

Department of Kansas VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program

Kelle Brewer-Brown, Chairman – August 2023



Schools of Instruction: **Where** to learn about reporting, **Who** needs to report, **Why** we report, **What** to report, **When** to report, and **How** to report.

Also....**What's** new for the Hospital, and other, programs, **When** are deadlines and upcoming events, **Where** are upcoming events, **Who** should go to these events, **How** to, and **Why** it's important to, stay informed & up-to date.

Dept School of Instruction, August 11-13, 2023, Hays, KS, learning opportunities abound. **JOIN US !!!**

I keep six honest serving-men, (They taught me all I knew); Their names are What and Why and When... and How and Where and Who.

~Rudyard Kipling, Just So Stories, 1902

ATTENTION AUXILIARY HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN: I am providing a packet of material for the Hospital program (43 pages) for every Auxiliary. Your District Hospital Chairman will present you with these packets, and any additional materials they may have added, at your District School of Instruction.

It is important that at least one member of your Auxiliary attend to pick up this packet for your Auxiliary.

It's official. While Dept of Kansas has been doing this for the past 10+ years, this year we are being tasked to recognize veterans not only on traditional holidays BUT also non-traditional holidays. Check out the OBSERVANCES calendar or visit www.holidays.calendar for ideas. Also on the OBSERVANCES calendar: **KS VFW Auxiliary Hospital Project Day**. Perform a Hospital project on this day that best illustrates the mission of the VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program. 12th day of months Sep, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar. See also Goals and Awards form.

CHALLENGE: THE RUBBER BAND BALL

I'm dreaming of a rubber band ball..... Teamwork makes the Dream work.



1. Each District, and *the Department Line Officers, are challenged to create a rubber band ball.

*Dept Line Officers=Pres, Sr VP, Jr VP, Chaplain, Conductress & Asst, Guard & Asst, C of S, Sec, Treas and PDP's on Council.

2. Create a rubber band ball, using ONLY rubber bands that are obtained free of charge.

3. Send a picture of your rubber band ball to Hospital Chairman, by Dec. 15, 2023, for judging.

For size comparison, please take a photo of your rubber band ball next to a quarter.

Include: How many rubber bands used and one sentence describing team effort in it's creation.

4. Winner announced at Department Mid-Winter meeting, January 2024 in Junction City, KS.

**District Hospital Chairman
& Department President,**

To help get you started on your rubber band ball.... a starter kit will be included in each Districts' Hospital materials given out at Department School of Instruction.

What does a rubber band ball have to do with the Hospital Program?

It helps to relieve stress. Stress is like taxes or traffic jams. We all endure it at some point in our lives.

In fact, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, seven out of 10 adults say they experience stress or anxiety daily. And just like taxes and traffic jams, you can't just make it go away. You can, however, implement tactics to help manage it. Even five minutes of aerobic exercise can stimulate anti-anxiety effects. For those who are stressed but unable to break into jumping jacks or go for a run, a rubber band ball is your answer.

The soft texture of a rubber band ball soothes our sense of touch. Simply squeeze the rubber band ball in your hand. The squeeze and release motion helps release some of that stress energy, and you will begin to feel the stress fade.

Rubber band balls are also handy if you or someone you know is in a fidgety mood. Having the rubber band in hand can help release all that nervous energy. ~ Rubber Band Ball/Therapy – George J. Limberakis, Mental Health Counselor

Inquire at healthcare facilities in your area if rubber band balls (and/or stress balls) can be donated as stress relievers for their patients/residents.

HOSPITAL Program VOLUNTEERS

A few of the reasons Hospitals/Healthcare Facilities need volunteers:

- Filling gaps in healthcare facility staff schedules
- Helping patients access the healthcare they need
- Reuniting visitors with their loved ones
- Helping facilities care for more patients
- Boosting patients' spirits during long stays
- Bringing the holidays to patients/residents
- Being surrogate family and friends to patients who are otherwise alone
- Supporting the operations of healthcare facilities
- Providing comfort and companionship to those who are sick or injured.

RECRUITMENT, RECOGNITION & SUPPORT-

Hand out the *Value of Volunteerism* pamphlet along with a promotional item when recruiting or recognizing Hospital volunteers.



- VFW Auxiliary... on the TRAIL for Hospital Volunteers.
- VFW Auxiliary Volunteers leave a TRAIL of happiness.
- The perfect MIX. VFW Auxiliary & YOU !



- Volunteers, there are so many "RAISINS" we are thankful for you.
- You are the 'raisin' we smile. Thank you Volunteers!
- VFW Auxiliary: RAISIN' awareness for Hospital Volunteerism.

Check out the Medical Facilities list on the Dept website for a facility near you.

OPPORTUNITY – Duties are remote but on-site training may be required. Contact your closest VA to find out how to get started.



The Compassionate Contact Corps is a program where trained volunteers are matched with Veterans that are experiencing loneliness or are socially isolated. The volunteer typically calls the Veteran weekly for 15—60 minutes to provide socialization and companionship **via phone or video calls**. These are friendly, **remote** visits with no medical or home-care duties.

Duties & Time Commitment

- Provide quality 1:1 social interaction, engaging Veterans in meaningful conversations
- Schedule and participate in regular telephone or video visits which may consist of conversing with the Veteran/Caregiver for a mutually agreed upon time frame (generally but not limited to 15-30 minutes) to convey support and concern
- Immediately report any problems, or concerns conveyed by the Veteran and/or caregiver to the local VA Compassionate Contact Corps Coordinator who works as the liaison to the Veteran's primary care team
- Contact will take place at least once per week, 15-30 minutes per visit.

Development Opportunities

- Volunteer gets the opportunity to build 1:1 connection with one of our nation's heroes

Qualifications

- Dependable with reliable access to resources needed to volunteer 100% virtually
- Volunteer to provide own means (phone/computer) of communication; ability to work independently
- Comfortable having conversations virtually using platforms such as Zoom, Facetime, etc. or by phone
- Sensitive to the needs of Veterans/Caregivers in stressful situations
- Ability to maintain privacy and confidentiality as mandated by HIPAA
- Must be willing to communicate regularly with the local Compassionate Contact Corps Coordinator
- Good people skills, excellent communication/empathetic and compassionate listening skills
- Emotionally mature, positive and service-oriented

Training (varies with facility)

- Compassionate Contact Corps Orientation
- Job specific orientations to include: HIPAA, Suicide Prevention, Customer Service Training/Telephone Visitor Orientation

The Veterans Crisis Line serves Veterans, service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and those who support them.

Callers do NOT have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to call.

Access is free, with confidential support 24/7, 365 days a year.
Connect with a real person qualified to support Veterans.



Confidential Chat at
VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat or text 838255

Team up with the Veterans & Family Support chairman on a joint project for National Suicide Prevention Week, September 10-16, 2023.

You can prevent Veteran suicide. Start by learning the VA S.A.V.E. acronym. For more information visit:

https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/VA_SAVE_Training.pdf