

# YOUR GUIDE TO CANCER GRANTS

**WHETHER YOU NEED A GRANT OR SOMEONE ASKS YOU A QUESTION, HERE IS YOUR RESOURCE FOR ANSWERS.**

**M**illions upon millions of dollars are raised each year to fight cancer in the laboratory. There is another battle going on that brings incredible stress to people dealing with cancer: the financial burden. Only a handful of non-profit organizations (out of thousands) offer grants to cancer patients. The Ladies Auxiliary VFW is one of the few.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 43.6 million Americans do not have health insurance (15.3% of the U.S. population). Treating cancer is expensive. Just one round of chemotherapy can cost \$25,000. Add the rest of the treatments and diagnostic tests to that, and you've racked up a bill in the hundreds of thousands. Insurance (if you've got it) may cover all of it, some of it or none of it. This doesn't include the hundreds of dollars in extra expenses that crop up when you face a serious illness.

The Council of Administration set forth the rules that strictly govern the grants. Available in only three amounts (\$300, \$400 and \$500), the Cancer Grant Coordinator at Headquarters can only distribute the grants based on the terms given her by the Council. The grants are given based on diagnosis, hospitalization, surgery and treatment. A specific amount cannot be requested, and the coordinator who issues the grants faithfully abides by the terms in place.

## How to Get a Grant

If you want to apply for a grant, contact your Auxiliary Treasurer for an application. The correct application is a two-page yellow form with the date "3/29/00" in the lower left-hand corner. The application has not been changed since 2000. Any other forms, whether they are older or made up by someone else, are not accepted for any reason.

The Treasurer of an Auxiliary should keep a supply on hand. Being the most visible member of an Auxiliary makes her the perfect person to keep the applications handy. You should also go to her first because an Auxiliary may have other kinds of help available, such as a matching grant, a meal service or transportation help.

If a Department Officer is contacted for a form, she should try to refer the member back to her Auxiliary.

Remember that Junior Girls are also eligible for cancer grants (with set guidelines), and the applications for Junior Girls are only given by Headquarters as-needed to the Auxiliary Treasurer.

Once you have the application, be sure to review the entire form before you fill it out. Note that there is a section that must be filled out and signed by the attending physician.

Send it in as soon as you can. Every application is date-stamped upon receipt at Headquarters and processed in the order it was received. ■

## Eligibility

There is no fuzziness when it comes to the terms for grants. Be sure to read these carefully if you are considering applying.

- 1 Applicant must be a member of the Ladies Auxiliary VFW one (1) full year.
- 2 Surgery or treatment after one (1) full year of membership.
- 3 Current dues must be paid before applying for a cancer grant. This also applies to reinstated members.
- 4 After twelve (12) months has passed from date of last surgery, treatment, or diagnosis, application will not be accepted.
- 5 A member is allowed two (2) grants during her lifetime. Twelve (12) months must elapse between new surgery and/or treatment for a second application to be considered. Continuous treatment which lasts beyond the twelve (12) month period will qualify for a second grant.
- 6 Applications will not be accepted for deceased members.
- 7 Grants "in process" (date stamped upon receipt at National Headquarters) at time of the member's death will be processed.

### For 2006-2007...

**12,000 Applications distributed**

**4,043 Applications returned**

**3,546 Grants awarded**

*The database software at National Headquarters can now track how many applications are mailed each year and to whom.*

This is why the Ladies Auxiliary VFW designed and made available the Cancer Grant. Formalized in 1952, the grant is a financial gift to members who meet the eligibility requirements (see box at right). It is a tangible way the national organization can say, "We care about you."