



The Texas V.F.W. Auxiliary

## Our Two Cents

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### Department President

**Ramona Henson**

### Soaring Thru Texas



All I can say is WOW! What a Mid-Winter Round-up we had! Our Voice of Democracy Banquet aboard the USS Lexington was the highlight of the weekend! Our hat is off to Dan West and the VFW Department of Texas for all the strategic planning to make it happen. Our National President, Sandi Onstwedder, making her official visit to Texas made it even more special. I hope you had an opportunity to meet her.

I could not be more pleased with the President's Luncheon. A big thank you to all who helped pull it together, your hard work is most appreciated.

I hope you learned something from our training, especially since we were not able to have Statewide Training. The 2020/2021 Team of Chairmen worked really hard to bring it to you.

We find ourselves with our year half over. It is time to buckle down and sprint to the end of the year with our membership and all of our programs.

Some items of importance that you can learn more about are from the Department Chairmen's *Our Two Cents* articles and our Program Book are:

- February – Hospitalized Veterans Month
- President's Special Project – Raising funds for VFW Foundation – Money stays in Texas
- Veterans' Voices Writing Project
- Young American Creative Patriotic Art

- Continuing Education Scholarship
- Nursing Scholarship
- Outstanding Hospital Volunteer
- Outstanding Hospital Youth Volunteer

As you can see, we have much yet to be accomplished during the remainder of this program year. Please contact our Program Chairmen for assistance and ideas.

Remember to report everything you do through March 31<sup>st</sup> on your Year-End Reports in April.

You need to get all your events and fund raisers done by the end of March.

Your accomplishments between April and June should be reported to the 2021-2022 Chairmen.

Thank you Districts 19 and 21 for great weekends and meetings. Much appreciated.

Happy Valentine's Day and do not forget, in a world where you can be anything, be kind.

**“Honor, Courage, Commitment For Our Veterans”**

**“Honoring Our Mission To Serve Veterans”**

## AUXILIARY COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Susie Carter - Chairman

Let's clear up some confusion with this clarification of what Auxiliary Community Outreach is; it is not our old Community Service. It is when a member, or group, of Auxiliary members volunteer hours with another organization or entity. It is not donations but time. As members we must be wearing Auxiliary clothing – hats, shirt or name badges when performing this volunteer service. Seven things that you can do for our program are:

- \*\*Sort and /or distribute food at a food bank.**
- \*\*Organize clothing donations, work at a local thrift store.**
- \*\*Assist the elderly to where they need to go, ride to the doctor's office, grocery store, etc.**
- \*\*Collaborate with churches, faith-based organizations and senior centers to befriend those who are home bound.**
- \*\*Participate in a community yard/garden clean-up and trash offs.**
- \*\*Partner with your local disability resource center to help those in need of basic handyman services.**
- \*\*Partner with local parks and recreation departments to improve local parks by planting trees or installing a Little Free Library.**

We love each and every one of you so  
please stay safe out there.

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**REPORT! REPORT! REPORT! REPORT! REPORT!**  
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**“Honor, Courage, Commitment For Our Veterans”  
“Honoring Our Mission To Serve Veterans”**



## MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP

Denise L. DuBois – Chairman

Well, here it is February 2021. We have had snow which brings new beginnings. As you know many mentors have been identified. Please continue to encourage and be supportive of new ideas as we improve the communication and enable all members to become involved and feel important. At Mid-Winter you were made aware of all the mentors and their willingness to

assist the members and auxiliaries in their own districts but are also available to all the membership in Texas.

Please remember: “A person’s most beautiful asset is not a head full of knowledge, but a heart full of love, an ear ready to listen and a hand willing to help others.”

## Honor, Courage, Commitment For Our Veterans Honoring Our Mission To Serve Veterans



## CHIEF OF STAFF/EXTENSION

Donna James

Well, we are halfway through the year. Hopefully, 2021 will continue to be a better year than 2020. I hope everyone enjoyed Mid-Winter Conference and learned a lot. We still have our programs to finish. Please get your Programs, Ways and Means paid for the year.

Our new Auxiliaries are doing a great job. We have two more new Auxiliaries. Welcome to Cleburne and Tyler. Thank you to Shawn Terry and Rene Batson for all your hard work getting these instituted.

We are working on three more, Palestine (Tammie Mosby), Greens Bayou (Brenda Whited) and Garland (Anna Watson). Hopefully, these Auxiliaries will be instituted in the next weeks. Please welcome these new members and offer support to make them good working Auxiliaries. If you know any Posts wanting an Auxiliary, please let me know.

Our Auxiliaries need to continue to work side by side with our Posts to make our organizations stronger. We are a team and should always remember their service to our country. We joined to always support our Veterans and Troops.

The question was asked about a Department Representatives at District meetings. The Department President will send a message to the District President if she is sending a Department Representative. Just because they are a Past Department President or Line Officer, does not make them a Department Representative at the meeting. They are only members unless Department President informed the District President. They do need to be acknowledged. We are not the VFW and Department Representatives are not budgeted for the year.

Have a Happy Valentine's Day. Keep working to make Texas the strongest in the Nation!

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## NATIONAL HOME/BUDDY POPPY

Tanya Jackson – Team Lead

Love is in the air!!! What can we do in February? We can send valentines to National Home to be given to the children. This is one way that we let them know that we are here and we think of them during all the special days of the year.

We are still collecting for National Home Unrestricted Funds. Different ideas for fundraising are what is needed right now. Do a bake less bake sale, do a raffle of an item that you feel can make some money to send, put your cans out and collect change.

If you are doing a King and Queen for Valentine's Day put the money in for National Home. Can you do a bike run? Plan one and let everyone on that run know that we are helping the VFW National Home for Children. There are different ways to raise money, we just need to start thinking outside the box. Please remember that when you do these things they need to be reported.

Buddy Poppy!!!! You do not have to have a Buddy Poppy drive just in May or November. These can be done any time during the year. Are you out and seeing veterans out? Give them a Buddy Poppy and say thank you. Has someone called and said I need a Buddy Poppy? Get one to them, send it in the mail, there is always a way to get these beautiful reminders out to anyone.

What to do with those dolls? As you are aware we are donating the dolls to the VFW National Home for Children? I will be mailing them north sometime in May or June.

So here is the address to send them to so that they can be put somewhere safe till I can get them boxed and mailed:

**Tanya Jackson C/O Crystal Slown, 5018 Charisma Drive, Midlothian, TX 76065.**

We will be accepting dolls until April 10<sup>th</sup>. This is the best way to get them boxed at one time. Please do not send any dolls after April 1, as I will not be able to do more than one mailing.

I hope that we get back to normal soon so we can do what we have always done. Right now, we can just do what we can to make sure that our programs are taken care of and that we are doing our best. Remember, we are **“HONORING OUR MISSION TO SERVE VETERANS”** with **“HONOR, COURAGE AND COMMITMENT FOR OUR VETERANS”** every day.



## VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

Shawn Terry - Chair

It was great to see many of you at the Mid-Winter Round Up. Thank you to everyone who worked behind the scenes to make it an outstanding event. There was a great deal of good information discussed and great ideas swapped back and forth. Good communication and a willingness to help one another is a key component in an organization of this size in a state this size. This is how we continue to make the VFW Auxiliary Department of Texas do the great things it does for our precious Veterans.

Now that the holidays are over, there is really no need to continue helping your local food banks, right? **WRONG!** Food insecurities are a constant all year long for many families. With the pandemic still affecting the job market, there are people getting help from food banks that have **NEVER** had to use their services before now. Thank you in advance for remembering these people during these continued difficult times.

February is designated as **“Salute to Hospitalized Veterans”** month although we salute them year around. It is still quite difficult to get into most of the V.A. Hospitals in Texas. Call the V.A. Hospital or get with a VAVS rep in your area, and he/she may have some ideas or ways to help you. There are nursing homes in some regions that are also letting a limited number of people in to see residents and there are veterans in many of these facilities that would be delighted to have company and maybe even a treat bag.

Thank you for everyone's continued support and hard work for our veterans. I would ask that you go back and look at your Mid-Year Report and see what else needs to be done from now until April.

Remember to use your Program Development Book. It is a wonderful resource tool. Just as a reminder, please make sure you are attaching pictures if possible, copies of checks written for projects and your auxiliary name, number, and district number on the monthly report form. If you ever have any questions, I am only a phone call or email away. (817-776-1830) or [seterry1965@yahoo.com](mailto:seterry1965@yahoo.com). I will do everything I possibly can to help you find answers to your questions.

**“Honor, Courage, Commitment For Our Veterans”**  
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## MEMBERSHIP

**Barbara Koehn – Team Leader**

December was a month of giving; February is the month of loving. Be kind and loving to each other in what you do for the veterans and their families. Membership of the VFW Auxiliary is an important facet of LOVE. Without the loving nature of our members to dedicate themselves to collecting annual dues, committing to add new members to their Auxiliary and growing the organization, our VFW Auxiliary will die. Retain, Recruit and Grow. We need members to see that our Veterans and their families have the best support and respect they deserve to live the best life they can for the sacrifices they have endured for us.

This month's theme is for all Auxiliaries to "synergize". Synergize is working together so the outcome is greater than anything that could have existed when you only work alone. If we work together, our organization will grow and will be able to support our veterans and their families.

The Department of Texas has assisted all auxiliaries in Texas by sending not one dues notice but two. Now the Auxiliaries and Districts need to step up to the plate. Texas now stands at 95.55%, only 4.45 % away from 100%. Let's get the job done. Together we can do this!!!!

Here are some of the ways you can boost your membership numbers. Offer incentives if dues are paid by a certain date, mentor new members, have a membership recruiting event, make personal phone calls to members who have not paid, and work with the Post about potential members.

I have three bangles that have a different word on each one. It fits our organization to a tee. We, as members, need to "Inspire" others to join, we need to "Unite" by working together or synergize and we will "Achieve" our goals of 101% membership.

Thank you for all the Auxiliaries and Districts who have achieved their goal. 82 Auxiliaries have now reached 100% plus and 20 Districts who have achieved 95% plus. A great accomplishment but our work is not done. Sprinkle the love around and remember, as Saint Theresa said, "Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love." Happy Valentine's Day!

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## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

**Mona Benotti - Chairman**

Greetings to each of you and thank you for the work you are doing on our Youth Activities program. I am excited to see your promotions of our two contests. You have gotten the entry forms to schools, art and music teachers, Auxiliary members and into the community by postal mail, email, social media, phone contacts and sharing with friends. Now on to the contests!

Children ages 6 – 16 can participate in **Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue** by singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" using the exact words to the song. Their video entries to the local auxiliary should be received by March 31, 2021. Each auxiliary then conducts the judging and submits one winner to me by April 15, 2021.

**Illustrating America** has the same deadlines. Entries to the local auxiliary should be received by March 31, 2021. You select the first-place winner in each of the 3 age groups (grades 1-2, 3-5 and 6-8) and send to me by April 15, 2021.

Judging at the state level will be conducted and a first-place winner selected for each contest. Entry forms and more details about these contests can be found at <https://vfwauxiliary.org/resources/>.

Thank you for your response to our **Patriotism Through Literacy** project. There is still plenty of time to participate by providing books to libraries, schools or other places where children gather. The suggested book list, divided by age groups, is at <https://vfwauxiliary.org/wp-content/uploads/Suggested-Book-List.pdf>. You may choose to recognize National President Sandi Onstwedder by giving a book in her honor. Check with your District President or me to get the label for this recognition.

Our Statewide Project, **Include the American Flag**, encourages us to do just what it says in every program, project and opportunity that we have. Department of Texas has been highly responsive to this.

Keep going and remember that sometimes we have to think "outside of the box the box came in" to get the job done. If you can't find something you need, contact me so we can find it together: [mlbenotti@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlbenotti@sbcglobal.net) or 817.805.3729.

**We show Honor, Courage, Commitment For Our Veterans as we are Honoring Our Mission To Serve Veterans.**



**LEGISLATIVE**  
**Tammie Mosby – Chairman**

Wow! Where has the time gone? We are already through the first half of the year. It was good to see everyone at Mid-Winter and for those of you who couldn't attend, we sure missed you.

I just want to congratulate again District 14 for submitting the most word search puzzles. I know that Madam Department President was happy to see that \$75.00 go to her special project.

The President signed into law a very important piece of legislation: [H.R. 7105](#), *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020*. This legislation includes several VFW-supported bills that were pending in the 116th Congress. The enactment of this veterans' legislation package satisfies a number of VFW resolutions and legislative priorities regarding women veterans' health care, disability assistance and memorial affairs, and economic opportunity issues.

The House and Senate passed [H.R. 6395](#), *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021* (NDAA), over a presidential veto. This law will add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism to the VA's list of presumptive conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange.

The VFW wishes to thank our members and advocates who contacted their members of Congress regarding this very important provision. We also thank the members of Congress who voted to expand care and benefits to veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange. If you need help filing a VA claim for disability compensation, please [contact a VFW Service Officer in your state](#). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many VFW service offices remain in a telework capacity, but the VFW's network of service officers have the capability to continue assisting our veterans safely without face-to-face contact.

The above is just one example of how we make a difference. Without our comrades, brothers and sisters of the VFW and Auxiliaries contacting your members of Congress this would not be possible. Your voice matters.


I want to remind everybody to be sure each auxiliary member is receiving the Action Corps Weekly e-newsletter. You can sign up online to receive this resource at [www.vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-effort](http://www.vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-effort). You can also go to the resource page in Malta under Legislative to find more tools and resources.

Please be sure you read your program books and follow the guide lines set out for our National and State priority goals. Remember there are things that we do in our daily lives that we can be reported on. Things do not have to be done as a group, each individual can report. This is one

of the ways we as auxiliary members have **Honor, Courage, Commitment for Our Veterans** as we are **Honoring Our Mission to Serve Veterans**.


I am here to help you in any way I can. If you succeed, I succeed. You can email me at [tjpurplerose@yahoo.com](mailto:tjpurplerose@yahoo.com) or by cell phone at 936-414-5293.

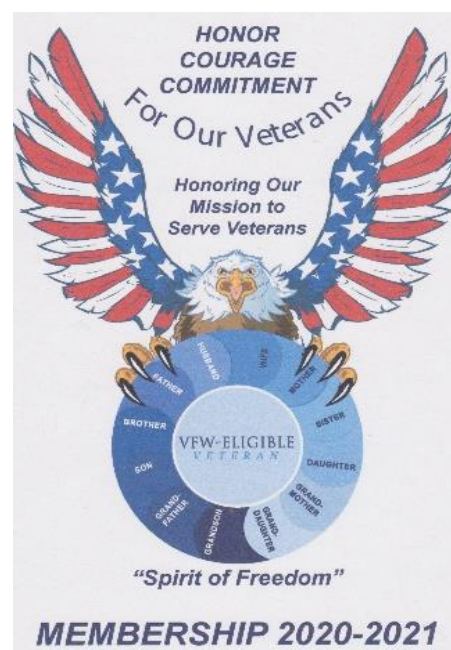




**SHAWN TERRY**  
Candidate for Department of  
Texas  
VFW Auxiliary Guard

2021 – 2022  
Life member of VFWA 7835  
Endorsed by District 21







*Valentine's  
Day*