



AMVETS LADIES AUXILIARY

Department of Michigan



October 2023—Issue 4

2023-24 Department Officer

- ★ President Pat Michalski ★
- ★ 1st Vice Kathy Keizer
- ★ 2nd Vice Bonnie Rojascki
- ★ 3rd Vice Pam Lein
- ★ Chaplain Patsy Watkins
- Sgt-at-Arms Linda Langland
- ★ Treasurer Deb Davis
- ★ Americanism Karen Harmon
- Hospital Kay Kemp ★
- Scholarship Roberta Robinson
- ★ N.E.C. Nancy Middleton
- ★ Parliament. Faye Richardson-Green
- Personnel Chair Wendy Lynema
- ★ AMVET Lodge Roberta Robinson
- ★ Ways & Means Nancy Woodwyk
- Honors & Awards Kathy Keizer
- Convention Chair Carol Pickett
- ★ Fall Conf. Chair Bert Lema
- Aleda E Lutz VAVS Linda Marshall
- ★ B.C. VAVS Faye Richardson-Green
- ★ G.R. Home Rep Leora Williamson
- Jacobetti Home Rep Judy Smith
- John Dingell VA Cel Rose Solak
- District II Pres. Linda Marshall
- District V Pres. Gloria Hall
- District VII Pres. Barb Robare
- ★ Exec. Secretary Nancy Middleton ★
- ★ Officer's with articles in the October Newsletter.

Pat Michalski, Department President

U. S. A.
United in Service to America



As you read this, the Penrickton Tour for the Department has been held. Pictures will be posted on the Auxiliary website.

There were seven (7) Auxiliary members who attended National Convention in Pittsburgh. This number was down according to attendance in the past. Nancy Middleton, N.E.C. Woman; Kathy Keizer, IPDP and Head Delegate; Pat Michalski, Department President; Caroline Wisniewski, Aux. 22; Faye Richardson-Green, Aux. 23; Rhonda Maynard, Aux. 1978 & Allison Aldrich, Aux. 4064.

The N.E.C. Woman and Head Delegate reports are posted on the Auxiliary website. Please read them to know what transpired at National Convention. Michigan's own Allison Aldrich was elected as National Scholarship Officer. Congratulations Allison, I know you will make Michigan proud!

Fall Conference is fast approaching. It will be held October 13-15, 2023 at the Doubletree Hotel in Grand Rapids. Friday, 10/13 will be our SEC meeting at 6:30 pm. Saturday, 10/14 Fall Conference classes will be held. Sunday, 10/15 a short Memorial service will be held. More info will be forthcoming from our Fall Conference Chairman, Bert Lema. Please read her Bulletin. This should have information for hotel reservations, FC Instructors and classes and much more. Please plan on attending. Be sure to get your reservations in for the hotel and also for the conference by the deadline dates.

My wish is for each Local Auxiliary to have an Amazing year! There is so much we can do by working together and sharing our ideas with others. Please let me know what your Auxiliaries are doing, and if I am able I would love to visit with you. If I can't join you, I would still love to know what you are doing for our Veterans and our Communities.



Pat Michalski, President

2023/2024 MEMBERSHIP
Re-Member to Recruit & Retain
PDP Kathy Keizer – Department 1st Vice President

Breaking news from National Convention!!

Effective 9/1, the National dues for an Honorary member have been raised to \$15. Currently the Department does not charge Honorary members any additional fee. Please be sure to send in the correct amount so processing does not get held up.

Also, current annual members who wish to become Life members (renew to life) can only do so from 9/1 to 12/31 each year. New Life members may be signed up anytime.

Don't forget to review your Honorary members for continued membership. This is to be done each Fall at a meeting with a vote taken and noted in your minutes. You also need to send in their dues (\$15 for renewal **POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN December 5**. They have to be into National by Decembers 31. This is for current Honorary members – not for new Honorary. **REMINDER: Each local may sign up 2 NEW Honorary members each year along with renewing their current Honorary members.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me when you have questions about membership. I am here to help you and your Department 1st Vice President.

Enjoy the fall season and get those annual members RENEWED!!

DEADLINE DATES FOR MEMBERSHIP

Honorary Renewals—postmarked by 12/5/2023

Renewals—postmarked by 12/5/2023

Renew to Life postmarked by 12/5/23.

Rejoins (annual renewals after 12/31) will be considered new and can be sent postmarked by 5/5/2024.

New Life members can be processed any time.

Life membership \$3 assessment (formally called life member dues) must be received by the Department on or before 12/31/2023. If this assessment is not received by the end of December, your Auxiliary will not be in good standing.

**AND EVEN MORE
BREAKING NEWS!
Our new National
President
Amy Stopyra
will be joining us
at Fall Conference
this October!**

BREAKING NEWS!
**The membership cards have
arrived!**
**and so have the
National rosters!**



CHILD WELFARE

By Bonnie Rojas,
2nd Vice President



I would first like to thank the 20 AMVETS Auxiliary and AMVETS who attended the annual Penrickton tour on September 14, 2023. It was a great tour as usual, lead by Patty Obrzut Executive Director. A delicious light lunch was served to all attending the tour.

We held the first Chairman's award at Penrickton which was won by AMVET Bob Green. He was presented with an awesome Penrickton Shirt.

All those Posts that attend, please remember to list it on your child welfare reports. Speaking of reports, the mid-year reports are due to me postmarked on or before November 5, 2023.

I'm hoping many of the Auxiliaries helped with much needed school supplies to their area schools. This is just one of many ways you can do things for children on your reports.

I'm so looking forward to reading all the great things our Auxiliary sisters are doing for Child Welfare.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

By Pamela Lein,
3rd Vice President

We are having our PAWS visit on Oct. 23rd at 11am. I hope many will be able to attend. If you do plan to attend please let me know at my email by Oct. 13th. If you have questions, please email me at upnorthpam1@gmail.com or call me at 231-357-6010. Please plan for 2 to 3 hours at PAWS.

We have some news on 2 of PAWS Purposeful puppies. Mr. Denver and Mr. Goose have been placed.



Mr. Denver, trained by Jordan Detection K9, has graduated as an electronic Detection dog and is working with his handler in Arkansas. He is from the 2021 "D" litter. Boulder housed by Adair Jackson, Caryn Ashbar and now Bob and Faye Richardson-Green, and VICKI, housed by Shari Hansen. He was raised by Josh and Charlotte Morgan.

Mr. Goose, trained by Jordan Detection has graduated as an electronic Detection dog and is working with his handler in Kansas. He is from the 2021 "AMVET" litter. Chaos, housed by Betsy Williams, and GILLETT housed by Polly Brainerd. He was raised by Olivia Wylie.

Remember to have your local 3rd Vice's document with all you do for community service. It all matters and counts hugely as we send everything off to National.



AMERICANISM

by Karen Harmon, Americanism/SOS
Officer

Americanism contest forms have been updated on the department website. Department entries are to be sent to me and postmarked by April 1st. Go to the website to run off the information for the forms and qualifications.

This year's theme is: "Why is it Important to Vote?"

Please encourage your posts and schools to participate in this wonderful program, and express their patriotism and loyalty to our military and our country.



NATIONAL ROSTERS



National rosters have arrived. The Secretary makes a copy of each Auxiliary's roster and gives it to the Dept. 1st Vice President. The 1st Vice then sends a copy of the local roster with a letter of instructions to the local Membership/1st Vice.

All this takes a little time. You can probably expect the roster within the week.

Please cooperate with the instructions and return date to Dept. Secretary. If the deadline is not followed, you may need to complete the Name/Address Change form. Save yourself some time and get the corrections back ASAP.





NEWS FROM THE GRHV

by Leora Williamson, GRHV Rep.



Who would have guessed that Root Beer floats and Silver haired dancing ladies would be as popular a combination as PB&J? Well the Ladies from Auxiliary #23 found out on the 30th day of August when they provided both to the members of the Grand Rapids Veterans Home. After over 50 floats were served, the members were introduced to the Senior Steppers.

They are an amazing group of a dozen dancers aged 65 - 85, dancing in groups of 6 to Golden Oldies tunes, introduced by another amazing lady who proudly admits to being 90 years old. Joint replacement surgeries make it difficult for her to dance, but she does a great job of announcing the history of each song, who wrote it, what inspired it and the year it was recorded. In different costumes for each tune, they wowed the audience, including the activities staff and care-givers.

Last, but not least was the lady who was in charge of the music. She was right on time when the dancers took their positions. The program closed with all 12 of The Steppers dancing to "Hero" (sung by Mariah Carey) especially for the Veterans. There wasn't a dry eye in the room. The Steppers were very impressed with the facility and thanked me again and again for inviting them.

My thanks again to Gloria Hall, Kathy Keizer, Nancy Middleton, and my great grand daughter Ana for helping with the floats.



HOSPITAL NEWS

by Kay Kemp
Hospital Officer

Well Fall Conference is right around the corner Oct. 14-15th. Hope to see new faces. We are getting into the fall spirit with Halloween right around the corner.

Remember Mid-Year reports are due. Since the 5th is on a Sunday the (next) business day will apply for the Post Office date only and NOT for emails.

Also a reminder to the VAVS Reps: you have a joint review yearly. They are due in the month of September.

WAYS & MEANS

by Nancy Woodwyk, W&M Chairman

Fall Conference is coming fast, and I have been very busy with all of the fun we will have at Fall Conference to help fund Ways And Means.

It is most unfortunate, but I will not be bringing snacks or baked goods or drinks to sell as they have indicated to us it is 100% not allowed. So you are on your own.

I have some awesome raffles and a really fun game slated for Saturday evening and the Chinese Auction will have a secret kick to it. I want to thank the girls who have my back and have donated some of their talents. You know who you are. We will also throw in a surprise drawing for those who are participating in my fundraising.

Funny One-Liners

- ★ "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."
- ★ "Politics: 'Poli' a Latin word meaning 'many'; and 'tics' meaning 'bloodsucking creatures.'"
- ★ "The road to success is always under construction."
- ★ "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."
- ★ ". "I can resist everything except temptation."
- ★ "Why do they call it rush hour when nothing moves?"

**DEADLINE FOR THE
NOVEMBER
NEWSLETTER OR WEBSITE
ARTICLES
OCTOBER 17, 2023**

NATIONAL NEWS!

by Nancy Middleton, NEC Woman



Except for making a wrong turn several years ago going through Pennsylvania, I have never been to Pittsburgh. We had our National Convention there in August – and I LOVED IT!!!!

Our hotel was very nice (yes, I know the elevators were a bit slow), the view from our 21st floor room was awesome, the staff were helpful and friendly, and I enjoyed everything (except getting sick on Wednesday and missing the opening ceremony with Rocky Blier as one of the speakers). I am a big football fan and it broke my heart to miss seeing the former Pittsburgh Steeler.

I have included a list of the new National Officers elsewhere in this newsletter. One of the most touching moments was the election of the new President – Amy Stopyra. As there was only one candidate for the office, a delegate from her Department moved to elect Amy by affirmation. The delegate was Amy's daughter Ivy who, until a couple years ago, was a Jr. AMVET and served as their National President.

We only had 7 delegates from Michigan. Hopefully next year we can get a few more to go to the Convention. It is in Illinois. It can really be a good time and very informative. Sharing a room with 2 – 3 – 4 people can make it affordable. Start saving your nickels, dimes and quarters!

FALL CONFERENCE IS ALMOST HERE!

by Bert Lema, Chairman

We are busy getting ready to make sure our Fall Conference is educational, interesting, and fun! Some important information you need to get set up for a great experience:

Our President's theme is United in Service to America. Please plan on wearing a red, white, blue, or patriotic tee to training on Saturday.

Registration times are 5:30pm-6:15pm on Friday October 13th and on Saturday October 14th 8:00am-8:45am. You'll find registration tables set up outside our training room.

Please see Ways & Means Chair Nancy Woodwyk's article for information about the fun activities she has planned. Nancy is working very hard to set up great raffle prizes along with other fun & games.

Plan for fun and a few surprises! I am looking forward to seeing many of my long-time friends and making new ones at Fall Conference. Hope to see you there!



Battle Creek VAVS News

By Faye Richardson-Green, VAVS Rep.

The Battle Creek VAMC recently held a strategic planning summit to ensure their four service areas will provide the intended care for West and Central Michigan veterans. Those areas are: primary care, mental health, specialty care and extended/geriatric care.

In addition, they are working with the other Michigan VA medical centers in Ann Arbor, Saginaw, and Detroit to determine where they can best provide coordinated services, such as mobile radiology.

On Wednesday, Battle Creek VAVS reps and depts from all service organizations learned their strategic plan includes opening community-based outpatient clinics in Howard City and Coldwater in 2024 and Kalamazoo/Portage in 2025. This would bring the number of Battle Creek to eight including Benton Harbor, Lansing, Muskegon, and Wyoming.

VOLUNTEERS are needed at all locations. If you are interested, please let me know. We can use volunteers in regular, occasional, and virtual roles.

HIGGINS LAKE LODGE/CABINS NEWS

by **Roberta Robinson, Lodge Rep.**



Hello Ladies, I hope everyone is doing well. With the Summer coming to a close, the Lodge & Cabins had a very successful season. Our customer surveys indicate we are heading in the right direction with many positive remarks. We're looking forward to Fall and all it brings.

Since the Summer has ended, it's time to prepare for our continued renovations and improvements along with some needed repairs. Thank you for all the support the Ladies Auxiliary has given to the Lodge and Cabins and continued support in the future.

The "New" Lodge Committee Members will be having it's meeting on (Saturday) September 23, 2023. We will be discussing and planning for the current and future repairs, maintenance and needed Improvements. A main topic to be discussed will be the much-needed roof replacement for the main Lodge building. Professional estimates have the replacement costs in excess of \$60,000.00 and we will discuss ways money can be generated to cover this cost.

This and more will be discussed along with Joel Trombley (AMVET Riders President) leading the way for a late October working party for painting, repairs, log splitting and roof cleaning to name a few as needed.

These are some the main areas and more will follow in the next newsletter.

Roberta Robinson
Higgins Lake Lodge Rep



HAPPY HALLOWEEN!!!!

NEWS FROM THE CHAPLAIN

by **Patsy Watkins, Dept. Chaplain**

Hope everyone is well. As you all know the Sunshine Fund is back, so if there is someone who is ill, send me a note concerning the Auxiliary member, with their name and address.

Also send me names and addresses of ones who need a card sent to them, as well as family members who are sick and in the hospital.

I would love to hear from everyone with any ideas for a little extra thoughtful gift for those who are sick—What they like to do in their spare time, etc. Just so they know their Auxiliary family is thinking of them.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Fall Conference

Patsy Watkins, Chaplain

phone - 616-589-2728

email - sassyjo1027@yahoo.com



NATIONAL OFFICERS 2023/2024

National President Amy Stopyra (Pennsylvania)

1st Vice President Cindy Rice (Ohio)

2nd Vice President Mary Lanphere (New York).

3rd Vice President Laura Bugaj (New York)

Americanism Officer Debra Gass (Indiana)

Scholarship Officer Allison Aldrich (Michigan)

Hospital Officer Donna Tolland (Maryland)

Sgt-at-Arms Mary McKinnon (Pennsylvania)

Chaplain Laurie Shea (Illinois)

President Elect appointments are:

Convention Chairman Debbie Dant - Illinois

Parliamentarian Heidi Dineen-Serpis - Maine

Jr. AMVET Coordinator Denise Speigle - Ohio

Honors & Awards Chair Leslie Wunderle - Alaska

History/Scrapbook Chairman Paulette Joy - Alaska

Pres. Scrapbook Janet Buterbaugh - Pennsylvania

Training Chairman Linda McGriff - Texas

VAVS Representative Marie Rorrio - Maine

Honoring A Fallen Hero

PDP Faye Richardson-Green

For the past couple of years National Scholarship Officer and PDP Allison Aldrich, current Department of Michigan Ladies Auxiliary President Pat Michalski and I have been working with Past National Sons of AMVETS Commander to honor our Michigan's fallen military personnel with Honor and Remember flags. Since 2008, more than 4700 flags have been presented across the USA.

On Wednesday, August 30, AMVETS Past National District IV Commander Bob Green (Post 126), Retired Army Lt Colonel Don Robertson (Post 126) and I, PDP Faye Richardson-Green (Aux 23), were finally able to present the 129th Michigan Honor and Remember flag to the family of Airman 1st Class Malik M. Houston, deceased, in Lansing, MI. We have been trying to make this presentation since July of 2022. Unfortunately, the family had to cancel several times.

Blessedly, all family members were able to gather on the 30th so this presentation could be made. It was a very moving and emotional ceremony.



CONGRATULATIONS MICHIGAN!

1. To National Scholarship Officer Allison Aldrich!! You did a great job at the National caucus, which can be a pretty scary thing to do. We are so proud of you.
2. To Auxiliary #23's member Kathy Swain who was one of the daily winners at the Nat'l. Convention raffle. She received a VERY nice check!
3. To the Dept. of Michigan which was the winner of the Department Child Welfare Award.
4. I also heard through the 'grapevine' we had a couple winners from the Americanism Poster and Essay contest.



Sadly, a member of Auxiliary 57 for more than 50 years, Carmen Simpson, passed away on Monday, September 18th. Carmen would have been 99 years young on November 15th.

She served as Auxiliary 57's Sergeant-at-Arms for MANY years and in the same position at Department a couple of different times.

There are no services planned. A celebration of Carmen's life will be held on some future date. As information becomes available, it will be shared with all of you.

More Funny One-Liners

- ★ "Success is the best revenge"
- ★ Well, at least your mom thinks you're pretty."
- ★ "It's always darkest before it turns absolutely pitch black.
- ★ "There's no better vacation than my boss being on vacation."
- ★ "I believe in luck: how else can you explain the success of those you don't like?"
- ★ "Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia."
- ★ "Experience is the name so many people give to their mistakes."



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Sometimes we use abbreviations and new members have no idea what they mean.

Sample:

PDP—Past Department President

IPDP—Immediate Past Dept. President

PDC— Past Department Commander

SEC—State Executive Committee

NEC—National Executive Committee

VAVS—Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service

S.O.S—Serve our Servicemen (& women)

VAMC—Veteran's Administration Medical Center



AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Department of Michigan presents:

United in Service to America

Fall Conference Agenda (Subject to change)

Friday, October 13th

- 5:30pm-6:15pm: Registration outside Wolverine Room
- 6:30pm: SEC Meeting Boardroom

Saturday, October 14th

- 8:00am-8:45am: Registration outside Wolverine Room
- 9:00am: Opening Session w/AMVETS – Salon BCD
- 10:00am -11:30 Wolverine Room- Membership training - PDP Kathy Keizer
- 11:30am-1:00pm: lunch
- 1:00pm-2:30pm: Wolverine Room- Constitution & By-Laws – President Pat Michalski
- 2:30pm-2:45pm: break
- 2:45pm-3:30 Fundraising ideas – PDP Kathy Keizer
- 3:30pm-4:30pm: Round-table discussion

Sunday, October 15th

- 9:00am: Joint Memorial Service - Salon BCD