

American Legion Auxiliary Department Of Minnesota Unit Guide 2024~2025

Our Unit Guide for 2024-2025 is dedicated to the service and sacrifices our Veterans and active military have given us. We enjoy our freedoms every day because of their sacrifices. This guide is also dedicated to our hard-working American Legion Auxiliary members who spread the word about our programs and what we do.

As we get ***Back to the Basics – Recognize, Respect, Remember*** - the information in the unit guide will lead our Auxiliary members and can be used as a tool for working our programs. Please read about each chairman's ideas for the program and refer back to it often.



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

Let's Meet Our President Judy Ackerman



Judy is a 66 year member of Schwieger-Kahler Unit 522, Northrop, MN. Judy is eligible for membership through her father, George Schadt, a WWII Army veteran; her grandfather, William Langholz, a WWI Army veteran; and her brother, Bill Schadt, a Vietnam Marine veteran. Judy is a third-generation Auxiliary member in a 5 generation Auxiliary family (her grandmother to her granddaughters).

Judy has held the office of president for her Unit for several years.

Judy has held the following offices and chairmanships at the District level: President, 1st and 2nd Vice President, Executive Committee for 2 years, Membership, Girl State, Junior Activities, Finance, Secretary/Treasurer, Americanism, Leadership, Legislative, Poppy and many more.

Judy has given her time and talents to the Department of MN by holding several chairmanships that include: Junior Activities, Unit Development and Revitalization, Historian, Public Relations, Chaplain, Membership, Strategic Planning Committee, Finance Committee, Legislative, and is currently the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chairman.

Judy has been employed as a Medical Coding Specialist since 1992. She currently works for Regions Hospital as a as the Park Nicollet Home Health/Hospice Coding Team Lead since 2015. She holds 6 credentials from 3 coding organizations.

Judy has exhibited her leadership skills through her employment, the coding organizations and the American Legion Auxiliary.

Judy and her late husband, Jim, were married for thirty-two (32) years and had three daughters. Jim was also a member of the Sons of the American Legion.

Theme: "Back to the Basics – Recognize, Respect, Remember"

Symbol: Building Blocks

President's Project –

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Part 2 is to raise funds and in-kind donations to help out our female veterans. The new women's clinic will be opening up in the spring of 2025. The VA is asking for Personal Hygiene kits to be given to our female veterans. This project will be started at the Junior Fun Weekend at Legionville the weekend of August 9-11th. (Depending on donations and where the required products are purchased.) I would love to be able to put together at least 300 of these kits.



PREAMBLE

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:
To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
to maintain law and order;
to foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism;
to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;
to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, State and Nation;
to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good-will on earth;
to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion;
to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Constitution & Standing Rules

Girls State AEF National Security
Education **Finance** Public Relations
Memorial Legislation **History**
Children & Youth Americanism
 Parliamentarian Gift Shop
 Past President's Parley Poppy
Risk & Compliance Leadership
Junior Activities Membership
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation **Community**
Service

2024~2025 Department Officers and District Presidents



Sitting: Department 1st VP Robin Dorf, Department President Judy Ackerman,
Department 2nd VP Linda Kelly

District Presidents

Standing: Row 1 – District 1 – Michelle Weaver, District 2 – Kollett Kaehlert, District 3 – Tamara Thayer,
District 4 – Sandy Gibson, District 5 – Cari Lamb, District 6 – Dori Hamilton,
District 7 – Sandy Wersal, District 8 – Tamara Martin, District 9 – Donna Ray Jacobson,
District 10 – Bethany Dickert

National Committeewoman & Alternate National Committeewoman



Jean Walker



Raleen Tolzmann

District Presidents – 2024~2025

1st District President – Michelle Weaver

Theme: Empowering Children, Strengthening Families

Symbol: Rainbow

Project: Child Welfare Foundation

Goal: \$4,000



2nd District President – Kollett Kaehlert

Theme: Serving those who served our country

Symbol: Helping Hands

Project: Memory bench at the Luverne Veteran's Home

Goal: \$7,000



3rd District President – Tamara Thayer

Theme: Bringing smiles to Veterans

Symbol: Smiley Face

Project: 3 Free Dental Clinics for Veterans

Goal \$5,000

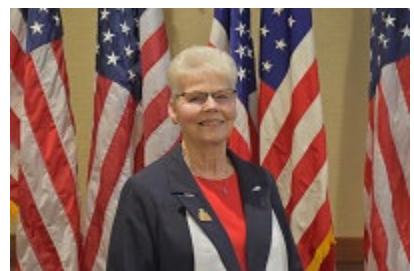


4th District President – Sandra Gibson

Theme: Let Freedom Soar

Symbol: Eagle carrying American Flag

Project: Game night at Minneapolis VAMC, Supplies for the Fischer House and special meal for 1 building at the Mpls Veterans Home



5th District President – Cari Lamb

Theme: Racing for Veterans

Symbol: Race Car

Project: Funds for cable, TV repairs & new TVs for Mpls Veterans home

Goal is \$1,500



6th District President – Dori Hamilton

Theme: Support our Military service members, past, present & future

Symbol: Poppy

Project: Funds for theatre seating at the Bemidji Veterans Home

Goal: \$6,000



7th District President – Sandy Wersal

Theme: Veterans have a special place in our hearts

Symbol: Poppy

Project: Montevideo Veteran's Home

Goal: \$3,00



8th District President – Tamara Martin

Theme: Bee Kind, Bee Friends, Bee the One

Symbol: Winnie the Pooh

Project: Funds for Silver Bay Veterans Home

Goal: \$1,000



9th District President – Donna Rae Jacobson

Theme: Be a light for our veterans

Symbol: Flashlight

Project: 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 – Bethany Dickert

Theme: Lift Each Other Up

Symbol: Hot Air Balloon

Project: Magnus Mental Health fund

Goal: \$7,000



OFFICERS 2024~2025

President	Judy Ackerman 924 Shoreacres Drive, Fairmont, MN 56031
First Vice President	Robin Dorf PO Box 1236, Monticello, MN 55362
Second Vice President	Linda Kelly 17670 511 th Street, Pine Island, MN 55963
National Committeewoman	Jean Walker 426 E Ross Avenue, Warren, MN 56762
Alternate NEC	Raleen Tolzmann 46590 Evergreen Lane, Cleveland, MN 56017
Department Secretary	Christie Avant State Veterans Service Building, St Paul, MN 55155
Department Treasurer	Shannon Brown State Veterans Service Building, St Paul, MN 55155
Department Chaplain	Vida Bacon 110 N Payne Street, New Ulm, MN 56073
Department Historian	Patti Coleman 231 Stardust Blvd, Circle Pines, MN 55104
Honorary Jr President	Terriana Richards

DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

First District	Michelle Weaver 1305 Willow St Apt 39, La Crescent, MN 55947
Second District	Kollett Kaehlert 1943 Sheridan Court, North Mankato, MN 56003
Third District	Tamara Thayer 4817 5 th Street NW, Rochester, MN 55901
Fourth District	Sandy Gibson 4268 Oakmede Lane, White bear Township, MN 55110
Fifth District	Cari Lamb 3217 19 th Ave S Apt 1, Minneapolis, MN 55407
Sixth District	Dori Hamilton 11997 140 th Street, Watkins, MN 55389
Seventh District	Sandy Wersal 16667 County Road 9 NE, New London, MN 56273
Eighth District	Tamara Martin 4480 Alderberry Drive, Hermantown, MN
Ninth District	Donna Ray Jacobson 386 Lake Avenue NE, Clearbook, MN 56634
Tenth District	Bethany Dickert 5109 Rainbow Lane, Mounds View, MN 55112

DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN ~ COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Americanism	Kollett Kaehlert 1943 Sheridan Court, North Mankato, MN 56003
Children and Youth	Anne Steffen 3018 127 th Lane NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55448
Community Service	Becky Olson 3610 90 th Ave N, Moorhead, MN 56560
Constitution/Standing Rules	Marsha Bible 5602 West Oakes Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303
Education	Sharon Voltz 828 NE 1 st Ave, Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Finance Chairman	Norma Tramm 29052 County Road 50, Cold Spring, MN 56320
Finance Committee	Mary Hendrickson 721 Hantz Road, Cloquet, MN 55720
Finance Committee	Cavalene Regan 5106 – 207 th St N, Forest Lake, MN 55025
Finance Committee	Tonia Bettermann 1625 Crestview Lane, Owatonna, MN 55060
Finance Committee	Jill Davis 2806 64 th Avenue N, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430
Girls State Chairman	Wanda Prescher 3321 Vista View Court SW, Rochester, MN 55902
Girls State Committee	Renee Suess 678 Independence Dr, Big Lake, MN 55309
Girls State Committee	Jen Stolz 2901 Clover Preserve Drive, Chaska, MN 55318
Director	Peggy Tesdahl 16892 Yale Street NW, Elk River, MN 55330
Education Director	Amelia Tesdahl 3900 Victoria Street N, St. Paul, MN 55126
Americanism	Kollett Kaehlert 1943 Sheridan Court, North Mankato, MN 56003
History	Patti Coleman 231 Stardust Blvd, Circle Pines, MN 55014
Junior Activities	Jean Walker 426 E Ross Avenue, Warren, MN 56762
Leadership	Carol Kottom 1909 Goldfinch Drive, Buffalo, MN 55313
Legislation	Linda Kelly 17670 511 th St, Pine Island, MN 55963
Membership	Hope Wilson 211 8 th Ave SE, Elbow Lake, MN 56531
Memorial	Vida Bacon 110 N Payne Street, New Ulm, MN 56073
National Security	Mary Kuperus 313 Pine Street SW, New London, MN 56273
Parliamentarian	Raleen Tolzmann 46590 Evergreen Lane, Cleveland, MN 56017

Past Presidents Parley	Shirley Frerick 3271 1 st Street NW, Hackensack, MN 56452
Poppy	Lorinda Kies 2177 Arnold Palmer Drive, Blaine, MN 55449
Public Relations	Cari Lamb 3217 19 th Ave S Apt 1, Minneapolis, MN 55407
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation	Robin Dorf PO Box 1236, Monticello, MN 55362
Gift Shop Chairman	Sandy Wersal 16667 County Road 9 NE, New London, MN 56273
Gift Shop Committee	Becky Nelson 3217 19 th Ave S Apt 1, Minneapolis, MN 55407
Risk & Compliance	Cheryl Schauman 54037 210 th Street, Grove City, MN 56243
Risk & Compliance	Kathy Kessler 27388 County Road 1 NW, Brooton, MN 56316
Risk & Compliance	Deanna Meyer 147 5 th Ave S – PO Box 248, Brownton, MN 553312

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

Auxiliary Emergency Fund	Brandi Christensen 15780 30 th Street, Watertown, MN 55388
Servicemen's Center	Chris Ronning 110 Regan Lane, Unit 201, Osseo, MN 55369
Advisory Board Committee 1	Donna Barbknecht 25891 334 th Ave, Battle Lake, MN 5615
Advisory Board Committee 2	Darlene Wondra 12451 100 th Street, Montgomery, MN 56069
Advisory Board Committee 3	Mary Hendrickson 721 Hantz Road, Cloquet, MN 55720

SPECIAL CORPORATIONS

Brain Science Foundation	Anna Eells 1029 SW 1 st Street, Grand Rapids, MN 55744
	Barbara Hopewell 9145 Highway 55, Golden Valley, MN 55427
	Patty Gunderson 115 E Elm Ave – PO Box 26, Upsala, MN 56384

VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM & MN VETERANS HOME REPRESENTATIVES

Bemidji Veterans Home	Denise Milton PO Box L, Bagley, MN 56621
Fargo VA Medical Center	Becky Olson 3610 90 th Avenue N, Moorhead, MN 56560
Fergus Falls Veterans Home-	Doris LaFayette 16699 170 th Street S, Barnesville, MN 56514
Hastings Veterans Home -	Darlene Wondra 12451 100 th Street, Montgomery, MN 56069
Luverne Veterans Home -	Jeannette Mertens 909 E Elm Street, Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Minneapolis Veterans Home -	Sandra J Gibson 2201 Eustis St., White Bear Township, MN 55113
Minneapolis VA Medical Center	Janet Thompson 16235 Glen Oaks Ct, Lakeville, MN 55044
Montevideo Veterans Home	Jennifer Hurst 1220 10 th Street, Clarkfield, MN 56223
Preston Veterans Home	Wanda Prescher 3321 Vista View Court SW, Rochester, MN 55902
Silver Bay Veterans Home -	Nancy Hopper 1303 E. Waldo Rd, Two Harbors, MN 55616
Sioux Falls VA Medical Center	Diane Strassburg 1993 121 st Street, Magnolia, MN 56158
St. Cloud VA Medical Center	Janet Benson 824 32 nd Avenue N, St Cloud, MN 56304

Articles for VA Medical Centers / Minnesota Veterans Homes

Send items directly to the Hospital/Home Representative of your choice. Include the Unit name, number, address, and a list of the articles enclosed. Addresses are listed above.

Be certain to check with the Representative at the Hospital/Home to make sure they can use the items you are sending. Many of the facilities are not open yet due to COVID and do not have a place to store your donations.

If not, consider contributing them to your local nursing home, assisted living facility, etc. that also have veterans.

Department Administrative Staff



Christie Avant ~ Department Executive Secretary
651-224-7634
christie@mnala.org



Shannon Brown ~ Department Treasurer
651-224-7634
shannon@mnala.org



Jocelyn Yasis ~ Administrative Assistant
651-224-7634
jocelyn@mnala.org

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Department of Minnesota - State Veterans Service Building

20 W 12th St Room 314 - St Paul MN 55155

(651) 224-7634 FAX (651) 224-5243

1-888-217-9598

Website : www.mnala.org

DO NOT send any money to the hospitals/homes. Send funds to the Department Office, properly earmarked for credit to your Unit. Make your checks payable to the American Legion Auxiliary, **not** to the Hospital or Home.

Monetary donations for the Gift Shop are to be sent to the Department Office, properly earmarked for credit to your Unit. Make your checks payable to the American Legion Auxiliary.

As there are several other organizations and state agencies in the State Veterans Service Building, please include the **American Legion Auxiliary** in your address.

Department Office Information

Embroidered ALA Emblems & Poppy Magnets

The Department office once again has ALA Emblem magnets available.

The ALA Emblem magnet patches are \$8.00



The poppy magnet patches are \$7.00 each. (while supply lasts)
Both items will be available at Department Fall Conference and through the Department office.

Using Current Forms

Each year, the Department Executive Committee meets in August and reviews the donation sheet and the pricing on items that we sell at the Department office. **Please make a point of using the current year's forms when you are submitting items to the Department office.**

Thank you!

Fall Conference

Fall Conference will be held October 25-26, 2024, at River's Edge Convention Center 4th Ave S, St. Cloud, MN 56301.

Department Convention

Department Convention will be held July 10-1, 2025 at Wilmar Conference Center 240 23rd St SE, Wilmar, MN 56201

Items to be Ordered or Sent:

1. Membership transmittal sheets, applications and supplies orders.
2. Membership supplies
3. All Department checks, donations, etc.
4. Poppy Orders

Membership pins, emblems, flags, bookkeeping and minutes books, Unit Handbooks and other such supplies. Order through National Emblem Sales catalog. Unit Presidents receive a copy of the catalog when available.

The Legionnaire - \$20.00 per year
or 2 years for \$35.00
(Paid American Legion members get a
subscription as part of their dues)

The Dispatch
National American Legion publication
Available electronically only

Mail to:

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

National Emblem Sales
The American Legion
Box 1050
Indianapolis, IN 46206
1-888-453-4466
www.emblem.legion.org

The American Legion
Department of Minnesota
20 W 12th St #300
St. Paul, MN 55155

www.legion.org/subscribe

Department Office Address

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

Phone – 651-224-7634
Toll Free -1-888-217-9598
E-mail – deptoffice@mnala.org
Website – www.mnala.org

2024~2025 Solicitation of Funds

The Department Standing Rules state: "No special requests for money by Department Chairmen and Department Committees or for the District President's projects shall be made from the Units without the approval of the Department Executive Committee". (Article X, Section 4)

For this 2024-2025 Auxiliary year of "**Back to the Basics – Recognize, Respect, Remember**" the following is the list of those solicitations that have been **approved** by the Department Executive Committee. Your support is needed and appreciated.

Make check payable to the American Legion Auxiliary, earmarked for the program(s) of your choice and send to the Department Office to be credited to your Unit. All donations may be combined into one check and earmark the amount for each program on the donation sheet.

Programs

Those denoted with an * are our own Auxiliary programs within the Department of Minnesota. We need to support these. No one else does.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Children and Youth

Legionville
Child Welfare Foundation
TFA (Temporary Financial Assistance)

Education

****Department Scholarship Fund***
The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund

Finance

The American Legion Family Hospital Association
American Legion Auxiliary Foundation
Brain Science Foundation

****Girls State Program***

****Junior Activities***

Honorary Department Junior President's Project

National Security

Armed Forces Service Center

Past Presidents Parley

****Health Care Scholarship Fund***

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

****ALA (American Legion Auxiliary) Hospital Program***
****\$5.00 Dollar Bill Shower***
Minnesota Fisher Houses

**** Gift Shop***

PLEASE NOTE: Charitable gambling funds may be used to support some of these programs.

The American Legion Auxiliary no longer receives these funds via The Minnesota American Legion Foundation. Please do NOT send any checks payable to that fund. The second Unit mailing has a detailed listing of the programs that can come from gambling funds. Contact the Department office if you need a copy of the list and/or forms.

Special Projects

Department President Judy's Project – Part 1 is to raise funds for rehabilitation equipment for the Veterans Homes. The two most requested pieces of rehabilitation equipment are the Kinevia Duo and the Scifit Stepper. These both allow residents in wheelchairs to access the equipment as well as those that are not in a wheelchair. Several of the other Veterans' homes have needs for other smaller rehab equipment. (Space is an issue.) The approximate cost for these pieces of equipment range from \$6,000 - \$8,500 each. Four of the homes have these on their wish list.

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Honorary Department Junior President Terianna's Project – Eagles Healing Nest, Sauk Centre to raise funds to help with finishing the family home on the grounds.

Each of the District President's Projects has been approved.

As of this writing, these are the only solicitations for funds that have been approved by the Department Executive Committee.

Your support of our American Legion Auxiliary's programs is needed to make them successful.

DEPARTMENT CALENDAR ACTIVITIES ~ 2024-2025

SEPTEMBER ~ JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

1st 2024 Dues Notices sent to All Senior Members

Harvest Rally Sept 21st Friday
Citizenship Day Sept 17th
National Children & Youth Conference TBD
National Americanism Conference TBD
Gold Star Mother's Day Sept 24th

Labor Day Sept 2nd

OCTOBER ~ EDUCATION

CONSTITUTION & STANDING RULES

Gift Shop Donations to Dept Office
\$5 Bill Shower Donations to Dept Office

National Family Week Oct 2-8th
Columbus Day Oct 14th

Fall Conference Oct 24-26th

River's Edge Convention Center - St. Cloud



Happy Halloween



NOVEMBER ~ PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

American Legion Auxiliary 105th Birthday Nov 10th

Veteran's Day Nov 11th
American Education Week Nov 11-15th
National Family Volunteer Day Nov 23rd
Thanksgiving Day Nov 28th



Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!

DECEMBER ~ VETERANS AFFAIR & REHABILITATION



Poppy Orders due to the Dept Office by Dec 1st

Gift Shop for Veterans
Pearl Harbor Rally Dec 7th

Pearl Harbor Day Dec 7th
Christmas Day Dec 25th
New Year's Eve Dec 31st

Happy Holiday's!!



JANUARY ~ NATIONAL SECURITY & LEGISLATION

Unit Dues Forms for 2026 Due Jan 31st

New Year's Day Jan 1st
2025 2nd Renewal Notices
Martin Luther King Day Jan 20th



Happy New Year

FEBRUARY ~ AMERICANISM

Sweetheart Rally Royalton Post Feb 8th
Time to Contact the schools for Girls State

Valentine's Day Feb 14th
President's Day Feb 17th
Washington Conference DC



Happy Valentine's Day

MARCH ~ COMMUNITY SERVICE

Appreciation Rally March 8th, Chanhassen

DEC meeting in AM



The American Legion 106th Birthday
March 15th

All Scholarship Applications Due March 15th

Girls State Reservation Due March 31st

Happy
Easter



APRIL ~ CHILDREN & YOUTH

Department Junior Conference April 11th & 12th

10th District Hosting

Palm Sunday April 13th ~ Good Friday April 18th

Easter April 20th

Unit Reports & Award Entries Due April 15th

National Volunteer Week April 20-26th



Think Spring!

MAY ~ POPPY

Girls State Enrollment Forms Due May 1st

National Leadership Conference May 2-5th

Mother's Day May 11th

Department President's Testimonial May 17th

Fairmont American Legion Post

National Poppy Day May 23rd

Memorial Day May 26th

Last Unit Mailing Goes out!



JUNE ~ GIRLS STATE

Department Convention Strength June 11th

Unit Officers List Due June 15th

78th Session of Girls State

Bethel University

June 15-21st

Flag Day June 14th



JULY ~ DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Independence Day July 4th

Department Convention July 10th-12th

Wilmar Conference Center



HAPPY
Independence Day!


AUGUST ~ NATIONAL CONVENTION

NEW ADMINISTRATIVE YEAR BEGINS

National Convention August 22-28

Tampa Bay, Florida

2026 Membership Year Begins

2025 - 2026 Auxiliary Year Begins

SUGGESTIONS FOR UNIT TREASURERS

1. Please make all checks payable to the American Legion Auxiliary.
Use the current year's Donation form to list your Unit's donations. These have been approved by the Executive Committee for 2024-2025. You may list multiple donations on 1 sheet, but please do not add other organizations to this list. You may donate directly to other organizations if you choose.
2. All donations should be included on one (1) check.
Please remember that all contributions for approved Department projects are to be mailed to the Department Office, earmarked for the proper program(s) so that we can credit your Unit accordingly.
3. Separate checks are needed for:
 - a. Membership dues
 - b. Poppy orders
 - c. Supply orders
 - d. Donations
4. Check to make certain your check is made out properly, the amount is correct, and it is signed.
5. Send **District** items to your District Treasurer – (District Dues, District Presidents Project, etc.)
6. Monetary donations for the ALA Hospital Programs benefit all 9 of the VA Hospitals and MN Veterans Homes that we support. They should be sent to the Department Office.
7. Monetary donations for the Gift shop should be sent to the Department Office.

SUPPLIES

The following supplies are available from the Department Office. Please send your check to cover costs with your order for supplies. Please make this a "separate" check. (Prices subject to change)

2025 Unit Guide	\$ 6.00 each
2024 Book of Annual Reports	\$ 2.00 each
ALA Emblem Magnets	\$ 8.00 each
Poppy Magnets	\$ 7.00 each

POPPIES

There is a special-order blank for 2023-2024 purchases of poppies. It is hot pink. Please use that form.

Small Poppies	\$25.00 per 100
Large Poppies	\$18.00 per dozen

Poppy Cards are available through Emblem Sales at <https://emblem.legion.org>

CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS 2024~2025

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT

Certificates of Merit will be awarded to Units for the most outstanding work in (based on the Unit Annual Reports. No special entry is needed):

- Americanism
- Auxiliary Emergency Fund
- Children and Youth
- Community Service
- Education
- Girls State
- History (both Senior and Junior) *
- Junior Activities
- Leadership
- Legislation
- Memorial
- National Security
- Past Presidents Parley
- Poppy
- Public Relations
- Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Ten Certificates of Merit based on the Unit Annual reports may be awarded by the Department Chairman in each of the four membership categories (based on current membership as of March 31st):

- Up to 50 members
- 51 to 100 members
- 101 to 200 members
- 201 and up members

An additional five Certificates may be awarded if warranted regardless of the category.

*Certificates of Merit awarded for Junior History will be based on the following Junior membership categories:

- 1-15 Junior members
- 16-30 Junior members
- 31-45 Junior members
- 46 and up Junior members

PLAQUES AND AWARDS 2024~2025

Many plaques and awards are available to Units for exceptional achievements. A complete list, including qualifications and rules for all Department and National plaques and awards will be forthcoming to each Unit in a Unit mailing and will be considered the official rules for all competitions.

Enter all competitions. Tell the story of your accomplishments. Your Unit and your Post will be proud of the recognition you receive.

Entries for Department and National competition must be submitted directly to the Department Chairman by the Unit. Entries for the National competition must be in addition to the Unit's Impact Report. An entry attached to an annual report will NOT be considered as an award entry. Follow the rules as provided in the Unit mailing including narrative, length, photos, etc. A Unit submitting either a Senior or Junior history for competition must submit an **extra** copy of that history, just like the entries for the other special awards.

There are some Department awards where the Department winner is selected as Minnesota's entry into National competition. For others, separate narrative reports must be submitted if a Unit wants to enter both Department and national competition even though the reports may be the same. Please read the rules carefully.

A Unit does **NOT** have to reach its membership goal to enter competition unless the rules clearly state that.

Only those entries postmarked no later than April 15th will be considered as entries for awards unless another, date is specified in the rules. All entries must be identified by giving the name of the Unit, unit location, name and address of the Unit President or unit chairman and the specific award for which it is being entered.

Awards will be presented at the Department Convention.

Please note: Units will no longer need to enter competition for the department awards, unless it ties directly to a national award.

VOLUNTEER HOURS 2024~2025

Each year the Department receives several questions concerning where to credit the volunteer hours that our members give to the various programs. The following is a brief explanation with examples of the various types of hours for which a person may receive credit.

COMMUNITY SERVICE - Are those hours a member spends working within their community for such programs as Bloodmobile, Meals on Wheels, senior citizens groups, etc., done in the name of the American Legion Auxiliary. Church functions may not be included. Masks made for schools, churches, and communities are included here.

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION - These hours are divided into the following categories:

1. **VAVS Hours** are those hours spent in the VA Medical Centers working with our hospitalized veterans. The volunteer has taken the VA Orientation course. Hours are credited through the VA Medical Center.
2. **Service to Veterans Hours** are those hours a person spends working with a veteran in a local nursing home, hospital or in the veteran's own home. This cannot include doing anything for a member of one's own family, serving at a funeral, etc. Also, those hours a member spends working within their own home on behalf of the veterans, doing such things as cooking and taking the meals to the veteran's home, sewing for our hospitalized veterans, Masks for VA and Vets homes are also included.

A person may **not** take credit for hours for their own family, teaching Sunday school, preparing food for a funeral of a Legion or Auxiliary member, distributing Poppies, writing letters to Senators and Representatives on behalf of veteran's legislation, etc. Clipping store coupons and sending them to military bases should be recorded under the National Security program. See each program in this Unit Guide for further details.

Membership Eligibility Dates

December 7, 1941, through (ending date not yet determined)
April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918

Membership in The American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the:

(1) grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion; and

(2) grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who served in either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918 and any time after December 7, 1941 who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge;

(3) grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941 who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and

(4) to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.*

* A woman who is eligible for American Legion membership is eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary regardless of whether or not she is a member of The American Legion. However, eligibility of her female relatives (sister, mother, daughter, direct descendants) and/or spouse depends upon her membership in The American Legion.

Information on a veteran's service record can be obtained by contacting:

National Archives and Records Administration
Telephone: 1-866-272-6272
www.archives.gov

Americanism

Kollett Kaehlert ~ Chairman

I believe that being a good American means showing respect to our Veterans and our Flag. I would like to see units contact their local schools and request to give presentations on Flag Etiquette, how to fold a flag, say the Pledge of Allegiance and why we stand for the Flag and the National Anthem.

This year the theme for the Americanism essay contest is: “***What does America the Beautiful mean to me (regarding veterans and our military)?***” I urge units to get the essay information out to the schools this fall, you don’t have to wait till spring to do it. When contacting local schools don’t forget the Home School Co-Ops, Alternative, and Private schools as well as the Public schools in your area. There are a few basic rules for the essay contest:

- Typed or neatly written essay conforming to the word requirement for class
- Entry must include signed coversheet
- One entry per class per unit may be submitted
- Entry due to Department Americanism Chairman no later than March 25, 2025
- Unsigned essays, those without a cover sheet and those received after the due date will not qualify.

The American Legion Auxiliary creates opportunities that all Americans can do to show our respect and set positive examples of living as grateful, patriotic citizens. This is an election year, help your neighbors get to the polls this November. No matter who you support, get out and vote.

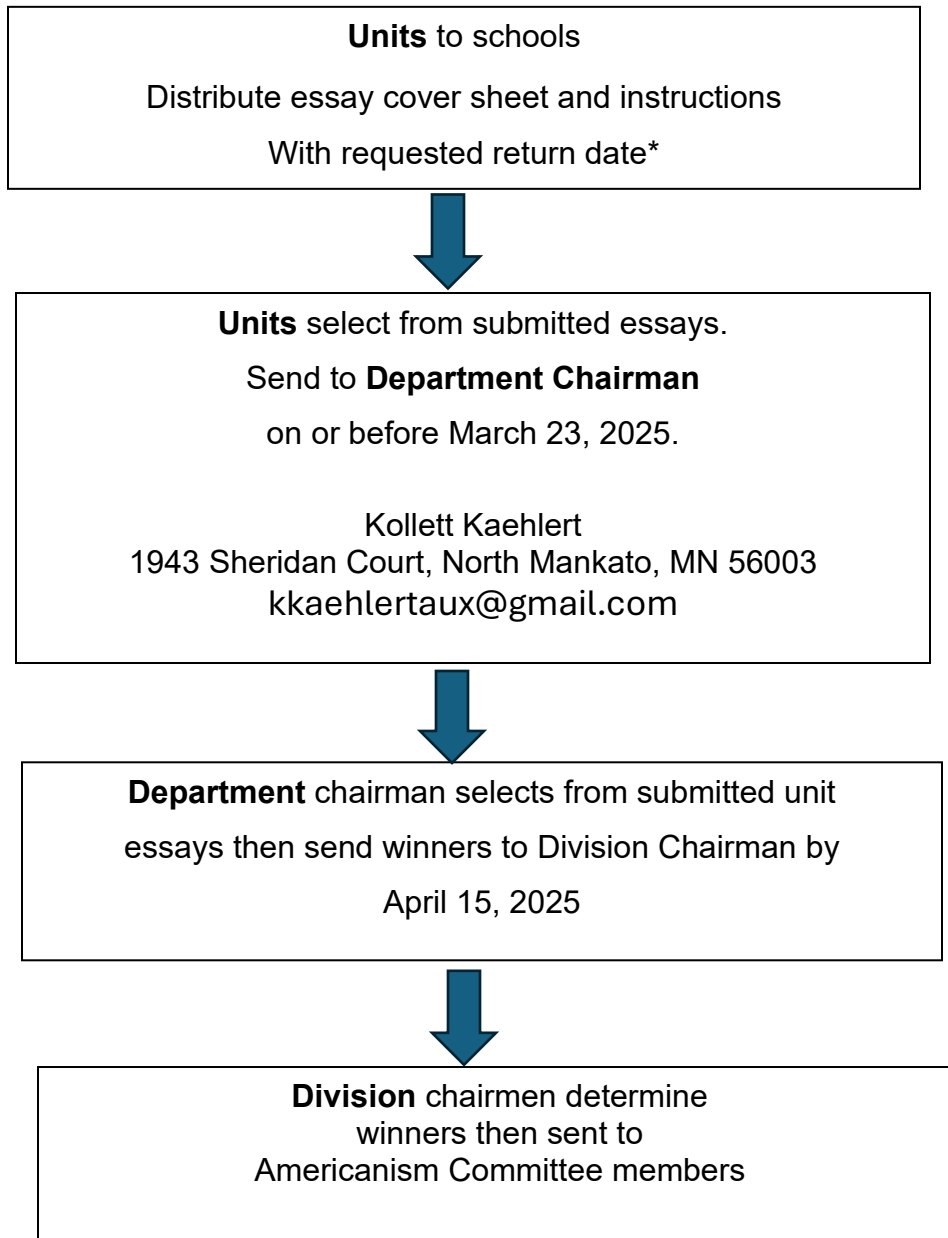
Take the opportunity in participating in patriotic community events, 9/11 Remembrance, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, July 4th to name a few. If you get the chance volunteer to help with a Honor Flight for our Veterans.

February is our Americanism Month, let’s all work together to create events that will show our Americanism and our love for our country and our veterans. The time to stop talking and start doing is now.



Americanism Essay Contest flow chart

Visit www.ALforVeterans.org for more information and required cover sheet



***Deadlines determined by unit and department chairmen.**

AEF

Brandi Christensen ~ Chairman

Members helping members. That is what the Auxiliary Emergency Fund is.

The AEF was established in 1969 and is a national grant program to provide temporary monetary assistance (up to \$3000) to eligible members who have endured significant financial setback because of an act of natural or personal crisis. Since it was established, the AEF has helped countless members and has given out grants for millions of dollars.

This is possible all by donations. Members helping members.

AEF funds maybe awarded to members whose primary residence has been devastated by disaster, flood, tornadoes, fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, or other catastrophic events.

Hardship Grants maybe awarded to members that have past/overdue expenses that is pertaining to their primary shelter and basic household utilities due to medical or employment reasons.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Members who are current on dues and have been members for three (3) consecutive years.
- Cannot be used for medical expenses or debts from credit cards.
- Applicants for disaster assistance must apply within six (6) months from the disaster event.
- One grant (disaster or hardship) per grantee within a 12 month period.
- Must submit all qualifying documentation including pictures, invoices, bills, ECT.
- All applications must be submitted online at www.alaforveterans.org

Please consider donating to this wonderful fund. You can even do fundraisers to help with donating. Ideas for fundraising could be like silent auctions, bake sales, raffles.

This is such a great program and an awesome cause to donate to!
More information will be on the Department website and National Website.

Children and Youth

Anne Steffen ~ Chairman

The American Legion Auxiliary's Children & Youth program puts emphasis on protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth, especially veterans and military families!

The American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion collaborate to ensure amazing experiences, and promote the programs, for the Children and Youth as well!

This will be possible by supporting Initiatives and Opportunities throughout the year.

For the Military Children they can enjoy and get involved and feel special with the Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2) initiative honoring military children who may be experiencing a separation from one or both parents. More information can be found at <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/children-and-youth/recognize-kids-of-active-military>.

Safety first! Promote safety for our youth with your events, parties, etc.!

Purple up on April 15th as it is the day of the Military Children. The whole month of April is devoted to Children and Youth! Recognize and celebrate our Children and Youth. Make it a BIG deal for all children! Have fun together with the Legion Family!

Perform the Military Child Table ceremony at a unit meeting or in your community when you can! The children LOVE to participate and bring more understanding to them and all of us the more we present it! It is beautiful! Visit the following link: [The Military Child's Table Setting Ceremony \(legion-aux.org\)](http://legion-aux.org)

Recognize and reward positive actions of our children and youth! There are two National awards that are available to units to honor our youth, so keep a watch out for the youth in your community and/or post or unit!

- ***The Youth Hero Award*** - Recognizes someone less than 18 years of age who performs a heroic act of physical bravery
- ***The Good Deed Award*** - For youth 18 years of age or younger who have contributed in a special way to society through community service. . You can go out to the National website and find all the information needed to nominate an honoring youth!

Visit the following link: [https://www.legion-aux.org/Youth Hero Good Deed Awards \(legion-aux.org\)](https://www.legion-aux.org/Youth Hero Good Deed Awards)

Cross Promote youth programs with your American Legion Post and get the entire Legion family and the youth involved!

- Invite a Legionnaire to speak at your unit meetings about Legion Boys State, Legion Ball, Oratorical Contest, etc. You could speak at a post and/or unit meeting about the ALA MN Girls State, Junior Activities, etc.

Search the National Legion website at www.legion.org for the following opportunities to support:

- The American Legion **Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)**
- **Child Welfare Foundation (CWF)**
- **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)**
- Big Brothers/Big Sister of America
- **Youth Crime Watch of America** – www.ycwa.org

YCWA enables youth to become resources for preventing crime, drug use, and violence in their schools and communities. Youth take ownership of their own programs in schools, neighborhoods, public housing sites, recreational centers, or parks. **Youth led programs encourage crime reporting, mentoring and mediation.**

- **National Family Partnership** - www.nfp.org

The National Family Partnership shares tools, strategies, and resources to support families and communities in their effort to promote safe, drug-free youth, NEP also sponsors Red Ribbon Week. October 24-31 which inspires our children to be drug- free.

Everyone can gather Pop tabs, so please do and give to Ronald McDonald House (**Do not give them to the Department of MN office**) and keep track of your donations throughout the year! Great, easy way to support our Children and Youth!

Partner with your local churches, schools, businesses and beyond to get involvement to identify the needs of the children and youth & encourage volunteer service and donations from the community! Be sure to connect with other units and collaborate with the Legion family to make a difference in the lives of Children & Youth.

Important Dates to Remember:

April is the Month of the Military Child

April 15th: Purple up day it is the official Day for Military Children

April 15th: District Chairman reports due to Department Chairman

May 15th: Department chairmen reports are due to division chairman, cc: national chairman June 1; Awards submissions due

The earlier we involve our youth the brighter our future will be!

Additional resources available with so much valuable information:

ALA Children and Youth Facebook page

National American Legion Auxiliary and National American Legion websites Department

of Minnesota American Legion website

Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary website

The Youth programs brochure is available online to download and print or you can order the actual brochures as well.

Thank you so much for your time, support and service!

Constitution & Standing Rules

Marsha Bible ~ Chairman

Constitution & Standing Rules is not the boring program that everyone thinks it is! In fact, it is a great way for everyone to have their voice heard on how your unit, district, our department and national organization operate.

It is very important that every unit, district and our department have properly written and regularly reviewed and updated governing documents. Governing documents include articles of incorporation (if you are incorporated), constitution, bylaws, standing rules and policies. These rules spell out for all members how to govern itself, how it will choose its leaders, hold meetings and any policies on how the organization is run. In the past few years, we have learned also the importance of governing documents that allow operations to carry on in case of an emergency.

Keeping your governing documents current and making them available to all members is the main key to having an organization that works together as team members. None of the rules that are adopted can be in conflict with national governing documents. When a change is made to any national document, units, districts and departments should automatically update their governing documents. This update does not require a vote.

In Minnesota, the following documents are adopted at the Department Convention:

- Department Constitution and Bylaws
- Department Standing Rules
- District Constitution *
- Unit Constitution *

*The District and Unit Constitution are adopted and/or revised at the Department Convention. The only changes to these constitutions are the items that have blank lines. Units and Districts create and revise their own Standing Rules if they are not already determined in the Department and National Constitution. The amount of Unit and/or District Dues should be included in the appropriate Standing Rules.

Any member can recommend additions or revisions to the governing documents. Typically, these recommendations work their way up the ladder – first at the unit level, then district level, etc. depending on where the member would like the addition/change to apply.

Units and Districts should send a copy of their Standing Rules to the Department office annually to be kept on file.

If your unit has questions on how to submit resolutions, feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Education

Sharon Voltz ~ Chairman

Hello, Auxiliary members! I was asked by our Department President, Judy Ackerman to be the Department's Education Chairman and I gladly accepted. That was before I knew what was involved with this program. What was I thinking?!!!

I will say, I do like a challenge and that's exactly what this year will be!

We all know about the Scholarship Program that the Auxiliary offers, and more information will be forthcoming later for that program. However, there are more programs that we can focus on too. "Give 10 to Education" is a fun program and don't forget about the "Box Tops for Education" program. I'm hopeful that all Units will be able to take part.

This year I want to focus on "Veterans in the Classroom" which is another Auxiliary program, however, I feel that most smaller Units don't know how to proceed in accomplishing this event. Currently, it's hard to believe that we have members in our Units that don't own a computer, nor do they wish to own one, let alone learn how to use one, and that's okay. So, to make sure those Units are included I will be sending out information on "How to Organize Veterans in the Classroom" so that those Units can be included in this program. I personally think it will be fun!

A new challenge that was added this year is an Essay Contest in which the Unit Education Chairman should coordinate with the Schools/Teachers after getting their permission for the 3rd graders to author a short essay on "If you could be the Principle or a Teacher for the day, would you make any changes, and if so, what would those changes be?" The essay should not be less than 25 words and not more than 50 words. This will be sent out later in the year, perhaps in February or March. There will be cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winners. I am so looking forward to their responses!

In closing, I would like to say that I am excited and somewhat nervous about being your Department Chairman, however, I will do my absolute best and look forward to a great year!

Finance

Norma Tramm ~ Chairman

What is a budget? I looked up the definition of a budget and found the following. It is “an estimate of income and expenditure for a set period of time”

Why should a unit make a budget? Once a budget is approved by the members, the treasurer can write checks according to the budget expenses without approval of the members. Reason the members have already approved the expenditure of the funds. This is very helpful in Minnesota when we are not able to have a quorum at a winter meeting and bills need to be paid.

What is your income? Each unit sets the dollar amount of dues for their senior and junior members.

Senior Membership dues sent to the department are \$30 per member. These dues are allocated as follows:

- National organization - \$18
- Minnesota - \$12 which is allocated as follows:
 - American legion Family Hospital Association - \$.25
 - Department National Leadership Fund - \$.20
 - Department Junior Conference Account \$.10
 - Auxiliary program support and Department staff expenses - \$11.45

Junior membership dues are \$6.00 per member. These dues are allocated as follows:

- National organization - \$2.50
- Minnesota - \$3.50

What other fundraising is done by the unit during the year? This would make up the total of your income.

What are your expenditures?

We have the amount of the membership dues that is sent to the department. You are also obliged to send a per capita amount to the district. (Check with your district treasurer to find out the amount of your assessment.)

It is hoped that all units will consider donating to our Auxiliary Programs first. Those approved are listed in this unit guide by programs in the first pages.

The Department President's Project and the Honorary Department Junior President's project should be considered when making your budget. This is also true of your District President and Honorary District Junior President's projects. The Department and District projects that were brought before the Department Executive Committee were approved.

Your unit may have some expenses that you have each year, and they should also be listed in your budget. Don't forget to include the unit bonding fee - this year it can be zero as it is only paid once every three years. It is good to have it listed so it is not forgotten. Hopefully when you consider your income and your expenses you are ahead of the game. If not, you may need to have another fundraiser to balance your budget.

Any expenditures that are not in the budget need to be approved at a unit meeting prior to the treasurer paying the bills.

It is best practice to have two signatures on each check.

Units must have separation of General Funds and Poppy Funds.

You do not need to have a separate account, although some units have separate accounts, but you must have separate ledgers to keep the funds and expenditures in the correct places.

Poppy fund must be spent in accordance with The American Legion Poppy Program and Poppy Fund Rules, as revised in 2013 and 2014 by The American Legion National Executive Committee, Poppy Funds may only be used for:

- ★ The rehabilitation of veterans honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces after April 6, 1917.
- ★ The welfare of the families of veterans of the above-named period.
- ★ The rehabilitation of hospitalized military service personnel returning home and awaiting discharge who require treatment in service hospitals.
- ★ The welfare of veterans, active military personnel, and the families of veterans and active military personnel of the above-named period where financial and medical need is evident.
- ★ For the purpose of poppy kits and supplies used to make symbolic poppies and poppy items that will be distributed for donations to the Poppy Fund.

The information can be found on the national website – alaforveterans.org – programs – poppy. Member log-in is necessary. You will need your ALA member number.

Where do I send my donations?

To donate to our Auxiliary Programs, there is a donation form to use. You can find information at **MNALA.org**, go to forms and scroll down to find the donation form. This form will also be sent to all units.

Make separate checks for the programs where poppy funds are allowed and another check for all other donations. You do not need to make separate checks for each program.

Make checks payable to “American Legion Auxiliary” send checks to:

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Minnesota
State Veterans Service Building Room #314
20 West 12th Street
St Paul, Minnesota 55155

Your district donations need to be sent to the district. Check with your district treasurer or president for correct address.

Membership needs to be sent to the department office with a separate check and transmittal sheet. Some units are now using ALAMIS to do membership online. If your unit is interested contact your district or department membership chairman.

What a great organization we belong to! Invite your friends to join!

Every Unit and District is required by law to file a 990 each year with the IRS. If you are not sure how this works, contact the risk and compliance chairman or your District President.

We will get “**Back to the Basics – Recognize, Respect, Remember**” this year and work together to support our programs financially. Every dollar counts – no amount is too small to make a difference. It is up to all of us to further the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Thanks for the donations.

The Department Finance committee is here to assist you if needed.

Norma Tramm / Department Finance Chairman/ 320.685.8510 (H) 320.493.8509 ©/
normatramm@gmail.com

Committee Members

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American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State Wanda Prescher ~ Chairman

We are looking forward to the week of June 15-21, 2025 at Bethel University for our American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. We are hoping for 300 citizens for 2025! Cost this year will be \$350 due to rising cost and no increase since 2010.

We need to let our communities know what our ALA Minnesota Girls State Program is all about. Hold informal meetings with juniors and families, run a small ad in local newspaper, get out there on Facebook, TikTok, or whatever electronic media you think would work for your community. Invite this past year's citizens to your mid-winter rally as well as this year's government class in their school. Get our info into charter and magnet schools as well as the home school community and our oratorical students. Letters will be going out right after the holiday school break in December.

Units need to interview and select their citizen(s), not leave it up to the schools or teachers. All citizens should still be interviewed by the unit for final decision. Citizens need to have an interest in government and how it works and want to participate in the week with their peers. Americanism is also a big part of the week, in which our citizens leave with a better understanding of why our flag and our veterans are to be respected. Girls State is not a week of vacation! Citizens that want to be there are willing to participate in the program as well as the long hours each day.

Our goal is to give our citizens the opportunity to partake and understand our form of state government at all levels. Give them the confidence to participate, empowerment that they can do whatever they set their minds too. Respect each other and build lifetime friendships!

The SCRIP program will continue with \$25 gift cards from Target, Walmart, Amazon, Kwik Trip and Cub Foods. They will be available at Fall Conference and Rally's. All proceeds go to helping our Girls State program!

Our committee looks forward to the upcoming 2025 ALA MN Girls State session. We will provide you with more detailed information as we get further into the year. Let's all work together to get our ALA MN Girls State program back to 300 citizens this year! We can do this!

Committee:

Wanda Prescher, Program Chairman
Peggy Tesdahl, Director
Amelia Tesdahl, Education Director

Rene Seuss, Committee Member
Jen Stolz, Committee Member
Kollett Kaehlert, Americanism Program

History

Patti Coleman ~ Historian

Every day is an opportunity to make history. It is up to the historian to document the events of today to be remembered tomorrow. As you embark on a new year of service, remember to record the information about all your ALA and American Legion Family events. Make a point of documenting the specifics immediately following the event or occasion. Trying to remember later can cause you to forget some of the special details that make your unit stand out from the others. Take and print lots of photos. This documentation will make it much easier to report on your accomplishments next spring.

Unit historians should work closely with the unit secretary so you both have accurate records. Try to put yourself in the place of our members of the future. None of us know what that picture will look like as our organization and membership evolves, but accurate records can keep what you have done now “alive” for them. Your history is the legacy of your ALA unit.

Have you ever walked into your post home or another Legion Post Home and looked at all of the photographs of the Past Presidents that adorn the walls? Have you ever wondered about the years they were a member of the ALA and what other contributions they made to the ALA? My challenge to every Unit Historian this year is to choose one of those members, research their accomplishments and share it with your unit. Then share it with the District Historian. Let’s see how many members each district can learn about.

Another challenge is to contact your long-term members and do an interview with them about their earlier years as a member. Record the interviews so you can share it at your meeting and on your Unit social media pages.

Go Back to the Basics-Recognize, Respect and Remember those who have volunteered before us and who have sustained our organization. Use the building blocks available to form your legacy. Knowledge of history is a gift. Share it with your members.

Junior Activities

Jean Walker ~ Chairman

The goal of the American Legion Auxiliary Junior Activities program is to develop Junior members age 17 and under into future leaders. This program will help our Juniors become engaging, productive members who will want to continue their membership into adulthood. This year let us all work together to build the Junior Activities program with one member at a time by giving Junior members a voice and an opportunity to participate.

The Patch Program allows Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary, as well as school aged Sons of the American Legion members who often work alongside Juniors, may earn patches for activities in ALA programs, such as Poppy, Leadership, Americanism, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, and more. Participating in the Patch Program is a terrific way to be involved in learning about the Auxiliary and our Legion Family, volunteering in the community and serving our country's veterans.

A Veteran Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS) student volunteer is a junior member that can volunteer at a veteran affairs medical center, community outpatient clinic, or nursing home. There is a free guide available on the National website with more information.

There is a great learning opportunity for our Juniors on the ALA Academy Junior e-learning course. This course provides educational information on basic protocol and parliamentary procedure.

Scholarships available to our Junior members include:

Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior Members: The applicant must have held membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for the immediate past three years; must hold a membership card for the current year; and must continue to maintain her membership throughout the four-year scholarship period. Scholarship monies are dispersed directly to the four-year accredited college or university, per the recipients' direction, and may be used for tuition, books, fees, and other appropriate expenses.

Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship: Candidates for this award shall have been Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary, held membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for the past three consecutive years and must be a paid member for the current membership year. Applicant must continue her membership in the American Legion Auxiliary during the scholarship period.

James H Parke Scholarship: Each Veterans Affairs medical center may nominate one Veteran Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS) Student Volunteer to be considered for this scholarship. The nominee must have completed 100 hours of regularly scheduled VAVS during a calendar year prior to September 1. The nominee must also be in the 10th grade or above and have not reached their 19th birthday to be considered.

National Junior meeting dates have been announced. These meetings are in conjunction with the ALA Mission Training. Junior members ages 8-17 can participate.

2024-2025 ALA Mission Training & Nation Junior Meetings are as follows:

Nashville – November 16, 2024
Denver-November 16, 2024, Northwestern Division
Des Moines-January 25, 2025
Las Vegas-February 1, 2025
Boston-February 1, 2025

Dates to Remember:

April 15, 2025-Purple Up Day
Department Junior Conference-April 11-12, 2025

If you are interested in starting a Junior group within your Unit, please reach out to me and I will get you the information or visit your Unit.

Resources:

Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary website: www.mnala.org
National American Legion Auxiliary website: www.alaforveterans.org

Junior Activities Page:

ALA Academy-Juniors e-learning course. Junior mentor training courses.
ALA Junior Activities Handbook-free to download or you can purchase from Emblem Sales.

Facebook:

**American Legion Auxiliary – Department of Minnesota
ALA Northwestern Division Junior Activities Group
American Legion Auxiliary Juniors**

Instagram:

American Legion Auxiliary Juniors (@alajuniors)

With Honorary Junior President Terianna Richardson's theme "***We love our Veterans to the Moon and Back***" and her symbol: **Stars and Moons** we start this new year.

Her project is the Lady Liberty house at the Eagles Healing Nest in Sauk Centre to repair the plumbing so that female veterans can move in.

Unit mailings during the year will have updated information.

Let us all work together and have an awesome year.

Leadership

Carol Kottom ~ Chairman

Purpose: The purpose of the Leadership Committee is to better equip members to serve in leadership positions with confidence and skill. *Standing Rules #6, National Committees – Raise awareness of ALA leadership development opportunities.*

- *Attend American Legion Auxiliary Mission Training — this is a one-day, interactive conference geared toward learning more about the ALA's core programs and deliver our mission. You can make reservations online at: <https://member.legion-aux.org/meetings/mission-training/>*
 - *November 16: Nashville, TN & Denver, CO*
 - *January 25: Des Moines, IA*
 - *February 1: Las Vegas, NV & Boston, MA*
 - *After Mission Training, share the information you received with your unit, district/county, and department.*

- *Attend leadership conferences/workshops within your district/department.*

Current plans are to have 3 Department workshops: Northern 1/3 of the State, Central 1/3 of State and Southern 1/3 of State. We are researching locations and dates and will publish as soon as determined. The workshops will be open to all members regardless of Location vs District. We are also welcoming Junior members 10 years old and up.

- *Participate in ALA Academy courses.*

Not only are there courses available to sign up for, but there are also recordings of all previous webinars available.

- *Log into the MyAuxiliary member portal at <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/memberprofile>.*
- *Go to the ALA Academy.*
- *Available courses include many topics – leadership, communications, mission outreach, etc.*
- *Be aware of ALA leadership opportunities in your community:*
 - *Speak to other community organizations about veterans' support.*
 - *Speak to high schools about veterans to develop your own leadership abilities.*
- *ALA Unit Member of the Year Award:*
 - *Nominate a fellow unit member for Unit Member of the Year.*
 - *Open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been, in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president.*

- *Procedures for submitting nominations will be included in the Department awards list.*
- *National Leadership Certificate Program: (Details will be published as they become available)*
 - *Members will need to complete requirements and a project and receive a Certificate of Completion. There are a number of categories and all will be published in the Department Awards list.*
- ***Enhance knowledge about ALA history, programs, and organization.***
 - *Attend district/department training sessions/workshops.*
 - *Obtain copies for Department resources:*
 - *Unit Guide Book from the Department Office*
 - *Constitution & Bylaws on MNALA.ORG*
 - *Standing Rules on MNALA.ORG*
 - *Download/purchase and become familiar with these National resources (ALAFORVETERANS.ORG):*
 - *Unit Guide Book*
 - *Constitution & Bylaws*
 - *Department Operations Guide*
 - *Parliamentary Procedure*
 - *And other ALA guide books available to enhance your knowledge of and promote our organization.*

Minnesota's goal is not to make everyone who attends one of the leadership workshops a "leader". Not everyone wants that role. But maybe we can stimulate you to be more interested and to want to know more about our programs. Maybe we can answer a question that you have. Everyone is qualified to play a role in our organization, whether it is a lead role, a worker bee role or a member who just wants to understand more and attend the meetings with a better knowledge of our organization. How far you want to go is up to you as a member.

Legislation

Linda Kelly ~ Chairman

As part of the American Legion Family, we are here for our veterans. We normally think about supporting our Auxiliary programs with money and time, but we don't always think about the laws that greatly affect our veterans. The GI bill was passed 80 years ago, and it is still helping our veterans. The PACT ACT was just passed last year, but there are many more bills that we are asking our legislators to support.

The CTF (Commanders Task Force) is a group of representatives from nine different Minnesota veteran organizations that meets regularly to discuss the bills that we want our State Legislators to support. The Auxiliary has been invited to this meeting as a guest. At the time of this writing, the CTF has a leadership summit scheduled for this week. They will be working on the issues they support. Please look for this information in a future Auxiliary Unit Mailing.

It is always a good time to be informed. Ask your legislators or their staff members to a meeting. Ask them what veteran bills they support and if they don't support what the Family is supporting, ask them, "Why not?" Invite candidates to come and speak to you – they are always ready in an election year, but why not ask them annually to see if they are still behind our cause. Include the American Legion Family in these meetings.

My hope is that after you know what bills the Legion Family is asking our legislators to support, that you contact YOUR legislator and ask them to support those bills.

Please note the websites below and read or download.

The Auxiliary has an information guide available - either purchase from Emblem Sales or download at: <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Guides/Advocacy-Guide>.

<https://legion.org/publications/223496/legislative-handbook> has a downloadable copy of the Legion Family Legislative Handbook.

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register> is where you can sign up to receive American Legion Legislative alerts when Family members are asked to act.

Remember that the American Legion Family never endorses a candidate for political office.

The most important thing is to remember to VOTE. Research how the candidates stand on Veteran issues and use that information to make your decision.

Membership

Hope Wilson ~ Chairman

Hello Minnesota Member-Opoly players,

I am excited to be your game host this year, your Rich Aunt Pennybags. This Membership year, I wanted to liven it up a little bit and throw a few different ideas into our everyday member search while rewarding our searchers. Read further on to learn about Judy Bucks.

So, as your Rich Aunt Pennybags, to answer a few of the questions I have created the Member-Opoly board. It is a simple gameboard that you can look at for places that members hang around at. Example... the Elks Club, Book Club, The Café or the VFW member. These are just a few game spaces on my game board. I am hoping that you will find more places or people I have missed so that at the rallies I can write them on my Big Game Board to share with everybody.

Below is a list of the four Rally dates. I am hoping to see many of you there as that is where your Judy Bucks come into play. Your Unit and District Membership Chairmen have copies of the Judy Bucks and when you sign up a new member, you will hand that application over to her. She will then give you a Judy Buck for every member you sign up. You will put your name, unit number and date on the back of the Judy Buck and bring it to the Rallies for a prize. The more members you sign up for membership the more dollars you will receive in Judy Bucks. Example... 1 member = 1 Judy Buck, 5 members = 5 Judy Bucks etc.

Soooo, mark your calendars for these important **Membership Rally Dates**!!!! And, be sure to check out the **Goal Percentages** for these dates.

- **40% by Sept 7, 2024** **Harvest Rally** – Fridley Post 303 starts @ 3 pm
- **75% by Dec 7, 2024** **Pearl Harbor Rally**- Spicer Post 545
- **80% by Feb 8, 2025** **Sweetheart Rally**- Royalton Post 137
- **85% by March 15, 2025** **Appreciation Rally** - Location to be determined

Lottery drawings at the end of membership turn in for \$75 for all units that have reached **goal** designation for each rally. (One winner per Rally),

- **95% by May 23, 2025** Poppy Day
- **100% by July 4, 2025** End of year
- **102% by July 26, 2025** 30 Days before National Convention

Our Goal this year is **26,214 Members**. This is down from last year's goal of 29,370. This is obtainable with everyone's help.

Every member has a valuable skill and ideas to contribute. When recruiting, ask what they like to do and what their skills are. A good member is anyone who likes to give to others and not have to get credit for it.

I have met with the District Presidents and District Membership Chairmen, and they are ready to help you in any way they can. If you find you have questions of any kind, please start with your Unit membership, then your District Membership or Myself before calling Department. If we don't have the answers you need, we **will** find it for you.

Presidents	Name	Email	Membership	Name	Email
District 1	Michelle Weaver	weaver.michelle595@gmail.com	District 1	Rosalie Trom	rosalie7g@gmail.com
District 2	Kollette Kaehlert	kkaehlertaux@gmail.com	District 2	Pam Sandland	djs1947@charter.net
District 3	Tamara Thayer	tlthayer@gmail.com	District 3	Ann Bovy	abovyauxiliary@centurylink.net
District 4	Sandra Gibson	kensan2k22@gmail.com	District 4	Teri Rieger	sunnie55126@gmail.com
District 5	Cari Lamb	crlmb74@gmail.com	District 5	Jill Davis	alajilldavis@gmail.com
District 6	Dori Hamilton	dorihamilton61@gmail.com	District 6	Wendy Grittner	wgrittner@gmail.com
District 7	Sandy Wersal	sandywersal@gmail.com	District 7	Jennifer Hurst	jenhurstaluxiliary@gmail.com
District 8	Tamara Martin	tamaramartin1104@gmail.com	District 8	Jessica Hanna	jessicajoreinhardt@gmail.com
District 9	Donna Rae Jacobson	drjacobson@gctel.com	District 9	Denise Milton	kuuky@hotmail.com
District 10	Bethany Dickert	bethany.a.dickert@gmail.com	District 10	Michelle Lesch	pmlesch@hotmail.com

2025 Department of Minnesota Membership Awards

Department Trophies for Districts

Adam Victory Plaque

To the first District to reach Goal in the 2024-2025 membership year.

Jergens Plaque

To the first District to reach All Time High in the 2024-2025 membership year.

Scallen Carlson Plaque

To the District with the highest percentage of goal by the 2024 Fall Conference. Cut-off date of Fall Conference applies.

Carlson Hollenbeck Plaque

To the District with the highest percentage of membership by July 2025, exact date in July based on the membership bulletin.

Department Unit Awards

Department Presidents Citation

To all Units reaching their 100% membership goal by January 31, 2025.

Unit Membership Chairmen: The Unit chairman with the most new unit members signed up will receive a state Park Pass selected by the Department Membership Chairman.

District Membership Chairmen: To the District Chairman with the most new members signed up District wide will receive National Park Pass!

Recruiting Our Future Stars Award

Any unit who recruits 3 Junior members will be entered into a drawing for

\$25.00 to be used to promote Junior Programs.

Outstanding Individual Recruiter

To the Minnesota member who recruits the most new members will receive a one year of paid membership dues.

Important!! Throw out your old Forms

There are **new** forms for 2024-2025 : **Membership Application / Member Data Form / Transmittal Form**

New Fillable Forms Online available for Download in Excel and PDF format:

Gambling Donation Form / Non-Gambling Donation Form / Memorial Donation Form / ALAMIS Request Form / PUFL Application Form / Membership Bulletins

Forms Coming Soon: **Poppy Order Form / Volunteer Voucher Form / Home & Hospital Rep Voucher Form**

Has your Unit subscribed to ALAMIS yet? This is the American Legion Auxiliary Membership Information System. This is the National membership database for each unit. Up to 2 members from each unit may access this database for a fee per person per calendar year. You can print reports showing who has as has not paid yet, allows you to make payments, see your roster and many other items for your unit. This is a great resource for the unit and I highly recommend every unit having it.

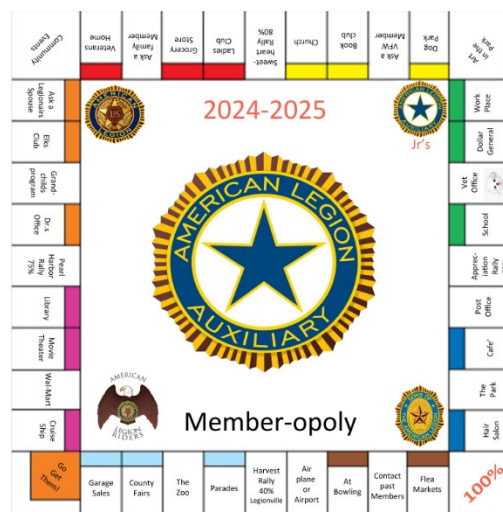
I know that the Auxiliary dues notices won't be mailed out by National until September 15, 2025. For clarification this was a item that was voted on at a National Convention several years ago to make it this date. Something to think about, if you want to bring it up at your District Conventions to have that date possibly moved. Just a suggestion.

As membership we do not need to wait until those renewal notices hit our mailboxes before we pay our dues or before we start working membership. The Units all have the membership rosters and membership cards and can start taking renewal at any time. Start making your calls, planning your membership meals, have your District or Unit get together. Submit articles in your local papers, on Facebook or other local media.

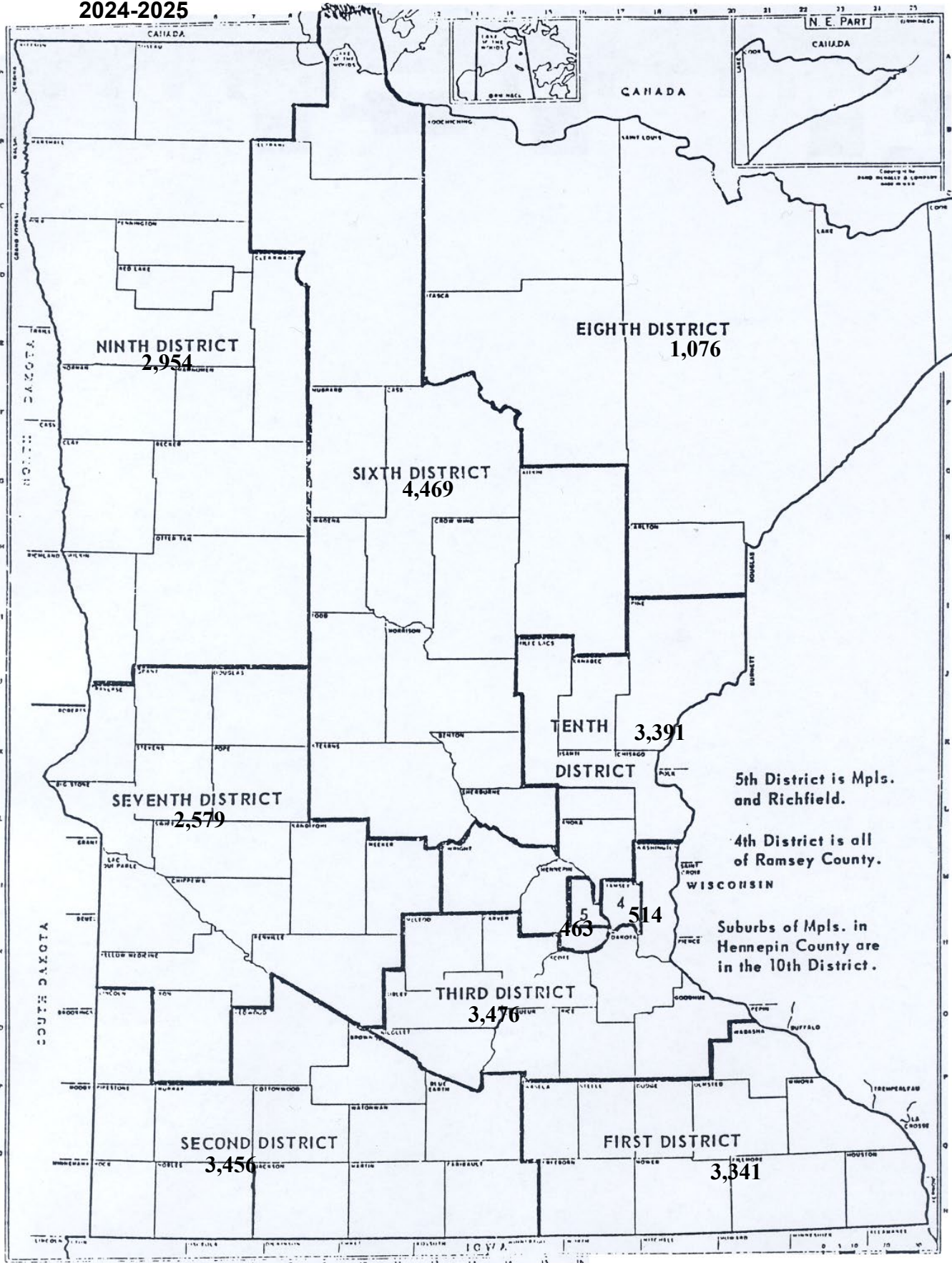
Our Auxiliary is mighty, we are a social group of friends and neighbors, and we have made many friends throughout the years. Now is the time to reach out to our friends, old and new, to see how they are doing. Do the buddy check, remind them that a new year has started for the Auxiliary. If you see a friend in need, Pay-it-Forward, for someone. Let it be your good deed for the day. Maybe it will start a trend. If you see a new face in town, welcome them and start a conversation with them, believe it or not, they are probably related to you in some way. Six degrees of separation or something like that. Its really weird but true.

And if you haven't heard about it by now, there will be NO SKIT at Fall Convention this year. Don't all cheer at once. There will be more to come on this soon.

Don't forget to always carry applications to the American Legion Family with you. You never know when you will need it.



DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP GOALS 2024-2025



Memorial \ Chaplain Vida Bacon ~ Chairman

Each unit and district should have a chaplain. The chaplain is intended to be the spiritual leader of the group. Our duties include providing an opening and a closing prayer for each meeting as well as mealtime blessings when asked. We could also be asked to oversee any religious services we might have. It is expected that they will so dignify their office that all fellow members will follow their example.

Each of us has, in our lifetime, faced challenges. Some were mere bumps in the pathway, others were boulders. Through our faiths and/or beliefs we have maneuvered over or around them. What helped you to get through?

I would like your help to put together a book of prayers, poems and verses of encouragement. It would be great to include something from each of the officers, chairmen and committee members who are serving the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota this year as well as from each of the units of the Department. Often the words of a song can provide what we need to hear. One favorite of mine is from a movie. The words to the song "You'll Never Walk Alone" remind me that I never have to face a problem alone. Through prayer, there is always help. You can send your thoughts and prayers to me at: vbpiq@newulmtel.net or mail them to Vida Bacon, 110 N. Payne St, New Ulm, MN 56073.

Unit chaplain, please keep an accurate list of deceased members so they can be remembered at District and Department memorial services.

I will try this year to include a prayer with each unit mailing that you can use as it is or adapt to your to your personality and need.

National Security

Mary Kuperus ~ Chairman

The purpose of the National Security Committee is to promote a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families. We can also support all military families by working with their command group and family readiness groups. Along with the American Legion Family, we can support and enhance initiatives to improve the Quality of Life (QoL) of our servicemembers and their families. The ALA can raise awareness of POW/MIAs and the work being performed by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) in the search for missing personnel.

To locate the nearest family support group regardless of branch of service, please check at www.Military Spouse Community: FRG, Spouse Ambassador Network | Military OneSource. Minnesota has three: USAREC-Recruiting, Minneapolis Battalion at Ft. Snelling; 133 AW-Air National Guard in St. Paul; and 148 FW-Air National Guard in Duluth. Remember that even if you aren't near a military installation, there are still service members and their families in your neighborhood with active-duty military recruiters, National Guard, and reservists.

Information can be found about the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency at <https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Experience/POW-MIA/>. Mark your calendar to host events in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day on the third Friday in September. National POW/MIA Recognition Day — which this year falls on Sept. 17 — was established in 1979 through a proclamation signed by President Jimmy Carter. Information can be found at <https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaFamWebPosters>.

Post a POW/MIA flag at every meeting or event.

Work with like-minded organizations to support the families of servicemembers who died during service to our country and gave the ultimate sacrifice. These groups are: [American Gold Star Mothers](#), [American Gold Star Families](#), and [Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors](#). Utilize [Military OneSource resources](#) to assist those you know in need.

Collaborate with other like-minded organizations that also support servicemembers and their families: [Blue Star Families](#); [Quilts of Valor Foundation](#); [Taking Care of Our People](#) (defense.gov)

Coupons for Troops - Coupons can be used on overseas military bases for up to six months past their expiration date. Whether you're an avid clipper or someone who throws away Sunday inserts, any eligible coupons will help. Only manufacturers' coupons can be used. Clip those coupons! They can be from the newspaper, dispensers in grocery stores, tear-pads, and elsewhere, as long as they state "Manufacturer's Coupon" on them. The most important coupons our troops need are for food, non-food, baby, and pet supplies.

Send active coupons to:

CouponCabin.com
attn: Active Coupons for Troops
PO BOX 231
Whiting, IN 46394-0231

Send expired coupons to:

CouponCabin.com
attn: Expired Coupons for Troops
PO BOX 430
Whiting, IN 46394-0430

(Please make sure expired coupons have expired within the past 60 days.)

Raleen Tolzmann ~ Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian is appointed by the President for her knowledge and skills in our organization and parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian should be reliable and trusted to provide accurate advice for everyone on both sides of an issue. The President and Parliamentarian should have a good working relationship as well as work closely with the Constitution and Standing Rules Chairman. Unless otherwise agreed to, the Parliamentarian is to be seen and not heard but always available should questions arise.

The definition of a Parliamentarian is a consultant who advises the presiding officer and other officers, committees, and members on matters of parliamentary procedure.

The Parliamentarian is governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised Edition.

There are three basic guiding principles in parliamentary procedure.

- Justice and courtesy for all
- The right of the majority to rule
- The right of the minority to be heard

Annually each unit and District should review their Standing Rules and update them. After reviewing them, send a copy of them to the department office. Guidelines can be found on the National website at www.alaforveterans.org under Constitution and Standing Rules.

A good parliamentarian is – impartial – knows the rules – helps members learn the rules – and continues to develop her own knowledge.

With President Judy's theme of Back To The Basics – Recognize, Respect, Remember – We need to remember Robert's Rules, be able to Recognize a good meeting and be able to Respect each other.

Past President's Parley

Shirley Frederick ~ Chairman

What is a Past President's Parley? Where do I find one? Who can belong?

How can I join? What do they do? How can we form one?

A lot of questions and most of us know the answers. But what about our newer members, do they know? What about longtime members that are getting more involved now? Unit members are more apt to support a PPP fundraiser if they know these answers.

A Unit Past President's Parley is made up of members who have served their Unit as President. A District Past President's Parley is made up of members who have served their District as President. And a Department Past President's Parley is made up of members who have served as Department President.

The purpose of the Past President's Parley is for its members to utilize the experience and knowledge of past Auxiliary leaders to help ensure a strong leadership for the future of our organization. We are here to help by mentoring, answering questions and develop knowledgeable leadership within the Unit, District and Department. By doing these things we are helping members to become officers and/or chairmen in their unit, District and Department.

Organizing a Past President's Parley:

Set a meeting date, time and place and then send out invite for all your Past Unit Presidents.

Dues should be set and plans for projects you may want to do. How to have money for a yearly contribution to the Department Past President's Scholarship Fund.

The Department of Minnesota Past President's Parley Healthcare Scholarship is not just for nursing, it is for any course of study in the medical field. It is open to any American Legion Auxiliary member that has been a member for three years and their current dues paid. It is a \$1,000.00 scholarship and up to 10 may be given each year, if the donations received from units have enough funds to do so. There will be more information in the Unit Mailing about the scholarship applications, rules and time frame.

Poppy

Lorinda Kies ~ Chairman

Connecting the visual image of the poppy with the sacrifice of service made by our veterans has been an important goal of the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program since its inception in 1921. On Memorial Day and Veterans Day, millions of red crepe paper poppies are distributed across the country in exchange for donations that go directly to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans in our communities.

The purpose of the Poppy Committee is to educate ALA membership and the public on the significance of the Poppy and the program's financial benefit for veterans, military and their families. Standing Rule #6, National Committees-Mission Outreach.

Department President Judy Ackerman theme is "Back to the Basics-Recognize, Respect, Remember" using building blocks as her symbol. Please visit the National website, it has a lot of great information on the poppy program.

The focus of the Poppy program this year will include:

1. Increase the number of Veteran poppy makers.
2. Celebrate National Poppy Day in May.
3. Have Units get out in the community to promote/educate them on what the "Poppy" is used for and why.
4. Best ways to promote the Poppy program to increase revenue.
5. Also possibly schedule some poppy making classes.

Celebrate National Poppy Day-Friday May 23rd, 2025.

While many units distribute poppies earlier in May, we still honor the poppy every day.

- ❖ Make sure to wear a poppy all day and be branded and let the public know who we are.
- ❖ The distribution of this bright red memorial flower to the public is a big component of the ALA Poppy program.
- ❖ Have poppies at your Memorial Day services to hand out to anyone that might want one.
- ❖ Go to your City Council and ask the mayor to sign a Poppy Proclamation for National Poppy Day in your community.
- ❖ Remember that we do not SELL poppies we ask, "would you like to wear a poppy", they do not have to donate to receive one.
- ❖ If you would like more information and resources visit <https://member.legion.aux.org/member/committees/poppy/poppy-days>.

Promote the ALA's Poppy Program.

- ❖ Wear a poppy when you are out in public to promote conservation and interest among non-members. Be prepared to explain the significance of the poppy.
- ❖ Educate your community about how funds collected help veterans, servicemembers and their families.
- ❖ Contact local businesses to see if they would like to donate, leave them a few poppies to display along with a poppy card that will let the public know about our memorial flower.
- ❖ Ask if we can distribute poppies at their location on poppy day. Remember to send them a "thank you", card or note thanking them for their donation or letting us distribute poppies.

Educate your community on the meaning and history of the poppy.

- ❖ Learn the history of the poem “In Flanders Fields” and teach it to others, especially Juniors.
- ❖ Use the story of “In Flanders Fields” to educate your community about the sacrifices of our military servicemembers, raise awareness of The American Legion Family and connect the ALA to our mission in the eyes of the public.
- ❖ Visit your local library or search online for the history of Moina Michael and how she became to be known as The Poppy Lady.
- ❖ Promote the ALA Poppy Poster Contest in your local schools, support a Little Miss Poppy Contest for Juniors in your unit. Offer to speak at local events about the meaning and significance of the poppy and how Poppy Funds help veterans.

Increase the number of poppy makers/veterans in your community.

A decrease in local poppy makers within our state is also happening in many other departments. Many units have taken on making their own poppies which will help, we need to increase what we have in reserve.

- ❖ Set up meetings with recreational and occupational therapists at VA Medical Centers, outpatient centers or community nursing homes to have them incorporate poppy making into their therapy programs.
- ❖ As a department we are reaching out to our veterans and Post homes to find more veteran poppy makers.
- ❖ Post information on “How Veterans Can Make Money by Making Poppies” in your local VA homes, medical centers, clinics, nursing homes and other community organizations that house and care for veterans.

There is a ton of great information on the national website (member.legion-aux.org). I was able to log on to the member’s portion under Program Engagement Plans.

Go to the Committees Tab

Select Committees link

Select “How to get Involved:

Select “Program Engagement Plans”

Select “Poppy”

I found that the Poppy Program Guide is also under that section, and I was able to find tons of information. I will share bits of that guide throughout the year. You might be surprised as to what you may find.

There is one more area where we can promote Poppy ambassadors which will come out after Fall conference.

Poppy funds support mission outreach activities?

Which ones you ask:

1. Donations to national or local Creative Arts Festivals.
2. Donations to Honor Flights to help fund veterans and /or their escorts.
3. Donations to the food pantries coordinated by the Arme Services YMCA.

Honor Flights are a 501c3, there are three from Minnesota and one from Wisconsin that serves veterans from southeast MN.

- ❖ Honor Flight Twin Cities-Attn: Jana Kyser

- 2674 Mackubin Street, Roseville, MN 55113
 - 651-481-8835 janakyser@gmail.com
- ❖ Honor Flight Northland
 - 4535 Airport Approach Rd, Duluth, MN 55811-send donations here
 - P.O. Box 7229, Duluth, MN 55807
 - 218-409-6110 info@honorflightnorthland.org
- ❖ Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN
 - P.O. Box 644, West Fargo, ND 58078
 - 218-284-6667 veteranshonorflightofndmn@gmail.com
- ❖ Freedom Honor Flights, Inc.
 - P.O. Box 505, LaCrosse, WI 54602
 - 608-74-1015 info@freedomhonorflights.org

The Poppy order form is in the September Newsletter. Remember to order early. Orders are due by December 1st, 2024.

Poppy Prices for the 2024-2025 year are:

Small poppies	\$25.00 per 100 plus shipping and handling
Large poppies	\$18.00 per dozen plus shipping and handling

New this year units can purchase the small poppy making kit and keep it at your unit, cost is \$250.00 for 1000 poppies.

Please let me know if you have any questions, I am here to help. If I don't know the answer I will find it and get back to you.

Public Relations

Cari Lamb ~ Chairman

Public Relations is a good way to keep up communication. Whether it is through Facebook, websites, and other means of social media. Keep in touch with your local newspapers, and radio stations. These are ways to get the word out about the auxiliary and what we do.

Always wear your Auxiliary branded clothing to events and out in public.

Communication is a big part of Public Relations. If you don't communicate there is no relations.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Robin Dorf ~ Chairman

The purpose of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee is to promote programs and services that assist and enhance the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring restoration and/or transition to normally functioning lives. Key program statement of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program include:

Support veteran caregivers, family members and survivors.

- ♥ Familiarize yourself with the service of the VA caregiver support program
www.caregiver.va.gov
- ♥ Reach out to local veteran caregivers, family members, and survivors to see if they need supports while or after caring for their veteran. It may be a phone call of support, a ride to an appointment, time to take a needed break for themselves, a meal, etc.

Enroll Auxiliary members as VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) volunteers at VA health care facilities.

- ♥ Recruit members as volunteers for the VA center for Development and Community Engagement at VA healthcare facilities.
- ♥ Volunteer at your local VA facility for events such as holiday gift shops and events that are planned.
- ♥ Contact your local representative for needs of their facility.

Support rehabilitation and healing of veterans through arts, crafts, and hobbies.

- ♥ Contact one of our veterans' homes or VA Health Care Systems to see how you can help with needs.
- ♥ Volunteer to sponsor and volunteer for an activity.
- ♥ Local and National Creative Arts Festivals

Sponsored in conjunction with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the American Legion Auxiliary, and Help Hospitalized Veterans, the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is a week-long event that showcases the creative achievements of veterans receiving treatment at VA facilities. Veterans participate in many mediums, including visual arts, such as painting, sculpting, and drawing. They also participate through creative writing, dance, drama, and music. Local Creative Arts Festivals were in September at Minneapolis and St Cloud VA Health Care Systems. The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival will be in Indianapolis, IN, May 11-18, 2025.

The Department of MN ALA has a fund available for participants in the Minnesota Veterans Creative Festival. This fund allows grants to veterans for artistic kits, paint, pens, pencils, performing arts costuming, leather, or music. This fund may also assist with clothing and funds for other expenses to compete in the Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Veterans must apply for this assistance. If you know of a veteran interested in participating in the MN Veterans Creative Arts Festival and they have a specific need, encourage them to apply for this grant.

Help The American Legion, State Department of Veterans Affairs and Chamber of Commerce promote job fairs for veterans and their families.

- ♥ Participate by volunteering or funding a Minnesota Stand Down program.
- ♥ Homeless Veterans Handbook <https://www.legion.org/homelessveterans/handbook>

- ♥ National Call Center for Homeless Veterans (877)424-3838
- ♥ The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (800) VET-HELP
- ♥ Veterans Justice Outreach Centers Each VA Health Care System has a designee

Find opportunities for Auxiliary members to serve veterans in your community

Adopt a Veteran

- ♥ Find a veteran in your community who faces loneliness and isolation
- ♥ Check in with them via phone, text, or a visit
- ♥ Run errands for or with them
- ♥ Help with needed tasks around their home
- ♥ Provide meals for them and make sure they have groceries
- ♥ Assist with transportation needs

Volunteer with partner organizations

Wreaths Across America www.wreathscrossamerica.org

- ♥ Take part in a local wreath placement at a local veteran's cemetery on December 14, 2024.
- ♥ Sponsor wreaths for placement
- ♥ Coordinate a wreath laying at a local cemetery not yet covered by Wreaths Across America

Honor Flight Inc. www.honorflight.org

- ♥ Volunteer at a local hub
- ♥ Use your poppy funds to support
- ♥ Participate in a welcome home event
- ♥ Coordinate the creation and delivery of cards and/or letters to Honor Flight hubs for their "mail call"
- ♥ Volunteer as a guardian for an Honor Flight

Minnesota is blessed to have eight beautiful veterans' homes and we work with four VA Health Care Systems that serve our veterans and their families through quality care and an environment of community. President Judy Ackerman has appointed the following to serve as the home representatives this year:

Bemidji Veterans Home	Denise Milton	Bagley Unit 16
Fergus Falls Veterans Home	Doris Lafayette	Barnesville Unit 153
Hastings Veterans Home	Darlene Wondra	Montgomery Unit 79
Luverne Veterans Home	Jeannette Mertens	Redwood Falls Unit 38
Minneapolis Veterans Home	Sandy Gibson	Rosetown Unit 542
Montevideo Veterans Home	Jennifer Hurst	Montevideo Unit 59
Preston Veterans Home	Wanda Prescher	Stewartville Unit 164
Silver Bay Veterans Home	Nancy Hopper	Two Harbors Unit 109
Fargo VA Health Care System	Becky Olson	Moorhead Unit 21
Minneapolis VA Health Care System	Janet Thompson	Apple Valley Unit 1776
Sioux Falls VA Health Care System	Diane Strassburg	Adrian Unit 32
St Cloud VA Health Care System	Jan Benson	Waite Park Unit 428

If you visit one of the facilities or see them at an event, make sure to thank them for their time with our veterans. They are many times the first face of the American Legion Auxiliary to these veterans and their families.

Please consider first, when formulating your unit's budget, to donate to our Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary programs. The following was approved by the Department of Minnesota Executive Committee for solicitation of funds:

American Legion Auxiliary Hospital Program

Money received is to the fund allows the hospital and home representatives to provide clothing, personal care items, special outings, events, treats, cards and much more for all the veterans utilizing our facilities.

\$5 Bill Shower

Provides a \$5 bill to all veterans in our facilities for personal use

Overall Minnesota Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program

Supports all activities we do in the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program

Gift Shop

Provides gifts to hospitalized veterans, nursing home residents and their families during the holiday season.

Minnesota Fisher House

Donations help cover support supplies, food, personal hygiene items, and other special needs for the families.

Silent Auction for our Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program at the 2025 Department Convention

There will be a silent auction at the 2025 Department Convention. As the year goes, please set aside items, or start thinking about a basket that your unit can put together.

Resources Available

Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary Website

www.mnala.org

National American Legion Auxiliary Website

www.alaforveterans.org

American Legion Auxiliary Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Facebook Group

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

Make sure to review monthly unit mailings from department office for more information.

Any questions, or concerns, please contact me directly. If you have an event or project, you would like to share please send me information and I will include in future mailings or social media.

Armed Forces Service Center Chris Ronning ~ Representative

The Armed Forces Service has been a comfort zone for many of our Military personnel. The Center was founded on November 22nd, 1970, by Maggie Purdum after her son died in Vietnam and is designed to serving those who served

It is a place for our active Servicemen and women and their dependents, and it is now located on the secure side of terminal 1 at the level 2 across from the Blue Door Pub at the end of Concourse C, where the Rotunda connects with the A and B Concourse. It is available for military retirees, former prisoner of wars, purple heart recipients, medal of honor recipients, Department of Defense or U.S. Public Health Service personnel and currently members of allied nations in a travel status.

The new Center has 4900 sq. feet this approximately 4000 sq. larger than the previous location with many upgrades and improvements. There are 4 unisex bathrooms, a playroom for children with TV, riding toys, books and other items to occupy them with. Flights can also now be checked by a monitor. There is a room to store their luggage, a Lounge with sofas recliners, outlets by each sofa and a large TV. A dining room with a pass-through counter from the kitchen, light snacks, hotdogs, chips water and soda are available.

The Armed Forces Service Center (AFSC), at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport (MSP), is open with newly adjusted hours seven days a week, during Phase 2. Access is limited to traveling -duty military, dependents, MoH recipients, Purple Heart recipients and military retirees. All guests must present a current government issued ID card. are optional and seating capacity restrictions have been removed.

The playroom safety of all concerned at the AFSC, the bunk rooms, shower and playroom remain closed at this time.

The Armed Forces Service Center (AFSC) has provided free food and shelter for over 1 million traveling military and their families down in March 2020, due to Covid concerns, and reopened in November 2020

We have assisted over 600 military flights with troops from around the country, since the satellite call from a Marine Lieutenant requesting support for 350 combat Marines returning to HI, during the first touchdown on US soil in 2006.

AFSC STATS & MILITARY SUPPORT:

Center Guests from NOV 2020 to date = 16,631 Military Charters from MAR 2020 to date = 18EPS Recruits from JAN 2022 to date = 2,237 Fallen Military from APR 2020 to date = Over 40 Deployments = 3 to date in 2022. Over 40 troops Training MIL = 2 to date in 2022. Over 500 troops with no cost to the visitors.

There are 30 bunks for men and 10 bunks for women and a crib and semi-private area for nursing mothers.

There is a reception area with a desk, supply room and two offices for part-time employees, who manage the day-by-day operation of the AFSC center. The Center has a full time Director and a Board of Representatives which is represented by private and military organizations, including the American Legion Auxiliary.

A dedicated volunteer staff operates the Armed Forces Service Center around the clock, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Due to the Virus the Center was closed for many months and is finally opened again on November 9th with limited hours and 2 volunteers are working a 4-hour shift. The Center right now is only open from 8am to 8pm. Some food items, refreshments and snacks are still available but only a limited number of travelers are allowed into the Center currently. The Center's "troop greeters" continue to assist during the shutdown with weekly arrivals or recruits, military remains from all branches returning to their home of record burial and military charters from the Middle East enroute to their duty stations statewide.

There have been a couple of training sessions related to the reopening of the center and there have been good discussions and questions from the volunteers and fully expect the remaining sessions will be as successful. Once we have fully reopened, we will inform media sites with the reopening information. As of now we only meet every other month, while the members of the Executive Board still meet every month. By the time this book comes out I might have changed again.

The Armed Forces Service Center needs the support from all of us, as thousands travel through our airport from and to anywhere in the US and Overseas.

The Center still does not take any personal hygiene items as they do not allow any overnight guests at this point. Last year we had some Units and our honorary Jr. Department President Ashley donated activity sets comfort items for children, and they were delivered to the Center by volunteers. I also was able to take items to our AFSC meetings, and it would be great if Units could bring them to the Fall Conference and so I can deliver them before the Holiday season.

Due to not serving food yet, The Center will accept little snack packs like chips, cookies beef sticks, anything that does not have to be refrigerated.

The Center also gives vouchers to travelers, and they are accepted at most food outlets, coffee shops, grills and restaurant with more places to join in the future.

Monetary donations are especially needed, as many donations are down from previous years. I hope some of the Unites put it in their Budget when they held their annual budget meeting, it would be greatly appreciated. When sending your check to the Department office please earmark it for the Armed Forces Service Center.

It is an honor to again serve you the members of the American Legion Auxiliary as the Armed Forces Service Center Representative.

Gift Shop

Sandy Wersal ~ Chairman

Becky Nelson ~ Committee member

This 2024-2025 year is going to be exciting with the new homes in Montevideo, Preston and Bemidji having their first gift Christmas gift shop for our veterans. We have three new representatives that have been working hard to help staff with the actives. The Department of Minnesota, works with 8 Home and 4 VA Hospitals.

Please ask your Unit, Posts and Son of the American Legion Squadron for a donation of money, as we work together as a Legion family, for a better Christmas for the Veterans.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers from National statement.

Our success in meeting our core mission is dependent upon our ability to ensure that volunteer opportunities are created or passed down and have meaning to a variety of individuals – members and potential members. Your willingness to serve, give of your time and of yourself to help our veterans, and help the American Legion Auxiliary meet its mission is greatly appreciated. The national Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee thanks each one of you for the commitment you have made.