

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Minnesota
2023-2024

Sharon Cross, Department President
October Unit Mailing

State Veterans Service Bldg. 20 W 12th St #314, St. Paul, MN
55155

(651)-224-7634 deptoffice@mnala.org

Website: www.mnala.org



As our autumn colors get into full swing so does the American Legion Auxiliary. You will find the Department Chairmen contact information coming out in the Unit mailing. We will have copies of the Unit Guide at the Fall Conference for each Unit in their packet. Every Unit should send a representative to the Fall Conference. Units in attendance should pick up their packet in the Department Office set up at the Conference. Speaking of Fall Conference, does your Unit have representation at the Fall Conference? This is not a formal meeting but a school of instruction on our programs. Hear firsthand from the Department Chairmen about what's new, what has changed, and what has remained the same. Bring a pad and paper so you can take some notes. There will be tri-fold presentations and power points for visuals. Feel free to snap pictures of the information if you prefer. Thursday evening there will be three short presentations beginning at 6:30pm. One on Membership, Girls State and Poppy. I hope to see all our Legion Family represented. We will also be painting a wooden quilt block that evening. Get your registration in early as space is limited for the painting project. Put on your dancing shoes and country attire for Friday evening after our day of learning. You will be introduced to our leadership, and we will have snacks and music to dance and enjoy each other's company. We will finish up on Saturday. So come prepared, bring your listening ears and your inquisitive minds, and don't forget your enthusiasm and of course your dancing shoes. This is the perfect opportunity to bring your new members to learn about what we do for our veterans. Have someone thinking about becoming a member? Bring them to this learning session.

After attending Fall Conference if you have a question on a program remember to use your District Chairmen first. If they don't have the answer, then they will help you find an answer. REMEMBER that your reporting from your Unit goes to YOUR DISTRICT CHAIRMEN FIRST. You have the choice to use the internet or paper mailing. There will be a questionnaire from each of the Department Chairmen with reports that will be included in the January Unit mailing for your YEAR END reporting. It will be the Units responsibility to send their reports to their District Chairmen. Districts will get their contact information of their respective chairmen to the Units. Units will attach the Award Cover sheet to their report when they are applying for an award. Neither Department nor District chairmen are going to compile your yearend report for you. District Chairman will choose which reports to mail to the Department Chairmen for awards as it has been in the past. Your District Chairmen need a copy of your report, so they have something to report on what is being done in their District.

BE THE ONE to lead the way. BE THE ONE to start the conversation. You may BE THE ONE to save a life.

Sharon Cross

President Department of Minnesota
American Legion Auxiliary

2023-2024 Request for Department President's Visit

Please complete all information and return to:
American Legion Auxiliary - Department of Minnesota
State Veterans Service Building - 20 West 12th Street #314 - St. Paul, MN 55155
Email: christie@mnala.org Fax: (651) 224-5241

Unit Name and Number _____ Unit Secretary _____

1st Choice

Name of Event _____				
Date of Event _____	Time of Event: Social _____		Lunch/Dinner _____	
		Meeting _____		
Event Location _____				
Complete Address of Event _____				
Contact Name & Phone Number _____				
Contact Email Address _____				
Indicate all who will be in attendance:				
Auxiliary _____	Legion _____	Juniors _____	SAL _____	Public _____
Estimated in Attendance _____	Is a guest allowed? _____			
Expectations of President	Bring brief greetings _____	Main speaker _____		
	Other (explain) _____			

2nd Choice

Name of Event _____				
Date of Event _____	Time of Event: Social _____		Lunch/Dinner _____	
Event Location _____				
Complete Address of Event _____				
Contact Name & Phone Number _____				
Contact Email Address _____				
Indicate all who will be in attendance:				
Auxiliary _____	Legion _____	SAL _____	Juniors _____	Public _____
Estimated in Attendance _____	Is a guest allowed? _____			
Expectations of President	Bring brief greetings _____	Main speaker _____		
	Other (explain) _____			

President Sharon Cross would love to visit and participate in your unit events - it doesn't matter what they are. Don't hesitate to request her to attend one of your activities, programs or unit meetings. The only time President Sharon is unavailable is during dates that activities are already planned for our Department and National organization.

What is the President's Project?

This is a project that a president takes on, something she/he believes in, a worthy project that will benefit many veterans, family members, caregivers, and others. Is it something that they can accomplish on their own, NO.? Is it just the Department Presidents that has a project? NO. All ten District Presidents and the Honorary Junior President, they ALL have projects that are near and dear to their hearts.

Read on to find out more about each of these special projects and share the news with others. Units and Posts and even individuals can support any of these projects.

Department President Sharon's Project:

– President Sharon has chosen the purchasing of two players piano's, one for Bemidji and another for Montevideo as the Preston Veterans home already has a piano. She is hoping to raise \$18,000 for each piano and any funds over and above the cost of the pianos will go to the Preston Veteran's home.

Honorary Department Junior President Taylor's Project – Our Honorary Department Junior President Taylor along with all Minnesota Juniors will be working on raising funds for the Believet Canine Service Partners program. Believet service dogs provide veterans with a new lease on life. They offer a path for veterans to grow and hope for a better future. She has set her goal at \$20,000.00, the cost of sponsoring one dog.

1st District President Michelle Weaver

Believet Canine Service Partners and the Armed Forces Center.
Goal \$5,000

2nd District President Kollett Kaehlert

Raising funds for the 13 County Veterans Service officers of District 2 and the American Legion Fund 85.
Goal \$7,000

3rd District President Deanna Meyer

Raising funds for religious supplies for the Hastings Veterans Home and the St. Peter Treatment Center.
Goal \$3,000

4th District President Tamara Michaels

Believet Canine Service Partners & Eagles Healing Nest.

Goal \$2,500

5th District President Cari Lamb

Every Third Saturday, a program assisting homeless veterans.

Goal \$2,000

6th District President Patti Gunderson

The activity/recreation program at the new Bemidji Veteran's home.

Goal \$7,000

7th District President Hope Wilson

Montevideo Veteran's Home Art's program.

Goal \$3,000

8th District President Sharon Voltz

Clothing items for the veterans at the Silver Bay Veterans Home.

Goal \$1,000

9th District President Becky Olson

Raising funds for the new National Veteran's Memorial Cemetery in Fargo, North Dakota and the Fergus Falls Veterans Home.

Goal 5,000

10th District President Anne Steffen

Operation Welcome Home at the Ironwood Springs Ranch in Stewartville, MN.

Goal \$5,000

POSITION OPENING: Department Treasurer

Resumes with cover letters are being accepted for the position of Department Treasurer for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Persons who are interested must be an American Legion Auxiliary member or eligible to join.

The Treasurer performs a variety of complex administrative accounting tasks, applying accepted procedures to manage accounting and financial records, to produce financial records and reports and to support the Department Executive Secretary. This is a responsible position and requires initiative and independent judgement to ensure the efficient implementation and completion of all tasks assigned. This is a full-time position and is based in the St. Paul office. This position requires some weekend meetings and may include out of state travel.

Applicants must have a degree in accounting or three years equivalent experience preferably in a nonprofit environment.

Resumes and cover letters should be sent to: Christie Avant, American Legion Auxiliary Department Headquarters 20 W 12th St W, St. Paul, MN 55155 Or emailed to: christie@mnala.org. A job description and application form are available on request.

This position is open until filled.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 26-28 – Fall Conference – River’s Edge Convention Center – St. Cloud

November 11 – Veteran’s Day

November 13 – American Legion Auxiliary Birthday 104

November 23 – 24 – Thanksgiving – Department Office Closed

December 9 – Pearl Harbor Rally – Paynesville

December 25th & 26th – Christmas – Office Closed

January 15 – Martin Luther King Day – Office Closed

February 3 – Sweetheart Rally – Forest Lake

February 19 – President’s Day – Office Closed

March 2 – Appreciation Rally - Montgomery

March 12 – The American Legion Birthday 105

March 29 – Good Friday – Office Closed

April 12-13 – Dept Jr Conference – 9th District Hosting

April 15 – Purple Up Day!

April 27 – Department President Testimonial – Melrose American Legion

April 28 – May 2 – National President’s Tour

May 27th – Memorial Day – Office Closed

June 9 – 15 – Girls State – Bethel University

July 10 – 13 – Department Convention – Wilmar Conference Center

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY FALL CONFERENCE
RIVER'S EDGE CONVENTION CENTER
ST. CLOUD, MN
Thursday, October 26th – Saturday, October 28th, 2023

Our Special guest will be:



Karen Susag Northwestern Division Vice President 2023-2024

Thursday, October 26th

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.		Girls State – Kelly Inn – Huskie Room (2 nd Floor)
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.		Department Executive Committee – Bell Room
6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.		Jenny Nelson, Membership Marsha Bible, Poppy Girls State Committee, Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary Girls State
7:45 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Wooden Quilt Block	Maximum Capacity 40 Cost \$25.00

Friday, October 27th

8:00 a.m.	Session Begins	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
3:30 p.m.	Session Ends	
7:00 p.m.	American Legion Family Grand March	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall

Saturday, October 28th

8:00 a.m.	Session Begins	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
11:30 a.m.	Session Ends	

ALA Foundation Grants

The who, what, when, where, and why of American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Grants Posted On: Monday, 28 June 2021

By now, you've probably heard that the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation has grants, but you might be wondering – who are they for, what can they be used for, when should I apply, and why do they exist?

Who: ALA Foundation grants are for ALA entities – so your unit, district/county, or department can apply! One note: You must be in good standing with the IRS to receive funding.

What: ALA Foundation grants are not what you might think of when you hear the word “grant.” They aren't long, 30-page documents that will take you months to complete. In most cases, they're just a few pages of information, and if you ever need help along the way, you can reach out to ALAFoundation@ALAforVeterans.org with questions. Additional qualifications and answers to frequently asked questions can be found at www.ALAFoundation.org/grants.

The ALA Foundation offers four different types of grants to support a variety of mission-related projects:

Veteran Projects Fund grants: If your Auxiliary unit, district/county, or department identifies a new, one-time need for your local veterans or active military, the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Veteran Projects Fund may be able to lend a helping hand. Last year, Veteran Projects Fund grants provided patio furniture for a veteran's home in Alaska, replaced broken kitchen appliances at a female veteran's homeless shelter in Kentucky, and helped purchase Echo Show technology for blind center residents at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Illinois. All of these projects, and many more, allowed for the continued service of our nation's heroes, despite the challenges brought on by a global pandemic.

Veterans Creative Arts Festival grants: The purpose of the Veterans Creative Arts Festival (VCAF) Grants is to aid in the well-being of veterans by introducing them to art therapy. If your ALA unit or department hosts a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival or offers art therapy courses that feed into the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, grant funds may be awarded for needs that contribute to these efforts.

Three VCAF grants were awarded last year, benefiting the marketing efforts of a festival at White River Junction VA medical center in Vermont, improving the quality of awards and recognition given to veteran participants in Syracuse, N.Y., and providing art supplies and certificates to veterans at the Grand Island VA Medical Center in Nebraska.

Mission in Action grants: The ALA Foundation wants to help members brand their programs to ensure the ALA is recognizable in the community for all their good works. Whether it's storage totes to transport items to a local food pantry, a branded vehicle or trailer to deliver meals to homeless veterans, or signage and banners for January/February 2022 Mailing #3 your

department's ALA Girls State program, the Mission in Action grant will help you work the mission while promoting the organization behind it all.

To grow their presence and impact, 10 units and departments received Mission in Action grants last year. These grants helped brand a cargo trailer to haul materials to Auxiliary events in Missouri, branded tents, banners, and table covers for local festivals and parades in Nevada, showed the impact the ALA has through branded banners and storage containers at ALA Michigan Girls State, and more.

Subgrants: American Legion Auxiliary units, districts/counties, or departments that have identified a source for grant funding from a foundation or corporation that requires the recipient to be a 501(c)(3) can have the ALA Foundation serve as the recipient. The ALA Foundation then, in turn, will sub-grant the full amount to the unit, district/county, or department according to the terms and conditions of the grantor.

ALA units and departments worked hard last year to bring in money from all different revenue sources. Subgrants helped play a major role for 12 ALA entities. Supporting everything from Quilts of Valor projects to local military children's scholarships, or veteran camps, subgrants can truly make an impact on any mission-related project your unit might be undertaking.

When: You can apply anytime – applications are accepted on a rolling basis. However, ALA Foundation board members meet quarterly (January, April, July, and October) to consider applications, so be sure to time your application with your project or event date in mind. Due dates for the next review cycle are always posted on the ALA Foundation's website.

Where: Applications can now be submitted online via Formstack! We recommend composing your answers in a Microsoft Word document, and then saving them there in case you need to fill out your online application over a few days' time.

Why: The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation exists to ensure the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary thrives for years to come. These grants are a large part of the effort to assist ALA entities in projects that support their local veterans, military, and their families.

Read more about ALA Foundation grants or get started on your application today at www.ALAFoundation.org/grants.



News from National

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

The American Legion Auxiliary is joining forces with The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion to promote the Be the One initiative, which destigmatizes asking for mental health support, provides peer-to-peer support and resources, and educates everyone on how they can Be the One.

How can you Be the One?

- Ask veterans in your life how they are doing.
- Listen when a veteran needs to talk.
- Reach out when you think a veteran might be struggling.
- Increase awareness about the veteran and military suicide epidemic.

Those needing help are encouraged to call the Veterans Crisis Line at 988.

2023 ALA National Convention wrap-up

We celebrated one year and ushered in the next at the ALA's 102nd National Convention. Here's a look at some takeaways:

- National president hands off the checkered flag: Enjoy this [blog post](#) on newly elected 2023-2024 National President Lisa Williamson of Alaska. And be sure to read this [swansong](#) from outgoing President Vickie Koutz if you haven't already.
- ALA and our people in the spotlight: [Visit our blog](#) for stories on recipients of the Public Spirit Award, Salute to Servicemembers, and Unit Members of the Year. See a listing of the 2022-2023 committee awards [here](#). Check out future ALA media for additional convention coverage, including the November issue of *Auxiliary* magazine.
- Recordings of the livestreamed general sessions and installation of officers will be available at a later date on our [YouTube channel](#).
- New for 2023-2024: Program Engagement Plans. Now is a good time to log in to the [member portal](#) and learn how you can get involved in serving our veterans, military, and their families.

Meet the new American Legion Family leadership

The 2023-2024 administrative year is in full swing! New national leaders were elected during National Convention in Charlotte. Lisa Williamson, Alaska, was installed as ALA national president, Daniel Seehafer, Wisconsin, was elected national commander of The American Legion, and Donald "JR" Hall Jr., Maryland, was elected Sons of The American Legion national commander. You can read more about each of the leaders in our November issue of *Auxiliary*.

A one-day commitment can amp up your service to veterans, military, and their families

We invite you to spend a Saturday learning, connecting with fellow members, and enjoying one of five cities. This one-day, interactive ALA event will allow attendees to share ideas, learn more about working the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary, and network with others who share the same passion for service.

The informative content will focus on:

- Service for veterans and active-duty
- Family support
- Community
- Youth development

Past attendees have returned home with a renewed sense of purpose, creative ideas, and new friends in the ALA.

[Register](#) for an ALA Mission Training today!

Have fun while developing leadership skills

ALA Juniors have the opportunity to increase their leadership skills, meet other Juniors, and have a fun Saturday learning more about the ALA mission.

This meeting is unlike a school day. It's a Saturday to make new friends, do crafts, play games, and more. Juniors will have so much fun, they won't realize they are building skills.

And here's something to get excited about: **NEW THIS YEAR** — therapy dogs and their handlers will be on site to talk about how canines assist veterans!

Don't let your ALA Junior member miss out on this opportunity. [Register](#) for one of the five national Junior meetings today! The events are held at the same time and in the same city as Mission Trainings, so while Mom or Grandma attends a Mission Training, their granddaughter can go to the national Junior meeting.

[Register now!](#)

Camp Lejeune Justice Act

Important Update from Our Partners at Bergmann & Moore

Recent updates on the Camp Lejeune Justice Act (toxic water litigation)

On Sept. 6, 2023, the Dept. of Justice/Dept. of Navy announced a settlement program called the “Elective Option” to evaluate and potentially settle CLJA claims. The government’s proposal applies to a small subset of Camp Lejeune water contamination claims — nine compared to over 40 diagnoses most law firms are pursuing. The “Option” applies to the following nine (9) diagnoses, which must include evidence of both a diagnosis and an exposure at Camp Lejeune: cancers of the bladder, liver, kidney; leukemia; multiple myeloma; Parkinson’s disease; scleroderma; Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma; and kidney disease/end-stage renal disease.

Bergmann & Moore, the law firm selected by The American Legion and the ALA to help assist their members in determining whether to file a CLJA claim, believes the government’s offer falls far short of adequately valuing the harm caused by the contaminated water and fails to consider many factors that would warrant additional compensation (e.g., multiple injuries, lost wages, age at diagnosis, etc.). What the elective option does importantly make clear is that **any settlement offer will not be offset by any VA disability award, payment or benefits**. Claimants who believe they were exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune may speak to someone personally by calling 800-898-9450, or by filling out the form online at www.camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al. If you have any questions before filing

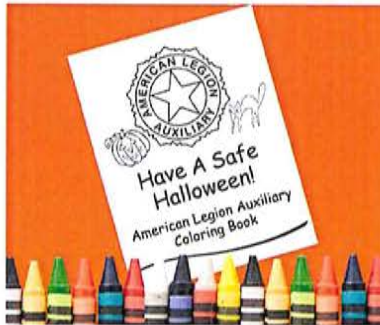
a claim, please call Elizabeth Hartman, B&M's CLJA liaison with The American Legion, at 202-497-7255. The Legion encourages veterans/claimants to reach out to a CLJA attorney for any condition they think may be related to toxic water exposure while at Camp Lejeune.

Fundraising 4-1-1

Lands' End Business has a special offer for ALA members! Until Sept. 15, get free logo embroidery and free standard shipping. Use code **EMTFLFS**. Full details below.

*Free Logo Embroidery Application Fee on first logo embroidery of each item (up to a \$7.95 value for logos under 16,000 stitches. Application fees over 16,000 stitches will be reduced by \$7.95). Additional logos at regular retail price. Free Standard Shipping to a single address in the contiguous United States. Excludes face masks, any item identified as "Promotional Product", furniture, screen print T-shirts and other promotional products with existing quantity discounts, excluded styles as marked, logo setup fees, monogramming, gift boxing, program certificates, gift cards, taxes and duties, or other fees. Online promotions may differ from catalog. Discount will be applied at checkout. This offer has no cash value and is not redeemable for cash. Promotional savings may be deducted from returns. Valid on Business Outfitter orders only. Not valid on previous orders or at Lands' End, LandsEnd.com or when combined with any other promotional offer or program discount. Offer valid through 11:59 p.m. Central, Sept. 15, 2023.

Good to Know



Fall is just around the corner and so is Halloween! Which means it's a great time to order or download ALA Halloween coloring books! These easy-to-use publications are a great way to spread awareness of the ALA and our important mission to families in your community while also giving Halloween treats to kids!

Exciting scholarship news! The ALA Spirit of Youth Scholarship will now award \$1,000 to each of the 52 department winners. Previously, department winners did not receive funds; only the five division winners were awarded \$5,000 scholarships. [Learn more](#) about ALA scholarships.

American Legion Auxiliary 2024 dues are now available to pay. Renew your annual membership dues in three easy ways: by phone, online, or mail. Go to www.ALAforVeterans.org, call (317) 569-4570, or mail in your renewal notice.

Looking for an article from a past issue of *Auxiliary* magazine? You can find copies dating back to 2010 on our [website](#). For older issues, contact history@ALAforVeterans.org.

Increase your knowledge of the ALA quickly and conveniently! The ALA Academy is an easy way for all ALA members to learn about topics related to serving our mission. The Academy includes recordings of previously held live webinars and self-paced courses. Get started today! Log in with your member ID at www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy.

Take a bow! Boundaries are important in leadership transitions

"I believe in leaving the stage while the audience is still clapping." What do you do if you're an ALA unit officer struggling with handing over the reins to new leaders? And if you're one of those new leaders, how do you ensure that the work transitions to you, giving you and other members the freedom to coordinate plans and activities as you see fit? Help your ALA unit avoid these fates by ensuring that your own leaders leave while the audience is still clapping. Follow tips on the blog to ensure the timely transition of responsibilities.

What would you say to people who are on the fence about volunteering?

"There is a blessing in giving and sharing. Everybody's level of volunteerism may not be the same. Your gifts and talents may be different from your neighbor, but everybody has something they can give."

— Candace Wicks, Texas

'Triumph in Tragedy'

The American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast is publishing a special six-part series, [Military Sexual Trauma: Triumph in Tragedy](#).

This special series strives to raise awareness about Military Sexual Trauma, share stories of overcoming the trauma, and pinpoint solutions for those seeking help.

(Please note that this series might be triggering for some who have experienced MST or other forms of abuse. The Veterans Crisis Line is available for all veterans 24/7, whether they are enrolled in VA or not. Dial 988 then press 1 or text 838255 to talk confidentially with a trained counselor.)

The first three episodes were released Sept. 5-7, and the final three are being published this week. The Tango Alpha Lima podcast will return to its regular schedule on Sept. 19.

Be the One podcast series debuts

As part of its initiative to reduce veteran suicide, The American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast is debuting a new monthly episode devoted to Be the One. Through this series, The American Legion aims to further elevate the discussion, raise awareness, and ultimately prevent veterans and servicemembers from being lost to suicide.

The series will be available at the Tango Alpha Lima webpage. Subscribers to the main weekly podcast will automatically receive the monthly Be the One episodes.

Marine combat veteran and current Navy reservist Amy Forsythe, an award-winning multimedia journalist, is host of the series, which will have a new episode on the first day of every month. In this month's episode, Forsythe welcomes fellow Marine veteran Waco Hoover, who recently led the Be the One Symposium at The American Legion's National Convention. In this new episode, Hoover talks about the next phase for the Be the One initiative.

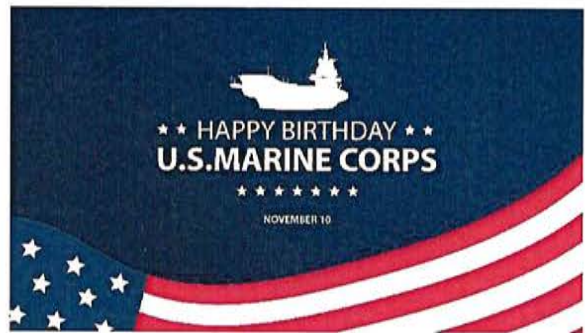
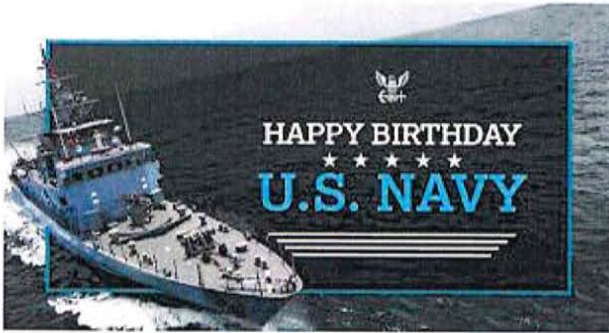
AMERICANISM

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary sponsors an Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs. Grade levels are divided into six classes. All essay submissions must have the Americanism Cover Sheet and filled out completely with each submission. It is included in this Unit mailing. This years question is:

“What does Freedom mean to me?”

Please promote this essay contest in your area schools, homeschools, Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops, Boys and Girls Clubs, or with your Junior or younger SAL members. My challenge to you all is to have submissions in each class and a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner for each. Please send these submissions and the completed cover sheet to me by email at wmkuperus@tds.net or mail 313 Pine St SW, New London, MN 56273 before March 25, 2024.

Happy birthday to the United States Navy on October 13th and the Marines on November 10th.



Veterans Day (originally known as Armistice Day) is observed annually on November 11, for honoring military veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. At the urging of major U.S. veteran organizations, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day in 1954.

As American Legion Auxiliary members, please sponsor or join in with your community Veterans Day celebrations. May we always honor and serve our veterans and military for their service to our country. Please take pictures and send me a report of what your Unit did for Veterans Day.



Let's continue to encourage patriotism and responsible citizenship within our communities.

Mary Kuperus
wmkuperus@tds.net

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Annual Silent Auction - at Minnesota Fall Conference

Bigger and better than ever! Hope we can count on **YOU!**

Thursday, October 26 through Saturday, October 28th. We will be open for set up by 3 p.m. on Thursday. Funds raised will benefit our Auxiliary Emergency Fund coffers. Please bring items to donate such as theme baskets, patriotic items, quilts, pictures, jewelry items, jams, jellies, munchies, pies, bake goods, etc. The list is endless. Just use your imagination. We will again have \$2.00 grab bags. I will have available paper bags so bring along those small items as well. So far, we have one generous donor of some large pictures – of watercolor, wildlife, etc.

Also, remember to bring donations of monies from individual members, units, and districts. A special thank you gift will be given by me to individuals donating \$50.00 or more. Also, we will be doing a district challenge. Challenge will be posted at the Auction. Results of the auction will be shared on Saturday morning.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me. I will attempt to answer your questions or put you in touch with someone who would be in the know.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

What is the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF)?

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund is a national grant initiative available to ALA members who have endured a significant financial setback because of a natural disaster or other personal crisis. Grants are awarded up to \$2,400.

How is AEF funded?

The AEF, established in 1969, is a legacy gift from Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wisc. Funding for the awarding of AEF grants today comes from generous contributions made by ALA entities, ALA members, and donors throughout the United States.

What are the qualifications to apply for disaster assistance?

The applicant must be an American Legion Auxiliary member who has maintained annual ALA membership for three consecutive years (the current year and immediate past two years). Applications for disaster assistance must be received within six months of a disaster event. One grant per grantee will be awarded within a 12-month period.

What types of expenses qualify for disaster assistance?

AEF disaster assistance funds may be used to provide emergency assistance to eligible Auxiliary members whose primary residence has been devastated by disaster, including flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, fire, or other severe weather. Funds may be awarded for interior/exterior structure damage to the vital livable portions of the primary structure, personal items, household contents, major appliances, furniture, and HVAC units with photos provided as documentation. Reimbursable expenses with itemized receipts as documentation related to essential emergency expenses for temporary shelter, temporary structure repairs, purchase of alternative power sources and/or purchase/replacement of groceries incurred due to or being displaced after the disaster will be accepted. Only applicable receipts dated the day of the disaster and after the disaster up to a three-week time limit may be considered for funding. Assistance will not be granted for damages to a secondary or seasonal residence.

Where are the AEF applications located?

The applications can be found on the ALA website at www.ALAforVeterans.org/AEF. The applications on the National Organization's website are the only applications accepted for processing. Applications formerly available through ALA departments and units are no longer applicable.

Does my ALA unit have to approve my AEF application prior to submission?

No. In the past, this was the procedure, but it is no longer required. All eligible ALA members can complete the applicable AEF application from www.ALAforVeterans.org/AEF, provide the required documentation, and submit it directly to AEF@ALAforVeterans.org.

Is my personal information listed on the application kept confidential?

Absolutely. That is the reason for changing the process for ALA applicants to apply directly to the National Organization for AEF assistance.

Can someone submit an AEF application on my behalf? Yes, if necessary. However, no individual or ALA entity may apply on behalf of another ALA member without their knowledge, consent, and/or approval.

How do I submit my AEF application and required supportive documentation?

The completed AEF application and required supportive documentation in which funding is sought should be sent by email to AEF@ALAforVeterans.org. When emailing multiple documents, please send each one as an individual attachment, such as a PDF, and include all pages of each document in the attachment. Application can also be mailed to American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters, ATTN: AEF, 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268.

Next month in the unit mailing I will supply additional information regarding your application and the process.

Ways to donate:

- Online: one-time donation or monthly donations — www.ALAforVeterans.org/donate.
- Text to give: text: AEF to 1-844-940-3450 and click on giving link to complete the donation form.
- Mail: American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters, ATTN: Development Division, 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268.

AEF donations made by ALA members: Did you know? When you donate \$100 directly to ALA National Headquarters within the ALA fiscal year (October – September), the donating member will receive by mail a beautiful *Members Helping Members* gold pin. AEF pins are sent quarterly National Headquarters to the member's home address once a qualifying donation is made from ALA.

Margee Keller
Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chairman
301 Maple St.
Crookston MN 56716
Email: margeekeller@hotmail.com - Cell: 218.349.4566

Children and Youth

With fall starting there are a lot of communities that do fall family days. You unit or American Legion family could set up a day to have families get together and have food and games for kids. It's a great way to get the community together and have a safe place for kids to play.

Halloween coming up think about having a Halloween party for the local kids. The National website www.alaforveterans.org has Halloween coloring books you can print off to give to kids.

Collecting items at Fall Conference

I am calling for units to put together small activity bags or purchase items for activity bags. The bags are for the children of Veterans visiting the St. Cloud VAMC.

The bags do not have to be big or extravagant and can have handles or drawstring anything you can buy or make. The stuff inside can be coloring books, crayons, cards or other small items, anything that will keep kids occupied while the veteran is at their appointments.

Ideas for bags:

- Small Drawstring
- Small, handled bags
- School Pencil bags
- Makeup Bags

Ideas for Items for bags

- Coloring books (there are small about 5"×7" books that the dollar stores have as well as Target, Walmart, and Amazon. I buy them for my daughter all the time.) Plus, the come with 3 crayons too!!
- Crayons
- Word Finds (older kids)
- Sticker books (you can still find them at Walmart)
- Small quite sensory (fidget) toys such as Popits)
- Small cars

Note: If you have trouble thinking of ideas check out activity bags at a church. Most churches have activity bags for kids to use during services.

Any questions, please, reach out to brandichristensen21@gmail.com or 763-843-0875



**Brandi Christensen,
Children and Youth
Department Chairman**

Community Service

October 2023

"One person can make a difference, and everyone should try." John F. Kennedy

Make a Difference Day is October 28th, 2023. National Make a Difference Day was created in 1992, for the purpose of crafting a day that we can all come together and help those who need it most. You can make a difference in someone's day! Make a phone call or visit a Veteran or an elderly neighbor that lives alone, send a thinking of you card to someone who has been struggling, say a kind word to someone who needs uplifting, offer a ride to the grocery store, post office, or doctor's office to a neighbor who does not have transportation, volunteer your skills/hobbies (reading aloud, writing a letter, baking, mending/sewing, etc.) to someone in need of those services, provide a meal for a family in your neighborhood that is busy with work and fall school activities, collect winter hats and mittens for adults and children in need of these items. Be creative...think "outside the box". Whether your efforts to provide support and to make a difference in someone's day is a small gesture on an individual level or a larger coordinated Unit effort...what you do will make a difference!

National Community Service Program 2023-2024 emphasis includes:

1. Promote American Legion Family Day April 27th, 2024
2. Promote partnerships between Units and other community groups
3. Promote the program through new and creative ways
4. Participate in Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service
5. Participate in the 9/11 National Day of Service

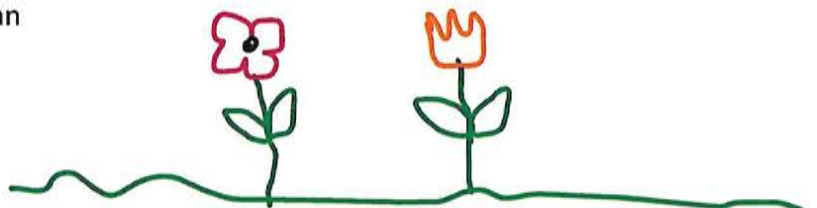
2023-2024 Northwestern Division Community Service Chairman, Deb Albers, encourages Units to urge members to keep track of individual Community Service hours, money spent, miles driven, and who was served by your Community Service volunteerism.

Throughout this year, please share your Community Service activities/projects/events (including photos and newspaper articles) with me, so I can share your awesome ideas and your Unit number in this monthly newsletter. Remember to make a copy and send the information to your District Community Service Chairman also. I will hold a random drawing of those Units that submit, and the District Community Service Chairman with the largest percentage of their Units submitting will also win a prize.

Thank you, Lake Crystal ALA Unit #294, for honoring your Veterans by sewing and presenting them with two beautiful Quilts of Honor!

Plant the seeds of Community Service in our "community garden" below by sharing your event! Plan on attending the upcoming Fall Conference and look for the Community Service table!

Wanda Seidler, Community Service Chairman



Gift Shop

Even though there have been a few cases of Covid again at our veteran homes we are still hopeful we will be able to have our in-person Christmas Gift Shops.

Your donations to this program are greatly appreciated by our veterans as it makes it possible for them to give their family members a beautifully wrapped gift for Christmas. Some of the things that have been offered in previous years for them to choose from are both men's and women's wallets, purses, boxes of candy, gift cards, cross bags, body lotions, fancy hair items, service caps for each branch and watches.

Let's keep this great program going for the benefit of our veterans and their families.

Please take the time to stop by one of our veteran facilities and spend some time with our veterans.

Bev Grose

Gift Shop Chairman

Sandy Wersal

Gift Shop Committee Member



American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State

Over the years, I have visited units that don't have the budget but fundraise so they can send a junior, units that have the funds but can't find a junior that is interested in attending, and units that have an abundance of interested juniors. All are important issues for our units. Some units notify the Department Office looking for names of juniors from their area that want to attend, but there are not units to sponsor. Some units donate to the Program. This is what our great organization is all about – working together for the benefit of our youth.

One of the challenges I have also heard about is how to interview. I would love to hear from those of you that had the opportunity to interview applicants in the past. What is the first question you ask them? Are there other questions that you ask that give you an insight into how they will participate during the week? Just send your answers to me at lkkauxiliary@gmail.com. I would like to share all of your ideas at Fall Conference.

President Sharon has asked all Program Chairmen to provide a tri-fold poster for their program, so please stop by and check us out. We will have information for you on how to purchase gift cards through the SCRIP program. There are over 750 businesses that give our program a percentage of those gift cards to our program. There will be a signup sheet for members wanting to serve as a Counselor in 2024. We will also have "Girls State" apparel for sale at Fall Conference. Our committee will also have a presentation on Thursday night – come with your questions.

I look forward to visiting with many of you at Fall Conference.

Linda Kelly, Chairman
lkkauxiliary@gmail.com
507.421.8270

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

This year is off to a busy start. Units are having boutiques, craft fairs and festivals that I have seen juniors out there raising money. The honorary Junior president has been out raising funds for her project and she is asking that the girls help raise funds for her project. Taylor's project is **Believet™ - Canine Service Partners** which works with preparing service dogs for veterans. **How your gift helps Taylor help out Veterans:**

- **\$30,000** Completely covers the cost of adopting, caring for, and training a dog for service with a disabled or injured veteran.
- **\$5,000** The kennel and boarding costs for 1 service dog for 6 months.
- **\$3,000** Provides a veteran with board and lodging for 21 days of training.
- **\$2,400** Provides annual vaccinations for 16 service dogs.
- **\$2,000** Pays spay/neuter fees for 8 service dogs.
- **\$1,000** Feeds 24 service dogs for a month.
- **\$500** Covers the adoption fee, spray/neuter, or vaccinations for a shelter dog.
- **\$250** Pays for dental cleaning and care, spay or neuter a service dog, and/or obtain other health clearances.
- **\$150** Vaccinates a service dog for a year, pays for a wellness check from our veterinarians, or buys a new crate.
- **\$40** Feeds a service dog for a month.
- **\$25** Provides a service dog vest, a gentle leader, ear wash, nail clippers, shampoo, or heartworm tests for our service dogs.
- **\$10** Covers one month's flea and tick treatment, heart-worm prevention, training rewards and treats, or publicity materials such as flyers and postage for events.

Veterans day is coming soon. Let us encourage our Juniors to visit Veterans in the Nursing Home or at one of the VA Homes in your area.

There are many patches the girls can earn. The patches have different levels for the different age groups. Let me know when they are completed, and we can order them. You can check on the website for all the different patches and requirements to complete them.

There are many trophies and awards to be won this year. Please check the trophies and awards as they come out.

Fall conference is fast approaching and it will be held in St. Cloud October 26-28th and Taylor would love to see the Junior's there. There will be a craft project on Friday afternoon for those juniors that come.

The Junior Conference will be April 12 and 13th 2024 in the 9th District in Detroit Lakes. Plans are well underway. Don't forget to pay Junior dues. More information to follow.

Let us get out there and get our Juniors organized and involved these girls are our future leaders.

Department Junior Activities Chairman
Sally Strasser



Karla Otterness
Leadership Chairman
Department of Minnesota
October

"I have yet to find the man, however exalted his station, who did not do better work and put forth a greater effort under a spirit of approval, than under a spirit of criticism" Charles Schwab

Mentorship/ Leadership goes hand in hand. The purpose of mentoring is to grow by tapping into the knowledge and experience of someone further along than yourself. It's the best way to accelerate your development. Find someone who is willing to see change to better the organization. If your Unit is facing member burn out, it's time to change. Even the smallest change can bring new energy. For lots of new ideas and inspiration come to Fall Conference October 26-28, St. Cloud Convention Center. Look for registration in your Legionnaire, Department Web Page, or Facebook.

Unit Member of the year - It could be you!

Each year your unit has a chance to honor a very special unit member. This member is willing to help wherever she/he is needed and volunteers to head up any special project or fund raiser your unit may be having. This unit member is active in the community and may be involved with other organizations. Why not nominate this member for Unit Member of the year?

Requirements:

1. Open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been, in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president.
2. Units: submit a narrative of 1000 words or less to your Department Leadership Chairman Karla Otterness Describe the nominee's accomplishments and activities and include the nominee's name and address.
3. Submit only one entry per unit. Your entry is due April 20th as I need to judge them and send the winner to national by June 1st.
4. Your entry must be on the official Unit Member of the year application form and must be emailed to me at t.d.news@share@gmail.com.
5. You can find the Unit Member of the year form on the National Web Site alaforveterans.org. You will need to go to forms and click on the applications for Unit Member of the Year.
6. Selection is based on accomplishments, activities, etc. For the current administrative year.

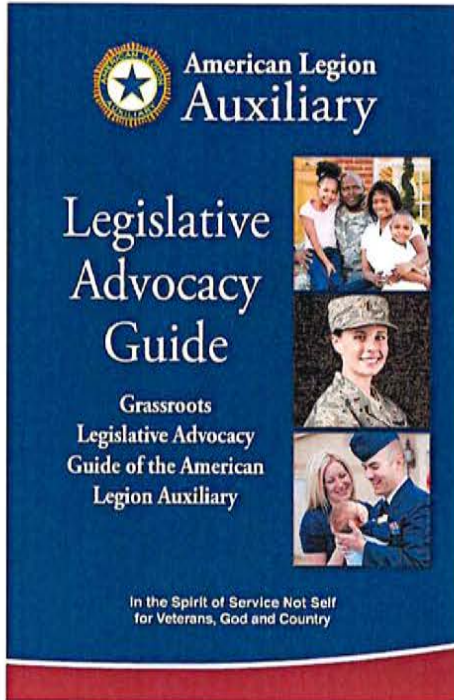
LEADERSHIP GOLDEN RULES # 2

There are no Shortcuts to Success. Being a leader takes time and patience. A leader does not happen overnight. Leadership excellence depends on the many times you can bounce back from setbacks and failures. Do not get bogged down by hardship that occurs. Instead, use them as tools to motivate and inspire you.

Save the Date; Saturday, November 18, more information on Facebook and Fall Conference

Legislation

October 2023



We may think that one voice does not make a difference, but that one voice added to others quickly can become a power of influence.

The Minnesota Commanders Task Force has not released the 2024 legislative priorities, when available I will communicate quickly, but we can still start our legislation program. Where can your unit start?

Go to <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Guides/Advocacy-Guide>

Download a copy of the American Legion Auxiliary Legislative Advocacy Guide. Review the information to help build legislative awareness in your community.

This guide has information that includes learning our issues, identifying, communicating, and building relationships with your legislators; and includes samples of communications.

Share the resource with your unit members and where they can find it. Share in your unit newsletter, email, or on your social media. You may

have unit members that do not attend your meetings regularly but have a passion to be advocates for our veterans.

As Auxiliary members we advocate for the legislative agenda of the American Legion. It is good to review information on the National American Legion website to educate ourselves also.

An available resource is the American Legion Family Legislative Handbook. Available to download at <https://www.legion.org/publications/223496/legislative-handbook>

Also available on the website under legislation is the American Legion Legislative Agenda when available and point papers that include background information, key points for conversations with your representatives, and what congress can do.

Make sure to sign up for the American Legion legislative alerts to receive notifications when the American Legion Family members are asked to act.

Go to: <https://www.voterve.net/AmericanLegion/Register>

Robin Dorf
Legislation Chairman





Cruising the Seas for Members Membership 2024

I was pleased to see such a great turn out at our Harvest Rally at Legionville! In recognition of my theme, Legionville was affectionately named Corncob Beach which was the first stop on our cruise itinerary. We need to do all we can to keep and maintain this beautiful place! The weather was perfect for bonfires, bingo, good music and family bonding time.

I want to apologize that you didn't get the individual numbers you were expecting. We were having computer issues and we ran out of time. Drum roll please!!!!

First place is 6th District with 13.73 %
Second place is 2nd District with 12.60 %
Third place is 8th District with 12.32%

With the fierce competition in place, 2nd Vice President Robin Dorf's (evens crew is in the lead with 12.11%.)

But 1st Vice President Judy Ackerman (odds crew) may be taking a different route to take the lead with 9.66%.

Keep a watchful eye on this competition!

While we were at National Convention, I sprung a contest for our members. Anyone who got new members while we were on our trip, their name was put into a drawing for a prize. Raleen Tolzmann, Patti Coleman and Jody Hassing accepted the challenge bringing in 2 Senior Auxiliary members, 1 Junior member and 2 Legion members! Way to go ladies!! Congratulations to Raleen Tolzmann for winning a beautiful anchor necklace.

With the first rally behind us, I would like to encourage each of you to reach out to members to renew their membership now and to look for new members for your Unit. It is all about word of mouth and networking. Wear your ALA clothing to all kinds of events!

Moving forward, there are 3 more MemberSHIP rallies. Please attend and challenge your units to bring lots of memberships with you! Make it fun and challenging! Make those phone calls and reconnect!

December 9, 2023 Pearl Harbor Rally Paynesville Dept Goal 75%

February 3, 2024 Sweetheart Rally Forest Lake Dept Goal 80%

March 2, 2024 Membership Appreciation Rally Montgomery 85%

FALL CONFERENCE will be here soon! Please get ready for those skits! Show us what you plan on doing at the island you were assigned to! This should be a hoot! Wear your vacation apparel! Dig out those beach hats and sunglasses. Maybe you have a muumuu to wear!

Be ready to dance into the hearts of Veterans with our Caribbean vibe! Let's go into Fall feeling refreshed and ready for cruising the sea for members!

If I can help you in any way, contact me! We will figure it out together!



Jenny Nelson 651-269-1199
Department Membership Chairman
9898 North Shore Trail
Forest Lake, Mn. 55025
Flipflops55025@gmail.com

Pictured below (l-r): 1st VP Department of Minnesota Judy Ackerman, Department President Sharon Cross, Department Membership Chairman Jenny Nelson and 2nd VP Department of Minnesota Robin Dorf Picture take at Legionville – Harvest Rally



Your Department Membership Chairman Jenny announces:

Recruiting Our Future Stars!

For the

2023-2024 Membership Year



Any Unit that recruits 3 Junior members will be entered into a drawing for \$50.00, to be used to promote the Junior Programs.



Let's capture those stars everyone!



2024: RECRUIT 10

Members who recruit 10 new junior or senior Auxiliary members for the 2024 membership year.

One entry per recruiter.

Certified forms must be received at ALA National Headquarters by June 5, 2024.

Please send this form to your department headquarters office no later than one week prior to the deadlines.

New members must be paid in ALAMIS by June 1, 2024.

ENTRY/CERTIFICATION FORM

Please type or print legibly and fill out the form completely. Incomplete forms may not be processed.

Recruiter's Name: _____ Member ID#: _____

Recruiter's Department: _____ Unit #: _____ Email: _____

Recruiter's Street Address: _____

Recruiter's City, State & Zip Code _____

Names of <u>New</u> Members	Member <u>ID#</u>	Names of <u>New</u> Members	Member <u>ID#</u>
1. _____	_____	6. _____	_____
2. _____	_____	7. _____	_____
3. _____	_____	8. _____	_____
4. _____	_____	9. _____	_____
5. _____	_____	10. _____	_____

Certified by Department Secretary: _____ DATE: _____

Department Secretary
Printed Name: _____ Dept: _____

Dept Secretary Signature (required): _____

***I certify that all 10 members are new and joined into the 2024 year.**

***I've provided or verified member ID numbers and that the form is filled out legibly and completely.**

DO NOT SEND INCOMPLETE FORMS or more than 1 form per recruiter.

Units: Send form to your department secretary.

Departments:

Please either scan and email to:
membership@ALAforVeterans.org
(Subject line: Recruit 10)

Or

Fax: (317) 569-4502 (Attn: Membership)

***Must be received at NHQ no later than midnight June 5, 2024.**

Each recruiter will receive a special gift selected by the 2024 National Membership Committee Chairman.

One award per recruiter.

Salute to Servicemembers Award Update

An update to the National Security Program in 2021-2022 was the addition of the Salute to Service Member Award, previously under Past Presidents Parley. With a revised name this year, the *Salute to Servicemembers Award* is open to active duty enlisted in all seven (7) branches of service regardless of gender. Past National President Mary Davis was instrumental in helping revise the nomination form for 2022-2023 and encourages all Departments to submit one nominee for this award for each branch of service. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see all seven branches of service represented on the stage during the 2023 National Convention? A nomination of this type is important to our enlisted personnel for recognition of their community involvement and becomes part of their personnel file. Stay tuned for an updated fillable nomination form that will be posted on ALAforVeterans.org under the National Security link and sent to all Department chairmen.



R.E.D. (Remember Everyone Deployed) Friday was created to remind people of our Heroes overseas and show that we are thinking of them. People across the country wear red every Friday to serve as a reminder and spread the message of how important it is that we keep our troops in our thoughts throughout the year.

Being a part of R.E.D. Friday is easy: Just Wear Red on Friday and tell your friends why!

Take pictures, post on social accounts, flood Facebook on Fridays to Remember Everyone Deployed.

If every one of our memberships share this with other acquaintances, fellow workers, friends, and neighbors, I guarantee that it will not be long before the USA will be covered in RED – and make our troops know there are many people thinking of their well-being.

Let's get the word out and lead by example; wear RED on Fridays.

Wear RED on Fridays. SUPPORT OUR TROOPS! WE LIVE IN THE LAND OF THE FREE, BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE. FOR US, THEIR BLOOD RUNS RED!! GOD BLESS AMERICA.

Carol Kottom
Department National Security Chairman
ckakottom@gmail.com 763-360-6102

Peggy Tesdahl - Parliamentarian

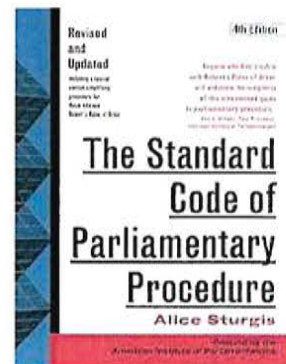
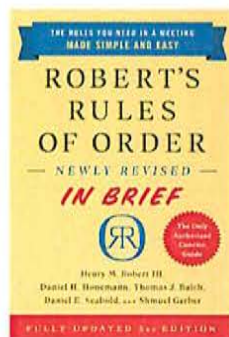
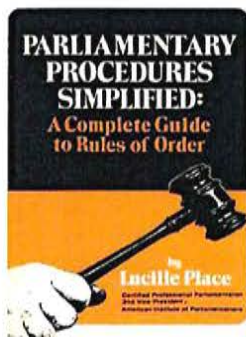
Welcome to the new American Legion Auxiliary year. I am proud to be serving the Department of Minnesota as your parliamentarian this year.

Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules of Order are two very dry and boring subjects. They are meant to bring order and rules to a meeting and to help the presiding officer keep the meeting moving and everyone on task. In a volunteer organization, everyone has the right to have their voices heard and their opinions respected. A good parliamentarian is essential to the smooth order of the meeting and efficient record keeping.

There is a lot of reference material available to help you in your journey. Your local library and bookstore are loaded with books on the subject. It is a good idea for each unit and district to have a copy of Robert's Rules of Order to refer to when needed. The internet has a trove of information also. Go to your search bar and type in parliamentary procedure. You will find free quick reference guides that you can print off or download for your use.

Productive meetings start with an agenda to follow that covers the topics that need to be covered. A secretary should be there to keep accurate notes with motions made that are either carried or failed. The record should show who made the motion and who seconded the motion. These records of a meeting are called the minutes and each meeting should begin with a review of the minutes from the previous meeting. Meeting minutes can be amended as needed and should be filed for the future. Meeting minutes are a record of our history.

Having successful meetings is a goal for every presiding officer. Dedicated officers can make that a reality. Using proper procedures will help. Strive to mentor upcoming officers and others who want to make the organization succeed.



ATTENTION VETERANS!

Are you able to use your hands and fine motor skills to do crafts?

If so, would you be interested in assisting the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota in assembling poppies?

The ALA Dept. of MN is in need of veterans to assist us in making both small and large poppies.

- Poppy kits are provided by the American Legion Auxiliary and come in a batch of 1,000.
- Veterans must be able to arrange for pick up of kits and return of finished poppies to our Department office located in St. Paul, MN.
- Veterans are paid for the poppies that they assemble on a piece basis.
- Veterans who produce more than 6,000 poppies per calendar year will receive a 1099 (required by IRS).
- Poppies all have a label on them that states “**Handmade by Veterans**”. Although we have had some wonderful ALA members assist us in a pinch with assembling poppies, we are currently looking to recruit **VETERANS** to make our Minnesota poppies.
- Training will be provided. Legionnaires, please share this with your members.

If seriously interested, please send an email, drop me a note or leave a voicemail message as soon as possible.

Marsha Bible, Department Poppy Chairman
5602 West Oakes Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56301
Marsha.bible@gmail.com
(320) 492-8977



PUBLIC RELATIONS

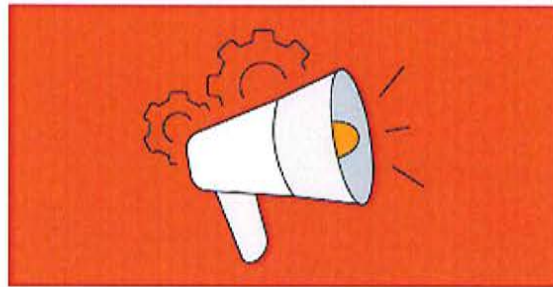
First, I would like to apologize for not getting the YouTube video I was planning on last month done. The person I was going to do the video with, and I just had conflicting schedules and could not get together. We will work on that next month.

With the age of social media, we kind of forget that before that age there was TV, radio, word of mouth and newspapers. So, ask the reporters, radio interviewers and even, where possible, TV reporters to come to your Unit events. There are still people out there who listen to the radio, watch TV, and read newspapers, believe it or not.

As the old saying goes we must

“Blow Our Own Horn”

to let everyone know what we
STAND for and do.



Sharon Hammon - Public Relations Chairman



Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation
October 2023

Time to start planning for the year. What can your Unit do to support our veterans and military? Enclosed is a Want/Need list from the Fargo VAHCS. If your unit can assist with any of these items, thank you very much. If you want to donate any of these things to the Fargo VAHCS and cannot deliver them yourself, please bring your items to Fall Conference and I will make sure they get delivered.

Remember to keep track of what your unit does for VA&R. The department needs to know what your unit does. This department chairman wants to sing your praises to the National office and of course to Congress. Congress needs to know what we are doing for our veterans and active Military.

Patterns for the sewing articles are available upon request from the Department Office.

FALL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES:

Let's **HELP** the Children & Youth Chairman pack children's activity bags. Please consider bringing items to put into Children's Activity Bags for the VAHCS. Here are ideas for the bags:

Coloring books	Foam shapes (self-adhesive)
Activity	Lacing cards
Word search	Stickers
Reading books	Small toys
Crayons	Etc.
Stuffed animals	<i>**Please NO play-doh or slime</i>

Judy Ackerman
1st Vice President
VA&R Chairman

Fargo VA Health Care System Suggested Donations

2101 Elm Street North; Fargo, ND 58102

Center for Development & Civic Engagement: 701-239-3700, extension 3395

The following items are requested for the comfort and welfare of Veteran patients as of August 2023. Please contact the CDCE for specific details on any of the items listed and before any transaction is initiated.

Please note that due to hospital infection control policies, we are **NOT permitted to accept any **USED** items, including blankets, clothing, toiletries, or otherwise, even if they have been laundered or cleaned prior to donation.

Sewn Items

- 60" x 80" blankets or comforters in masculine colors/prints

NOTE: Lap robes and Afghans are NOT needed at this time

- *Neck pillows
- *Firmly-stuffed heart pillows
- Walker bags
- Wheelchair bags

Children's Activity Bags

Individual drawstring bags filled with items to keep children busy while they attend medical appointments with their Veteran guardian.

Suggested items to include in the bag: coloring/activity/word search/reading books, crayons, stuffed animals, foam shapes, lacing cards, stickers, small toys, etc.

***Please do not include food items or Play-Doh/slime.*

Comfort Items

- *Deodorant (men's and women's)
- *Toenail clippers
- *Shaving Cream
- *Full-size body wash
- *Full-size shampoo, conditioner, and body lotion/cream
- *3-in-1 wash
- *Chapstick
- *Lens cleaner wipes for eyeglasses
- *Fidget cubes, fidget spinners & pop-its (used for anxiety, dementia/Alzheimer's behaviors, and various therapies)
- *Toothbrushes, toothpaste, mouthwash, floss/flossers, and denture cleaner/adhesive for Veterans receiving outpatient dental care

NOTE: Bar soap, pens, cards and notebooks as well as travel-size shampoos, conditioners, bodywash and lotions are NOT being accepted at this time.

In accordance with VHA Directive 4721, we are required to state, "The Department of Veterans Affairs will not provide you, the donor, any goods or services in consideration in whole or part for your contribution."

(*)Denotes a pressing need

Gift Cards

- **\$20/\$50 Walmart Gift Cards:** to be provided to Veterans to cover a wide variety of emergent needs
- **\$20/\$50 Gas Station Gift Cards:** to be provided to low income Veterans that need to travel for medical appointments but do not qualify for beneficiary travel pay
- **\$20/\$50 Grocery Store Gift Cards:** to be provided to Veterans in need (Hornbacher's, Cashwise, Family Fare, etc.)
- **\$20/\$50 Dollar General/Family Dollar gift cards:** to be provided to rural Veterans in need

Clothing Items for Emergent Needs or Homeless Veterans:

All items must be brand new with tags or in original packaging per facility policy

- Sweatpants, Small—3XL
- Athletic shorts, Small-3XL
- T-shirts, Small—3XL
- Men's underwear, Small— 2XL

*Emergency Food Bags for Homeless and At-Risk Veterans

*These food bags have been designed to meet the needs of this unique Veteran population as they do not require cooking, microwaving, refrigeration, or a can opener. Please ONLY include the items listed below. The Homeless Program cannot accept anything outside of this list.

Each paper or reusable grocery bag should contain:

- 3 Hormel "Compleats" (easy-open and shelf-stable meals)
- 3 individual servings of beef jerky
- 3 individual packets of trail mix
- 3 containers of Easy Mac
- 3 protein shakes
- 3 bottles of water
- 3 granola bars
- 3 fruit cups
- 3 Individual servings of tuna or peanut butter and crackers

Please call the Center for Development & Civic Engagement to schedule your donation drop-off.

In accordance with VHA Directive 4721, we are required to state, "The Department of Veterans Affairs will not provide you, the donor, any goods or services in consideration in whole or part for your contribution."

(*)Denotes a pressing need