

From the Desk of the Hospital Chairman,

As I reflect back on the past few weeks, I can't help but feel truly blessed to be part of this organization, both **VFW & Auxiliary**, and marvel at all we are able to accomplish, sometimes in a short amount of time, with hurdles along the way, no matter the journey or the path we must navigate, we always manage to cross the finish line, then simply turn around to see where we came from and then where we are now, and just say **WOW** we did it! Yes **WE DID IT TOGETHER**, as one team, focused on one mission and in some very difficult times finding the most efficient and affordable steps to embrace and get the job done to complete the mission!!

Thank you to each and every VFW Post, Auxiliary Post, Cootie Post, individual members, family and yes even friends for sponsoring a Thanksgiving Dinner Basket for a total of **77** Veterans and their families this year. So many struggle just getting thru one day at a time, worrying about how to feed their families, pay the electric or buy groceries this week, without complaining for they are Veterans..... **they have borne the battle** and will find a way to greet the next day with continued hope.

Little did they know that off in a distance there is a **beacon of light** that embraces the ability to choose to step up, volunteer to participate and support what is promoted thru the Hospital Program. As your Hospital Chairman, and a very proud one indeed, I am actually speechless for words to say thank you enough for this support. After weeks of shopping trips, looking for the best deals, smoozing all the MB managers for bargains, filling 2 & 3 grocery carts and squeezing the last box of instant potatoes in my car, trying to see out the windows to drive to get it unloaded at my post. Recruiting boy scouts, high school students and anyone else that I meet to unload, line it up, count it....yes count it one more time in anticipation for the big day of building the

baskets for 37 Veterans and/or & wife, 11 families with 3 members and the list goes on and on up to a five Veterans plus 6 family members. Based on these numbers, each item was calculated out as to how many go into the basket. The apple pies and pumpkin were ordered and picked up fresh as well as a package with a dozen rolls. This time the Manager actually escorted the rolling cart of merchandise out to the parking lot and shook my had to say *thank you and your organization* for all they do for the Veterans. Thank you!

The final task was calculating the dollar amount for each gift card for the baskets, again based on their family size. I was politely asked, to please make an appointment next time to purchase that many gift cards, and they would block off one side of the service center for me.....now that is first class service!!

With an organized team, and a system in place the baskets were quickly filled and loaded up into two big trucks for delivery to the waiting "case workers" parked at the Brady Sullivan building. Each basket was beautifully labeled with the Veteran's first name/case worker on an index card making it extremely easy to sort and give to right case worker for delivery.

We crossed the Finish Line thanks to the generosity, volunteerism and the fantastic support of all who participated and sponsored baskets. When we work as "One" we accomplish great things! Again, thank you all for your support, sponsorship and making this project, once again become a reality. When you sit down at YOUR Thanksgiving Dinner, please take a moment to reflect on the gift that you gave to these families. God Bless!

Madeline Dreusicke, Chairman
Hospital/VAVS Representative
2022-2023