

## Letter of Intention for the office of National Vice President

National Organization of Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Greetings Sisters!

My name is Sister Sue Freshley and am currently your National President. I have dual membership in the Departments of Ohio and Wisconsin, supporting our beloved Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War for over a decade, serving in many positions on the local, Department, and National arenas. This organization is important to me because not only do we honor our Country's national heritage by learning of our Civil War ancestors and why they sacrificed for us, but this leads us into a deeper understanding of the truth of no matter what year a veteran served, all veterans have sworn an oath to protect and defend our great nation from threats outside and within. Our veterans have always been willing to put their lives on the line for us. Importantly, the Sisters of the ASUVCW continue to be of service to veterans today. Veteran stories are lessons for us to think carefully about war and its immeasurable cost.

My personal lineage is through my 2 times great grandfather on my father's side, Pvt. Charles Teas Grave, who served on the western front in Minnesota Co. B, 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Minnesota Infantry. Pvt. Grave served 1862-1865, and while he only saw one incident of Confederate conflict in

Alabama, he participated in The Indian Wars, including the Dakota War of 1862 and the Sioux uprising. Charles died in 1901 and is interred in the Long Lake Cemetery in Long Lake, Minnesota.

I am wife to Ken Freshley (PCnC, SUVCW member- Ohio and Wisconsin) and a proud mom to 2 good humans- Matt (member SUVCW James A Garfield camp 142, Ohio) and Becca (member ASUVCW Eliza Garfield 142, Ohio). I fill my time with baking and cooking, reading, tending my flowerbeds and koi pond, and doing genealogical/ historical research. Oh, and I never met a dog I didn't immediately fall in love with!

The Sisters of Eliza Garfield #142, Dept. of Ohio, have elected me as auxiliary president and I've directly brought in several members. I enjoy supporting my local and Wisconsin auxiliaries with fundraising events to benefit our charitable works. For my Ohio Sisters, I have been honored to serve as Department Patriotic Instructor, Vice President, and President. It's so enjoyable to participate in charitable undertakings at Encampments we share with the Brothers of the SUVCW. I am a firm believer in all the Allied Orders. We need to remember that each Allied Order is, on the simplest level, motivated by a shared love of our lineage, as well as our mutual responsibility to our country and remembrance of our veterans.

Nationally, I've served on committees and enjoyed executing the offices of National President (2023-2024), Vice President (2022-2023), as well as Chief of Staff (2021-2022). As National Chief of Staff, it was necessary to aggressively pursue funds, and with the support of our Auxiliary Sisters, the goal that had been set for the 2022 Chief of Staff was far surpassed.

One thing I enjoy is a good challenge, and I was lucky enough to participate in planning and hosting a successful Allied Orders 2019 National Encampment in Cleveland, Ohio with only 2 years to plan. What an opportunity for personal growth as a Sister. With help from Sisters of Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan, and many other departments, we made this a memorable Encampment with a personality of its own. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the support of our Past National Presidents, who provided good advice and limitless support. I've learned so much planning, arranging, and hosting events like the 2018 CRA meeting, and events for our ASUVCW and Brothers of the SUVCW such as Department Encampments and testimonials for National and Dept. Commanders (inc. vetting location, menu selection, pricing, live entertainment, fundraising, etc.). I was honored by the Department of Ohio SUVCW by being presented with the first Dr. Mary Walker award, with an SUVCW Court of Honor.

Each year, I've attended Encampments on Department level (New York, Pennsylvania, California and Pacific, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Ohio among a few!) and National level, in person and via Zoom, as well as visiting local Auxiliary meetings in many states. It has been such a pleasure to attend, represent, and serve our Auxiliary at Remembrance Day, Lincoln's Tomb, Arlington Cemetery, countless national, state, and local monument dedications, wreath laying ceremonies, grave site dedications, parades, testimonials, charitable presentations, etc. Every event has taught me something new, making my experience deeper and richer. What a marvelous education our Sisters provide us! This year, I've learned even more, especially to use the strength of our Past National Presidents- their knowledge is a gift. I've been taught how important our National ASUVCW CR&R is to our governance on every level and have assisted in writing bylaws for auxiliaries on the local and department levels.

With the knowledge I've been fortunate enough to gather by serving my Sisters in various positions, coupled with the wisdom and support of the PNP's and my Sisters who continue to guide me, I am confident that I will be successful in service as Vice President of the ASUVCW, at the pleasure of my Auxiliary Sisters. There is so much more work that was left undone as your National President

I established many committees that are continuing to do important work, but more participation from a greater number of Sisters is required. Today, our Auxiliary as an organization, is faced with the dilemma of attracting members, and especially younger members. We continue to lose Sisters, presently our membership pool is not sustainable for the continued future of the ASUVCW. If the Auxiliary fails in this objective, eventually, our greying population will diminish, until one of our Sisterhood is left to go the way of G.A.R. Brother Albert Woolson.

It is still my opinion, our ASUVCW must work toward modernizing the image of our organization. This is not to say we should abandon our traditions and our basic mission statement; we just need to adapt a little bit and survive. We Sisters behave, dress, accessorize, reinvent, and update ourselves to accentuate our best features, but we don't lose sight of ourselves or the mission each of us promises to uphold as Sisters of the ASUVCW. Why shouldn't our Auxiliary have the same considerations afforded to it?

As your National President, my most important take away is I have learned our Auxiliary Sisters are there for you, they'll step up and support you, and freely give assistance of any type without making you feel they are being burdened. Sisters, I respectfully ask for your support in electing me to continue to serve our Auxiliary as National Vice President. We are stronger together and will do great things as Sisters.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty-

*Sue Freshley*

Sister Sue Freshley  
National President, National Organization of Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
Past Department President, Department of Ohio  
Past Auxiliary President, Eliza Garfield #142, Department of Ohio