

**American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Minnesota  
2023-2024**

**Sharon Cross, Department President**

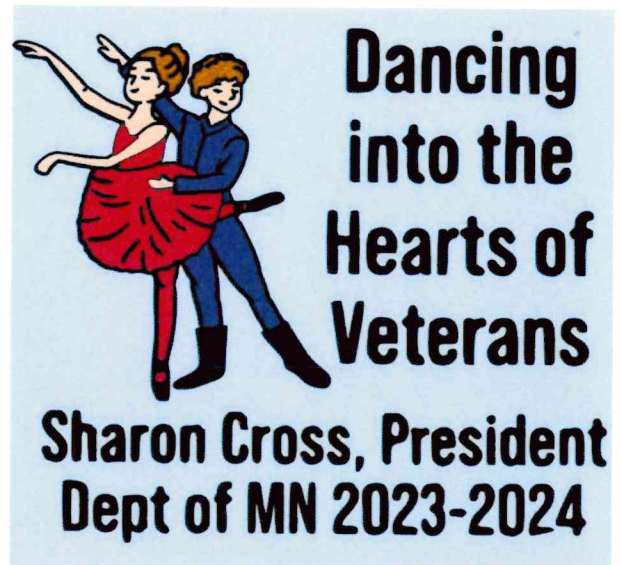
**February 2024 Unit Mailing**

State Veterans Service Bldg. 20 W 12<sup>th</sup> St #314

St. Paul, MN 55155

(651) 224-7634 [deptoffice@mnala.org](mailto:deptoffice@mnala.org)

Website: [www.mnala.org](http://www.mnala.org)



Welcome February and Americanism month!

From saying the pledge to participating in a Veterans Day celebration there are so many ways your Unit participates in Americanism. Just check out the Americanism Chairman Mary's questionnaire from last month's mailing. Rather than me specifically mentioning each program in this mailing, I have a question for you. How are your plans going for your Units year end reports?

All report forms were sent out in last month's mailing. So here is some information for the Unit to help answer some questions regarding your Unit reports. Your District Leadership should give you the contact information for your District Chairmen. Send one copy to the appropriate District Chairman and keep one copy of all your reports. You decide how you want to submit your reports. You can mail paper copies or email them to your District Chairmen. Some District Chairmen might not have email and you will need to mail that chairman a paper copy. Unit Presidents submit the National yearend report form only to your District President. Young members under 18, organized or unorganized, include what they, your Junior, members, do in their community. Some of your members might live in a different state, stay in touch, show them that you care and ask them what they do. They are your future. Send in a Junior History to your District Historian along with your Senior History.

What did your members do in your community? Networking together in Community Service or serving your veterans? Your Unit History is what you make it. So, Make It Great! Toot your horns and put your Unit in the Spotlight! Your Unit does not need to participate in all the programs. But let's get those numbers, dollars and hours reported so we can shine a light on all we do for our veterans, military, and their families in our communities. Those numbers matter when The American Legion is lobbying in congress for our veterans. It is a trickle up from our Units that add up to big numbers for our state. Are you ready to dance together and make your time together fun and interesting.

Many of us have enjoyed the late arrival of winter temperatures and snow, except the ice fishermen. Winter is upon us so be careful out there. Hopefully we will have a short winter as we look forward to warmer temperatures! The time to shine is now. Shine a light on your Unit's accomplishments. Help us put Minnesota in the spotlight!

***Dance Into The Hearts of Veterans!***

***Sharon Cross,  
President Department of Minnesota***



# TESTIMONIAL DINNER HONORING

American Legion Auxiliary  
Department Of Minnesota  
President  
**SHARON CROSS**

**April 27, 2024**  
**Melrose American Legion Post 101**  
**265 County Road 173 SE, Melrose, MN**

**Social Hour: 5pm**

**Dinner: 6pm**

(Menu: Chicken, Ham, Mashed Potatoes, Carrots, Gravy, Dressing, Cole Slaw, Desert)

**Program Following**

**Cost: \$30**

**R.S.V.P. By April 21, 2024**

### Local Lodgings:

American Lodge and Suites: 1230 Timberline Drive, Sauk Centre, MN 320-352-2800

American Best Value Inn: 322 12 Street, Sauk Centre, MN 320-351-7256

Palmer House: 500 Sinclair Lewis Avenue, Sauk Centre, MN 320-351-9100

Super 8: 231 County Road 175, Melrose, MN 320-256-4261

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**Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_ Post \_\_\_\_\_**

**Number of people: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Total amount of check: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Address check as: (American Legion Auxiliary)**

Mail Registration to: American Legion Auxiliary, Dept. President Testimonial, Attn.: Judy Hennen, P.O. Box 152, Melrose, MN 56352



**Department of Minnesota  
February 2024 Unit Mailing  
Americanism**

February is Americanism Month; however, Americanism is used all year round!

**Presidents Day will be observed on Monday, Feb. 19, 2024**

What can you do to promote Americanism in your schools and communities? Contact your schools, Boys Scout, Girls Scouts, Home School Co-op, or other youth organizations. Ask to promote respect for the flag, proper flag etiquette and appropriate flag retirement to our youth and community members.

Units can also promote the Americanism Essay. The Americanism Essay title this year is "What does Freedom mean to me?" The deadline for returning the Americanism Essay Contest is getting closer. The Unit will choose their winner and will send that submission to me on or before March 25<sup>th</sup>. Please make sure that the National Cover Sheet is completed and attached to the submitted essay. No late submissions will be accepted.

**American Flag Myths**

**The Flag Code is The American Legion Flag Code.**

On Flag Day, June 14, 1923, The American Legion and representatives of 68 other patriotic, fraternal, civic and military organizations met in Washington, DC for the purpose of drafting a code of flag etiquette. The 77th Congress adopted this codification of rules as public law on June 22, 1942. It is Title 4, United States Code Chapter 1.

**A flag that has been used to cover a casket cannot be used for any other proper display purpose.**

A flag that has been used to cover a casket can be used for any proper display purpose to include displaying this flag from a staff or flagpole.

**You must destroy the flag when it touches the ground.**

As long as the flag remains suitable for display, the flag may continue to be displayed as a symbol of our great country.

**The Flag Code prohibits the washing or dry-cleaning of the flag.**

There are no provisions of the Flag Code, which prohibit the washing or dry-cleaning of the flag. The decision to wash or dry-clean would of course depend upon the type of material.

**The mayor, a town official, or the Post Commander can order the flag to be displayed at half-staff.**

The gesture of placing the flag at half-staff means that the Nation or the state mourns the death of a highly regarded National or state figure, hence only the President of the United States or the Governor of the state may order the Flag to be half-staffed in accordance with Flag Code section 7(m). Those individuals and agencies that usurp authority and display the flag at half-staff on inappropriate occasions are quickly eroding the honor and reverence accorded this solemn act.

**Mary Kuperus,  
Department Americanism Chairman**

**American Legion  
Child Welfare Foundation**



**Children Welfare Foundation**

Was developed in 1954 to help contribute to the betterment of children in this country. It is to help with the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children and youth. Grants are given to nonprofit organizations for research, programs, and activities for the welfare and well-being of children and youth. National Auxiliary Liaison Linda Newsome has challenged each Auxiliary Unit to donate \$1 per member to the Child Welfare Foundation.



**Legionville**

I wanted to take some time and give you a little information on Legionville. This is such a great program that the Department of Minnesota American Legion Family offers to the youth in this state. This information came from Carl Moon the President of Legionville and I want to thank him for this information.

The original camp opened in 1956 and was 560 acres with 1500 feet of shoreline along North Long Lake near Brainerd, MN. Since the camp opened over 90000 youth campers have graduated from the school crossing guard program. And there has never been an accident at a school crossing that has had a graduate of the program present. With the changing of times and some schools not using students as crossing guards they have also included other youth safety programs. They still train crossing guards but also offer water safety, CPR, bus safety, and First Aide. In the future they hope to offer 4-wheeler safety and snowmobile safety. The 2024 Camp will have 6 weekly sessions with a maximum capacity of 154 campers ages 9-13. The cost per camper is \$500. The 2024 sessions will be: June 16-21 and 23-28 July 7-12, 14-19, 21-26, and 28- Aug 2.

I have also included what the camp would like to get with donations they receive. This camp works solely based on donations and registration from campers.

- Faucets/Drains for Dorms \$2,000
- Soft Cab for Tractors \$1,800
- Snowblower for Tractor \$1,000
- Swing Gate for Entrance \$600
- Bagger System for Lawn Mower \$2,700
- Pressure Washer
- Wood Splitter



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



**Department of Minnesota  
February 2024 Unit Mailing  
Community Service**

**AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY DAY IS APRIL 27, 2024**

The National Executive Committee of The American Legion passed Resolution #7 in October 2022, establishing American Legion Family Day to be observed annually on the last Saturday of April. Posts are encouraged to open their doors to members of their community for the day to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of Legionnaires, Sons of the American Legion members, Legion Riders, and American Legion Auxiliary. Use this day to bring awareness to The American Legion's "Be the One" initiative to improve access and reduce the stigma around mental health services. Partner with your Post American Legion Family when planning and promoting your event. Be sure to make it a family event by providing activities for all age groups, having a variety of informational brochures on hand, and membership applications available with members ready and willing to answer questions. The "How To" sheet to assist in promoting your American Legion Family Day is found by logging into the National website ([alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org)). Under Committees, go to the heading How to Get Involved and select Community Service. In addition to the information on "How to Organize and Promote American Legion Family Day", you will find information on "How to Mobilize Community Support for Those Who Serve" and "How to Partner With Other Organizations for Community Outreach".

**UNIT ANNUAL REPORT FORMS FOR 2023-2024**

Please follow all instructions and due dates provided to your Unit by the Department office!!!

Following are some of the questions included on your 2023-2024 Unit Community Service annual report form...

\*What Community Service projects did individual members of your Unit participate in to promote community awareness of the ALA and who was served by these projects?

\*Total number of hours volunteered, money donated, and miles driven by individual members?

\*What Community Service projects did your Unit participate in promote community awareness of the ALA and who was served?

\*Total numbers of Unit hours volunteered, and money donated?

\*Did your Unit participate in ALA suggested days of service and who was served?

(9/11 National Day of Service, Martin Luther King Jr Day of Service, etc.)

\*What did your Unit do to promote American Legion Family Day?

I encourage individual members and Units to be keeping track of your Community Service projects and who was served, hours volunteered, money spent, miles driven, etc. throughout the year. Also, please note that National has added a new Community Service Unit award this year- "Best Promotion of American Legion Family Day", awarded to one Unit in each division.



**Thank you for all you do for your Veterans and your Communities!**

**Happy Valentine's Day!**

***Wanda Seidler,  
Department Community Service Chairman***



**Department of Minnesota  
February 2024 Unit Mailing  
Girls State**

Greetings and Happy New Year. We are in 2024 and the American Legion Auxiliary, Minnesota Girls State Committee is gearing up for this year's event at Bethel College on June 9-15. In fact, we recently had a zoom meeting. We are working on the daily programs, staff, speakers, and activities.

I hope that your unit has discussed sponsoring one or more junior students from your local school(s) for this educational opportunity. This is a week-long chance for them to learn about our election system, hear from speakers from all three of the branches of our government and visit the State Capitol – just to mention a few activities. All of this will make them better voters and better citizens of our great state.

This is such a learning opportunity for that student. Not only do they learn about elections, but they also learn about flag retirement, poppies, flag advancement and retiring of colors, the folding of the flag, and what the American Legion Auxiliary does.

By the time you read this, your local Superintendents and Principals should have received letters and other information. Please contact your school to be sure that the information has been passed on to a staff member that is interested in finding the right student(s) to attend. Maybe one of your Auxiliary members is part of the school staff or someone may have a suggestion to who could help your unit.

I can't impress enough that we strongly encourage your unit to meet with all candidates. Some units meet them individually – others as a group. Visit with them, answer their questions, and ask them questions. We want you to be confident that you have chosen the right student to send to Bethel. The final decision should be yours.

There will be a maximum of 200 spots for our students this year. We encourage you to complete the reservation form (included in this unit mailing) and get it sent to the Department office. The deadline will be March 31<sup>st</sup> or until all 200 spots are filled. No reservations will be taken after we have 200 students.

As a reminder, don't forget to order your gift cards from [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com). This is such a benefit to the program. Use them as gifts or just for your weekly purchases for those trips to Walmart or Kwik Trip. The participating store list is endless – check it out.

***Linda Kelly,  
Girls State Chairman***



## American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State

The 77th session of American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be held June 9-15, 2024, at Bethel University in Arden Hills. The ALA MN Girls State citizens will arrive on Sunday and leave on Saturday morning before noon. The ALA MN Girls State committee has made the decision to keep attendance to 200 participants for the 2024 session.

The school mailing to principals was mailed in January. The schools are aware that units will be contacting them to set up an appointment to meet with potential candidates from the Junior High School class to attend the 2024 ALA MN Girls State session. ***Please read all the information we have provided so that you are aware of the eligibility and qualifications required.***

- ❖ ***2024 eligibility updated to include MN ALA junior members living out of state and meeting all other criteria.***

There is **no** limit to the number of girls a Unit may sponsor to ALA Minnesota Girls State.

**The registration fee remains at \$300 per citizen for the 2024 session.** If there are no high schools in your community, please consider sponsoring or co-sponsoring a girl(s) from the Junior class in a neighboring community.

What can your Unit do to raise funds to send a girl to Minnesota Girls State? Here are a few suggestions:

- ✓ Units may hold different types of fundraising events
- ✓ **Charitable Gambling funds** may be used for the reservation fee only.  
If gambling funds used make checks payable to: **American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.**
- ✓ Donations can be received from local businesses and/or community organizations.
- ✓ Their checks need to be made out to your Unit and then your Unit sends a check to the Department office for the reservation fee.
- ✓ Ask your American Legion Post or Sons of The American Legion Squadron to sponsor a girl or girls by writing a check to the American Legion Auxiliary.

A resolution, passed at the 2011 Department Convention, states that monies sent to the Department Office for reservations not used to sponsor a girl to ALA Minnesota Girls State would be placed into a **Girls State Reservation Fee Fund**. This fund is available for any unit to use ***one time every 3 years on a first come-first serve basis.*** If your Unit has a girl who is interested in attending and you do not have enough funds to reserve a place for her, consider applying to the Department Office in writing to request these funds.

All reservations are due by **March 31<sup>st</sup>** accompanied by your check. Once your Unit has submitted your reservation and payment of \$300.00 per girl, you will be sent a Registration Packet. This packet will be sent to the name listed on the Reservation Form. The paperwork included in this packet has due dates listed which must be followed. It is important that you read the Registration Packet thoroughly before you share it with your citizen. Please remember there are NO late arrivals and NO early dismissals. The 2024 Girls State session begins promptly at 3:00 pm on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup> and ends on Saturday morning June 15, 2024.

The name(s) and email address of your girl(s) are due to the Department office by **May 1, 2024**. Our contract with Bethel University requires that we commit to a final number of reservations for citizens and staff on that date, so the deadline is very important.

The ALA Minnesota Girls State Committee has been working diligently to ensure that our citizens have a truly memorable week at ALA Minnesota Girls State. We look forward to welcoming a participant representing your unit and community.

Please refer to the Auxiliary web page at [mnala.org](http://mnala.org) for forms and other information about Girls State.

***If you have questions, feel free to contact any of the members of the Department Girls State Committee. We are here to assist you!***

Linda Kelly, Girls State Chairman

Patti Coleman, Girls State Director

Bethany Dickert, Girls State Education Director

Jessie Hoppe, Girls State Committee Member

Lynn Carr, Girls State Committee Member

Mary Kuperus, Americanism Chairman

**Linda Kelly – Department Girls State Chairman**  
Cell: 507-421-8270 Email: [lkkauxiliary@gmail.com](mailto:lkkauxiliary@gmail.com)

**Patti Coleman – Girls State Director**  
Cell: 763-354-8644 Email: [pjc3555@aol.com](mailto:pjc3555@aol.com)





**American Legion Auxiliary  
Minnesota Girls State**  
20 W 12<sup>th</sup> St #314, St. Paul, MN 55155  
Phone: 651-224-7634 - Fax: 651-224-5243  
Toll Free: 888-217-9598  
Email – [deptoffice@mnala.org](mailto:deptoffice@mnala.org)

**APPLICATION FOR RESERVATION – PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY  
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY MINNESOTA GIRLS STATE**

**Return by MARCH 31<sup>st</sup> to:**

American Legion Auxiliary - Department of Minnesota State  
Veterans Service Building  
20 W. 12th St. - Room 314  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Unit Number \_\_\_\_\_ Unit Location (city) \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many girls is your Unit sponsoring to Girls State? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of the High School(s) you are sponsoring a girl(s) from \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Amount of reservation check enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ (\$300.00 per girl)

**NOTE: Checks should be made payable to: ALA Dept. of MN unless you are using gambling funds.  
Checks from Gambling Funds should be made payable to: American Legion Auxiliary Foundation**

**Please note:** There are no restrictions limiting the number of girls a Unit may sponsor to Girls State from the same high school, but there is a limit of 200 students. Once we reach that number, no more reservations will be accepted. Consider sponsorship of a citizen from outside your Unit/area. Check Home Schools, Charter and Private Schools.

Upon receipt of your Unit's reservation fee(s), your space will be reserved for this year's session and your Unit will receive an information packet and the forms needed to register **each** Girls State citizen you are sponsoring. **If registering more than one girl, you will receive a packet for each girl.**

**Information of Unit Member the citizen packet(s) should be sent to:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Position in Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 1/16/2024

<b>For Office Use Only:</b> Citizen Reg. Form _____	Citizenship Confirmation _____	Enrollment Form _____
GS Pledge _____	Waiver & Consent Form _____	Media Consent Form _____
		City Assigned _____



**Department of Minnesota  
February 2024 Unit Mailing  
Junior Activities**

Hope the new year has started out for all of you. We have all had a taste of winter by now and I am looking forward to spring and the Department Junior Conference, hope all of you are also. The 9th district has many activities planned for Friday night and they will be waiting for us to arrive. I hope that all of you are getting your registrations in so that we know how many of you will arrive,

Please send me pictures with explaining what your juniors are doing in their units to help raise funds for our Honorary Junior Presidents project or that they are doing to assist you in your units. Or put them on the Junior activities Facebook page.

Please send me the names of the Junior members who will be turning 18 so during the conference we can plan accordingly for our graduation ceremony for senior members.

Do not forget about the patch program if there are any Juniors out there that have errands patches, please send the names of the girls and the patches so I can get them ordered.

Stay safe and warm.

***Sally Strasser,  
Department Junior Activities Chairman***

**“LEADERSHIP IS THE CAPACITY TO TRANSLATE VISION INTO REALITY”** Warren Bennis

copied from Leadership e Newsletter.

#### UNIT MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Does your Unit have a member who stands out in making a significant impact on the accomplishments of the Unit? Who consistently exemplifies the values and ideals of the ALA?

Here are just a few attributes of prior recipients of this award:

- volunteers to help with whatever needs doing
- steps up to serve on a Unit committee
- enthusiastically takes on a task
- participates in many Units projects
- is always a team-player
- keeps a positive attitude
- is excited about Unit activities
- welcomes new and returning members

It is never too soon to look within your Unit to identify your

Unit Member of the Year nominee.

Eligibility criteria and submission requirements:

- Open to Senior members only.
- A nominee must not currently hold, nor have previously held, an elected or appointed position higher than Unit President.
- A narrative of not more than 1,000 words describing the nominee’s accomplishments and activities contributing to the Unit and to its activities must be submitted to the Department Leadership.
- Each Department will select one Member of the Year to submit who will be recognized at the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention.

#### Department of MN Unit Member of the Year

1. Submit only one entry per unit. Entry is due April 20<sup>th</sup> **Mailed to Karla Otterness 239 Westgate DR Winsted MN 55395**
2. Open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been, in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president.
3. Units: may submit a narrative of 1000 words or less

#### LEADERSHIP GOLDEN RULES

##### Have a Vision and Plan

Vision is what differentiates a leader from a follower. A good leader comes with a clear vision and persuades others to believe in it as well with the same passion. Having a vision will not guarantee you success until you have a solid plan and strategy to turn your vision into reality. As Benjamin Franklin put it, **“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”** Combine your vision with a plan of action and you will get one-step closer to converting your vision into reality.

**Be an inspirational Leader  
for the ALA!**



**Karla Otterness,  
Department Leadership Chairman**



**Department of Minnesota  
February 2024 Unit Mailing  
Legislation**

**PLEASE SHARE DATE OF 2024 VETERANS DAY ON THE HILL**

The 2024 Veterans Day on the Hill is April 17, 2024. Doors open at 10am for coffee with lunch served at 11:30am. The march to the rally will begin at 1pm. New this year there will be a minibus running from the armory to the House and Senate office building from 10-11:30am. The flyer has been included again in this newsletter to share and let your posts, units, squadrons, and community members know the importance of making our presence known. Plan to meet your lawmakers!

**AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE AGENDA  
FOR THE 118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS SESSION**

Last month I shared the Minnesota Commanders Task Force and the Department of Minnesota American Legion priorities for 2024. This month we will look at the American Legion Legislative agenda for the 118th Congress which can be found at <https://www.legion.org/legislative>. There is also a downloadable agenda to share.

On the American Legion Legislative Center website, it states that the American Legion is the voice of nearly 1.6 million US military veterans and servicemembers. Now think add on the entire American Legion family with adding the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion. Think for a minute of the impact we make.

Agenda items include:

- Mental Health & Suicide Prevention
- VA Healthcare Modernization
- PACT Act: Implementation & Oversight
- Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors
- Concurrent Receipt
- Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity
- GI Bill for Honorable Service
- Support our Afghan Allies
- Military Quality of Life
- Pay the Coast Guard
- Protect the American Flag

More information on each agenda item can be found on the website. There are also flyers you can print off and share.

***Robin Dorf,  
Department Legislation Chairman***

# VETERANS DAY ON THE HILL 2024

**WHEN:  
APRIL 17TH, 2024**

**DAV of MN Presents:  
Free Veterans and Supporters Lunch**

**Doors Open @ 10:00AM FOR COFFEE  
LUNCH @ 11:30AM**

(One Block from Capitol at 600 Cedar Street, St. Paul)

**Veterans March to the Rally @ 1:00pm**

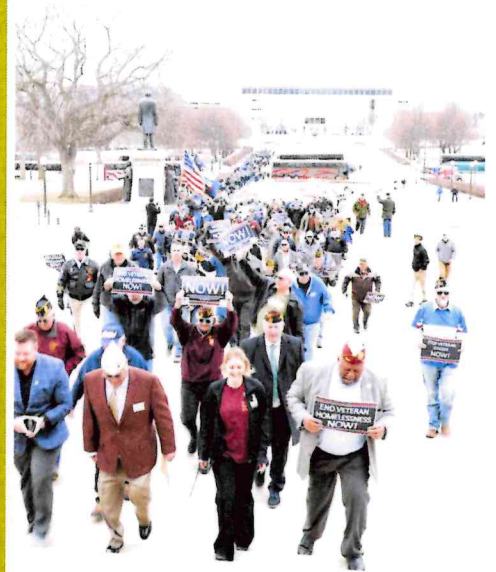
(Short Walk from Armory to State Veterans Service Building  
20 West 12th St, St. Paul )

**CTF, UVLC, and MACVSO Present:  
Rally in the Rotunda 1:15-2:00pm**



**ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT-  
TRENT@DAVMN.ORG:**

**NO MEMBERSHIP IN  
ANY ORGANIZATION  
REQUIRED.  
ALL SUPPORTERS ARE  
WELCOME!**



## **Topics Include:**

**PASSING A CLEAN  
VETERANS OMNIBUS  
BILL**

**INCREASING THE  
AMOUNT OF THE PROP  
TAX VALUE EXCLUSION**

**NEW THIS YEAR!!**

**A MINIBUS RUNNING  
FROM THE ARMORY TO  
THE HOUSE AND  
SENATE OFFICE  
BUILDINGS 10-1130.**

**MAKE YOUR  
APPOINTMENTS TO SEE  
YOUR LAWMAKERS!**



**DAV OF MINNESOTA  
BENEFITS  
PROTECTION**





## Department of Minnesota February 2024 Unit Mailing Membership

If your unit or district is not there yet, THAT'S OKAY!!! You are all doing FANTASTIC! We added one more unit to the 100% list and that is Unit 505 Gary. Congratulations to the 4 units on their 100%+ status! And we have 25 units in the 90% range. We are down 1,079 members from this time last year. There are still some that have not reached 75% overall.

The EVENS (Robin Dorf's ship) is ahead. It is such a close race!! The ODDS (Judy Ackerman's ship) are moving fast! It is a close race!! Look for every possible opportunity to get there before the year end!

Gather a group to call unpaid members. If every member calls one, the numbers will increase. We don't need to be ships passing in the night. We need to be ships sailing along together so we can be more successful in helping Veterans and our Communities.

When making those calls, encourage them to renew. Review with them and remind yourself about the benefits of membership. Remind them of the friends that they have made in the Auxiliary. Let them know that we will miss them if they do not renew. They are important!

It is not just the numbers that we are looking for, although they are important. If we don't make a priority of getting out there and putting our words into action, we will not have the successful numbers we need to stay going.

Here are a few benefits of membership. We are remarkable in that we have 100 years of service to Veterans and the Nation's Communities. Not to mention the personal gratification and rewards gained in voluntary service!

Members receive a subscription to the Auxiliary's national quarterly magazine. We have exclusive access to a wide variety of discount services and supplemental insurance products. Members also have access to free classes, webinars, and training through the ALA Academy.

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency help to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have suffered a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or another personal crisis.

National says that the decline in membership has stopped, as we have 1,200 more members than we had in 2022. This may be a short trend as many members are aging out. Having said that, we do need to attract younger members and listen to their ideas. It does not hurt to try new things and implement ideas that are tried and true. We should always be looking for ways to make our meetings fun, so people want to come back! It is a balance that we need to strive for!



The dues will continue to rise as other organizations do. Our dues are cheaper than most organizations. Consider finding ways to raise money for those who can't afford to pay their dues. Consider that an investment in your Unit. Maybe a contest for the member who can call people and regain the most members in trade for paid dues for one year. Don't be discouraged...Get creative and have fun with it!

I am looking forward to the Sweetheart Membership Rally in Forest Lake! I hope to see you all there!

**Jenny Nelson,**  
**Department Membership Chairman**

# 2025 UNIT DUES FORM

*\*Please print neatly - forms not legible will be returned\**

I understand that the dues amount listed below will be printed on the 2025 Membership Renewal Notices that will be mailed to each Senior member of our Unit next September. Below is the address to be printed on each Renewal Notice showing where our members are to mail their dues for this Unit.

It is understood that no change in the dollar amount of dues or the address to which the dues are to be sent can be made after a deadline which Department Headquarters will establish based on the requirements of National Headquarters. **When determining your dues amount, please make sure that the amount charged is at least \$30.00 for Senior members and \$6.00 for Junior members amounts that are sent to the Department office.**

DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

UNIT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

**2025 SENIOR DUES OF THE UNIT ARE**

(Amount **each Senior** member pays to your Unit)

\$

**Dues sent to Department per Senior = \$30.00**

**2025 JUNIOR DUES OF THE UNIT ARE**

(Amount **each Junior** member pays to your Unit)

\$

**Dues sent to Department per Junior = \$6.00**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of individual in the Unit to receive membership dues

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (Please be certain it is the current/correct address)

Check Box if this is the Legion Post address.

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

( )

\_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code Telephone Number E-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Membership Chairman

\*\*\*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

**EVERY UNIT MUST COMPLETE & RETURN THIS FORM**

**Return no later than March 15, 2024 to:**

American Legion Auxiliary  
State Veterans Service Building  
20 W 12<sup>th</sup> St Room 314  
St Paul MN 55155

Forms are also on our website and completed forms may be emailed to [deptoffice@mnala.org](mailto:deptoffice@mnala.org).



**Department of Minnesota**  
**February 2024 Unit Mailing**  
**National Security**

## **THE MISSION OF THE YMCA**

The Armed Services YMCA enhances the lives of military members and their families in spirit, mind, and body through programs relevant to the unique challenges of military life.

Our focus is to provide needed programs and services for single or married junior enlisted personnel and their family members. **The Armed Services YMCA empowers military families, no matter who they are or where they're from**, by ensuring access to resources, relationships, and opportunities for all to learn, grow, and thrive.

The program of the YMCA empowers young people, improve health and well-being, as well as provide support and inspire action in our communities today and every day. They offer the following programs:

Military Support Programs  
Holiday Assistance  
Child Development & Camp

Operation Little Learners  
Operation Ride Home  
Emergency Food Assistance

6-9 is the number of times military children will be transferred by the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.  
43% of military families feel isolated from their communities.  
7 in 10 of our military families struggle to access affordable, quality childcare.  
40% of military children are on free or reduced-price lunch programs.

The YMCA offers a number of free or low-cost programs to help our military families through the challenges they face every day.

Go to their site: <https://asymca.org/>

See what you can do to help. Check the locations, the services that the YMCA offers, how we can help, what the YMCA is all about, and how you can become a member.

Locations are as follows. See <https://ymcaminnesota.org/find-your-y/>

Mesabi	St Cloud	Northfield Area
Itasca County	Kandiyohi County	Red Wing
Duluth Area	Marshall Area Youth	Winona
Fergus Falls Area	Worthington Area	Austin Community
Alexandra	Mankato	Albert Lea

Find the nearest YMCA and see what you can do to help our military families.

***Carol Kottom,***  
***Department National Security Chairman***





Military OneSource is the 24/7 connection to information for all members of the military family. They are eligible to use this Defense Department-funded program anytime, anywhere. They can turn to Military OneSource for tax services, spouse employment help, webinars and online training, relocation, and deployment tools, and more. They do not provide any advertising or promotional services on their website. All commercial organizations that are listed on the site have an official agreement or contract with the Office of Military Community & Family Policy. They also recommend trying to contact some of the larger veteran service organizations & military service organizations to find out how you might work together to target the desired population.

Military OneSource can help by providing information—how to get new ID cards, how to get copies of military service records, how to find certain benefits, programs, and allowances such as Caregiver Support Services, Building Healthy Relationships, Everyday Commissary Savings, Education Specialty Consults, and Elder Care Specialty Consults.

This program was specifically designed by the Defense Department for service members, military family members and survivors. The app streamlines their online experience with one-touch navigation & fast 24/7 access to military benefits, military life experts and MilLife guides.

With all this information, please see the Military One Source website for more online information and resources which are vetted by the Defense Department & connects service members, their families, survivors & the entire military community with programs, services & products developed for military life. Please see the website at: Military Personnel [Support for Military Personnel & Families](#) | [Military OneSource](#)

Submitted by:  
Pat Alvarez  
American Legion Auxiliary  
Western Division National Security Chair

## Reminders

**Be The One Day(s):** Help bring awareness to the “Be The One” initiative by wearing and promoting “Be The One” on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. See Resolution 13 approved in May of 2023 by The American Legion for more information on “Be The One” Day(s). <http://www.betheone.org/>

### Upcoming Dates:

**World Day for War Orphans** January 6

**Martin Luther King Jr Birthday** January 15

## PRAYER FOR NEW YEAR

Lord, as we begin a new year, let us resolve to keep a promise, seek out a forgotten friend, listen, laugh, brighten the heart of a child, encourage the young, appreciate our elders, express our gratitude, take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of life, and speak Your love to others. Dear Lord, guide us in the New Year to grow closer together in our families, in our units, in our world. Let us always strive to bring peace to the world. Let us live each day to the fullest. For all the blessings of the year, we give You thanks, O Lord. Amen.

(American Legion Auxiliary Chaplains' Prayer Book)



## More on National Security Committee:

### Purpose:

The purpose of the National Security Committee is to promote a strong national defense. *Standing Rule #7, Core National Standing Committees*

### Key Program Statements:

- The ALA National Security program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service-members and their families.
- Support active-duty military families by working with an installation Family Readiness Group (FRG). Contact the Family Readiness Center on your nearby military installation for more information.
- Raise awareness of POW/MIAs and the work being performed by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) in the search for missing personnel

### Looking for Ideas?

ALA Committee **Facebook Groups** are spaces on the social media network for ALA members to discuss or share about broad or narrow topics related to each committee. Groups provide an arena for organic discussion about your local programs or services and present the opportunity to cultivate brand awareness.

This group serves as a place to share service activities and events, ask questions, obtain information, and network for those interested in the American Legion Auxiliary and how the ALA National Security programs works.

The American Legion Auxiliary National Security Program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service-members and their families.

Spread the word and show what your Departments and Units are doing to work the National Security Program!

If you have not already done so, join the ALA National Security Facebook Group, and encourage your members to join as well:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/915563745139663>

## Department Committee Chairs

### Important Dates:

May 15, 2024

- Year-end reports (Department chairmen reports due via email to division chairmen with a copy to national chairman).

June 1, 2024

- Department and Unit Award Nomination Form Completed and Submitted
- Salute to Service-members Award

### **Reminder!**

#### **Upcoming Quarterly Zoom Meetings for National Security:**

**Tuesday January 16, 2024**

**Tuesday, March 26, 2024**

EASTERN	8:00 PM
CENTRAL	7:00 PM
MOUNTAIN	6:00 PM
PACIFIC	5:00 PM
ALASKAN	4:00 PM
HAWAII-ALEUTIAN	3:00 PM

Registration info will be sent prior to meeting. All Department National Security Chairmen & Department Presidents are invited to attend.

**My Contact Information:** Need to reach me? Feel free to reach out however you are comfortable!

**Bettina Kossow**  
American Legion Auxiliary  
Northwest Division Chair, National Security  
Cell Phone: (719) 440-3111  
Email: [bettinakossow1000@msn.com](mailto:bettinakossow1000@msn.com)



**Department of Minnesota  
February 2024 Unit Mailing  
Public Relations**

This month we are going to talk about the Program Engagement Plan or PEP. In short, the PEP program is geared specifically toward that program. Check out the Public Relations Committee page for some tricks and tips such as

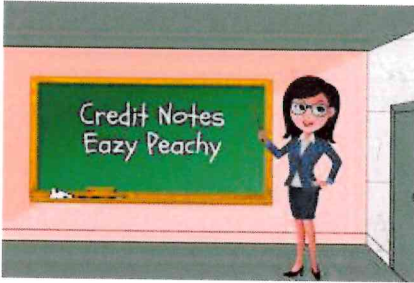
- 1) Having a positive social media present (all platforms).
- 2) Maintaining a positive relationship with your local media outlets (radio, tv, newspapers, ect).
- 3) By having an elevator speech. (What is the ALA?, Why did you join?, What do you do?)
- 4) The importance of branding (this way people will associate the things you do with your unit).

There is also a link on the Public Relations Committee page for a Public Relations Toolkit which you will find very helpful.

Please encourage your members to look at the PEP plans as they provide valuable information. They can be found a [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org) If you have never logged in you will need your member id number, (which can be found on your membership card) to get started. Once you have logged in, click on the Committee's Tab (immediately right of the Forms Tab). Once you are on the Committee's page the first link on the far right of the page has a link to the Program Engagement Plans. Check this out, great information can be found.

***Sharon Hammon,  
Public Relations Chairman***

**Credit Memo Notification  
Time Shortened**



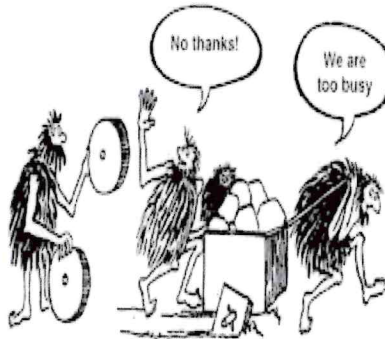
Historically, credit memo notifications went out every 3 months when you received a statement. I have changed that so you are notified of a credit memo immediately after being processed. This will allow the units to use their credits when they become available. Most of what I am talking about is members that pay their dues online and PUFL credits. I have set up all the unit accounts with an email going to the treasurer. If you wish the credit memos be emailed elsewhere, please email me at [shannon@mnala.org](mailto:shannon@mnala.org). If your UNIT pays dues online for your members, please contact me for a refund check.

**Departmental Processes are  
Improving**

Christie, Jocelyn & I have been working together to improve how certain things are processed at the department level.



We are trying to make these changes with little to no effect on the units as possible. So far most of what has changed is how I, as the treasurer, record paperwork in our accounting software. The functionality of the software is amazing, and I'm planning on using it to its fullest potential.



**Membership Transmittals-  
Accuracy is Key**

A couple items we are seeing on transmittals that are causing credits to the Unit's accounts.

- Sending in a payment for a member that has already paid their dues online
- Paying a junior fee for member that is now a senior member
- Incomplete member applications, i.e. unmarked Veteran Served and the Anytime After section, unmarked living or deceased, Applicant's Relationship to the Veteran, unsigned by the applicant or the post adjutant/officers.

**THE APPLICATION  
MUST BE COMPLETE IN  
ORDER TO PROCESS IT.  
IF IT IS NOT COMPLETE  
IT WILL BE RETURNED  
TO YOU VIA USPS AND  
THIS WILL DELAY THE  
APPLICANT'S  
MEMBERSHIP.**

**Shannon Brown,  
Department Treasurer**



## Department of Minnesota Dates to Remember

**February** – Black History Month & Americanism Month

**Feb. 2** – Groundhog Day

**Feb. 3** – Four Chaplains Day

**Feb. 3** – ALA Mission Training and National Junior meeting Lincoln, NE & Nashville, TN

**Feb. 3** – Sweetheart Rally Forest Lake Post #225 11:00am Turn-in

**Feb. 19** – Presidents Day (office closed)

**Feb. 25-28** – Washington Conference

**March** – Women's History Month & Community Service Month

**Mar. 2** – ALA Department of Minnesota DEC Meeting Montgomery Post #79 9:00am

**Mar. 2** – Appreciation Rally Montgomery Post #79 4:00pm

**Mar. 10** – Daylight Savings Starts

**Mar. 15** – Unit Due Forms due to the Department Office

**Mar. 29** – Good Friday (office closed)

**Mar. 31** – Easter

**Mar. 31** – Girls State Reservations due to Department Office

### American Legion Family Day

American Legion Family Day is Saturday, April 27. On this date, American Legion posts throughout the nation will open their doors to their members and the members of their local communities with the intent of celebrating all great deeds and works of The American Legion Family with the intent to educate, recruit, recognize, and to give back to those members who continually support the gift of giving. The day will also place special emphasis and awareness on the Legion's "**Be The One**" program.

### The Friday before Memorial Day is National Poppy Day – May 24th

It's never too early to start planning! ALA National Headquarters is already preparing! We'd love to hear from you and make your unit/post home a part of our ALA media coverage. Send us an [email](#) and tell us about any of the following:

- What are your plans for National Poppy Day?
- How have you used poppy funds to help veterans, military, and their families?
- Share a success story about how poppy funds helped someone in your community.

### **LOVE** Quotes - Happy Valentine's Day!

*Loving a military man is not hard. The distance is hard, the worry is hard, the sacrifices are hard. But loving him...that's the easiest thing I've ever done. – Unknown*

*"Some people look up to their heroes. I'm in love with mine." – Unknown*

### **HOLD THE DATE**

Department Convention July 11-13, Willmar, MN  
Look for more information coming in the April Unit Mailing