

## SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION PRESENTATION

The Message from this year's National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador, Tessa Butcher i Focus will be supporting the National Programs National Veterans Services (known as NVS), Veterans Military Support (known as VMS) and Suicide Prevention & Mental Wellness.

So, what is Veterans & Family Support - This program includes assistance to veterans who are not in hospitals or nursing homes, and to Military families. It includes financial assistance, bringing meals to shut-ins, and providing support during times of illness and bereavement. It can involve driving people to the Dr. office or to church, mowing their lawn, helping with shopping, or any type of assistance. It also includes supporting the National Veterans Services by making a donation to the fund or support for the military, such as funding or donating to the National Military Services fund, adopting a unit, or providing assistance to military families.

So, what is the VFW National Veterans Services? NVS provides a nationwide network of more than 2,000 VA Accredited VFW Services Officers across America and abroad who help hundreds of thousands of veterans navigate the veterans affairs system each year. Service officers assist all veterans, whether they are VFW members or not in filing claims.

Veterans Military Support consists of Unmet Needs - which is for service members who have run into unexpected financial difficulties can apply for a grant to ease the burden. Military Assistance Program - helps provide financial assistance to VFW Posts and auxiliaries to sponsor troop send offs, homecomings, and get togethers. Post and Auxiliaries participate in Adopt-a-Unit and Family Readiness Groups can also receive assistance. VFW's Sports Clips Help A Hero Scholarship - provides service members and veterans with scholarships of up to \$5000 to complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student load debt.

The Department of Washington donated to Veterans Military Support a total of \$4,343 within this total 7 Aux's donated \$1,013. What National put back into the Department of WA \$326,331 to Unmet Needs, \$207,189 to Military Assistance Programs, \$50,890 from the Foundation Community Support and 29 scholarships awarded totaling \$129,405. National Veteran Services donations are not tracked but I can bet you that the amount is not any where near what it could be such as it is for Veterans Military Support donations.

We need to do better this year so the Goal is to have more Auxiliaries & Post making an monetary donation to both of these programs to support what is being given back. So, the Challenge begins today and for every Auxiliary who donates to both programs will be put into a drawing at Mid-Winter and State Convention for a \$50 gift certificate from the VFW Store.

Last thing on the focus this year is Suicide Prevention and Mental Awareness - So September is National Suicide Prevention & Mental Awareness Month and I know from the past that it is all about timing for us as auxiliaries to participate due to our school of instruction scheduled in August. I'm asking that the District Presidents get this information out ASAP and not wait for

your District Meeting. But bottom line is the information should get them on board for next year where the timing will still be an issue so my intent is to have all auxiliaries plan ahead. On the YER it states if you don't participate in September report whatever you can do throughout the year. I believe everyday is Suicide Prevention and Mental Awareness Day. In your packet and out on the table you will find a handout with 10 ideas of things your auxiliary can do to support and provide resources in Septembers National Suicide Prevention month or anytime throughout the year.

Other things to address are:

Heroes in the Ballpark - there were only 5 Auxiliaries who donated to Hero's in the Ball Park as of May 16<sup>th</sup>. We need to support this event and I know they were looking at very little being left in the fund after all is said and done. It is always nice to have a little cushion for next year's event versa looking at having to cancel because of lack of funding. So, let's get on board giving active military and their families the opportunity for a day at the ballpark. Spokane's game is Sept 1<sup>st</sup> and flyers will be available today on my table to pick-up or available on the Auxiliary Department website. Donations can be mailed to VFW Hdqts in Fife. Rainier's game flyer will be posted as soon as it is available

There will also be 6 pgs. of resource links for this program in your packet and available on the Auxiliary Departments website [www.vfwauxwa.org](http://www.vfwauxwa.org) please take the time to review this document.

I'm available for whatever questions you may have about this program by phone or email so let's "Do It for Those Who Can't"

I will close with a quote from Bonnie Jensen:

I use to think my house had  
to be in perfect order to  
invite friends to tea. Now I  
realize we're both very happy  
to be together in a dusty  
house with warm cookies.