



AMVETS LADIES AUXILIARY

Department of Michigan

June 2024—issue 12



2023-24 Department Officer

President Pat Michalski

1st Vice Kathy Keizer

2nd Vice Bonnie Rojeski

3rd Vice Pam Lein

Chaplain Patsy Watkins

Sgt-at-Arms Jennifer Zelony

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

United in Service to America

Pat Michalski, Department President

I hope all local Auxiliaries got their service reports in on time so they will be eligible for awards. I know there is so much service work being done. Each Auxiliary should be proud of what they do in the community and report it. This is NOT just to win an award. The Department Chairman reports all the hours, etc. and sends the report to the NEC Woman who in turn sends them to National. The AMVETS National Commander takes this information to Congress each year. This helps keep our 501c status.

I also hope each local Auxiliary sent in their Revalidation form which lists the newly elected officers for 2024-2025. Also, if an Auxiliary had by-laws due this year, they should have been sent to the Department Parliamentarian Faye Richardson-Green for approval. These two items are needed for a Local Auxiliary to be in Good Standing!



Time now to concentrate on the Department convention which will be held June 20-23, 2024, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Grand Rapids. A tentative agenda was in the last Newsletter; however, an updated agenda will be posted on the website within the next day or so. If you are mandated to attend a committee meeting, or if you are interested in attending, please check the updated agenda. Some meetings are "closed" and will be indicated on the agenda; however, any member may attend a committee meeting if they chose to do so (if it is not marked as closed). Also, Registration forms for Delegates were included in the Digest. There is an Early Registration fee, so check the forms to be sure to get the early rate. I hope each Local Auxiliary will have their delegate strength at Convention. The Department needs your input.



I visited two VAVS hospitals within the last month. One was Aleda E. Lutz VA and the other was John Dingell VA. Both were very impressive. Of course I reside in the Aleda E Lutz VA area and Auxiliary #22 has a Bingo there once a month, so I was familiar with that one. I have not visited John Dingell VA since I was Department President 10 years ago and there have been many changes and upgrades.

Pat Michalski, President

+LONG-RANGE PLANNING SURVEY: RESULTS SUMMARY (v.2)

Bert Lema, Long-Range Planning Committee Chair

Thank you to everyone who participated in our first survey. As of today, 35+% of those who were asked to respond, did! Due to space limitations, I am summarizing responses below. A complete review will be sent to everyone in my original survey distribution list. Any member may obtain a copy by contacting me at lema81@wowway.com so I can email you the document to you.

Long-Range Planning Survey Questions Response Summary

Question	% Yes	% No	% I Don't Know
1. Have you ever attended convention?	52%	47%	n/a
2. Our Department Newsletter is sent every month to every Local Auxiliary President. Has it ever been shared with you?	90%	9%	n/a
3. Have you ever attended a Fall Conference ... ?	59%	40%	n/a
4. ... Does your Local Auxiliary submit Service Reports?	81%	12%	6%
5. If your Auxiliary doesn't submit Service Reports, why not?	n/a	n/a	n/a
6. Please include ...recommendations for future surveys or other issues we should be addressing.	n/a	n/a	n/a

Generally, those who have attended Conventions or Fall Conferences have had positive experiences:

- Opportunity to connect with members around the State;
- Friendly atmosphere, camaraderie, fun;
- Great learning experiences;
- Love the classes & information sharing;
- Fall Conference at the Lodge is great;
- More surveys, please;
- Attending is worth the time & effort.

However, the Department does have room for improvement:

- The environment is too stuffy & formal – relax more;
- Less “bickering” and more respect for attendees;
- More question-and-answer sessions; classes with individual officers
- Classes are repeated too often. Break-out sessions with an opportunity for attendees to select which to attend would be better. New trainers and new information-sharing;
- All ladies representing Department need to arrive and be ready to start meetings at the scheduled time;
- Newer/1st time attendees aren't always made to feel welcomed;
- Too expensive and/or too far away to drive;
- Find away to get more members to attend;
- Would like Department Officers to be more available and/or responsive to local questions;
- Smaller Auxiliaries feel as if they don't have as much input or are not listened to as are larger Auxiliaries.
- Zoom meetings or web-based meetings/training would reach more members.

Other:

- Most respondents see the monthly newsletter but would like more informative articles from the Dept. Officers.
- Service reports are being completed but suggest the Department Officers reach out to those who do not complete them to find out why.
- Localized and/or web-based training would be appreciated. Templates for developing websites and social media pages;
- Automate reporting, automate membership – ask National to help bring Auxiliary into the 21st century.

There are SO many great responses. I encourage anyone interested to contact me for a complete copy.



Re-Member to Recruit & Retain

PDP Kathy Keizer – Department 1st Vice President

Just a reminder the deadline for rejoins has passed by the time you are reading this article. Those who did not renew by December 31, 2023, will now be 'new' members.

About June 1 you will receive an email from me with the membership chart for the end of the year going into Convention. The totals on this chart will be the numbers we start with for the 2024/2025 membership year. Your Life membership assessment will be based on the number of Life members listed on this chart. Your delegate strength will be based on the total membership as of June 1.

Any new members sent in after June 1 will most likely be held until after the Department Convention since the Executive Secretary will be very busy preparing for Convention.

It is my hope you will consider attending Convention this year. You can learn a lot about how the Department works and what the Department Officers have done through the year.

I will be having a Membership Committee meeting on Thursday, June 20. When I know what time it will be held, I will send an email out to all local membership chairmen.

Thanks to all who did work hard and increase their membership this past year. I hope we can continue to increase our membership and retain our current membership going forward.

FROM THE TREASURER **By Deb Davis, Dept. Treasurer**

As this Auxiliary year winds down, so does my time as Department Treasurer. Thank you for allowing me to get to know the Auxiliary from this aspect and to serve as your Treasurer.

In my two and a half years in this position, I have seen this organization's dedication to our nation's Veterans and I wish everyone continued success.

My apologies to Bert Lema. I left her article out of the May newsletter!

She was very nice about it and totally understanding—but I still feel bad.



Nancy Middleton,
Editor



WAYS & MEANS STUFF **By Nancy Woodwyk, Chairman**



June is fast approaching and that means convention and that means fun and I know it will be fun because I will be there.

This year we have new games. I hope you enjoy them all. Also, the 50-50 raffle will run from Thursday - Sunday. That will be a nice little pot. It would be nice to have a couple new people at convention.

Please, please sell those tickets. The stubs and check (made payable to AMVETS Ladies Aux Dept. of MI) should be returned to me at 5459 N Bluff Ave, Hudsonville MI 49426.

CHILD WELFARE NEWS

By Bonnie Rojas, 2nd Vice President

Just want to say,

"my Auxiliary Sisters are AWESOME".

I just finished up reading all the local reports and I am blown away with all the great things each post as done this past year.

I received final reports from the following Auxiliaries:

23, 52, 57, 93, 114, 115, 121, 122, 126, 910, 1957, 1988, 2273 and 4064. With total evaluations of \$148,806.00

Please remember to always send in a Mid-year report even if you have nothing to report at that time. I had a few great final reports sent in but will not qualify because they DID NOT send in a mid-year

I will be having my final award given out at Convention. This will be a drawing from the Auxiliaries who donated to Penrickton thru the Department.

I am hoping to see some first time Auxiliary sister at this years convention.

Thank you for allowing me be your 2023/2024 Dept. 2nd Vice. President.



HA HA HA

"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go."

"There's no secret about success. Did you ever know a successful man who didn't tell you about it?"

"The trouble with her is she lacks the power of conversation but not the power of speech."

"A diamond is merely a lump of coal which did well under pressure."

"Life is short. Smile while you still have teeth."



CONVENTION NEWS

By Carol Pickett, Chairman

Can you believe it's almost time to start packing for Convention 2024? Let's start a checklist and some suggestion

- date June 20-23
- DoubleTree Hotel 4747 28th St. Grand Rapids
- call 616/957-0100 for a room \$108 plus tax
- Send pre registration (\$15 & convention form) to Nancy Middleton by June 7 or pay \$20 at event.
- committee meetings on Thursday
- registration is open Thursday 5:30-6, Friday 8-8:30/ 4-4:30, Sat. and Sunday 8-8:30
- hope your Aux can donate two or three attendance prizes about \$5 each—wrapped. Give to Sgt-at-Arms or Convention Chair.
- need more information or have questions? check web page or call Carol Pickett
- if checking convention digest please note SEC is Friday morning.
- My email is cpickett121@comcast.net

I can't wait to see you. I am getting excited and hope you are too.

HOSPITAL

By Kay Kemp, Hospital Officer



Here we are—Auxiliary Sisters all ready for another Convention. I would like to thank the following Auxiliaries for their final reports. They are as follows, 22, 23, 52, 57, 93, 115, 121, 122, 126, 1941, 1957, 1988, 22, and 4064. Remember reports should be dated 5/1/23-4/30/24.

VAVS Representatives and Hospitals audits will take place at the Convention. (see agenda) Hope to see a lot of ladies attending.

There have been no letters sent as to who is eligible for pins or bars. Post 57 does have a Youth Volunteer who should receive a certificate.



AMERICANISM/S.O.S.

By Karen Harmon, Dept. Americanism/SOS Officer



Hard to believe the year is almost over. I am excited about our Americanism program, and I am getting confirmations from our winners. The winners and their Posts or Districts will be listed on the Department bulletin, and they will receive their awards Saturday at Convention.

I am currently working on buying needed items for Camp Grayling and USO. I did a tour there 2 weeks ago - very excited!

Thank you to the following Auxiliaries for their reports:

22, 23, 52, 57, 93, 114, 115, 121, 126, 1941, 1957, 1988, 2273, and 4064

Unfortunately, not all will qualify for awards. Both midyear and end-of-the year reports must be turned in on time. Also remember to proofread and completely fill out reports.

MVH—Grand Rapids

By Leora Williamson, Dept. Rep

The MVH-GR building was damaged by a tornado that hit the north side of the city and Comstock Park a few months ago. In fact the storm lifted a rather large HVAC unit off the roof and dropped it to the ground. A crane had to be hired to return it to its place. The roof and windows of two private rooms were damaged, rendering them untenable. No one was hurt and activities go on as usual.

I recently went along on a trip to Holland, for a pre-Tulip Festival visit. We were able to see the tulips in bloom and enjoy some Ice Cream from Kilwins just across the street.

A trio called "Just Us" entertained the Vets, and the volunteers on a Tuesday afternoon. We all enjoyed them very much.

To volunteer at this Home never feels like work.



CHAPLAIN'S NEWS

By Patsy Watkins, Chaplain

Here it is almost a start of a new Auxiliary year. It's been a pleasure serving as your Chaplain for the past two years.

Enjoy your summer and be safe traveling. Be aware for the motorcycles! Things can happen in the blink of an eye. Prayers go out to our 1st Vice Kathy Keizer's grandson Kyle who was in a serious motorcycle accident. Hope he's doing fine. Kathy, we offer prayers for you and the family.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the convention this June. Time sure has flown by fast this year.

The Sunshine Fund is doing great, it was used 3 times this past year.



Keep all our veterans in your prayers as well as their families at home. Some have fought for our country and some are still fighting for our country. Remember them this Memorial Day.

Prayers

Patsy Watkins, Chaplain



COMMUNITY SERVICE

By Pam Lein, 3rd Vice President



I have received a total of 14 final reports. We are still making mistakes in our reports, which makes it difficult for us to track. I had a few which were extremely hard to read. Some reported correctly but included veteran projects in the same project which needed to go for Americanism not community service. These are the Posts I have received reports from: 23, 52, 57, 93, 114, 115, 121, 122, 126, 910, 1941, 1957, 2273, and 4064.

If you are a member of a given church and you do things at the church, that does not count as you are doing it as a member not volunteering for just a group. Please do not just abbreviate or use initials for something as I do not know what it is about. I know that classes on how to report have been offered at many of our Fall Conferences.

I have had some local Auxiliaries call and question what they could count, and it was very helpful to me and them to know what they can count. Overall, our Auxiliaries did some great work, of which you should be very proud. Keep up the work as we send it on to National and it counts!

There will be a PAWS presentation at our Dept convention in June. I am excited to be able to present a check to them at that time. I hope many of you will be able to attend. I wish you will truly think about attending this year's Convention. It would be great to see you all.

Again, thank you for your reports and so much work you are doing in your communities, it does make a difference.



"Calamities are of two kinds: misfortunes to ourselves, and good fortune to others."

"The road to success is dotted with many tempting parking spaces."

"Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else."

"If you find me offensive. Then I suggest you quit finding me."

"I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

"If had a dollar for every smart thing you say. I'll be poor."

"Always give 100%, except when giving blood."

Listen, smile, agree, and then do whatever you were gonna do anyway."

Sgt-at-Arms

by Jennifer Zelony



With convention right around the corner, we need to make sure we have our dress code proper: white or gold neckline blouse, black pants or skirt that is 2 inches above the knee and no longer than four inches below the knee. Pearl earrings and single strand pearl necklace. White toe covered shoes may be used from April until labor day. Dept. Officers are not to wear any decorations or pins on their hats. Earned pins are to be worn on the Auxiliary blazer, upper left pocket. Make sure not to wear blue jeans, or any pants with holes in them.

Make sure to have your membership card if needed. Respect everyone we interact with and work together. Making sure everything that is needed will help with whatever Madam President needs.

If anyone is willing to assist with the Sgt-at-Arms escorting PDP's please contact the Convention Chairman or Sg-at-Arms.

AMVETS Higgins Lake Lodge and Cabin NEWSLETTER June 2024:

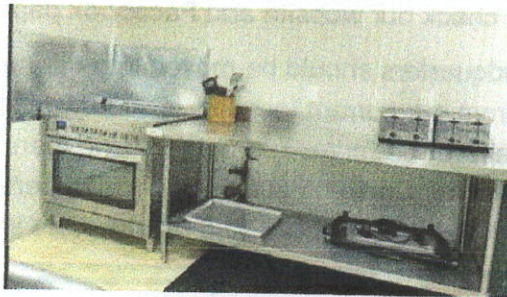
by Roberta Robinson, Lodge Aux. Rep.

Thank You! There has been a magnitude of progress made possible through generous donations from our AMVET Family and volunteers. The support has helped aid in repair and enhancements necessary to maintain the accommodations and restore the beauty of this historic landmark.

Most recent update at the Lodge include a new commercial grade electric stove. This was made possible through the generous donation from Bay City Auxiliary 22. To compliment the new stove is a new stainless steel prep table. These well-needed additions are just in time for peak season.

Cabin 5 is nearing completion of its updates that includes interior painting, new stove, new refrigerator, microwave, drapes/blinds, dressers and nightstands.

Remember.... It's not too late to get your AMVET Department of Michigan Raffle ticket for \$10 each. All proceeds will be directed to benefit Higgins Lake Lodge and Cabins. Drawing will be held at the AMVETS Department Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan held on June 23, 2024.



Reservation/Inquiries: 989-821-6574 or amvetslodge@gmail.com

Calling all Gavelieres

Bert Lema, Gavelieres' President 2023-2024

ilema81@wowway.com

586-214-1019

I am in the process of working with our Convention Chair, PDP Carol Pickett, to finalize arrangements for this year's Gavelieres' Dinner Meeting. Our dinner will be held in the hotel restaurant following our Friday Convention schedule. Carol has advised me the restaurant has hired a new chef who is working on a revised menu which is not yet available to share.

If you will be at the Convention this year and plan to attend the Gavelieres' Dinner, please let me know via phone or email (contact information listed above) so I can reserve a seat for you. If you have any questions, let me know!

Hope to see you there!

LOL HA HA HA

"When life gives you lemons, squirt someone in the eye.

He was happily married – but his wife wasn't.

You can't have everything. Where would you put it?

I'm sorry I hurt your feelings when I called you stupid. I really thought you already knew.

Before you judge a man, walk a mile in his shoes. After that who cares?... He's a mile away and you've got his shoes!

Unless your name is Google, stop acting like you know everything.

Important

New and Upcoming Stuff from the NEC Woman

Nancy Middleton

The 78th Annual National Convention will be held in Springfield Illinois on August 5-10, 2024. The National Convention Digest has arrived and it has a lot of information about the Convention, registration form, awards for each local to apply for, etc.

National Convention Hotel Information:

President Abraham Lincoln Springfield— a DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 701 E Adams Street Springfield IL 62701 Phone Number: 217-544-8800 <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/amvetsnationalconvention/> Group Name: AMVETS National Convention Group Code: AMC Wyndham Springfield City Centre 700 E Adams Street Springfield, IL 62701 Phone: (217) 789-1530 <https://bit.ly/3Ukc1TT> The hotels are directly across the street from each other. The Bank of Springfield Convention Center is next to the Abraham Lincoln hotel and cattycorner from the Wyndham – very convenient and an easy walk. The Auxiliary and Sons of AMVETS will be having their meetings at the Wyndham. Scooter rental, registration and much more information will be available in the coming weeks! Be sure to check our website and Facebook page for updates!

As of May 1, 2024, Auxiliary National Headquarters should be moved into our new office space. We are moving about 15 minutes down the road from our current location. Our new mailing address will be 3309-11 Hubbard Road, Hyattsville MD 20785. Mail **will** be forwarded but realizing there are many things that will be sent to Headquarters in preparation for National Convention as well as membership and other day to day correspondence, **PLEASE** use the new address. Our phone and fax numbers will remain the same.



HA HA HA

"Be the reason someone smiles today... or the reason they drink. Whatever works."

"Why do they call it rush hour when nothing moves?"

"A man can be happy with any woman, as long as he does not love her."

"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."

"No matter how bad it gets, I'm always rich at the dollar store."

"Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until they speak."

Scholarship NEWS

By Roberta Robinson, Scholarship Of-

Final Year End Service and Evaluation Reports have been received from Local Auxiliaries 52, 57, 93, 114, 121, 126, 1941, 1957, 1988, 2273 and 4064.

Thank You to the Auxiliary Officers and Members for your contributions towards working on projects, completing the required reports and the donations provided to support the Program this past year.

No articles are due next month.
I do the July newsletter which
is a synopsis of the Dept.
Convention.

Nancy

This is Issue #12 which is the final issue for the 2023/2024 Auxilliary year.

Because of the ever increasing cost of postage, I am going to recommend at this year's Convention in June to increase the yearly subscription rate to \$12. BUT...I am also going to recommend we eliminate mailing the Convention Digest in March to all those who subscribe to the newsletter. It is very expensive to produce the Digest and the postage alone is well over \$3 each. Some subscribers to the newsletter are not really interested in the Digest.

The Digest is now automatically sent to each Department Officer, each local Auxilliary President, each newsletter subscriber and PDP's who request it. I will suggest the cost of the newsletter be \$12 and if the Digest is wanted, an addition \$3 be added.

The newsletter and Digest will still be sent free of charge to each local Auxilliary. Each Department Officer will also receive one copy of the Digest in March—free of charge.

If this is approved, all subscriptions must be received by the end of June.