

The Texas V.F.W. Auxiliary

Our Two Cents

Published Monthly by the VFW Auxiliary Editor – Kathy Marrelli Located at 8503 N IH 35, Austin, TX 78753



Volume 34 Issue 7

January, 2024



DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT SUSIE CARTER



"WIND BENEATH OUR VETERANS WINGS"

"BANDING TOGETHER FOR OUR VETERANS"

Happy New Year to each and every one of you. I sincerely hope that you have a very bountiful, rewarding and healthy year. I also hope you had a wonderful Christmas with your friends and family. Hopefully, Santa was good to you!

Congrats to all Auxiliaries that have reached 100% or more and to all of you District Presidents that have reached 95% and above. Thanks for the hard work you put in to get there. Please thank all the members of your Auxiliaries for assisting. It takes the effort of all members to get the membership in. Kudos for a job well done Texas!!! I'm really looking forward to our "Night out" with the membership team at Mid-Winter Round up.

Mid-Year Reports were due by December 10th to your District Presidents. It is my deepest hope that all Auxiliaries got their reports in as requested. While we don't have to attain "100%" in reporting everything, we do still have to answer to the IRS. Therefore, the projects, hours, monies and members that are reported keeps our 401-C tax free status. Also, the numbers entered on report forms, are compiled from across the country and those numbers are used to generate our brochures from National stating what we do, how much we spend etc. This in turn helps to inform potential members of what we do and why they should join us, becoming a part of our team.

Be sure to check the Department Stat Sheets to stay on top of what your Auxiliaries have done or need to do. If you have completed one of the programs on the stat sheet but it is not marked as done, please contact the office. Mistakes are made and I want every Auxiliary to get the credit for what they do.

Mid-Winter Roundup is in Corpus Christi this month at the BayFront Omni, with other "overflow" hotels available. Mid-Winter is not just for officers, it's for anyone wanting to come and learn, review and prepare for the remainder of the year. The Department Chairmen will have ideas, handouts and info to share with you for completing programs. We have numerous events, raffles and games designed to make the weekend fun and informative. I would love to see lots of NEW faces as well as the familiar ones at this years event, so if you can, try to attend. Schedule and other info is at the back of this newsletter.

My travels in December took me to District 24, then down to District 18. As always, Jimmy and I were greeted with exceptional hospitality, fantastic food, very good meetings and lots of fun. Thank you to every member that took the time to come to the District meetings, visit with us and thank you for the work you do in your Districts. I also had the honor of attending the "ground breaking" for the new VA Cemetery in the Lubbock area. What an honor to participate in this great experience benefitting our Veterans.

I am looking forward to visits in Districts 30, 19 and 14 this month as well as Mid-Winter.

Please continue to work membership, our programs and the work you do for our veterans. Stay warm.



EXTENSION/REVITALIZATION CHIEF OF STAFF Debi Daniel

Wow!!! Can you believe we are already into 2024? Did you have a fantastic Christmas? I certainly hope so.

Are you ready to gear up and get ready for the rest of our year? I just know that you are. We have so much to do. We have places to go, people to see, membership to increase, inspections to finish or a second visit to make, mentoring of new members and new Auxiliaries and institution of much needed new Auxiliaries. All of these things combined, allow us to be in a better position to take care of our Veterans. That's what we are all about...Right?

District Presidents, have you reviewed your inspection sheets again so that you may follow up on anything that may have caught your eye, instructions that you felt might be needed or problems that need attention? Are you checking for those "red flags." Maybe you just need to call your Auxiliaries and say I hope you had a productive holiday for our Veterans and say "Thank you."

Have you registered for Mid-Winter Roundup later this month? Made your room reservations? Bought your VOD/PP banquet tickets? It's time to get excited, get ready to soak up the info, gather up all your handouts and take everything you learned home with you to share with your Auxiliaries.

Please take the next few weeks to revitalize yourselves. You are appreciated. Thank you for taking time out of your busy lives to take care of our Veterans, our senior citizens, our youth and our activeduty military. I look forward to seeing each one of you at Mid-Winter.

"Wind Beneath Our Veteran's Wings"
"Banding Together For Our Veterans"

VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT Tammie Mosby – Chairman Karlene Chambers – Co-Chairman

The countdown to Mid-Winter is on. We can't wait to see everyone. Now that we have our Mid-Year Reports done and the holidays have past, we can breathe and have some fun.

We have received such wonderful reports from across the State of Texas. Please continue to report.

We know we sent the following out in an email, but the information is too important not to share again. The VFW has issued a Claim Shark factsheet for you to share with fellow Veterans and social media communities. A Claim Shark is an individual or company that charges hefty fees to "assist" or "consult" Veterans with filing their VA benefit claims. This practice is illegal! Like the VFW said last year during testimony before Congress, "In our opinion, any group that fails to adhere to VA's well-established standards of accreditation and fee arrangements should be met at the door by Capitol Police, not offered a seat at the same table as hard-working, VA-accredited advocates who are held to professional and ethical standards designed to protect Veterans." You can go to the VFW web page and download the fact sheet.

If you need us for anything, please email Tammy at tjpurplerose@yahoo.com or you can call 936-414-5293 or contact the Co-Chairman Karlene Chambers at karlene440@gmail.com or call 713-502-1436.

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings"
"Banding Together For Our Veterans"



AUXILIARY OUTREACH Gerald Spradlin – Chairman Cyndy Yancey – Co-Chairman

Hope everyone had a wonderful, blessed holiday season! Can't believe it is 2024! It's time to hit the ground running and make this an epic year for Madam President and our Veterans.

Seeing what you accomplished on your Mid-Year Reports and doing our Mid-Year Report was really amazing. While we have been getting all your reports, seeing the sheer numbers on paper has been awesome! We know how confusing this program was in the beginning and how it was changed many times, but now

you all have embraced it and the work you are doing is truly wonderful.

We hope that this program is also benefiting your Auxiliaries by finding out what is going on in your communities and helping you figure out where the Auxiliary can plug in for support. We know that the holidays were probably busy and hectic for everyone, but try not to lose momentum in the New Year. Keep doing your special projects and wonderful volunteer work. It is our job to educate the community on what we do and what we are all about.

As always, friendly reminders:

- (1) Make sure that your Auxiliary Outreach activities are voted on by your membership
- (2) You can host the activity you are helping with at your Post/property, but you cannot lead/organize it, you can just be a helper/worker
- (3) Be sure to wear apparel that identifies you as an Auxiliary member (shirt, name tag, hat, etc.)

Thank you for all your hard work. Please continue your wonderful work and let's make this a fantastic year for the VFW Auxiliary and our Auxiliary Outreach program! By working side-by-side we can better both the community and the VFW Auxiliary.

"Wind Beneath Our Veteran Wings" Banding Together For Our Veterans"



MEMBERSHIP Beth West – Chairman Shawn Terry – Co-Chairman

The new year always seems so drab when all the tinsel and lights come down. It doesn't have to be. Now is the time for renewal. You probably think we're still a little too jolly and maybe lost our minds in the eggnog or New Year's Eve merriment. Not at all.

One of the things our National Ambassador and our Department Chairs have put in their programs is to invest in your Auxiliary. We've set the stage, picked our cast, promoted our movie and wrapped up filming. To keep the movie at the top of the charts, we need to continue to invest: invest in our Auxiliary and invest in our members. If you are not exactly where you want to be, change the narrative. New year, new tactics. Our ability to be flexible and find new ways to work our programs to honor our Veterans is how we have existed for over 100 years.

Holidays are tough. If you were not depressed before, January's grey skies and staring at the new credit card balances from a little too much Christmas shopping are enough to make you a little blue. This is the perfect time to invest in your members, old and new. Check on your members and make sure all are ready for the next recruiting event. Start planning some member appreciation event(s) to show your appreciation for all their hard work in the whirlwind of events from Veterans' Day to today. No matter what, do not stop shining the spotlight on your members.

The Texas VFW Auxiliary is investing in you! We will anxiously be awaiting your arrival at the Soaring with the Eagles Celebration at Mid-Winter in Corpus! We are so very proud of you and appreciate all you have done to help make Madam President's year so memorable!

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings" "Banding Together For Our Veterans"



YOUTH Teresa Ramon – Chairman Michelle Booker – Co-Chairman

Greetings to all. Thank you for getting all your reports in. What an exciting first half of our year. Just around the corner is our Mid-Winter Convention. The activities that you did with our youth were amazing. I am looking forward in hearing you share your success stories with everyone.

Continue promoting all our programs. Patriotism Through Literacy – by reading to our youth. Here is a fun activity to do with our younger youth teaching them about our history.

Making flash cards with the President's name is a fun way to teach them the names and order of their term in office. Do not forget to reward them with a fun treat for participating.

- Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue through our National Anthem Singing Contest. Remember any participants entering the Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue by singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" contest must use the exact words to the song. Grades K-8 & 9-12. All video entries should be received by March 31, 2024.
- Illustrating America, expressing patriotism in art through the eyes of students K-8. We cannot wait to see those amazing entries.

Again, thank you for all your reports. Let us continue encouraging our youth leading them in the direction to become our leaders of tomorrow.

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings" "Banding Together For Our Veterans"



HOSPITAL/VAVS Pamela Fintel – Chairman

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I can't believe we are half way through our year. TEXAS has done an outstanding job caring for our Hospitalized Veterans and their families.

Please start planning your "SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS WEEK" now. February is the month to have this special event. Remember to get the event approved on the Auxiliary floor in January. This is also a great time to honor the Nurses and Doctors too. Work with your youth to make cards or goody bags for the Veterans. Don't forget those Valentine Cards and candy or fruit treats too.

We have seen a big rise in Women Veterans needing health care. Work with your VA and Non-VA Facilities to see what your Auxiliary can do. Make up some feminine bags, (socks, sweat pants, T-shirts and feminine pads). Don't forget the Oncology Department – they can use crocheted chemo caps and blankets.

I love your Non-Traditional Day Cards. Keep sending those pictures on your reports. It shows that you are thinking outside the box and putting smiles on our Veteran's faces. Let's show our Ambassador what TEXAS can do for our Veterans

Did you know....Ringing in a New Year means new beginnings and endings. Celebrating the New Year is the first holiday on the Calendar, but the world didn't see January that way.

January 3rd is National Drinking Straw Day January 3rd is National Chocolate Covered Cherry Day January 11th is National Milk Day

I can't wait to see you in Corpus Christi at the Omni Hotel - January 17th.

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings"
"Banding Together For Our Veterans"



SCHOLARSHIP Dorthy L. Bennett – Chairman

Wow the holidays are behind us and a new year has started, welcome to 2024. Hope that you and yours received many blessings in the holiday season.

Mid-Winter Conference is scheduled for later this month. Here is a chance to learn more about the programs we have been working so hard on this year. More hard work needs to continue for the remainder of the year. Thanks for all that have been done to this point. We want to continue to be the "wind beneath our veterans' wings" and help Texas shine as always.

Remember we have Auxiliary Continuing Education for members, their spouses and children. This is a written entry of 300 words or less received by National on or before February 15, 2024. These written entries are submitted to National and not to me. This date is coming up quickly. The goal is to have 23 entries for Texas. The Scholarship amount to be awarded in each of the four conferences is \$1250.00. That amount of money can pay for books, labs and other fees.

Don't forget that this program continues with Young Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional. Follow the guidelines in the Program Book starting on page 62. You may also find more information on MALTA under Scholarship. Page number 53 of the National Program has changed. There has been a change to the amounts given at National for art. Second place has increased to \$1,500. The local Auxiliary must receive art pieces by March 31. It has been pointed out to me that March 31 is a holiday. The Auxiliary at the local level can request that entries be to them earlier than that date.

Remember art must be in my hand no later than April 15. Districts can hold judging for art pieces but it is not required. Please continue to send the Escrow money for art at the National Level. This helps to increase prize money for the winners. Promote art contest through the same channels that were used for Voice of Democracy.

Remember, we are asking that Auxiliaries donate monies to create a Department Award for 2- and 3-Dimensional Art. The goal is to have awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places that total amount for this year \$1,000.00. Thank you in advance for this. We know that we have asked a lot this year. You may contact me for any help or explanations that you might need.

More information can be found in your Department Program Book and on MALTA under Scholarship Resources.

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LEGISLATIVE Chyenne Parker - Chairman

Greetings from your Legislative Chairman. I hope everybody had a great and safe holiday. The only thing that is still going on in Action Corps is the military promotions survey. Please make sure you're continuing to sign people up for the After-Action Alerts.

Let's keep encouraging everyone to register to vote. Remember you can only have an opinion if your registered to vote.

Did you know the rate of 2023 suicidal Veterans is 217? Even one Veteran is too high. Please make sure you're reaching out to all the Veterans and their families. Even a phone call to somebody is nice, you can ask how is their day or how they are doing.

Did you also know that there are 81,000 Prisoners of War (POW) and Missing in Action (MIA) still missing to this day. Please make sure you're checking on the VFW page. Hope to see y'all at Mid-Winter.

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AMERICANISM/PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR Ronnie Wiley – Chairman Laurie Wiley Co-Chairman

Hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season. Here we are in a new year 2024. I can't believe it has been 6 months, we have been promoting Americanism and our Patriotic Instructors have been instructing our Auxiliary members about our VFW Auxiliary Traditions.

Keep up the great work. Just by the looks of all the reports I have received we are working together this year. Don't forget about awards for Auxiliaries.

More Than Letters

Awards for Auxiliaries

Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community that our VFW Auxiliary acronyms are "more than letters."

Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community that our VFW Auxiliary acronyms are "more than letters."

Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Americanism Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Americanism Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at info@vfwauxiliary.org a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters. Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community that our VFW Auxiliary acronyms are "more than letters." The Department Americanism Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Americanism Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

We Love Our Freedom, We Love Our United States of America and We Love Our Veterans.

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings"
"Banding Together For Our Veterans"



MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP Candace Baines – Chairman Patsy Kemp & Jane McCormick – Co Chairmen

Well Mid-Year Reports are in and we hope to see you all at the Mid-Winter Conference in Corpus Christi. I hope you all had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year!

With half of the year complete, I'm sure you have had some bumps in the road. With that being said, I would like to address conflict. You may remember me stating at Statewide Training that everyone is right from their own perspective.

As Mentors we need to remember that everyone has their own personality and way of processing. We must address our own personalities and try to understand how the person receiving our message perceives it. Some people are direct and some people need warm and fuzzy. This is just one example, but sometimes asking a third party to sit and hear both sides can help make sure the message is not misunderstood. I have witnessed situations where both sides want the same thing, but it is being misconstrued so the needs and wants are not being met which causes confusion, hurt feelings, anger and unnecessary fighting.

Please utilize your Mentors that you have selected, or even reach out to a neighboring Auxiliary's Mentor to help resolve any issues before they become irreversible damage. I feel we can retain more members if we implement this one simple step. Think of all the projects we can complete and Veterans we can help if we all are on the same page and come together as a team. This is just one piece of the puzzle and by year end I know we will complete the picture and it will be beautiful.

"Attitude is the 'little' thing that makes a big difference."
-Winston Churchill

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings"
"Banding Together For Our Veterans"



PROGRAM COORDINATOR Denise DuBois

Oh, my goodness! Reports have been received and Mid-Year Reports have been filed with such an abundance of thankfulness. Texas is the BEST!

Each and every one of you have raised the bar of success. I look forward to seeing you in Corpus at Mid-Winter and I am super excited that each of you will be giving a recap to our members in attendance. I am certain membership will receive all sorts of new ideas and challenges to finish up this year.

"When one voices their ideas, opinions and success, that encourages other to voice theirs, but most of all, it engages the members to better understanding what is being taught." Safe travels to ALL. Keep up the great work. Always believe in yourself and share the love you have for our Veterans and their Families.

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BUDDY POPPY Denise DuBois –Chairman Eunis Cordova – Co-Chairman

What an amazing the first six months have been! Your reports are being received daily and as we review them we can say that Buddy Poppies are being distributed throughout the state of Texas in bundles. So many different ways have been shared and the pictures of the pinatas are great! The ideas are so overwhelming.

It makes us happy to see that you are working together with your Posts in holding Buddy Poppy Drives. We have enjoyed reading your own ideas on spreading the history of the Buddy Poppy and incorporating the Poppy with other programs as well.

Just a reminder to bring your winning District Buddy Poppy Pinata to Mid-Winter. Make sure an original poppy is on the piñata. These displays will be accepted Saturday morning to allow late attendees to participate as well. Make sure that you also attach a card telling how many poppies were used, the number of hours it took to make and the number of members that participated. Also, please share the story about your piñata. What it means to you!

VFW NATIONAL HOME

We have the cutest Buddy Poppy Children traveling the state to promote the VFW National Home. The smiles and to see them hand out Buddy Poppies with their cute smiling faces begins their understanding of helping others. Thanks to all those Districts that have participated in this Project to benefit the VFW National Home.

Thank you for purchasing the Life Time Membership to the VFW National Home and also the Tribute Bricks. What a great gift that is!

Thank you for sending the home gifts from their wish list and you can be sure that your kindness is well received.

Continue to spread the word about the VFW National Home and just know that as of today all homes are full and the families there are benefiting from your kindness and love for them.

We look forward to seeing you in Corpus. Continue to do what you are doing which is a great job and you are making Texas Proud.

"Wind Beneath Our Veterans Wings"
"Banding Together For Our Veterans"



FROM DEPARTMENT OFFICE

PDP Donna James (effective now)

New Email: drjames1958@yahoo.com

Cell Phone: 979-236-3170

PDP Ann Ingram (new address)

2336 Independence Blvd Abilene, Texas 79601

NEW AUXILIARIES

2479 Sweetwater District 8 Division 1

CLOSED AUXILIARIES

6974 Burnett District 14 Division 2

JO ELLA MENN

CANDIDATE FOR DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS VFW AUXILIARY TREASURER 2024-2025

ENDORSED BY AUXILIARY 8621 ENDORSED BY DISTRICT 6

FUN FACTS FROM SNAPPLE BOTTLE CAPS

The world's 1st escalator was built in Coney Island, New York in 1896.

Earth is the only planet not named after a Greek or Roman God.

JEANENNE LUMPKIN

Candidate for National Council Member Area H

2024-2026

Endorsed by

Auxiliary 9182 District 17

GERALD SPRADLIN

CANDIDATE FOR DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS VFW AUXILIARY GUARD 2024-2025

Endorsed by District 19 & Auxiliaries Endorsed by Post/Auxiliary 1836

KAREN KAYLOR

CANDIDATE FOR NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER AREA H

2024 - 2026

ENDORSED BY VFW AUXILIARY 4008 ENDORSED BY DISTRICT 14



Carla Martinez

National President 2023-2024

Carla Martinez of Layton, Utah, was elected to the office of National President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) Auxiliary at its 110th National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

A Life Member of Lt. Clarence E. Allen Auxiliary 409 in Salt
Lake City, Utah, she has served the organization in many
capacities, including Auxiliary, District and Department President. She also served as
Department Chief of Staff from 2017 to 2018.

On the National level, Carla served as National Certified Recruiter Trainer for the state of Utah from 2016 to 2018 and as the National Western Conference Chairman for the Scholarships Program from 2017 to 2018.

She joined on the eligibility of her father, Harry Creel, who served in the United States Air Force for 23 years and served in the Vietnam War.

Carla has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and master's degree in criminal law from Weber State University. She retired from WCF Insurance after 22 ½ years of helping individuals who were injured on the job. Carla is a Lifetime Member of the Military Order of the Cootie (MOC), a Lifetime Member of the Fleet Reserve Association and is a Gold Legacy Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). She is retired from the United States Navy and spent 13 months in Korea.

Carla and her husband, Stanley (Utah's National Legislative Member (2021-2024), have a son, daughter-in-law and four grandchildren. In her spare time, likes to volunteer at the VA Hospital, recruit and mentor. She loves to bowl and swim.



$2023\sim2024$ MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

Omni Hotel, Corpus Christi, Texas <u>TENTATIVE AGENDA</u>

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM 6:00 PM	Wednesday – January 17, 2024 Registration Omni Hotel Floor Practice Arrival of National President – Carla Martinez Dinner with National Rep, Open to all VFW &	Ballroom Laguna Madre TBA TBD
0.001141	Auxiliary (<i>DUTCH TREAT</i>)	TBA
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM	Thursday – January 18, 2024 Registration and Booths Lunch on Your Own Council of Administration Meeting	Laguna Madre Corpus Christi
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Soaring With Eagles Celebration	Corpus Christi
	(Invitation Only)	
	Friday – January 19, 2024	
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Registration and Booths	Laguna Madre
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Joint Memorial Service	Corpus Christi
11.00 434 4.00 734	Joint Opening Session	Corpus Christi
11:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Presidents Luncheon (Pre-Purchase Tickets)	Nueces
	Presentation of Past Dept Presidents	Nueces
	Presentation of District Presidents	Nueces
	Presentation Benefit Hub	Nueces
	Presentation by Motorcycle Group	Nueces
6:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Programs: Program Coordinator and Drawings Quarter Auction – Ways & Means	Nueces Nueces
0:00 FMI – 10:00 FMI	Quarter Auction – ways & Means	Nueces
	Saturday – January 20, 2024	
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Registration and Booths	Laguna Madre
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	POW/MIA Ceremony	Nueces
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Programs	Nueces
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Lunch On your Own	
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Completion of Programs/Raffles	Nueces
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Remarks National President	Nueces
5:30 PM - 6:00 PM	VOD/PP Reception <u>Cash Bar</u>	Corpus Christi
6:00 PM – Close	Voice of Democracy Banquet	Corpus Christi
	Pre-Purchased Tickets Required	

<u>Sunday – January 21, 2024</u> - Safe Travels



President's Luncheon Mid-Winter Conference January 19, 2024

Send Reservation To:

VFW Auxiliary Department of Texas PO Box 15285 Austin TX 78761-5285

Mid-Winter Conference will be at the Omni Hotel, 900 N Shoreline Dr., Corpus Christi TX

Deadline: January 5, 2024

Meal to be Determined

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL DEPARTMENT AT 512-834-9190 ENCLOSE CHECK FOR \$45.00 PER LUNCHEON TICKET

Please Make Check To: VFW Auxiliary, Dept of Texas-Earmarked Luncheon

Names			
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