



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Department of Maryland FROM CHIEF of STAFF CATHY GISTEDT *Be A Force For Veterans in March*



Check It Off....Getting Things Done

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

- ✓ Celebrate their year of service at the Department Commander & President's Testimonial at Post 6027 in North East on the 14th. Seating is limited and tickets must be purchased by March 7th.
- ✓ Attend the Auxiliary's Council of Administration meeting on the 15th at Chesapeake City VFW 7687. Lunch will be served at 12 Noon with the meeting following at 1. All are invited to attend.
- ✓ Department Officers, Program Chairmen, and District Presidents should plan to attend the Council meeting or send the Senior/Junior.

Prepare for April's Election of Officers

Auxiliary Officers for 2025-2026 must be elected at our upcoming April meetings. Start planning for that meeting in March.

- Inform members that the elected officers needed include: President, Senior Vice-President, Junior Vice-President, Treasurer, Chaplain, Guard, and the 3-Year Trustee.
- Make it clear that any member in good standing can consider running for an office.
- Candidates for office (1) may be nominated at the meeting by any member, (2) may nominate themselves, or (3) may be nominated by a committee.
- Your auxiliary may form a nominating committee before elections to talk to members about serving your auxiliary as an officer for the upcoming year to place their name in the running at the election.

Take this month to approach possible candidates for offices to offer your support, being sure to clarify the responsibilities that they would need to accept. Looking for good candidates for offices is taking the first step to success in the coming year.

Conducting Good Meetings: Don't Make These Frequent Mistakes

- During Roll Call, Auxiliary and District Officers call out *Here* when their name is called.
Correct: *At the command of the President....the Secretary calls the title and name of each officer....the Conductor responds "present" or "absent."* (Bylaws & Ritual p33)
- Districts have members sign in as they enter the meeting room to take attendance.
Correct: *"Roll Call of Auxiliaries" should be taken.* (Bylaws & Ritual p32 – This is done by the Auxiliary Presidents being called on to give the number of their members attending the meeting. To confirm the President is in attendance a plus 1 is added. This is to assure that there is a quorum present to conduct district business.
- When money is advanced at a meeting with a motion for a project, the bills do not need to be presented later and can just be given to the Treasurer for the records.
Correct: *Duties of All Chairmen – To make written financial reports (with bills attached) of any fundraising functions.* (Booklet of Instructions p29)

District Presidents:

The program year is quickly drawing to a close. Will you make Maryland's Circle of Excellence at our Convention Awards Ceremonies? For District Presidents to enter the Circle, each auxiliary in their district must earn the points needed and send their final report to Chairman Debbie Sturgis.

Take time to check how your auxiliaries are doing. It's not too late to gain additional points for:

- * membership growth
- * program reporting
- * Completing a joint project with your Post
- * attending the Testimonial
- * donations

Visit their meeting or contact each President to see where your auxiliaries stand in earning points so you can be a Circle of Excellence District President.



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



Program Reporting

The importance of Auxiliary Program Chairmen can not be understated. Their efforts fulfill our mission of assisting veterans and their families. Reporting to Department is frequently lacking. At times, the best *organizers* are not the best *reporters*. Presidents are reminded that their Program Chairmen do not have to be the member completing and sending their reports. Any member can offer to help with this essential task. Allow your members to use their skills to help your auxiliary and our veterans to report.

**National Chief of Staff
 Karlene Beams:**

“Keeping informed and becoming knowledgeable of our traditions and subsequent programs will help us to mentor our members and prepare them for leadership roles.”

**Challenges Facing Auxiliaries:
 Members Don't Feel a Part of Meetings**

Meetings are essential for accomplishing projects, but they can be intimidating for members who are reluctant to share their ideas and opinions. As a result, they often feel that they are not contributing and that decisions are being made by only a few. The President is key to developing a feeling of *shared participation* at your auxiliary meetings.

Presidents can create a comfortable atmosphere for participation by:

- Setting up the meeting room, when possible, so members are not seated far apart so it is easier to speak during discussions.
- Looking around the room to allow different members to speak and comment during discussions.
- Explaining that not speaking up at meetings means that you agree. Help everyone to understand that it's not wrong to share your thoughts.
- Helping new members attending your meetings by taking time to explain programs, acronyms, bylaws, and other aspects of our VFW Auxiliary culture that we may take for granted.

When all members feel they can openly express their ideas, Auxiliaries can accomplish more, keeping them in the *green light* of a healthy auxiliary.

District Presidents: Speak with your District Commander to have a Joint Officers and Chairmen's meeting to work as a team planning and presenting programs. Working together as a team will bring success.

**Understanding Our Bylaws –
 The Secretary's Book**

Besides the minutes taken at meetings, the Secretary's Book must also include:

- A copy of the current Standing Rules
- A copy of the bond for the Treasurer and the President
- Copies of the Treasurer's Reports
- Copies of Audits

The Secretary should also have a correspondence file with information from the Department and National in the order they were received. And remember, the Secretary should also have a current copy of the VFW Auxiliary's *Bylaws & Rituals*.

[Section 812 -Secretary, Duties of (All Levels)]

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