Projects, volunteers, hours, miles, and total expenses must be included in their documentation. This is the same information on your monthly program reports.

VFW National Headquarters presents all the accumulated data from the VFW and Auxiliary to report to Congress in March each year. The documentation is our primary justification for both the VFW and Auxiliary's tax-exempt status and strengthens legislative support for veterans. Your data is needed. Reporting is important.

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow



How can we strengthen our Auxiliaries and Districts?

- Reconnect with your senior **legacy members** so they feel needed and appreciated.
- Welcome and assist your **new members**.
- Help **active members** step up to leadership with the knowledge and confidence to lead the auxiliary in the future.

Challenges Facing Auxiliaries: Disputes Among Your Members

Conflict is a normal part of healthy relationships. Two people can't be expected to agree on everything much less a room filled with members attending your auxiliary meeting. Facing conflicts head on is not always pleasant, but solving small disagreements will head off future disputes.

Conflicts can actually bring a team closer together and revitalize your auxiliary if handled properly. The key is not *avoiding* conflict but *resolving* it in a constructive way. Most disagreements are simple personality conflicts. Handling personality clashes one-on-one is best. But when the disagreements disrupt your meetings and the smooth operation of your auxiliary, the President must assume leadership to:

- Openly acknowledge the problem at your meeting.
- Remind members that when the Bible is open everyone is expected to be respectful.
- Control the discussion so facts are presented allowing each side's position to be clearly explained without using emotional attacks and responses.
- Summarize the facts. Then give your members time to formulate suggestions to resolve the disagreement.

At the next meeting, members should be asked to present their suggestions. Appreciating our differences is the key to building a strong Auxiliary where decisions are not controlled by friendships but made for the benefit of your Auxiliary and our veterans.



MEMBERSHIP Retain and Recruit. Membership is about the numbers. When the VFW and Auxiliary ask Congress for support for veterans' issues like health care, pensions, and family benefits, our legislators often look at our unit strength – our membership - to decide their reactions. There is power in numbers. Help the VFWA Department of Maryland reach **100%** ...and more...to help our veterans! Pay your annual dues or become a Life Member....then **RECRUIT!**

Meet Our National Chief of Staff



Our National Chief of Staff is **Karlene Beams** from Auxiliary 2278 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Karlene has served veterans in many ways including volunteering for the Fisher House and as a VAVS rep.