



I'd like to start by thanking our Department President, David, for asking me to be the Extension and Revitalization chairman this year. I will be working closely with David as well as our Department Chief of Staff, Mike McCandless. This year, one of my main focuses will be on the revitalization of Auxiliaries through mentorship. Our Department Chief of Staff, Mike McCandless, will be working hand-in-hand with our Department President to bring you all the organizational duties that are required to be "healthy". Keep an eye on the General Orders in each Sunflower Express for those.

"From Sea to Shining Sea, Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free," is the theme from our National President, Lois Callahan for 2025-2026. What does this mean to you? For me, I think about the reason that I joined this great organization, which is to honor the service of my family members who served and to all the veterans who have fought to protect my rights and freedoms. Veterans from all across the nation who gave selflessly for each and every one of us. Each of our national programs are geared towards helping us honor those veterans, their family members as well as our active-duty military. National Ambassador, Karlene Beams has asked us to think about the quote, "You Can't Stop the Waves, but You Can Learn to Surf." When I hear this saying it brings to mind that there are situations where challenges may occur – but it's how we adapt and apply what we know to bring a positive experience or resolution to a situation. Think about this in terms of your Auxiliary, when you have a few things that just aren't going according to plan, you may need the assistance of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). PIP's will outline steps that can be taken to get you back on track and help your Auxiliary achieve its goals.

Extension is part of this program and focuses on **establishing new Auxiliaries**. Whether a VFW Post decides on its own that it wants an Auxiliary or whether a member sees the potential for a new Auxiliary, the steps for creating an Auxiliary are the same:

1. A VFW Post must vote by 2/3 majority to have an Auxiliary. (An Auxiliary can never exist on its own without a Post and can never be started without that Post's 2/3 majority vote).
2. The Department President appoints the official organizer of the new Auxiliary, and he/she must be a member of the VFW Auxiliary.
3. A minimum of 15 eligible applicants must be on the application for the Charter (transfers are not eligible).
4. From there, it's a matter of securing and filling out the proper paperwork provided by VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. Every Department President, Secretary and Chief of Staff has access to these forms.

So, how can we encourage bachelor Posts to start an Auxiliary? Perhaps all it takes is a call or letter to bachelor Posts to see if a presentation can be made on how having an Auxiliary can boost their Post. There are several resources available through MALTA to assist with making a presentation.

Be on the lookout for individualized training sessions on Zoom – more information to follow!