



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Department of Maryland



FROM CHIEF of STAFF CATHY GISTEDT

Be *A Force For Veterans* in February

Check It Off....Getting Things Done

Don't let time slip by without checking off the following:



- ✓ Membership.....Retain and Recruit!
- ✓ Are you 100% reported for our National Programs – at least one report sent for each?
- ✓ Plan something for a *Salute to Hospitalized Veterans* on the 14th.
- ✓ Continuing Education Scholarship applications are due to National Headquarters by the 15th.
- ✓ 4th Quarter Audit should be sent to Treasurer Jackie Kimball after being approved at your meeting.
- ✓ *Celebrating America's Freedom* event at the Vietnam Veterans Wall in Washington, D.C. is on the 28th if you can attend.

More Recruiting Ideas

- Have perks for members like lower prices for tickets to dinners and dances.
- Offer a *Members Only* event each year.
- Enter community parades and attend festivals to be visible in your community.
- Adopt a street or area near your Post Home to show civic commitment.
- Make sure all your members have a VFW Auxiliary pin to wear and consider t-shirts with your auxiliary name and number.
- Keep your Facebook page current with photos of members just having fun.

Conducting Good Meetings: More Ways to Open Communication

- Include your shy members at meetings by asking that they sit in for Officers who are absent.
- Vote on motions that seem controversial by ballot. It may take longer but it allows members to secretly make their choices and not face any possible criticism.
- Recognize a special group at each meeting:
 - Honor your Past Presidents on the month of your Auxiliary's anniversary with a Potluck dinner before your meeting.
 - Salute your auxiliary members who are also veterans with a special small gift in November.
 - Show your appreciation for your VAWS volunteers with a pizza party after a meeting.
 - Present membership pins to eligible members at your final meeting in May to thank them for their continuous VFW Auxiliary membership.
- Give a shout out to your Program Chairmen who won awards at the Department Convention at your June meeting.

GOOD MEETINGS = BETTER ATTENDANCE



THE CHALLENGE

Invite children and grandchildren of your members to the Post to make cards for the VA patients for this month's Valentine's Day Salute. Then have the children say the Pledge for a certificate and do a drawing to enter in your *Youth Illustrating America* art contest. Keep reporting those programs!





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



Strengthen Our Auxiliaries By Staying Informed

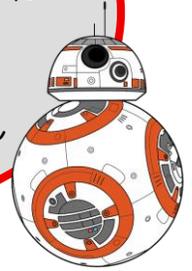
Sign up at vfwauxiliary.org for the VFWA e-newsletter. It has up-to-date information on many subjects and keeps you connected to our National Headquarters. The *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* is a digital publication that is out every other month and offers information as well as inspiring stories.

Share your auxiliary and district stories following projects and events with National Headquarters at info@vfwauxiliary.org.

from *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation*

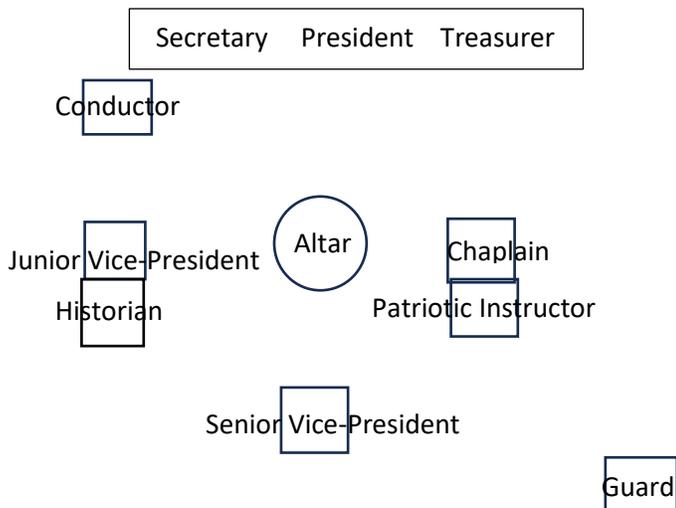
National Chief of Staff Karlene Beams:

"A strong membership on every level of our organization will be accomplished through mentoring."



Conducting Meetings: Seating Officers at Stations

Although seating at meetings of officers at stations designated in the Floor Plan section of *VFW Auxiliary Bylaws & Rituals* is not required, it is encouraged. With most auxiliaries not including floor work at meetings as was often done in the past, seating officers at their stations today would maintain one of our oldest Auxiliary traditions.



Don't think that when Officers are not seated at these Ritualistic stations for a meeting that you are now conducting a Round Table meeting. The meeting format is not determined by the seating of your officers. It is based on the agenda that you follow.

Needed: Mentoring All Year Long

How many Christmas gifts did you return? This month I'm asking everyone....yes, everyone....to give your Auxiliary a Valentine gift. The gift of mentoring. Now don't think, "Who me?" We all have something to share that can help others and strengthen our auxiliary.

Mentoring is sharing your knowledge *and* your experiences. Help that member who is ready to volunteer but is hesitating to go solo. Mentoring can be as simple as sharing your auxiliary's traditions or as detailed as completing financial reports for fundraisers. Often, we forget that we have so many little things we learned in our time as a member - those how-to's not always written down.

Keep the spirit of giving in your Auxiliary all year long by mentoring any way that you are able to support members ready to be actively involved in work for our veterans and the community.

Cathy Gistedt, Chief of Staff
Extension & Revitalization Program
2911 Ritchie Avenue
Edgemere, MD 21219-1244
410-477-1078
cathygistedt123@gmail.com





From Cathy Gistedt, Chief of Staff
 Be *A Force For Veterans* in February p3



Recruiting Younger Members

The *Nonprofit Times* is a publication that for almost 40 years has offered information to executives running nonprofit organizations. With many nonprofits increasingly failing, the editor noted common problems that our VFW Auxiliaries should also take note of to improve membership.

One of the biggest problems is that members are aging without new, younger volunteers being recruited. The publication's editor warns that organizations are often *afraid to make waves* by changing the status quo. This can be deadly to the survival of an organization.

Maybe one of these ideas would work for your auxiliary to attract younger members.

- ✓ Recruit at events our younger population tend to support – concerts, community fairs, and carnivals.
- ✓ Keep your auxiliary current on social media which is a major communication tool and source of information younger adults.
- ✓ Partner with a local elementary school to recruit at their events (and better promote your Youth Activities projects).
- ✓ Update your fundraisers to events that will be of more interest to younger members. Bake sales and bingo parties may need a new slant or used less to raise funds.
- ✓ Consider offering babysitting during meetings. Students needing community service hours for graduation could be recruited, but always have adult supervision for the safety of the children.

Don't let younger recruits slip past your Membership Team. We need to build our membership if the VFW Auxiliary is to continue being *A Force For Veterans*

Join the Auxiliary Swap

We are always looking for our next fundraising idea....and getting one that is proven to be successful is the perfect way to choose a project. An initiative started in 2018 is the Auxiliary Swap. The Swap allows auxiliaries across the nation to share great ideas for projects, programs, events, membership recruitment, and more. On Saturdays, the National VFW Auxiliary shares *swap ideas*. Share your idea at #AuxSwap.

Fulfilling Our AUX Mission

Remember to make these donations before the close of our membership year:

- 👄 Hospital Treat 👄 Hospital Fund
- 👄 VFW National Home Health & Happiness
- 👄 Maryland House Maintenance Fund
- 👄 Special Project - Maryland Kitchen
- 👄 Joint Project – Shuttlebus at MCVETS



With the Department winners chosen for the VOD and Patriot's Pen contests, don't forget to report. If you tried to get a contestant but were unable, report your efforts. Forms are on the Department website. Report today!

