

# VFW Auxiliary Family Freedom Festival

## *Steps to Participate and Event Information*

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### **Steps to Participate:**

**Step 1:** Auxiliaries hosting a Family Freedom Festival will set a date and identify a primary point of contact and email this to Megan Zinn-Sanchez at [mzinn-sanchez@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:mzinn-sanchez@vfwauxiliary.org) no later than one month prior to their event.

**Step 2:** Plan your Auxiliary's Family Freedom Festival. Sample event ideas are listed below. Your Auxiliary is encouraged to combine two or more event ideas to increase attendance at your event.

**Step 3:** Prepare for and market the event by downloading and using the sample publicity tools provided behind Member Login at [www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org).

- VFW Auxiliary Family Freedom Festival Logo
- Sample Social Media Posts
- Sample Family Freedom Festival Press Release
- Fill out the Brochure Order Form and receive Membership Brochures, Facts Leaflets and Young American Creative Patriotic Art Brochures at no charge from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.
  - Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy and other VFW brochures are available for download at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org), or may be purchased from the VFW Store at [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org) or by calling 1.800.821.2606.

**Step 4:** Host your Auxiliary's Family Freedom Festival and share photos from your event on Facebook using the hashtags #AuxiliariesinAction and #FamilyFreedomFestival.

**Step 5:** After the event, email Megan Zinn-Sanchez photos and information about the event, including the number of adult and youth attendees, and volunteers.

### **Event Ideas:**

- Host a safety fair and invite fire, police, EMT to come; offer fingerprinting for children.
- Host a 5K run and a 1 mile family-friendly walk.
- Host a talent show featuring adults and children playing or dancing to patriotic music.
- Host a children's bike parade – have the children decorate their bikes and dress in red, white and blue.
- Host a car/bike show.
- Host an art show or art auction; the art can be created by veterans, children or even animals!
- Host "Shows under the Stars" – outdoor patriotic movie events for the whole family.
- Host a contest – it could be a Battle of the Bands, Cook/Bake-off or even a photo contest.
- Host a tournament – it could be a video game, board game or trivia tournament.
- Host touch-a-truck, musical instrument petting zoo or other hands-on event for youth.

## **What to Do at the Event:**

- Highlight Auxiliary programs by having a booth for each of the following. Consider having a display board with information pertaining to that program and an activity at each:
  - Americanism
  - Hospital
  - Legislative
  - Membership
  - Scholarships
  - Veterans & Family Support
  - Youth Activities
- Have a place where attendees (non-members) can register to win something. It could be a gift certificate to a grocery store, restaurant, Walmart, Target, etc., or it could be an item such as a purse, rifle, iPad, AmazonEcho, TV, etc. They must fill out a form with their contact information and if they are a veteran, relative to a veteran, etc. Winner is drawn at the end of the event in public. Follow up with those who may be eligible.
- Share Five Facts with attendees – i.e.:
  - Did you know the Auxiliary helped \_\_\_\_ families in this community last year?
  - Did you know the Auxiliary volunteers each month at \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Did you know the Auxiliary adopted \_\_\_\_ park and helps pick up trash and maintain flower beds?
  - Did you know the Auxiliary delivers clothes and goodies to \_\_\_\_\_ every quarter?
  - Did you know the Auxiliary, with help from \_\_\_\_\_, placed \_\_\_\_ Flags at graves of veterans last year.

*Those listed above are samples. You are encouraged to list Five Facts that pertain to your Auxiliary.*

## **Event Suggestions** - Add a few of these to your event; no need to have them all!

- Collect items for veterans, deployed troops and/or their families such as canned goods, clothing, school supplies, etc. Add a charitable element to the event.
- A “selfie station” with fun props (boas, big glasses, etc.) for people to take photos of their families.
- Food Trucks/Food vendors to park at your event.
- A popcorn stand, cotton candy and/or snow cone machine (you can rent these).
- Relay games such as hula hoop marathon, potato sack races, bean bag toss, egg toss, egg on spoon balance, ring toss, balloon squeeze, balloon tennis, noodle ball, twister, oversized memory game, tire rolling race, limbo, etc.
- Games with a patriotic twist such as Patriotic Bingo.
- Craft stations with crafts such as finger painting, sidewalk chalk, painting with bubbles, decorating patriotic visors, bottlecap poppy painting, build a birdhouse, etc.
- Sports clinic or organized pick-up game of the sport of your choice.
- Kid-friendly Zumba or Yoga.
- A free face-painting station.
- A balloon artist.
- A 50/50 raffle.