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Auxiliary

contents



FEATURES

32 RECRUITING FOR THE ENTIRE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY
Attracting veterans to the Legion. Sons to the SAL. When we recruit together, we bolster our membership to help more veterans, military, and their families.

38 NATIONAL POPPY DAY® IS MAY 28 THIS YEAR
Since its launch four years ago, this special day has morphed into many kinds of honor and remembrance activities.

IN EVERY ISSUE

4 NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

6 BEHIND THE SCENES

7 FROM OUR READERS

8 JUNIOR MEMBERS

10 I AM THE ALA

13 IT'S ALL GOOD

43 IMPACT ALA!

50 BUILDING ALA BRAND LOYALTY

52 ALL THINGS ALA GIRLS STATE

53 ALA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

54 WISE PERSON SAID

55 LEGION FAMILY NEWS

56 MISSION MATTERS

57 SOCIAL MEDIA

58 THE LAST WORD

ON THE COVER: Papaver rhoeas: Otherwise better known to American Legion Auxiliary members as the poppy we distribute annually in honor and remembrance of our fallen veterans. National Poppy Day® is May 28 this year.

ABOVE: Lenny Hart, a U.S. Army combat infantry veteran of the Vietnam War, salutes during the national anthem at a POW-MIA watchfire event in Seaside Heights, N.J., last September. Standing next to Hart is ALA member Laurinda Miller of Unit 129 in Toms River (photo: Denise Henhoeffler).



HONORING SAFELY: My mom, Jeanne Paustian, and I placed an American flag and poppies at my grandpa Roger Schroeder's grave on Memorial Day 2020. Grandpa Schroeder served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. ALA membership eligibility for Mom and me is based on his service.

There is something so special about paying respects to America's fallen military heroes, particularly on Memorial Day. For me, the specialness comes from the knowledge that, though we may be in different cities, states, and time zones, we stand together as one to honor the many. We make sure their ultimate sacrifice, made on behalf of our nation and its principles, will be remembered.

It's an emotional experience to witness or participate in laying a wreath at a gravesite, planting a small flag there, or other solemn demonstrations of our gratitude and respect. We remember our fallen heroes in prayers, songs, or moments of silence. We ask God to bless their souls and watch over their families. It's even more of a moving experience when we do these things together at all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary and the entire American Legion Family. One lesson we're all learning from the COVID-19 pandemic is that being together does not always mean being in each other's presence.

On any day of the year, at least one member of the Auxiliary or other parts of the Legion Family is paying tribute to a fallen servicemember. That makes me proud. But Memorial Day, May 31 this year, is the time set aside specifically for all Americans to show that respect.

Due largely to the pandemic, last year's Memorial Day events and activities were a lot different than they were in the past. And they're likely to be different again this year,

mainly because of the pandemic and safety precautions such as social distancing.

But that doesn't have to stop us from honoring our fallen heroes on Memorial Day. We can still find safe ways to hold events, ceremonies, and observations. I've already seen lots of other ways Auxiliary members have carried out ALA mission-based outreach and activities. So I know we can come up with ways to pay our respects this Memorial Day. Our resolve to honor and serve is still intact; it's just a matter of adapting to current conditions. As we re-imagine our traditional tributes, please be aware of public health guidelines and restrictions within your local communities and at federal government sites such as national cemeteries.

Though we may be apart this Memorial Day, we'll be connected in spirit and purpose through our tributes on this occasion. And that's a special feeling!

One final thought: When counting your blessings, please remember to include our veterans, troops, our fallen military heroes, and their families. For their service and sacrifice, up to and including the ultimate sacrifice, we owe them a place in our prayers, thoughts, and hearts.

Nicole Clapp

Nicole Clapp
National President

Mark your calendars:



May is Military Appreciation Month

May 7: Military Spouse Appreciation Day is a tribute to the sacrifice and support of military spouses.

May 8: Victory in Europe Day (also known as V-E Day) is the anniversary of Germany's unconditional surrender in WWII on May 8, 1945.

May 9: Mother's Day — Join the American Legion Auxiliary in wishing "Happy Mother's Day" to all the

women who are servicemembers, veterans, military spouses, or military moms. The ALA also wishes an early "Happy Father's Day" to all the men who are servicemembers, veterans, military spouses, or military dads. Father's Day is June 20.

May 15: Armed Forces Day honors Americans serving in the military.

Friday before Memorial Day: National Poppy Day® — Read more about this special day on page 38.

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STILL SERVING VETERANS: The new Indiana Veterans Center, housed in the original ALANHQ building in downtown Indianapolis (pictured), provides a modern one-stop facility for veterans services, with a nod to the building's historic past (photo: The American Legion).

Warmer weather. With it comes a sense of renewal, an urgency of nesting, and feelings of preparation.

We're in full-on planning mode over here at National Headquarters. The current American Legion Auxiliary administrative year doesn't end for a few more months, but we're already getting ready for it. During this time of year, we sit in numerous meetings with staff and members of all levels — for the sole purpose of closing out one year and prepping for the next.

National Convention — the official culmination of our year of successes, accomplishments, and goal reporting — is still in deep planning stages, as things could look a little different this year because of the pandemic. But just because there are question marks (bright side: maybe not as many as we had during this point last year!), we still need to organize, strategize, and outline.

What's happening in your ALA? How early do you plan? You'll want to remember that not everything evolves around an event.

In the case of *Auxiliary* magazine, we conduct a reader survey every few years to gauge our readership and ensure we're planning and publishing valuable content you can use to support the ALA's mission and your unit. You can read more on page 48 about this reader survey. If you're one of the randomly selected members to receive the questionnaire, please be sure to fill it out. This is a membership magazine; it's all about you!

Something that doesn't involve a great deal of advance notice — military honor, remembrance, and respect. Those everyday tributes are ingrained in us as Auxiliary members. But May is a big month for us in terms of the *official* displays of admiration for our heroes. We distribute poppies to make sure everyone knows the symbolism behind the red flower. We attend Memorial Day services and vigils to honor the fallen. This year, we also honor the veterans we lost to the COVID-19 virus. May their memories live on, and may we always have a place in our hearts for those who serve.



ALA ON THE GO

Auxiliary magazine is fully digital and available for download at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

TOOLS & TIPS IN A CLICK

In addition, you'll find expanded magazine content, valuable unit and department resources, plus downloadable templates, news releases, and other ALA promotional materials available on the ALA website 24/7.

American Legion *Auxiliary*

*A Community of Volunteers
Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families*
May 2021



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American Legion Auxiliary Magazine is published quarterly by the American Legion Auxiliary with a yearly non-refundable allocation of \$3.40 from membership dues. Letters, unsolicited articles and photographs are not guaranteed to be published or returned and may be edited. See www.ALAforVeterans.org/Media/Magazine-Submissions for further details. Opinions expressed in this publication may not necessarily represent policy or positions of the organization. Advertisements do not reflect endorsement by the organization.

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FROM OUR *readers*

Thank you for promoting *Auxiliary* magazine

We'd like to use this space to give a shout-out to Unit 374 Millard in Neb., for creating a Facebook post announcing the February issue of *Auxiliary*, as well as the feature stories published inside. Thank you, Unit 374, for promoting the national magazine and its valuable content to your social media followers!



**American Legion Auxiliary
Unit 374 Millard, NE**

Are you in need of some positive reading material? Check out the American Legion Auxiliary February 2021 issue now arriving in mailboxes.

Here are some interesting articles not to miss:

♥ Membership Recruitment Made Easier: Consider these helpful tips for finding, talking to, and signing up new members for the American Legion Auxiliary (page 32-27)

♥ Veterans Showcase Heart Through Art ... from Home (pages 38-42)

You can also view and read it online:
<http://bit.ly/39Azh0Y>.

#AmericanLegionAuxiliary #alamagazine



Veterans see our magazine too

The cover page of *Reaching Our Veterans through the Arts* is a horrific sight for vets like my husband who saw enough “hands” attached and detached reaching out to him in the Viet Nam Tet Offensive. Regardless

of the awards this art has won, it was not an awarding experience for my husband to retrieve from our mailbox. Please: In the future, use discrimination choosing your magazine cover choices for those to whom this digital art “hand” does not “reach” but is burned and buried in their hearts and minds and to this day can clearly hear many pleas to God for compassion. Thank you.

— Marla Rutherford, Illinois

Editors' response: Marla, we greatly appreciate you for contacting us, and for the care and concern you share not only for your husband, but for all veterans. Our editorial team felt compelled to choose that artwork as a representation of the healing power of art therapy for our veterans; it was not intentionally placed to cause harm or emotional trauma. Regardless, your letter has given us cause to examine our choices more closely in the future.

What happened to ‘the mitten’?

I received the February 2021 edition of the quarterly magazine. Well done. I bookmarked several actionable pages. BUT...on page 59, I came to an abrupt halt. Not only does Michigan not have a star as a grant recipient, my Great Lake State does not even have a complete presence! Where is “the mitten”? The Upper Peninsula is represented, but the Lower Peninsula is not even a ghost. This area has veterans, veteran hospitals, retirement homes, and even a new Fisher House. Please restore us!

— Karla Christenson, Michigan

Editors' response: We are terribly sorry, Karla, and to all of our Michiganders! Omitting the other half of your state from the map was an oversight on our part, and for that, we apologize.



ALA ACADEMY LIVE

Looking to Learn How to Help Veterans?

Watch the Next Installments of the Mission Delivery — Veterans Services series:

- Adaptive Sports
- Volunteering Opportunities with the VA
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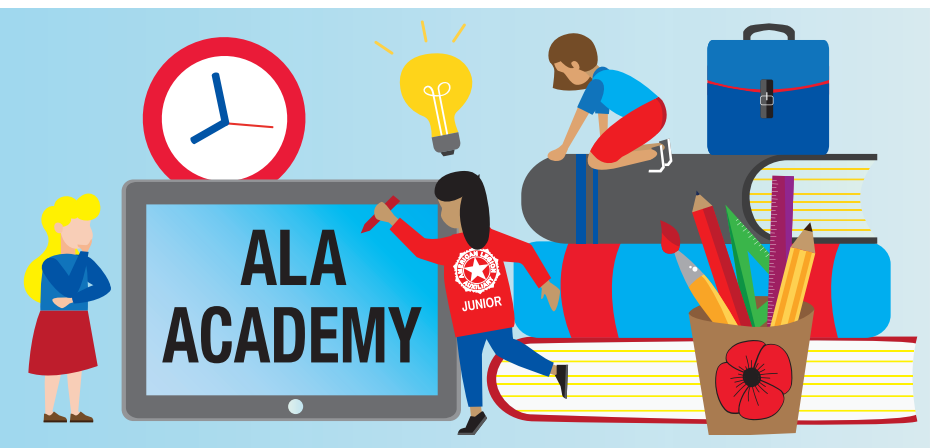


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JUNIOR *members*



JUNIOR MENTOR TRAINING COURSES AVAILABLE ONLINE

To help ALA Junior Activities leaders mentor the youngest Auxiliary members, National Headquarters created a series of ALA Academy courses designed for those adults working with Juniors. Offered through live webinars initially, the recorded versions are available for viewing with your member login via the ALA Academy online portal.

With a variety of topics offered, the webinars are sure to help adult leaders become more knowledgeable about ways to involve Juniors, which will help increase the ALA's youth membership numbers.

Course 1: Getting Started with Juniors

Having effective adult leaders for the Junior Activities program at the local level is crucial for the ALA. As mentors, our Junior Activities leaders

need to prepare Juniors to lead the ALA successfully by giving them useful life and leadership skills, and helping them understand and support our mission.

This course addresses some of the questions those leaders have and will help them feel capable of filling their roles successfully. Junior Activities leaders will learn how to instill an appreciation of and habit of service in Junior members, so they will stay involved as adult members.

Course 2: Junior Patch Program

The ALA Junior Patch Program has been a vital component of Junior Activities for many years. As a fundamental program tool, it teaches our Juniors about the mission which they are charged with carrying on: helping veterans, military, and their families.

GET JUNIORS INVOLVED THROUGH ALA PATCH PROGRAM

After attending a webinar on the ALA Patch Program, many Junior Activities leaders agreed — the Patch Program is the easiest way to get a Junior group started.

Because of the flexibility, the variety of patches that can be earned, and the wide range of ages of kids who can participate, the Patch Program is an ideal way to get started with a Junior group in your unit.

In addition to Junior members, the program can also easily include Sons of The American Legion youth members. Patches can be earned from kindergarten through 12th grade (18 years old). There are three levels divided by school grade level.

Juniors and SAL members can earn a patch on their own or with a group.

Getting a Junior group started through the Patch Program is a great way to get younger members involved in learning about the Auxiliary and our American Legion

As mentors, Junior Activities leaders need to know how the program works and how to engage their Juniors in earning patches. For groups without Junior Activities, this is the easiest way to engage Junior members.

This course addresses the questions leaders have and will help them feel confident in managing the ALA Patch Program.

Course 3: Juniors and The American Legion Family

As mentors of our future leaders, we need to inspire Junior members to carry on the work of The American Legion Family.

As Junior Activities leaders encourage Juniors to deliver the mission with the Legion Family, they will have experience and be acquainted with the Family when they become adult members.

Course 4: ALA Junior Meetings

Junior meetings are an opportunity to bring young members together as they share ideas, form lasting friendships, and have fun. As mentors, we know these meetings are also a place they can learn about the American Legion Auxiliary mission and programs. When we know how to make Juniors' unit, district, and department meetings more fun and meaningful, our Junior members will continue their membership once they reach adulthood, ensuring a strong future for the ALA.

Get started on the Junior Mentor Training Series courses today at www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy.

Family, volunteering in the community, and serving our country's veterans.

To learn more, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org, go to the MyAuxiliary member portal, and then Junior Member Activities.



UNIQUE FUNDRAISER HELPS ARKANSAS UNIT

In addition to supporting our veterans, military, and their families, Junior members often learn various skills through fundraising.

Juniors in Arkansas put their culinary skills to the test by making sweet pepper jelly to sell as an ALA fundraiser.

After learning their local unit needed funds to continue the mission, Melissa Rush-Grantham and her daughters got to work.

“I’m known at bake sales for sweet pepper jelly, so I thought it would be a good idea for them to learn that skill from beginning to end,” she said. “They did really well on it.”

Rush-Grantham and her three daughters put in about 40 hours of work. The peppers were grown in their garden and then cut and put in the fridge. They had to purchase about 200 pounds of sugar at a Walmart, which is an hour away from their hometown.

Once they got the supplies and ingredients, they could begin the cooking process, which is delicate.

When making sweet pepper jelly, Rush-Grantham said you have to be careful that it doesn’t boil over, or the sugar burns and leaves a sticky, gooey mess.

“We only had that one time out of 10 to 12 batches,” she said.

The family created an assembly line, pre-rinsing the jars, boiling the lids, and putting the jelly in jars through a funnel. One of her daughters wrote “Sweet Pepper Jelly 2020” on all of the jars.

Then it was time to share the goodness.

“We delivered them all over the county,” Rush-Grantham said. “It took two days.”

Overall, they made 125 jars in the first batch and another 50 to 75 in the second round, totaling about \$500 raised.

Rush-Grantham said it wasn’t difficult, just time-consuming.

“They were enthused and excited about making this a priority,” she said about her girls. “I think they all felt good about it. One thing can make a big difference.”



JELLY FOR FUNDRAISING: Melissa Rush-Grantham’s daughters, (from left) Ava-Grace, Mary-Claire, and Chloe-Belle, made over 100 jars of sweet pepper jelly to raise funds for the ALA.

Rush-Grantham said they plan on doing it again, perhaps on a larger scale if the girls get some friends to help out too.

For other groups of Juniors who want to do fundraisers, she offers advice.

“Find what your niche is, and go with that,” Rush-Grantham said. “For some people, it’s making cookies; some, it’s crocheting or painting — whatever you are good at to help out the American Legion Auxiliary.”

FUN, LEARNING PART OF JUNIOR RACE CAR DRIVER’S MEMBERSHIP

Racing has always been a part of Junior member Cassi Leonard’s family, starting with her grandfather.

During race season in 2018, a program came to her local track that’s geared toward giving disabled veterans the opportunity to get behind the wheel of a race car.

“Being a huge fan of racing and a Junior member who loves being able to help veterans, my mother, sister, and I all volunteered to help at the racetrack behind the scenes with the program and were welcomed with open arms,” Leonard said.

Eventually, Leonard got behind the wheel herself.

Driving a Pontiac Sunfire and a Chevrolet Cavalier (both manual) in 2019, she competed in her first year

of racing. In 2020, she finished nine times on the podium with four first-place finishes.

“I pulled off my dream — my goal of becoming the first female to win track championship for the DareDevil Division,” she recalled proudly.

Although Leonard turns just 14 in May, she has experienced quite a few life lessons from the track already. Like racing, her Junior membership has also been full of learning.

“I’ve learned how sometimes the smallest acts of kindness can mean the world to some, that many who have served struggle on many levels, and some won’t ask for help even when they need it, how to properly fold a flag, and how a formal meeting is held,” she said.

Between race car driving and her Junior membership, Leonard said there are similar life lessons

between the two.

Leonard has been an ALA member since 2015, eligible through her grandfather, Bernard Boulay, a U.S. Army National Guard Vietnam War veteran. For girls who are eligible to join the ALA, Leonard encourages them to sign up.

“It can be fun, and you meet a lot of great people,” she said.

Continuing to combine her love of racing and veterans, in 2020, Leonard and others were successful in getting a second accessible racing event at the local speedway, along with newly developed adaptive racing equipment for virtual racing to reach even more disabled veterans. Leonard was a tester of the new setup.

Through her Auxiliary membership and racing, she’s living out her dream of helping veterans and competing behind the wheel.

Getting creative for Juniors: New this year, the ALA is offering a virtual experience like no other for Juniors with the Junior Jamboree. Not a meeting — this is a once-in-a-lifetime event. For more information, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

I AM THE ALA

“A military death in combat — it is a unique and solemn death. And for any mom, the loss of a child is truly the deepest sorrow she can experience.”

TONI GROSS



Gross knows that pain. Her only son, U.S. Army Cpl. Frank R. Gross, was killed in action July 16, 2011, by a roadside IED during his deployment in Afghanistan. He had served a little more than a year prior to his death, Gross explained.

Her Christian faith has been helping her recover from that ache in her heart. Service to others also became a pathway to healing. In addition to her activities as an ALA member and as part of American Gold Star Mothers Inc., Gross volunteers with several other veterans service organizations — including the USO at Tampa International Airport and the VAVS (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service) at James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital in Tampa.

“My son lives on in what I do. When I’m serving, I am getting uplifted and blessed. It lifts my

spirit to be able to do for others. Being part of ALA Unit 5 is part of this,” Gross said.

There are ALA units closer to your home than Unit 5 in Tampa. Why did you choose Unit 5?

The primary reason is the genuine care and concern of the officers and members toward all — not just newer members like me — but to everyone. At Unit 5 meetings, there are no strangers. Each of our unit officers takes time to greet and speak with everyone. The monthly unit meetings are like family gatherings without the family drama.

Discuss your experience as an ALA member of Unit 5 in Tampa.

After I joined Unit 5, our unit president at the time, Rosemary Hamblin, often sent me encouraging personal emails — even as she was standing by her husband Bill during his cancer battle. Rosemary’s emails seemed to reach me at just the right time. They were well thought out, heartfelt, uplifting messages. She would call too, sometimes just to see how I was doing. She did this for all of our unit members. Rosemary passed away not too long ago. But her endless grace, kindness, and courage as an individual and as an ALA member lives on. She helped foster Unit 5’s caring environment, which encourages us to deliver

kindhearted, thoughtful, and selfless service to others. I am so grateful for my ALA unit.

What is/are your favorite ALA event/outreach/activity? Why?

Before COVID-19, our unit was very involved in attending ceremonies and memorial events in the community. I enjoyed that very much. But that all ended in March 2020. Now, my favorite ALA activity is our monthly Auxiliary Crafts/Social Get-Together. It is a time when we gather in the large room at the post and work on many programs to support our unit’s National Security Program. We are careful to wear face masks and maintain social distancing. Some of the different activities we do are cutting coupons, folding small flags to be sent to our deployed troops along with snacks and goodies, and handcrafting cards for our veterans. While we are doing something that will benefit and bless others, we also chat and share stories. During this time of limited and safe social contact, I look forward to us getting together to relax and have fun while serving others.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT:
Unit 5 in Tampa, Fla.

ELIGIBILITY THROUGH:
Frank R. Hankey, father
(U.S. Navy veteran)

YEARS IN THE ALA: 3



SHARE YOUR MEMBERSHIP STORY!

Tell us about yourself and how you support the American Legion Auxiliary as a unit member who also loves the ALA’s mission of serving veterans, the military, and their families. Contact us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or (317) 569-4500.

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American Legion Auxiliary members work tirelessly to help others. But what happens when they need help for themselves from a flood, wildfire, or being laid off from a job? That's where the Auxiliary Emergency Fund comes in. The AEF has helped

members for the past 50 years as a hallmark of the Auxiliary's legacy.

Don't wait to get the help you need. If you've been affected by a natural disaster or financial crisis, please apply to the AEF at www.ALAforVeterans.org/aef or email your application to AEF@ALAforVeterans.org.

www.ALAforVeterans.org

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For more information about sponsoring an ALA event or program, please visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/sponsorship-opportunities or email development@ALAforVeterans.org.



www.ALAforVeterans.org

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“We are shaped and fashioned by what we love.”

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German writer



Thousands of American Legion Auxiliary members have a sustained sense of purpose when it comes to the ALA — they love the mission, they honor their military heroes, or they just value the social aspect. But for some, the lack of engagement is a struggle, resulting in leaving the organization. In the August issue of *Auxiliary*, we'll explore the ways you can keep the membership fire ignited — generating strong retention support for the mission. What personally helps you stay involved and enamored with the Auxiliary to make you renew your membership? Tell us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.

Above: Karen Suarez, a member of Unit 397 in Monterey Park, Calif., sorts items for the post home's food drive, toy drive, and small business pop-up late last year. The post regularly collects and distributes food to veterans staying at U.S. Vets, a veteran short-term housing organization in Los Angeles (photo: Jeric Wilhelmsen).



ALA ACADEMY LIVE

Looking to Learn about the ALA Junior Program?

You can still register for the final Junior Mentor Training webinar:

• ALA Junior Meetings — May 6, 8 p.m. ET

Miss a Junior Course? Check out the recordings in the ALA Academy.

Start today by going to www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy



IT'S ALL *good* GOOD ADVICE FROM ALA MEMBERS

May is a month to honor those who served in the military. On Memorial Day, with special services and poppy distributions, we'll remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Tell us about the veteran you are honoring or memorializing.



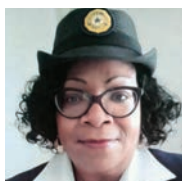
“Honoring my son’s comrades. Fallen warriors in 2010 serving during Operation Enduring Freedom.”

— Janet Lee Skerry, Virginia



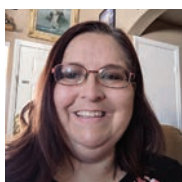
“We will be remembering and honoring Justin Pollard, and all those brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice defending our country.”

— Julie Fredensburg-Tyner, California



“I am proudly honoring my father, George T. Wooden. My father was drafted at the age of 18 into the Korean War.”

— Patricia Wooden, New York



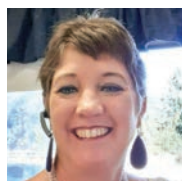
“My dad Nicholas E. Flores Jr., United States Air Force 1950-1963, my husband Curtis Ninmer, United States Navy 1990-1992, and my son Nicholas Flores, United States Air Force 2001-2007.”

— Nicky Flores-Ninmer, Nevada



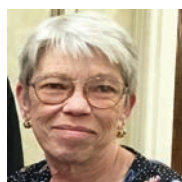
“We honor our father, Robert C. Lavee Sr. He was in the Korean War with the Army. After he came back, he went civilian for a year and decided to make a lifetime career in the Air Force, where he entered the Vietnam War.”

— Debi Graziano, Vermont



“My son, Pvt. Nicholas E. Aberle. He served in the Army National Guard from 2011-2013.”

— Dawn Aberle, Iowa



“My grandfather, Edward J. Connelly. He attended the Paris Caucus in 1919. He established and was first commander of Cpl. Harry Nelson American Legion Post 63 in Wakefield, Mass.”

— Kathy Connelly, Massachusetts

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ADAPTED SPORT: INJURED VETERANS STAY ACTIVE DURING PANDEMIC

Guest Column Written by Dawna Callahan, Founder, All In Sport Consulting

Despite the disruptions in our lives in 2020 due to the global pandemic, ALA National President Nicole Clapp continues to place her focus on the positive impact adapted sport has on injured veterans, their caregivers, and the larger community.

The past year has certainly been challenging not being able to get out and engage in regular adapted sport opportunities. The good news is that adapted sport leaders are great at adapting. It's something they do every day when implementing adapted sport programs. When our country began to shut down, many adapted sport programs across the country pivoted quickly. They began offering a variety of virtual sport opportunities and loaning equipment to veterans who did not have their own specialized adaptive sport equipment at home. The goal of these virtual adapted sport programs was to keep participants engaged and moving, even if it meant working out in their home and using laundry detergent containers as dumbbells or signing up for a virtual fitness challenge. This past year was time to get creative and adapt so that injured veterans were able to stay physically active.

If 2020 taught us anything, it's perseverance and resilience — skills that injured veterans have honed for many years post-injury.

As we move further into 2021, we are pleased to see that many adapted sport programs are starting to offer in-person sport opportunities around the country. Sport leadership has worked diligently to create detailed safety protocols. Keeping program participants safe and healthy, including injured veterans, is of the utmost importance. There certainly has been a collective sigh of relief around the country when we see more injured veterans receiving vaccines. This brings hope they may be able to go outdoors again and meet up with friends to work out together, be physically active, keep their minds sharp, and enjoy the fresh air.

Learn more about the adapted and paralympic sport movement

Wheels of Courage

The adapted sport movement in the U.S. is forever indebted to the injured veteran community and the visionary World War II veterans who were determined to stay active post-injury. These brave veterans directed their drive and passion toward continuing the pursuit of sport, competition, and camaraderie.

Wheels of Courage (www.ddavisla.com) is an enlightening book that shares the challenges WWII veterans faced when returning home from the war with a life-changing injury. The book examines the desires of injured veterans wanting to stay active and their vital role in building the national

adapted sport movement, specifically through wheelchair basketball.

See Athletes in Action: *Rising Phoenix* and Tokyo Paralympic Games

- Check out *Rising Phoenix* on Netflix. It's a ground-breaking movie about the Paralympic Movement — elite level adapted sport. The documentary features Paralympians from across the world. *Rising Phoenix* tells the extraordinary story of the Paralympic Games. From the rubble of WWII to the third biggest sporting event on the planet, along the way sparking a global movement which continues to change the way the world thinks about disability, diversity, and human potential. Team USA athletes featured in the film include wheelchair racer Tatyana McFadden and Para Archer Matt Stutzman.

- The Tokyo Paralympic Games were originally scheduled to take place in 2020, but due to the pandemic, they're now scheduled for Aug. 24 – Sept. 5, 2021. For the first time, NBCUniversal will give a primetime spot to the Paralympic Games, with more than 200 hours of coverage on its platforms. At the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games, 35 U.S. military veterans represented their



country again, wearing the Stars and Stripes and competing at the highest level of sport. Look for more details on how to watch the Paralympic Games at www.teamusa.org and www.paralympic.org.

About Dawna Callahan: A competitive wheelchair racer, Callahan has been involved with adaptive sport professionally for more than 20 years.



Read more about adapted sport — Dawna Callahan wrote about the origins of adapted sport, its evolution, and the involvement of Veterans Affairs for our February 2020 issue of *Auxiliary* magazine. You can find it at www.ALAforVeterans.org/magazine.

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HearClear hearing aids have been clinically proven to show **significant improvement in speech understanding**. (University of Memphis, 2018)



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DONATING BOOKS FOR A CAUSE (from left): Monticello Middle School media specialist Kari Green accepts a donation of books from Monticello ALA member Lynne Dahl-Fleming and Auxiliary President Mary Simondet.

MINNESOTA UNIT SHARES VETERANS' STORIES WRITTEN BY LEGIONNAIRE

American Legion Auxiliary members continue the mission to honor veterans and educate the community in creative ways despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking for ways to give back to the community, Monticello Unit 260 donated three history books filled with Minnesota veterans' stories to their local middle school. The series of three books, titled *War Stories*, is written by Minnesota Legionnaire Al Zdon.

"The Monticello community just does a beautiful job honoring our veterans, and so it was just a perfect fit to donate those books there — they are all amazing stories," said ALA Unit 260 President Mary Simondet.

Veterans in the Monticello community partner with the school corporation for various projects throughout the year, so this was a way for Unit 260 to continue those veterans' stories for years to come and help spread awareness. The books will be at students' fingertips for possible history projects or an inspiring history lesson from

Minnesota military men and women. *War Stories* features veterans' biographies from the Civil War to today.

"Maybe they will go through it and look for family or friends," said Simondet. "It's all about discussion, telling stories, and getting the conversation going because it's not always easy for our veterans to tell their stories."

After a unit meeting, Auxiliary 260 members ordered the books and called the middle school librarian to get more information about donating. The unit decided it was a great idea because they knew the great work the kids do to honor veterans during Veterans Day and throughout the year.

With proceeds going to the Children & Youth program and representing The American Legion Family by donating a book written by a Legionnaire, all members of the Monticello unit contributed to the donation. ALA Unit 260 member Lynn Flemming created an ALA label to attach on the inside of each book as a way to show the students where they came from. The books display timeless photos showing where and when these veterans served.

"We have a great group of volunteers, and we are always looking at ways we can give back to the community and our veterans," said Simondet. "I think the books are going to be a great asset for both the Monticello community, the school, and the Legion. We're happy we could do this small little token — we just knew it would touch a lot of people's lives."

EDUCATING YOUTH WHILE PROMOTING PATRIOTISM THROUGH ART

Dayna Beyer is always looking for new ways to spread patriotism. The Ohio department historian and member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 535 taught a "sip-and-paint" class as a fun educational activity for youth in the community. A volunteer at another local veteran organization, Love Our Heroes, Beyer offered hosting a painting class, with the paintings going to veterans and the proceeds benefitting veterans.

"A lot of people were shut in due to the pandemic; the post was closed down for a little bit, and a lot of veterans couldn't go out of their homes, so we wanted to lift up their spirits," said Beyer.

Located a block away from the post home in Bellville, Love Our Heroes is a thrift store and coffee shop where all profits are donated back to veterans. The coffee shop was closed because of COVID, making it the perfect opportunity to host a socially distant paint class



HELPING THE COMMUNITY: Florida ALA Unit 383 members assemble gifts for local nursing home residents.

VETERAN AUXILIARY GROUPS WORK TOGETHER TO SERVE COMMUNITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way of living for everyone, especially those in nursing homes. With the thought of isolation in mind, Florida American Legion Auxiliary Unit 383 worked with other veteran support

Good works to share? Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/magazine for details.

with limited seating.

“We had 6-year-olds through 12-year-olds attend,” said Beyer. “The painting theme was Valentines, but the first thing they were to do was paint a rustic American flag, and the American flag paintings were then presented to veterans in the community.”

Continuing the ALA’s mission, Beyer had students honor veterans by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance,

Beyer was impressed that many of them were able to answer questions and recognize the relationship between veterans and the flag.

which was followed by a Q&A about the history of the flag, its meaning, and symbolism. Mainly teaching children the basics of the American flag, Beyer was impressed that many of them were able to answer questions and recognize the relationship between veterans and the flag.

Most sip-and-paints are unstructured for more social

interactions and open discussion among painters, allowing the kids to be creative and connect with one another. After the Q&A and introduction, everyone painted an American flag while Beyer walked around to spark conversation.

“We are a very patriotic community, and we are really proud of the veterans we have,” said Beyer. “I think it’s up to us to get out there and take the initiative to help educate the kids ... because who else would do it?”

After finding a poppy sip-and-paint idea in the ALA Poppy Program Facebook group, Beyer decided to incorporate the American flag instead to help spread patriotism during a time that needs it the most. There were easy step-by-step instructions to follow on hosting a painting class.

Wanting to spread patriotic awareness and have a fun-filled class



CREATING ART FOR VETERANS: Ohio Auxiliary Unit 535 member Dayna Beyer organized and taught a “sip-and-paint” educational art class for children in Bellville.

for the local kids, Beyer added a second painting that was Valentine’s Day themed. The canvases came with their own easels for veterans to have a place to display the kids’ artwork. Beyer and her husband donated the frames and paints, and the children paid a small fee that included lunch. The rest of the proceeds went back to the veterans fund at Love Our Heroes.

“We had four kids ask if they could give their paintings to their grandparent or great-grandparent, and the rest were given to veterans in the community,” said Beyer.

Auxiliaries to donate Valentine’s Day and Easter gift baskets as a way to bring some joy to those who needed it.

“We looked for ways to help veterans and the elderly during this time that has been hindered by COVID and the inability to visit these groups of people,” said ALA Unit 383 member Kathy Browne. “I started thinking about these poor people in the nursing homes and I knew they are isolated, so I was feeling particularly bad for them and wanted to help.”

Many residents in the town’s three local nursing homes are veterans or spouses of veterans, so the gifts helped continue to honor veterans while giving back to the community. Browne and other members of Unit 383 partnered with Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary 25 (an honor degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars) to organize a Valentine’s Day gift project.

After bringing up the idea in a

Legion meeting, the post wanted to help contribute by donating half the cost of all gift bags. Thrilled with the support, Browne did all the shopping in a few trips to the store and with the help of Amazon Prime. It cost each of the Auxiliaries less than \$130, and they were able to make 230 Valentine’s Day gift bags for three

“Some of the Auxiliary members designed homemade quilts, napkins, and booties as a special gift for those who may have needed extra love.”

different nursing homes, including extra bags for new residents or guests.

“We included ‘Happy Valentine’s Day’ notes from the Auxiliaries, decks of cards, a little bit of candy hearts, and things like coloring books, crayons, sudoku, crosswords — just something for them to do,”

added Browne. “We put about five items in each bag, including items like notepads and pens, because a lot of them like to write — so they could write a note to one another or their families.”

Some of the Auxiliary members designed homemade quilts, napkins, and booties as a special gift for those who may have needed extra love. The Valentine’s Day gifts also included regular toiletries and necessities like toothpaste, body wash, lotion, shampoo, and conditioner. Along with Browne, Auxiliary 383 members Elaine McDermott, Char Zelnak, Connie Pruss, and Mary Jane Dalphond put together each gift with care before dropping them off at living facilities in the community.

“Sometimes you have to be extra creative with projects,” added Browne. “We are all here to serve veterans and support the local nursing homes, so hopefully this can be an idea for other Auxiliary units.”



RELATIONSHIPS MATTER: Unit 62 in Peoria, Ariz., hosted a Veterans Day event with its local Chick-fil-A. Pictured are ALA member Amy Kloszewski, police officer Roy Minton Jr., and Alison Bosen of Chick-fil-A.

FUNDRAISING IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Fundraising is not “taking from the rich to give to the poor.” It’s not walking in off the street asking for a donation. If the idea of asking for money makes you break into a cold sweat, then maybe you need another way to approach it.

Step back for a moment. Let’s pretend you just baked a big batch of cookies and you want to share them with a neighbor. Who do you pick?

- The neighbor you don’t really know — they’ve lived there a while, but you never really cross paths with them.

- The neighbor who is so busy all the time, they barely even wave at you.

- The neighbor who came over last week and helped you get your mower started.

That might seem obvious, but the real question is how is your American Legion Auxiliary unit or post home perceived by your community? Does the community at large know who you are and what you do? Do they see your post as more than a bar? Do you make time to reach out and assist local

community leaders? Do you make sure the community sees the good work you do?

People want to help those who are in need. But no matter how “rich” they are, they can’t help everyone. They must, and will, be selective. If you want to be first in line to receive

**In the past five years,
they have raised over \$60,000
from outside sources.**

the batch of cookies, your neighbors need to know who you are, what you do, and why you matter!

Let’s look at another scenario:

Your neighbor asks you to pick up their newspaper when they are on vacation. Of course you are going to do that. Later, you need help moving a couch before the carpet cleaners come. Is it easier or harder to ask your neighbor for help now that you have helped them? Are they more or less likely to happily come over to help you?

In this scenario, you developed a relationship with your neighbor. You now automatically help each other

when you can. When you need help, you ask. They can’t always be there, they don’t always have the resources, but it’s no big deal to ask.

Start thinking about how you can engage your unit/post community and neighbors. Be ready to reach out when an opportunity presents itself. You need to engage them.

There are several easy ways you can reach out in your community:

- A local business is having a Veterans Day sale. Ask if they would like a POW/MIA table set up during their event. Same for Memorial Day: Ask about displaying poppies. Make sure the display includes your unit/post name.
- Provide poppies to the mayor when you hear that he/she is attending a school assembly or other public event.
- Offer free membership to government leaders who qualify.
- Ask for a proclamation to be read at a City Council meeting. Have your members attend wearing branded clothing.
- Establish a newsletter and make sure you include community leaders and local media in the distribution.
- Follow, like, share, and comment on social media pages of local businesses and leaders.

Always show appreciation for those who help. Post on your social media pages, notify local media, inform the mayor’s office, and send a thank-you. It doesn’t matter if their contribution was big or small; you never know where the next contribution will come from.

Of course, none of this happens overnight. It takes deliberate and consistent effort.

These actions have paid off for American Legion Auxiliary Unit 62 in Peoria, Ariz. In the past five years, they have raised over \$60,000 from outside sources.

— *By Marge Christianson,
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 62
member*



Did you know the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation provides grants for such things as a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival or promoting the Auxiliary while working the mission? Learn how to apply for a grant to fund your mission-focused project by watching a recording of ALA Academy Live — American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Grant Panel. The recording is available in the MyAuxiliary member portal at www.ALAFforVeterans.org. Just go to Meetings and Trainings and click ALA Academy. Learn more about ALA Academy on page 29 of this issue of *Auxiliary*.



Breakthrough Joint Pain Discovery

Doctor's Formula Eases Joint Issues

By S.A. Nickerson, Health Correspondent

If you're over 40 or 50, odds are you suffer pain or stiffness in at least one of your body's 230 joints.

In fact, over 21 million Americans suffer from "wear and tear" concerns such as:

- Joint pain or stiffness
- Restricted motion in joints
- Grinding, crackling, or popping
- Mild joint swelling or warmth
- Enlargement of joints

These issues can make it difficult to climb stairs, clean house, do yardwork, enjoy hobbies, or even just keep up with the grandkids.

Many doctors tell you pain is just part of growing older. They say you should learn to "live with it."

Joint Pain Sufferers Love LIMBEX

"Had bone on bone in right knee with pain on all movements. Taking LIMBEX for 2 years. No more pain and great flexibility at age 88."

Edward R. — MA

"LIMBEX has reduced the joint pain I was experiencing, especially in my hands."

Joe H. — FI

"The pain in my hip is all but gone. I can get up from a chair and walk without limping."

Carol T. — TX

"I am 77 years old. My knee pain is completely gone, allowing me to be very active again. I love LIMBEX!"

Gena S. — CA

"I have only used it for a week and my hands stopped aching. I am thrilled. Thanks!"

Andrew P. — CT

"This has made me virtually free of joint pain. My husband has a severe neck issue and notices improvement as well."

Doris W. — SC

"Wonderful! When I don't take it, my knees kill me. I absolutely love LIMBEX!"

Caridad W. — MD

"LIMBEX has reduced pain in my aching knees, elbow, hips to almost nothing."

Diane H. — TX

Top Doc Says Don't Settle for Constant Joint Symptoms

Renowned holistic doctor David Brownstein, M.D., decided to search for new natural strategies to help soothe and comfort aching joints.

After seeing so many patients take handfuls of expensive but low-quality joint supplements, Dr. Brownstein formulated LIMBEX®.

This advanced joint support formula contains 11 premium ingredients to improve and maintain healthy joints, cartilage, and connective tissue.

AprèsFlex® Starts Helping Joints in as Little as 5 Days!

Boswellia has been used for 2,000 years to help aching joints. However, traditional boswellia is poorly absorbed.

Fortunately, scientists developed a new next-generation boswellia extract — AprèsFlex® — that improves upon the bioavailability of traditional boswellia.

Here's why Dr. Brownstein made it the flagship ingredient in LIMBEX: AprèsFlex starts balancing the inflammatory response in your joints in as little as five days!

And as good as AprèsFlex is for your joints, Dr. Brownstein didn't stop there. He went on to create an all-natural joint health "multi-tasker."

11 Powerful, Hand-Picked Ingredients

In addition to AprèsFlex, LIMBEX contains 10 more hard-working ingredients:

- » **Glucosamine** — keeps joints lubricated and promotes healthy cartilage
- » **Chondroitin** — provides building blocks for new cartilage and supports joint mobility
- » **Bromelain** — improves blood flow to speed up healing in damaged joints
- » **Holy Basil** — inhibits COX enzymes that cause joint irritation
- » **Turmeric** — contains curcumin to help reduce pain, swelling, and stiffness
- » **Green Tea Leaf Extract** — puts the brakes on pain-producing compounds that irritate joints
- » **Pomegranate Fruit Extract** — blocks a specific protein that causes cartilage breakdown
- » **Piperine** — helps reduce cartilage destruction
- » **Vitamin C and Vitamin E** — both guard against joint-damaging free radicals

The Simple Solution for Joint Health Support

LIMBEX now makes it easy to help support and soothe your joints. Get back to living your life again with less pain and stiffness. Try LIMBEX today!



DR. BROWNSTEIN

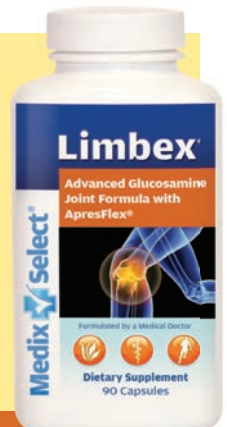
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You'll also receive Dr. Brownstein's detailed special report "**A Doctor's Guide to Happy, Healthy Joints at Any Age**" as a **FREE** bonus gift (a \$20 value).

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'CAN WE HAVE A DEPARTMENT CONVENTION?'

It seems like such a simple question, but as we quickly discovered, the answer might require some professional help. ALA National Headquarters consulted with our professional parliamentarian, Chris Dickey, for guidance.

The following is an account of the process and resources we utilized to determine if, when, and in what form our 2021 National Convention would be held. By sharing our process, we hope to answer questions that need to be answered in order to determine what your department convention might look like this year.

- **Look at your department bylaws to see how the time and place of your convention is determined.** Is your meeting tied to The American Legion? At the national level, the ALA National Convention "shall be held annually at the same time and place as the convention of The American Legion." There's no flexibility there. However, if your Constitution & Bylaws have a clause that begins with "or," you might have some flexibility.

- **Look at your state's laws on electronic nonprofit membership meetings.** These are different from board of directors meetings. The American Legion Auxiliary national organization is incorporated in Indiana, and its state laws regarding

virtual membership meetings state: "If provided in the articles of incorporation or bylaws, a member of a corporation may participate in an annual or a regular meeting of the *members* by or through the use of any means of communication by which all members participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A member of a corporation participating in a meeting by this means is

In addition, does the election take place at the convention?

considered to be present in person at the meeting." [IC 23-17-10-1(g) emphasis added] Since there is no provision in the ALA national bylaws allowing for electronic membership meetings, we cannot hold a virtual National Convention.

- **Has your state government issued an emergency order that would allow electronic membership meetings even if an organization's bylaws do not provide for them?** Some state governments have done so, although Indiana has not.

- **If you can meet only in person, what should you consider?**

- What are the local restrictions on gathering sizes?

- Will members be staying in a hotel?

- Are there restrictions concerning amenities such as food service or elevator capacity?

- **Quorum.** Attendance might be down; will you be able to achieve a quorum for voting? Whether an electronic meeting or an in-person meeting, you must meet quorum. Look in your bylaws for your convention quorum.

- **If we cannot have a convention, can we change our officers?** Look in your bylaws for the wording on the term lengths. For example, at the national level, our national officers serve "until their successors are elected," and elections occur during National Convention. In addition, does the election take place at the convention? If it is tied to your convention, then one option might be that the officers choose to resign (just not all at once!). Then you would look in your bylaws for the process of *filling vacancies*. Many department bylaws involve the department executive committee in the process of filling vacancies.

- **Can your Department Executive Committee meet electronically?**

Consult your state nonprofit statutes regarding board of directors meetings. Remember: These are different from statutes regarding membership meetings. In Indiana, our state laws allow boards to meet if all board members can simultaneously hear each other if it is not *prohibited* in the bylaws.

If you're confused, you're not alone. Membership organizations nationwide are trying to answer these same questions. National Headquarters strongly recommends that departments consult a professional registered parliamentarian or an attorney to assist in interpreting department bylaws on these complex issues. Visit the National Association of Parliamentarians website at www.parliamentarians.org to find a professional in your area.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS RATIFIED AT MID-YEAR NEC MEETING

We were overwhelmed by the qualified applicants for these special committees. After an unbiased and objective process, 16 members were chosen from 300 applicants to serve on the Code of Ethical Conduct Review Committee and the Inclusion & Diversity Committee. Meet our impressive members!

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS:



Lauralee Gooch, JD (Calif.) is a regulatory compliance lawyer and graduate of

Stanford Law School. She has extensive experience in code of conduct policy development, investigations, and whistleblower policies.



Jacqui Hood, JD (Vt.) is a justice of the peace and graduate of Yale Law School. She

brings over 26 years of experience with boards of directors, codes of conduct, and bylaws.



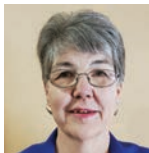
Dr. Susan Neville, PHD, RN, CDP, CADDCT, AACN Wharton Fellow (N.Y.) is a nursing

professor and retired university nursing administrator with considerable experience with boards, ethical codes, and bylaws.



Bethany Goers, SHRM-SCP (Ohio) is a chief human resources officer. She brings over 25 years

of experience in government and nonprofit boards, compliance, and ethics reviews and investigations.



Ann Rehbein (Iowa) brings experience not only with the ALA national organization, but

also as the former executive director of a nationwide veterans nonprofit organization, the Quilts of Valor Foundation.



Erin Bruni, JD (Pa.) is a municipal investigations manager for the City of Pittsburgh.

She is a certified internal affairs investigator/supervisor.



Sarah Fry, JD (Texas) is an associate general counsel. She brings extensive experience

in corporate governance, code of conduct policies, and nonprofit organization bylaws.

INCLUSION & DIVERSITY SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:



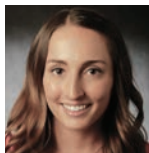
Mariann Cheney (N.Y.) is the director of public relations and development for a nonprofit

serving people with disabilities. She volunteers regularly as a lobbyist and received national awards from the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and Society of Surgeons of the Alimentary Tract.



Dr. Teresa Nuñez (Calif.) is a clinical psychologist and professor of nursing.

She volunteers with many organizations, including American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness, homeless outreach, and at the Navajo Nation.



Kaylene Khosla (Colo.) participated in ALA Girls State and ALA Girls Nation. She is a

law student at U.C. Berkeley and is involved with the Diverse Attorney Pipeline Program.



Karla Washington (Ga.) is an HR/operations manager. She serves on the board of the Morgan Bay Youth Village and the NAACP.



Deidre Wilson (Ohio) has over 25 years of experience as a corporate compliance risk

management executive. She is certified in fostering inclusion and diversity through Yale School of Management.



Yvonne Oliver (Md.) has 20 years of experience in training and development,

including diversity and inclusion training.



Lorraine Boucher (R.I.) has an educational background in sociology. She

has instructed college courses on ethnic and race relations, social stratification, and social justice.



Dr. Leslie Rist, EdD (Calif.) is a graduate professor of leadership and HR management.

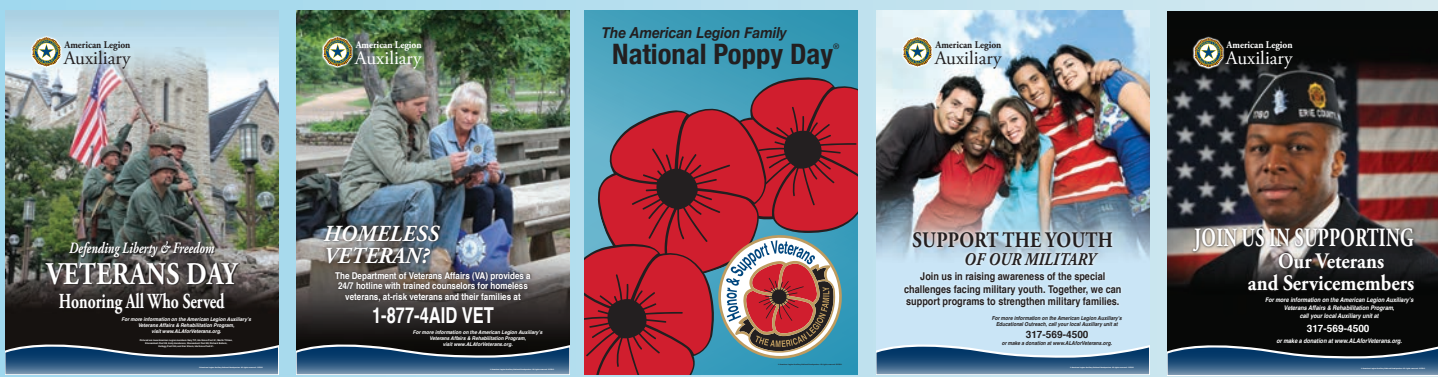
She is the founding member of the Northwest Human Rights Coalition.



Claire Gallagher Moore (Va.) is a military spouse, behavior specialist, and promotes

inclusion of individuals with disabilities. She was a former ALA Junior member and now is a mentor.

To learn more about the selection process, check out our story on the ALA blog at www.ALAforVeterans.org.



MARKETING POSTERS: Various ALA posters are available for download as print-ready PDF files at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

BRING FUN, FRESH APPROACHES, AND DIFFERENT VOICES TO UNIT MEMBERSHIP TASKS

Has collecting dues become a snooze? Has getting membership renewals and rejoins become a chore that's a bore?

It doesn't have to be that way. Yes, these are important tasks. Yes, responsible behavior is required. But that doesn't mean these activities can't be fun. Nor do these tasks have to be a one-person activity.

Shake things up a bit. Make membership activities a fun project that can be done along with others in your unit. In addition to having a good time while doing something positive for the unit, you may also boost your chances of meeting your membership goals. There would be additional people, with varying approaches, making the calls to remind members about dues payments and renewals, and encouraging former members to rejoin. Changing things up in this way can be just what's needed to get more people paying their dues and renewing or resuming their ALA membership.

"Your unit can have a membership chairman. But why not

set up a membership team and invite other unit members to be part of the team?" said Shirley Frederick, ALA national Membership Committee Northwestern Division chair.

Need some ideas on how to make membership activities fun? How about some good-natured competition to liven up things and increase the chances of getting positive results? Frederick offers an example.

Shake things up a bit. Make membership activities a fun project that can be done along with others in your unit.

"Make a list of unpaid members — the ones who have not paid for at least the past two years — and a list of those who are eligible but have not joined. Ask members to volunteer to help with one of the two lists. See if you can get several members for each list. Thank and celebrate everyone who participates. We all have a part to play, and we should all be recognized for the work we do," Frederick said.

Another competitive twist to membership activities is to have your

fellow unit members put up ALA posters in various public places, where permitted. The posters should include membership eligibility criteria, a local contact name and phone number or email for someone interested in talking about the ALA, plus a website address where more information about the Auxiliary can be found.

The competition comes into play when you set fun rules. For example: The person whose posters are mentioned by three new members by a certain date wins the competition. You can offer a small prize or trophy. Or the winner simply gets bragging rights — all in good-natured fun.

Be creative. Find ways to make these important tasks enjoyable and involve others in your unit. Try something new. If it doesn't work or no one is interested in participating, ditch that idea and come up with something else. Maybe you can seek ideas and input from others in your unit who are interested in membership matters. You might be pleasantly surprised by the results when you add a little fun, involve others in the membership activities, and shake things up a bit.

MORE MEMBERSHIP SUGGESTIONS

Signing up new members is a must for the American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion, and Sons of The American Legion. It's a wise idea for Legionnaires, Sons, and Auxiliary members to recruit for one another, as well as the organizations to which each person belongs. There is strength in numbers,

and this can be an opportunity to involve others in your post home's unit, post, and squadron. Growing the Legion Family will continue to be a priority in the years ahead. The good news is that recruiting for the entire Legion Family is not difficult. Tips and suggestions about this can be found in this issue of *Auxiliary*, beginning on page 32.

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— Don W., Sherman, TX

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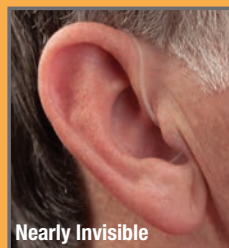
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**WATCH, LEARN, GROW
WITH TED TALKS**

The long year of 2020 gave many people a chance to embrace their individuality during isolation and quarantine. While not being able to socialize and indulge in everyday events, virtual learning activities like TED Talks were universal hits with everyone staying at home.

If you aren't familiar with or have never listened to a TED Talk, look up the most viewed TED Talk videos to get a sense of what these informational and relatable stories are. With views ranging from around 20 million to over 70 million, these inspirational stories give advice and help viewers understand the topic discussed. There are thousands of talks to choose from — just click on the topic that interests you!

TED Talks feature real people telling their real stories on stage with a small audience that laughs and cries with them. The talks are then posted to TED.com for anyone to view, and you don't need to log in or make an account to watch. The most popular talks feature scientists, psychologists, businessmen and women, doctors, influencers, and the leaders of tomorrow.

According to their website, "TED is a nonprofit devoted to sharing ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks (18 minutes or less).

TED began in 1984 as a conference where Technology, Entertainment, and Design converged, and today covers almost all topics — from science to business to global issues — in more than 100 languages."

Looking for positivity and happiness? Watch *What Makes a Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness* presented by psychiatrist Robert Waldinger, who is the director of a 75-year-old study on adult development. He uses his knowledge, wisdom, and data to determine true happiness and satisfaction with three important life lessons.

Need a burst of motivation? Tune in to career analyst Dan Pink's talk, *The Puzzle of Motivation*. With almost 27 million views, he examines what truly motivates people with an interesting study that demonstrates the powers of left-brain thinking vs. right-brain thinking.

Want to be and feel inspired? Listen to leadership expert Simon Sinek's powerful talk *How Great Leaders Inspire Action*. He explores how the world's greatest leaders can inspire cooperation, trust, and change by using examples like Martin Luther King, the Wright brothers, and Apple. Sinek studied the way these leaders think, act, and communicate — then codified it into a simple idea about leading by inspiration.

TED is a nonprofit devoted to sharing ideas for people who seek a deeper understanding of the world. They believe in the power of ideas to change attitudes, lives, and the world. TED is a global community with a mission to spread ideas, share knowledge, and inspire millions.

 **JOKES** 

What did the affectionate crayons say to one another?
I LOVE HUE!

When a teacher asked my 6-year-old nephew why his handwriting wasn't as neat as usual, he responded, "I'm trying a new font."

Two men are hiking through the woods when one of them cries out, "Snake! Run!"
His companion laughs at him. "Oh, relax. It's only a baby," he says. "Don't you hear the rattle?"

My laptop was driving me crazy. "The A, E, and I keys always stick," I complained to a friend. She quickly diagnosed the problem: "Your computer is suffering from irritable vowel syndrome."

What did the nut say when it sneezed?
Cash-ewwww!

Source: www.ajokeaday.com

AUXILIARY SUDOKU

Insert the missing numbers one to nine exactly once in every row, column, and 3x3 square. The three Sudoku games below are in order of beginner, newspaper style, and hard. Answers are found on page 57.

4	7		1		3	6	
3			5			8	
1		2		3	5		9
			3		6	2	8
8		7	2	5			3
	1		9		4	7	
	2		4	9	8		
			7	2	9	1	
5	4	9			2	3	7

3			8	6			
			7	1		2	
9		7		6	5		
2	1				3	4	
	6			7	2	9	
			3	2	8		5
			5		7	9	6
	5		3			2	
	9	4			8		3

			9				
		5		2		3	4
3		8			7	5	1
	9	7		3			
2				6			3
8			5				
		2			1	9	
4					5		
				8		2	7

A Sparkling Celebration of
Military Love and Pride

CHOOSE FROM 4 SERVICE BRANCHES!



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 Infinity Pendant



"I Love My Sailor"
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"I Love My Marine"
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GIVING A BRIGHTER FUTURE: Images of veteran Joshua Peterson's artwork. Below: Peterson with his mother, Angie Foster.

TIPS ON STARTING A VETERANS CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL IN YOUR AREA

A mother of a former U.S. Army medic, Angie Foster saw how much of a toll military service can have on a person's mental health. Her son, Joshua Peterson, returned from his time in the service suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and moved into a facility to receive care. There, he was introduced to art therapy.

"He was never an artist growing up," Foster said, "and I could see from when he started, his pictures were very dark. He may not talk about it, but he would paint his feelings, what he needed to get out."

Foster saw her son's recovery firsthand — it was visible in the art he had created.

"Toward the end of his therapy and his time in the facility, his paintings were brighter," Foster said.

Seeing that progress, Foster realized that more veterans could benefit from artistic expression. She went to her local U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Grand Island, Neb., to see if they could host a Veterans Creative Arts Festival (VCAF), a program she had seen the American Legion Auxiliary promote over her 16 years of membership. The program is meant to aid in the well-being

of veterans by introducing them to art therapy and celebrating their talent with a showcase and festival.

Though Foster's idea wasn't acted upon immediately, her passion never dwindled, and when staff at the Grand Island U.S. Veterans Affairs Medical Center took an interest, they knew exactly who to turn to. After figuring out details and getting administration on

board, they asked Foster to apply for a VCAF grant from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation to help get things started.

"At first, I was worried when they said we need to apply for a grant," Foster said, "but it was really easy, and the ALA Foundation worked with me a lot during the process."

The ALA Foundation awards Veterans Creative Arts Festival grants up to \$2,500 to ALA units or departments that host a VCAF event that feeds into the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Foster's ALA unit was awarded \$1,630, which helped the festival have success in its first year by providing easels, display materials, and prizes for the winning veterans. Since then, they have had more entries and interest than ever, including another nearby veterans hospital that would like to host a VCAF of their own.

If your local VA facility does not currently host a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival, you can work with your ALA unit and contact a VA staff member who instructs creative arts, or a voluntary services coordinator to get started.



If you have more questions regarding how to start a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival in your community, please visit www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov. If you already plan on hosting a VCAF this year, you can apply for an ALA Foundation grant to support your event at www.ALAFoundation.org/grants.



Since 2000, the American Legion Auxiliary has been involved with the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, alongside the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Learn more at www.ALAFforVeterans.org/NVCAF.

IT'S ALL good

GOOD LEARNING

MISSION EDUCATION FOR ALL AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY MEMBERS

Learning is something that never ends. No matter our age, there is always something new we can learn or teach others. As an organization, it is important for American Legion Auxiliary members to share knowledge with each other to help continue the ALA's longstanding mission of serving veterans, military, and their families.

Auxiliary members of all ages and levels in the organization can learn new skills and ways to serve through ALA Academy and ALA Academy Live — all of which are free. In addition to the self-paced courses on ALA Academy, you can now access recordings from previous ALA Academy Live webinars at www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy. You will need to log in to access the recordings.

The list of available webinars continues to grow as National Headquarters staff and members work together to create new material. The recordings available:

ALA Foundation Grants Panel

- Learn how to apply for grants for things such as a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival or promoting the Auxiliary while working the mission.

Junior Mentor Training Series Course 1: Getting Started with Juniors

- Learn how to create and instill an appreciation and habit of service in Juniors so they'll stay involved as adult members.

Junior Mentor Training Series Course 2: Junior Patch Program

- Develop an understanding of how the ALA Patch Program relates to our mission and how to engage Junior members in the program.

Junior Mentor Training Series Course 3: Juniors and The American Legion Family

- Get ideas on how to expand the role of ALA Juniors within The American Legion Family.

Mission Delivery: Basic Training

- Discover the mission needs in your own community and think differently about how we get others to join us in service.

Mission Delivery: Veteran Service

- Get resources to tailor your programs to meet the needs of the veterans in your community and learn about opportunities to serve in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facilities.

Mission Delivery through Caregiver Support

- Discover American Legion Auxiliary specific tools and training in place within the Military and Veteran Caregiver Network.
- New and exciting opportunities through the VA emerging to meet the needs of caregivers during the pandemic.

Mission Delivery: Veterans Creative Arts

- Learn how to support local veterans creative arts competitions both financially and with volunteer support.
- Discover ways to fund activities through VCAF grants from the ALA Foundation.

If you have not taken an ALA Academy self-paced course, consider adding them to your list of learning opportunities. Courses available:

- ALA 101
- ALA Branding and Why it Matters to Me
- ALA Communication Methods
- Establishing an ALA Culture of Goodwill
- ALA Fundraising
- How to Deal with Conflict
- ALA Leadership: Living Our Motto of *Service Not Self*
- ALA Juniors eLearning Course

To keep up to date on all of the latest offerings for ALA Academy and ALA Academy Live, follow our social media channels (@ALAforVeterans) and the monthly *ALA eNews*.



ALA ACADEMY REVAMPED!

Have you checked out the new ALA Academy?

What can you do?

- Watch videos from previous ALA Live Courses
- Take the newly revised ALA 101 course
- See the new look and ways to engage with content
- Leave reviews from courses

Stay tuned for more ALA Academy Live courses and self-paced content by going to www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy





WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN MATTERS AT THE UNIT LEVEL

Following the completion of the American Legion Auxiliary's 5-Year Centennial Strategic Plan in 2019, ALA National Headquarters staff and volunteers began working on the current strategic plan. Launching in October 2020, NHQ has already seen results for the first quarter.

You may be wondering what this means at the local level and why members should care. The phrase “strategic planning” may seem complicated and something you may not need at the unit level. But strategic planning is important for organizations and businesses — no matter the size — to prioritize objectives and reach long-term goals. It helps every level of our organization focus on the priorities and the steps needed to have success at all levels. This will ensure the ALA continues its longstanding mission of serving veterans, military, and their families long into the future.

Think of strategic planning in the same way you would your personal goals. Have you made a plan for retirement? What steps do you need to take to reach your post-employment objectives? Are you planning a job change? What do you need to do to make that happen? In both of these scenarios, you need to have a plan and

know what action you need to take.

The ALA's national Strategic Planning Committee will develop strategies and tactics that can be applied at the unit level. After all, we need our units and members in order to make our mission successful. One such strategy will be for units to build a stronger relationship with The American Legion. Our Legion Family can achieve great success if we all work together toward our common collective missions.

Goals of the national ALA strategic plan:

- Cultivate a variety of mission engagement opportunities.
- Enhance organizational effectiveness of all levels: national, department, unit.
- Recruit and retain members through mission engagement.
- Ensure financial stewardship of resources to maximize mission delivery.
- Enhance and foster the family relationship with The American Legion.

This strategic plan differs in many ways from the previous national plan:

- The National Executive

Committee/governing board still adopts goals, but NHQ staff, with input from volunteers, implements the strategies to reach the goals.

- Moving forward, division budgets will include resources to implement strategies and tactics, as opposed to the previous plan, which had its own strategic plan budget. This time, no strategic planning reserves will be established.

- Individual staff performance will be tied to division strategic plans. Previously, staff was taxed with completing regular job duties AND strategic plan duties, which often had nothing to do with their core job functions.

- Metrics will be used to evaluate, report, and, when necessary, modify strategies, allowing the ALA to monitor progress and recognize achievements — two things members noticed were lacking from the previous plan.

The current strategic plan will allow us to have multiple accomplishments in each area. During quarter one of the plan, NHQ saw progress in each of the goals. Here are just a few of the accomplishments:

- Launched a refreshed ALA national website, enabling more visibility and awareness to the public.
- Membership: Since the launch of the redesigned website, there has been a 30 percent increase in the number of dues renewed online compared to the same period last year.
- On #GivingTuesday last fall, the ALA Foundation raised \$56,000 from 595 donations. This surpasses 2019's total by more than \$11,000 and 100 donors.
- ALA Academy Live webinars, designed to enhance mission delivery, are reaching more unit-level members.
- ALA Academy self-paced courses are now easier to access and have refreshed content and new features — an added benefit for ALA members.

At the end of each quarter, NHQ division directors will evaluate the plan to make sure progress is being made toward accomplishing the strategies. This allows for adjustments to be made if necessary.

We'd love to hear how your unit is using a strategic plan. Email us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.



Membership retention by using your voice

When was the last time you reached a fellow member by phone?



When we call members who regularly renew their dues, as well as those who lapsed in their membership, it shows we care. A simple thank-you or “How are you doing?” goes a long way. A quick phone check-in with unit members makes them feel

they are a dynamic part of our organization.

Rally around our veterans, community, and members. Take the time to personally reach out to those who have dedicated their time to the Auxiliary.

Learn how you can connect even further:
Visit www.ALAFforVeterans.org



MEMBERSHIP: PART TWO OF A FOUR-PART SERIES

This year, Auxiliary magazine is publishing articles with useful information about gaining and retaining members within the American Legion Auxiliary, and other parts of our American Legion Family. This article is about recruitment. Topics such as membership retention and encouraging former members to rejoin will be explored in future articles.

Recruiting Members for the Entire American Legion Family ... and Why It Should be Done



WORKING TOGETHER: American Legion Family members of Post 27 in Missoula, Mont., dispose of unserviceable flags during a retirement ceremony on Flag Day (photo by Tommy Martino/The American Legion).

Recruiting for all parts of The American Legion Family is easier than one might think. It doesn't take a salesperson or pressure-laden selling tactics. Recruiting usually begins with a conversation in which the Legion Family member is an active listener — and sincere when speaking.

It may help if you don't think of it as recruiting. After all, what you're doing is sharing. You're telling a person about an opportunity to serve and honor veterans,

military, their families, and your community. You're passing along useful and helpful information. One way to share information is through authentic and friendly conversations.

"I don't like to start with, 'Would you like to be a member?' Instead, I start with a short explanation of what we do, what we're about, and then I say: 'Is there anything our organization can do for you or your family right now?'" said ALA National Membership Committee

Chairman Pam Ray.

Auxiliary magazine interviewed Ray for tips to help all members of the Legion Family recruit for the ALA, the Legion, and Sons of The American Legion. Some of these suggestions may be ones you've heard or seen previously. But good advice bears repeating. Adapt these recruitment tips as needed to accommodate the situation you're in, the person you're talking to, and to foster a natural and honest conversation.

Before that discussion begins — long before you meet that prospective member, there’s something you may want to do first: Familiarize yourself with everything each Legion Family organization does and has to offer.

Learn the basics about each organization’s programs, outreach, and activities. There’s no need to memorize and spout off all of the facts, dates, and figures in the history of all Legion Family organizations. In fact, it’s a good idea to do a lot of listening to the prospective member, Ray advises.

“You have to do more listening than talking when you are recruiting. You have to show interest in them as people. See if there is a natural connection between what he, she, or their family likes to do and the programs, activities, and outreach opportunities our Legion Family offers. Then talk about those offerings that may be of interest to the prospective member and his or her family,” Ray said.

If there is a natural commonality between the prospective member’s interests and the missions, values, programs, and activities of Legion Family, discuss those commonalities.

“What I could say to one prospective member may be well received but could mean absolutely nothing to another person. For example: They may not care about our scholarship programs, or they may feel uncomfortable going to nursing homes and visiting with people they don’t know. You have to listen, no matter which part of the Legion Family you are recruiting for. What is their family dynamic? What do they like to do?” Ray said.

“If you don’t feel as if you are getting anywhere or the person is not interested, let go of the membership topic. But usually, if you listen, you’re going to find one thing you can relate to something in The American Legion Family,” she added.

Understand membership eligibility criteria for the ALA, Legion, Sons,

and American Legion Riders. This can help with recruitment for the other Legion Family organizations.

A few examples: To be eligible for the Auxiliary under the military service of a living relative as outlined in our criteria, that veteran or servicemember has to be or become a Legionnaire.

To join a chapter of Riders, you have to be a member of either the Auxiliary, Legion, or Sons. ALA’s adult members must be at least 18 years old, and ALA Juniors range in age from birth to 17. And males who qualify for the Sons of The American Legion can be any age.

“You don’t have to go into all of the specifics of membership eligibility criteria during a casual conversation — unless you are at a recruitment event and you have those details available,” Ray said. Details on membership eligibility criteria can be found for ALA at www.ALAforVeterans.org, and for Legion, Sons, and Riders via Legion.org.

“It’s important for all of us to remember when recruiting that, if we are speaking to a veteran or servicemember, we are speaking with one of our nation’s heroes. You need to let them know how proud you are to even be speaking with them and how much you appreciate their service. Because if you show sincerity and respect, then they may want to look into volunteering with you,” Ray said.

To get comfortable recruiting for other parts of the Legion Family, talk to other Legion Family members in your post home. Get familiar with events, activities, and mission-based outreach occurring at the local level.

Recruiting for other parts of The American Legion Family can be as simple as mentioning the other organizations. Ray has some examples of wording that can be used in a couple of different scenarios.

“Know your audience. Usually, someone will see a Sons member’s cap or shirt and ask about that. And that’s how a conversation starts. They

can say something like, ‘I belong to the Sons of The American Legion. And there’s also an American Legion and an American Legion Auxiliary. They have great programs as well. Do you have any special interests in the areas of serving veterans or military? I can hook you up with someone who can tell you more about it.’ Or, ‘I can tell you about this program if it’s of interest to you.’

“If you sign up an Auxiliary member, it’s OK to ask, ‘Do you have a son or grandson? We have a program for him called the Sons of The American Legion. And for daughters and granddaughters, we have Auxiliary Junior members. Maybe you’ll want to sign them up.’ Or you might want to give the person the information and say, ‘You might want to think about signing him or her up at some point,’” Ray said.

If you decide to mention facts and figures, choose impact numbers and data which show how our organizations help veterans, servicemembers, military families, youth, and communities locally, nationally, and worldwide.

You might pick a national impact figure, such as: For military families, the American Legion Auxiliary raised and spent \$1.1 million in resources in 2020. Or give a local impact figure or brief fact. Here’s a hypothetical example: “Our ALA unit, here in town, provided 100 meals to local veterans in need over the last two months.” Whether you offer an impact figure or fact — a local or national one, or both — is up to you.

National impact figures and facts can be found in the ALA Annual Report at www.ALAforVeterans.org. Promote the website to prospective members who want more specific or in-depth information about our programs (including ALA Juniors), activities or impact figures, and facts about the ALA (including ALA Juniors). Information about The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, and American Legion Riders can be found at Legion.org.



MISSION SUPPORT (top row, from left): Kansas member Paula Sellens helps families through a Thanksgiving food line (photo: Ben Mikesell/The American Legion); Sons of The American Legion Squadron 507 of Newhall, Calif., along with Legion and Auxiliary members, distribute hot dog lunches to veterans; (bottom row, from left): Illinois members during an American Legion Family membership caravan; members of the Legion Family Post 86 in Arizona participate in a Wreaths Across America event; and a flag retirement ceremony in Missoula, Mont. (photo: Tommy Martino/The American Legion).

One of the most frequent responses when talking to a prospective member about joining any organization revolves around dues — and not wanting to pay any. Ray has a suggestion for how to respond to that:

Tell the truth. The explanation doesn't have to be too heavy on details, unless you have a couple of specifics to share.

"I would say: 'It goes to veterans. And it goes to military. And it goes to their families. And it goes to communities every time you step out the door [as a member] to do something for them.' Dues don't go to everyday operations; I think a lot of people don't understand that," Ray explained.

Another common negative response, a potential recruitment roadblock from a prospective member, is dislike for meetings. Ray's got a response for that too.

"Being a member doesn't mean you have to be at every meeting or event every time. Let's find out what works best for you.' This is appropriate no matter which Legion Family organization you are discussing," Ray said.

Make room at the recruitment table for other Legion Family organizations.

Setting up a table to engage with prospective members at a community event? Ask others from your post home to join. Bring applications for each Family organization.

"Because we are a Legion Family, I think a united approach to membership recruitment would help us. And having all of our organizations at the same table makes a statement that we are indeed a family," Ray said.

"At our Illinois State Fair every year, [ALA and Legion Illinois departments jointly] have a Legion Family membership table. We have applications. We have posters that show what we do as individual organizations and as a Legion Family. Of course, we're all branded. It's very simple to do," she added.

Auxiliary members: Ask Legionnaires at your post home to ask Legionnaires at bachelor posts elsewhere, to consider helping to charter an ALA unit there. It is also a good idea to

encourage Legionnaires to establish a Sons squadron at the post home.

"That's where the Legion can help the Auxiliary. What they could say to other Legionnaires at bachelor posts is, 'You know, you could do X, Y, and Z if you added an Auxiliary unit. Let me hook you up with someone who can give you more information and help you do that. And the Sons is a program of the Legion. Start a squadron and let Sons members help you with the mission,'" Ray said.

Information about chartering an ALA unit is located at www.ALAforVeterans.org. Learn about establishing a Sons squadron or a Riders chapter via Legion.org.

Some post homes already have effective techniques for finding and signing up new members for the Auxiliary, Legion, and Sons. We can learn from them.

"If you have a successful strategy for recruiting for the entire Legion Family, please share it with other units, posts, and squadrons. If you see another post home that has had this success, it's acceptable to ask them how they did it. It's one way you can help our Legion Family grow and support our collective missions even more," Ray said.

Recruiting for other parts of The American Legion Family HOW THEY DID IT

When it comes to growing membership within the Legion Family, there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to achieving the goal. Four Legion Family members shared with *Auxiliary* magazine how they recruit for the American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion, and Sons of The American Legion.

Mention all Legion Family organizations in conversations with prospective members.



Sheila L. Couch

Member of American Legion Auxiliary and American Legion Riders

Unit 88/Chapter 88
Nashville, Tenn.

I just try to do it naturally. It's part of the conversations I have with veterans. I tell them, 'Thank you for your service. It's much appreciated by me and my family.' I might mention the service of my dad and my father-in-law, who are both deceased. And my husband and his two brothers, they're all veterans. One thing leads to another sometimes during these chats.

I may ask if they've heard of The American Legion or the American Legion Auxiliary. If they haven't, I tell them about the organizations and tell them the website where they can learn more. I have said something about all of them. I share info about different activities and programs the Legion Family offers. If the conversation doesn't go that way, it's not something that I force on anybody: To stand there and listen to me.

My recruiting efforts are usually done when I participate in the annual Legacy Run in August. I may not see them again, so I don't know how many I recruit in those cases. But when I have those discussions locally, I would say 10, maybe 15, of the people I've spoken to about our Legion Family have joined.

Ask new members if they have relatives who might be eligible to join ALA, Legion, Sons, and Riders. If your post does not have an ALA unit, Sons squadron, or Riders chapter, why not work to start one? A full post home helps with the mission.



Jeffrey K. Crouser

Member of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American

Legion, and American Legion Riders

Post/Unit/Squadron/Chapter 3
Milford, Del.

Jeffrey K. Crouser decided to transfer his Legion membership to Post 3 in Milford, Del., in 2018 to help save a post that was close to turning in its charter due to major membership decreases. The effort was a success. After 18 months, Post 3 membership went from 52 and falling to 99 and climbing. But that wasn't enough for Crouser and many of his fellow Legionnaires at Post 3. The story continues from there ...

"We decided that being an individual post — without an American Legion Auxiliary unit, without a Sons of The American Legion squadron, without an American Legion Riders chapter — we just weren't complete without the whole Legion Family there, working together on goals toward success. You can't be a Family if there's just one of you.

We opened our post home June 1, 2020, and immediately started — with assistance from leaders at ALA Department and Sons Detachment of Delaware — to form our post home's unit, squadron, and chapter.

We worked hard to exceed Unit 3's membership goal for the current administrative year. The goal, set by the ALA Department of Delaware, was 30 by June 2021. As of Feb. 24, Unit 3 has 75 members. Of that, 60 are new members and 11 are transfers from other units. With a goal of 199 Legionnaires by June 2021, Post 3 membership rose to 325 as of Feb. 24. Of that 325, 47 are new

recruits. Squadron 3's goal to reach by June 2021 is 35. As of Feb. 24, the squadron has 39 members, 26 of whom are new recruits.

What's our secret to success? One thing is to recruit for the entire American Legion Family. If someone signs up for the ALA, Legion, Sons, or Riders, ask questions to see if the new member has a relative who may be eligible to join any part of the Legion Family.

We have a very active media communications team. We are involved in the social media, email communications with all of our members, email blasts, and articles in the paper. These days, most newsprint professionals are begging for content. If you send them some information on a feel-good project, they'll print it for you free of charge. Best advertising in the world.

Tell your friends, neighbors, co-workers, and other contacts about the Legion Family.



Jill Puett

Member of American Legion Auxiliary
Unit 100
Cherryville, NC

A lot of customers who come into the long-term care pharmacy where I work are veterans. And they are so proud of their military time. They seem to always have their military hats on. I look out for that, and when I see them, I thank them for their service. Then, I ask them whether they belong to The American Legion. If they say no, I invite them to visit with us at our Legion post home. I tell him the best times to show up. I give them my card in case they are interested in visiting or joining and want to call me about it.

Some of the guys who come in to the pharmacy, I will probably know that their fathers served in the military and I will let them know we have a Sons of The American Legion squadron at our post. I invite them to come to the post, maybe to sit in on a Sons meeting. I tell them that as a member, you'd

be helping our veterans and that we are also about helping our children and youth. I tell them all of the work the Sons do and what we all do as a Legion Family.

You can't get people to join if you don't talk and listen to them. You have to tell them what you do. For us, it's telling what the Auxiliary, Legion, Sons, and the Riders do.

It's about sharing our Legion Family information with people you know. I have my community connections because Cherryville's population is about 5,000 and I've lived here all my life. So, I know a lot of people here.

But if you don't have those type of connections, there's still something you can do. Most towns and cities have a chamber of commerce, and the chambers usually have websites where you can put general information about organizations.

If you're a member of another community group, you can make connections there and maybe one of your contacts there might be eligible to join our Legion Family. And there's also connections you can make at work. Whenever you are talking to people about signing up, make sure you talk about all of our organizations in our Legion Family, and not just the one you belong to.

Identify Legion Family members with relatives who might be eligible to join but haven't.



Shirley Frederick
Member of
American Legion
Auxiliary
Unit 202
Hackensack, Minn.

One way to find new members for other parts of our post home is to review the rosters of the unit and post to see if there are current members with relatives who may be eligible to join but haven't done so already.

At my post home, we've done this roster review in a couple of different ways through the years. Depending on who's in the Auxiliary unit and Legion post leadership roles at that time, we've shared the [unit and post] rosters to see where the Auxiliary can

pick up membership and where the Legion can pick up membership.

Once we talk to the Legion leaders at our post and find Legionnaires who have spouses and children who haven't joined our Legion Family, then we have an avenue to send them membership applications with the info about the Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion. The [Auxiliary] here has gotten a number of new members — as many as eight through the years — this way. Then, some of those new members have told other people who have moved into our area, and some of those eligible people are coming into the post and signing up.

I've been suggesting this to people in my district and department for a number of years. I know that some units and posts have done this and have added to their membership this way.

And by the way, this is a nice time to get a half of a dozen or so of your Auxiliary members involved in this as a project. If we are making calls to follow up on potential members discovered through the roster review, each Auxiliary member can take a few names of people to call.

INSPIRE OTHERS IN YOUR POST HOME TO WORK AS A TEAM AND RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS FOR THE ALA, LEGION, AND SONS

Membership matters should not be placed upon the shoulders of only one person, or on only one Legion Family organization at a post home. It may require some inspiration to get others in your Legion Family on board with the concept of working together, recruiting together, and seeking members for the Auxiliary, Legion, and Sons ... not just for the organization to which one belongs.

Here are some statements and facts which illustrate the strong relationships across The American Legion Family — and why it makes sense to recruit members for all parts of the Family organizations.

There is encouragement, within national leadership from The American Legion, for Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, and Sons members to recruit for each other's organizations.

"We should be constantly recruiting for the entire American Legion Family every time we are talking with a veteran or family member of a veteran! Especially when talking with our younger veterans and family members, they are more likely to want to do things together rather than apart.

We are much stronger as a Family unit than we are individually. Because we are devoted to help our fellow veterans and their family, mold and teach our youth, advocate for a strong National Security, and be on the front lines showing our love of country through our Americanism spirit, we can better support our four pillars when doing it together. We welcome and encourage Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion members to recruit for the entire Family." — Legionnaire Jay Bowen, National Chairman, Membership and Post Activities

The American Legion has had a high regard for the ALA dating back to its early years

"The Auxiliary is the right arm of the main body, which is The American Legion." — James Drain, past national commander of The American Legion (American Legion Weekly magazine, Aug. 21, 1925/pg. 4)

"The force to achieve the Legion's aims receives added intensity when the strength of the Legion Auxiliary is pushing it on. The Legion needs the Auxiliary. The encouragement of every individual Legionnaire, post, and department, should be given unstintingly to the Auxiliary. Every act of the Legion and its Auxiliary should be for the other and both always for everything to benefit our common country." — James Drain, past national commander of The American Legion (American Legion Weekly magazine, Aug. 21, 1925/pg. 4)

“The Auxiliary is the other half that waited for us at home and now walks at our side.” — Columnist Frederick Palmer (American Legion Weekly magazine, Aug. 21, 1925/ pg. 4)

“The bachelor post, the one which does not have an Auxiliary unit, is not making the most of its opportunities. To bachelor posts, I say: ‘Get an Auxiliary unit as quickly as you can and watch yourselves go forward.’ To those posts fortunate in having a unit, I say: ‘Back it up, count upon it to help you, and watch it go forward with you.’” — James Drain, past national commander of The American Legion (American Legion Weekly magazine, Aug. 21, 1925/pg. 4)

“Every bachelor post ought to ask itself seriously why it is not taking its proper place in Legion affairs by inviting the women relatives of its members to join the American Legion Auxiliary. Every post having an Auxiliary unit may well examine its own record to determine whether it has given its Auxiliary unit the full support to which it is entitled. Faith in the future of the Legion demands this,

and so does common fairness.”
— Editorial (American Legion Weekly magazine, Aug. 21, 1925/pg. 8)

Help your Family members in recruiting efforts by talking more about their organizations to others

“The term Legion Family is more than just words. We are really a family. Our local ALA units, Legion posts, Sons squadrons, and Riders chapters share a post home. So why not help each other with finding new members? Just a mention of our other organizations during a conversation with a prospective member can make a difference. It can help our family grow.” — Pam Ray, ALA National Membership Committee Chairman

Supporting The American Legion is a key part of ALA's mission, vision, and purpose

This is spelled out in the first sentences of the Auxiliary's mission and vision statements:

Mission Statement

In the spirit of *Service Not Self*, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American

Legion and honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace, and security.

Vision Statement

The vision of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion while becoming the premier service organization and foundation of every community providing support for our veterans, our military, and their families by shaping a positive future in an atmosphere of fellowship, patriotism, peace, and security.

For over a century, American Legion Family members have collaborated on so many successful efforts to help and honor America's veterans, military, and their families.

So why not work together to recruit, signing up members for all parts of our Legion Family? ★

By Landa Bagley, Staff Writer



FAMILY WITH FLAGS: Members of Pennsylvania's American Legion 12th District Family host a patriotic Fourth of July concert for patients and residents at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center in Wilkes Barre, Pa. (photo by Corey Perrine/The American Legion).

National Poppy Day[®] is May 28 This Year

Get Creative with Poppy Distribution



Honor the fallen and support the living.

This motto has been part of poppy distribution for decades, with proceeds going toward veterans, military, and their families.

The focus on the poppy began after the death and destruction that was part of World War I when beautiful, bright red poppies began to flourish in the soils of France and Belgium. This little flower came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following publication of the wartime poem *In Flanders Fields*. Moina Michael drew inspiration from this poem when she popularized the idea of wearing a poppy flower in memory of the lives lost in WWI.

A few years later, the poppy became the official flower of The American Legion Family to memorialize

the soldiers who fought and died during WWI. In the decades that followed, poppies have been worn, displayed, and distributed for fundraising efforts by veterans service and support organizations like the American Legion Auxiliary around the world.

National Poppy Day

Led by the American Legion Auxiliary, each year members of The American Legion Family distribute poppies in exchange for donations to support the future of veterans, active-duty military personnel, and their families with medical and financial needs.

These poppy distribution days are often observed around both Memorial Day and Veterans Day in the United States. In 2017, The American Legion Family

brought National Poppy Day to the United States by asking Congress to designate the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day — May 28 this year.

In 2018, The American Legion successfully trademarked the name National Poppy Day for the Legion Family to use publicly. Trademarking National Poppy Day helped to establish The American Legion Family as the authority on all things poppy related. ALA units and departments are encouraged to use the trademark ® symbol when using the name National Poppy Day on all communications materials. Just include the symbol on first reference.

Thinking outside the box for poppy distribution

As we all experienced last year and yet this year, the pandemic has changed the way members distributed the poppy and the way we've celebrated National Poppy Day. Since our founding, ALA members have continued to be resilient in whatever they face, and continuing to promote the poppy is no exception.

Last year, many members didn't do anything for National Poppy Day because they didn't know how to do it contactless, as the Auxiliary is such a hands-on organization. But the pandemic didn't stop some units, like Unit 45 in Greenbrier, Tenn., whose members figured out a way to continue with distribution while keeping its members and community safe. Lessons learned from last year's event have prompted the unit to do a contactless drive-thru poppy distribution again this year.

"Think outside the box," said Kathi Carney, president of Unit 45, as part of her advice to other members. "Look at your location and what you can do in that location to get your community behind you."

If that location — say, your post home — doesn't work well for an event like this, Carney suggests borrowing someone else's location for your poppy distribution.

Last year, the flow of Unit 45's event went really well, so they plan on duplicating that again. One change based on last year's event will be instead of it simply being focused on distribution, it will be more of a drive-thru educational event, showcasing different pieces of history with the poppy so people can go slower and read. Community members can also park and walk to read the signs if they wish. The unit is also adding a copy of the *In Flanders Fields* poem in the bags with the poppies so people will have that history to take with them. Carney added they also hope to make a giant poppy out of plywood with a hole in the middle so people can put their head through and take a picture.

One suggestion Carney has for those thinking of doing a drive-thru poppy event is to make sure to have good signage, especially facing two sides, as visibility from both sides of the road is important. After last year's

event, the unit has decided to purchase a second sign. (Read more about branded signage on page 42 in this feature story.)

Carney said the ease of the event for members was a determining factor in doing it again for 2021. Rather than having members out at local stores, conducting the event at the post made it easy for members to go inside and take a break from volunteering and/or from the elements, make more poppies, and also gave the opportunity for more American Legion Family members to get involved being held at the post home. The Family aspect, Carney said, was a key part to their success and suggests units work with other parts of the Family, even reaching out to another post if needed and doing something jointly.

Unit 45 utilized social media to spread the word about their poppy distribution last year and plan to do so with this year's event.

"Facebook has been our friend without a doubt," Carney said. "We pushed a lot of things out through social."

Carney offers advice to other units thinking of doing a contactless poppy drive-thru or something different than what they usually do.

"You just have to be creative," she said. "Sometimes we get stuck in a rut and are not thinking outside the box at all. The more creative you are, the more you engage the community, the better off you are. Your community embraces you when you try something different."

Bonus tip:
Collaborate with a local business to include coupons for a small item. For example, Unit 5 in Tampa, Fla., added a twist to its poppy drive-thru event. They partnered with a local McDonald's and got "bounce back" coupons for a free burger, which they then included with the poppies during their distribution. In less time than a traditional poppy distribution event with a membership of only 42, the unit earned over \$1,000 in donations!



More creative ways to distribute poppies during the pandemic

In addition to contactless drive-thru poppy distribution, members got creative last year and tried new things to raise funds. Needing to do something different than your usual poppy distribution because of the pandemic? Borrow one of these ideas!

- Distribute poppy donation cans and jars to businesses. These businesses are given recognition for their support in local newspapers, on social media, and on radio and television.
- Send letters with poppies, poppy bookmarks, and the *In Flanders Fields* poem to your post's Family members requesting donations. Include self-addressed, stamped envelopes for their convenience.
- Make poppy face masks, and label bottles of hand sanitizers with the ALA emblem to raise funds.
- Distribute poppies during drive-up meals held at posts. Consider attaching a poppy and a poppy information sheet to lunch bags.
- Use social media to collect funds. Add donation buttons to your website and Facebook page to encourage members to donate.
- Hold virtual fundraising events through Zoom meetings with unit/department members, auctioning poppy items such as wreaths, hats, cookies, etc., or hold a raffle to increase poppy funds that may have been lost during the pandemic.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO UNITS

National Poppy Day toolkit

This toolkit is available to members of The American Legion Family to help get the word out about the poppy. Events that include local government, civic leaders, your community, and the media are opportunities for departments and units to raise awareness and funds.

Units and posts are encouraged to build on this by hosting poppy awareness activities, such as inviting local government and civic leaders to a poppymaking event in advance of National Poppy Day, while abiding by local

guidelines for social distancing.

This toolkit is designed to assist with local promotion. It contains a proclamation, sample media alert, press release, social media posts, graphics, and talking points to ensure a consistent message is used by everyone in The American Legion Family. It also includes a tip sheet for hosting a poppymaking event.

- State and citywide proclamations: Ask your local government to declare May 28, 2021, as National Poppy Day in your community. A sample proclamation and request letter have been included in the toolkit and provide language that can be used to help your unit and post garner support from state and local officials.
- Media alert: Announces local poppymaking events, poppy distribution, and other activities planned around National Poppy Day. This at-a-glance reminder should be distributed to local media outlets two days prior to an event. List the specifics of where the media can go to learn more about National Poppy Day and interview local members of The American Legion Family.
- Press release: Issued after an event to recap the details and highlights for the media. You should include a picture, if possible. In essence, you do reporters' work for them, increasing the chances of an outlet running the story if all of the details are provided in a clear and organized way.
- Quick facts: A good leave-behind for media following an interview, the quick facts sheet helps ensure that information and facts are accurately reported by the press. It can also be used to provide unit and post members with information, especially for those distributing poppies who may encounter questions from the general public.
- Tip sheet — poppymaking event: The tip sheet is provided as a guide for hosting a poppymaking event. It is organized in a start-to-finish format and can be used for reference when planning your event.
- Social media suggestions: Unit and post websites and social media feeds can increase awareness about National Poppy Day to members and followers. Be sure



DID YOU KNOW?

The Sunday after National Poppy Day, May 30, is the Indianapolis 500 race, another opportunity to get The American Legion Family name and the importance of the poppy out to the general public.

This year, the Family has a greater chance of educating the public on who we are, what we do, and why we matter with the multi-year agreement between The American Legion and Chip Ganassi Racing. The Legion will be a sponsor of the No. 48 Honda in the NTT IndyCar Series. The Legion will be featured prominently on the No. 48 Honda during every race in the 2021 and 2022 NTT IndyCar Series and will also be the primary paint scheme for two races in 2021 (photo: Tony Kanaan, the 2013 Indianapolis 500 winner, will drive the No. 48 car for his 20th race on the famous oval).

to regularly post information during the weeks leading up to May 28, 2021, and encourage members to share the links with their friends and family. This ensures that your post promotes National Poppy Day outside The American Legion Family. Sample social media posts are included in the toolkit for reference.

- **Talking points:** The entire American Legion Family is participating in and supporting National Poppy Day. It is very important that everyone communicates a consistent message to the media. Talking points are provided to ensure the campaign provides one clear, united voice that explains how The American Legion Family is helping communities show their support for our heroes and servicemembers on National Poppy Day. These talking points should be given to your media spokespeople and localized with details of events in your community.

- **Community calendar posting:** Many print and web publications announce events in their community bulletin board sections. A sample post and submission instructions have been provided to have your event(s) included on any community calendar. For web publications, event information can be emailed to the website point of contact.

- **Logo:** The American Legion Family logo and poppy graphic can be found online for download at poppydayusa.org. We encourage you to use these logos on all National Poppy Day communications.

To view the toolkit, visit poppydayusa.org. The American Legion Family created this website for the public and Legion Family entities alike to learn more about National Poppy Day.

Banners and posters

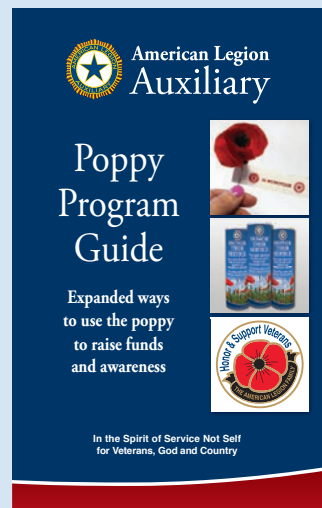
ALA National Headquarters recently created banners for contactless drive-thru poppy distribution that units and departments can use by downloading them from the national website at www.ALAforVeterans.org. Two sizes are available: 8 feet by 2 feet and 8 feet by 3 feet.

Poppy posters are also available for use. Sizes are 11 inch by 17 inch and 18 inch by 24 inch. One poster is branded for National Poppy Day, and one includes the *In Flanders Fields* poem.

Website resources

The ALA national website has a Poppy Day resources tab. Here you will find ideas for alternative items to distribute and a poppy kit. The distribution of the bright red memorial flower to the public is one of the oldest and most widely recognized programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.

There are many items you can distribute in exchange for donations in addition to the traditional crepe paper poppy. Items include a felt poppy, poppy cookies, and a poppy coloring book.



HOW POPPY FUNDS CAN BE USED

- ★ 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.

- ★ 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 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.

Learn more about the poppy via the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program Guide at www.ALAforVeterans.org.



The poppy kit is also available to units, with several items including a donation can label, poppy bookmark, *In Flanders Fields* poem bookmark, Poppy Program certificate, PSA template, Poppy Day news release template, and a sample poppy proclamation.

Social media

Here's an easy way to communicate the poppy message for everybody — social media. With the simple click of a button, you can share your National Poppy Day plans with all of your followers! You can also request to join the national ALA Poppy Program Facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/ALAPoppy. There, you and other American Legion Auxiliary members can share ideas, projects, and information about our Poppy Program!

Poppy spirit

Be sure to wear your poppy items with pride! Visit American Legion Flag & Emblem sales at www.Emblem.Legion.org to view National Poppy Day items such as shirts, pins, poppy kits, donation cans, and more.

It's for kids, too!

Children can also get involved in spreading the poppy message. Poppy Poster Contests are held in local schools for students in grades two to 12. Also, the Little Miss Poppy Contest is a fun event for Junior Auxiliary

members ages 6 to 12 who promote the Auxiliary memorial poppy.

Virtual National Poppy Day event

Once again, the national American Legion Auxiliary will be hosting a virtual National Poppy Day event on Facebook in early May. Leadership from The American Legion Family will talk about the poppy's significance, its place in history, and its relevance today. You will also hear from members explaining what the poppy means to them.

New this year will be an added discussion on the crisis of food insecurity for junior enlisted servicemembers — which poppy funds can be used to support these men and women. Visit Facebook.com/alaforveterans for more information. The full program will be available for viewing on YouTube. Search for “AmericanLegionAux.”

To learn more about poppies and the upcoming National Poppy Day, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/poppy or poppydayusa.org.

National Poppy Day is a strong renewal of our nation's commitment to a powerful reminder of the cost of our freedom. Wear a red poppy to honor the fallen and support the living who have worn our nation's uniform. ★

By Sara Fowler, Staff Writer



NATIONAL POPPY DAY® MARKETING ITEMS: Make sure your poppy activities are fully branded this year! Available for free download at www.ALAforVeterans.org are posters, banners, the Poppy Program Guide, a coloring book, and more. And check out American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales at emblem.Legion.org or 1-888-453-4466 for donation cans, shirts, stickers, patches, pins, jewelry, bookmarks, and more!

IMPACT ALA!

NEC APPROVES RESOLUTIONS; DELEGATES TO VOTE AT CONVENTION

At its mid-year meeting, the National Executive Committee received a refresher on business items from the cancelled 2020 National Convention, and what business will be presented this year.

The proposed changes to the ALA Constitution & Bylaws will be voted on by delegates at the 2021 National Convention.

The first change is to establish the Executive Committee to the NEC in the bylaws. While the responsibilities of the Executive Committee are already defined in the Standing Rules, the committee itself needs to be established by name in the bylaws. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to review, research, and make recommendations to the NEC on matters requiring NEC action, and to address and act on time-sensitive matters such as in emergency situations subject to ratification by the NEC.

The second change to vote on at National Convention is renaming the NEC to the National Board of Directors. The name would change, not the duties. The ALA's governing structure can be very challenging to try to describe internally and externally. When the organization was established over 100 years ago, this name didn't really create confusion.

In today's culture, "board of directors" is the most commonly understood name for a governing board. It would also align the ALA more with Indiana corporation statutes, the state where the ALA national organization is incorporated. A name change would reflect the legal responsibilities vested in board members by the state.

The third item of change to the bylaws is creating the position of executive director at National Headquarters, its duty, authority, and to whom the position is responsible. Responsibilities of the NHQ executive director are already detailed in the standing rules, but the

position needs to be established in the bylaws.

These items will be voted on at the ALA's National Convention, currently scheduled for Aug. 27-Sept. 2 in Phoenix.

In other news, the NEC approved the national policy for employee and volunteer background checks. There was some concern among NEC members if this would put an additional financial burden on units and departments.

Background checks are a long-standing risk mitigation practice of the national organization, and nonprofits nationwide and have been recommended to departments and units for many years.

There can be legal ramifications for failing to perform background checks for those interacting with children or vulnerable populations. This policy is a formal statement of the national organization's position on background checks. Departments are encouraged to adopt a similar background check policy.

Through a nationwide agreement between The American Legion and Protect Youth Sports (PYS), one of the nation's premier background screening providers, Auxiliary departments have the opportunity to order background checks at a significantly discounted rate. To learn more about PYS and discount pricing, call (877) 319-5587.

Special committee members ratified at NEC meeting

After an unbiased and objective process, 16 members were chosen from 300 applicants to serve on the Code of Ethical Conduct Review and the Inclusion & Diversity special committees. See page 23 in this issue of *Auxiliary* to meet the committee members.



Now Available: ALA Poppy and Halloween Coloring Books

Purchase at emblem.legion.org
or by calling (888) 453-4466, or download
free at www.ALAforVeterans.org/coloring-books



ALA GIRLS NATION: PERSEVERANCE THROUGH A PANDEMIC

 www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAGirlsState



Two new words we are hearing often in the ALA Girls State world — “in-person” and “virtual.” Who would have thought we would use these words when we talk about American Legion Auxiliary Girls State? However, during this time of COVID-19, these formats are being considered. In 2020, ALA Girls State programs made the decision to do something by holding virtual

programs. Their formats were as different as night and day, but they had resounding compliments from delegates who thanked the programs for not forgetting them.

Fast forward to spring 2021, and again decisions are being made regarding our American Legion Auxiliary Girls State programs. Many have already made the decision to go virtual. Some have decided to continue with an in-person program, while others will be making their decision soon. Is one better than another? No. Do we wish that all could be in person? Yes, but many are limited by their colleges not allowing them on campus, insurance, and safety concerns to consider during the pandemic.

Your ALA Girls State leaders are making decisions they never thought they would have to make.

They are willing to do whatever needs to be done to have a 2021 ALAGS program. They are carefully analyzing their options and making the best decisions they can with the information they have. Will this be the program that we have always known? No, but that is not to say it will be worse or better. It will just be different.

Continue to do your part by recruiting young women to attend this premiere program of the ALA. Encourage your ALA Girls State leaders. Believe me; they need that right now more than ever. This year will not be the same as what we've always done, but it will preserve the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program for the future.



Wendy Riggle is a 59-year member of the ALA. She belongs to Unit 177 in Mount Auburn, Iowa.

AUDIT: WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM COVID-19 THIS PAST YEAR

COVID-19 has highlighted that unanticipated occurrences caused by vulnerabilities may be avoided through pre-emptive action.

The pandemic put things in a new perspective — disasters can strike anytime and in any form, which may suspend, alter, or paralyze operations if not adequately prepared. A detailed Disaster Response and Recovery Plan can help serve as a roadmap for continuing operations under adverse conditions. It should be updated annually with information, such as an inventory of equipment, a list of vendors, login and passwords to re-establish connection, emergency contact list, and alternative worksite plans in the event of displacement. The plan should include safety considerations and logistical details in order to

restore operations.

We also learned from facing the pandemic that there is no better time to develop and implement a plan to digitize the organization's records. A Record Retention and Destruction Policy should be reviewed to include guidelines for handling digital and electronic files, backup procedures, archiving of required documents, and testing to confirm integrity of the files for reliability.

This year has necessitated embracing virtual meetings and increased interactions with key parties, such as management, the governing body, and the external auditor. The main responsibility is to oversee the veracity of the ALA's financial statements, including the related disclosures and to maintain overall integrity of internal

control processes, procedures and regulations, financial credibility, and long-term viability.

Audit Committees should supervise how management monitors and controls major financial risk exposures to include fraud, cybersecurity, and data privacy issues. The shift to virtual interactions brought with it the potential for heightened risks related to company processes being conducted remotely, such as the use of remote access leading to cyber exposure risks or fraud being intensified due to necessary system updates and security platforms, financial pressures, and new operating environments.



Jeri Greenwell is a 54-year member of the Auxiliary. She is a PUFL member of Mundt-Allen Unit 81 in Bethel, Maine.

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS: IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

The rules protect us. They provide direction in times of chaos and provide a haven of security when challenges are presented. Their importance becomes clear during moments of greatest unrest.

The Constitution & Bylaws Committee is tasked with one important purpose: to inform members about having proper governing documents at all levels. Originally, a constitution was a critical element of governing documents. As times change, so does appropriate action as it relates to governing documents. Unless there is some real purpose served by having two separate documents with one more difficult to amend than the other, having a separate constitution & bylaws is now considered unnecessary. According

to present parliamentary direction, the only time a separate constitution is a good idea is when some law requires it.

So, our responsibility is to assure that governing documents contain critical elements, and to provide support regarding language, verbiage, and paragraph clarity. As actor Tony Randall said, “Words can make us laugh, cry, go to war, fall in love.” The power of language can never be underestimated, and assuring intent is appropriately realized is a critical element when writing amendments and revising documents. Think about how one word change — “wives” to “spouses” in the ALA’s eligibility — dramatically changed the composition of membership. The more words that can be clarified and

articulated, the less likely there will be conflict and confusion.

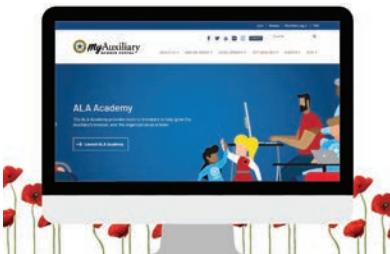
Rudyard Kipling called words the most powerful drug of mankind. Whether a student, CEO of a corporation, or an ALA member at any level, the better the command of words and language, the better the chance of saying exactly what is meant and understanding what others mean. As teams work through amendments to governing documents, now more than ever, we must recognize and understand the power of language, the power of words, and the importance of our rules when performing our mission.



Trish Ward is a 22-year-member of John P. Hand Unit 250 in Louisburg, Kan.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES: CHECK OUT OUR JUNIOR MENTOR TRAINING SERIES

 www.Facebook.com/ALAJuniors



Looking into the eyes of our Junior members, we see our future leaders. Recognizing that having mentors for our Juniors will strengthen the Auxiliary, the national organization started a four-part ALA Academy Live series on Junior mentoring. The courses have been well received with many questions, from starting a Junior group to keeping Juniors engaged. The Junior Mentor Training Series encompassed the following topics: Getting Started with Juniors, the Junior Patch Program, Juniors and The American Legion Family, and Junior Meetings.

■ **Getting Started with Juniors** helped our members learn how to begin working with Juniors and how to engage them and keep them interested. Ideas and best practices were shared from established, involved Junior groups.

■ **The Junior Patch Program** examined procedures for managing the Patch Program, as well as the requirements for earning patches. We also discussed how to be adaptive with the requirements for each age group when needed.

■ **Juniors and The American Legion Family** answered great questions as we learned how to utilize the abilities of all ages of our Juniors while helping The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, and American Legion Riders with events.

■ **Junior Meetings** taught us how to keep Juniors interested and engaged in the mission of

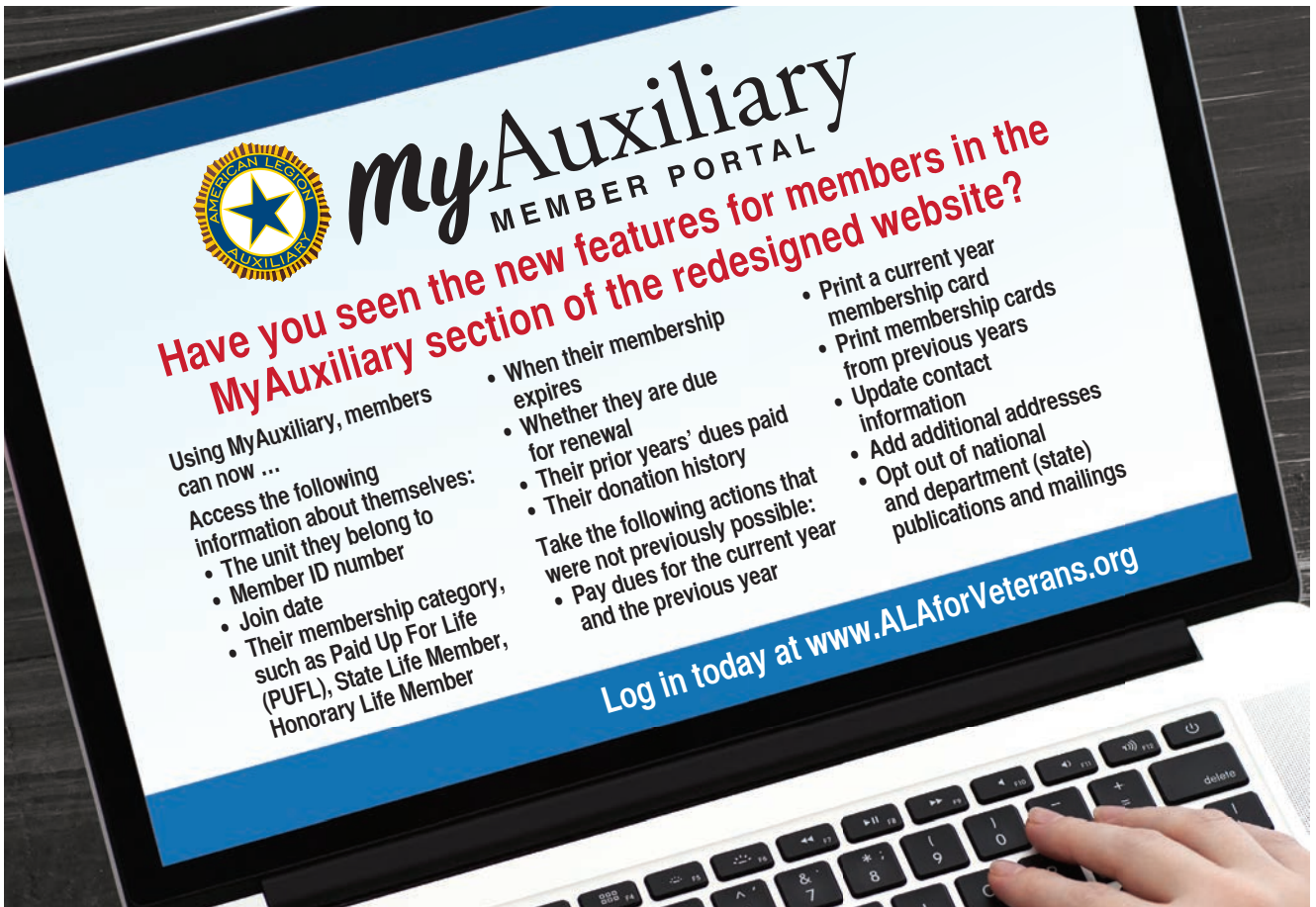
the ALA by making their meetings informative and fun. Letting Juniors have a hand in leading and planning their meetings goes a long way in keeping them interested in the ALA and continuing their membership into adulthood.

Our membership is eager to learn how to prepare Juniors in taking over and becoming leaders who will guide our organization. Sharing ideas from established Junior groups seems to have greatly helped some of the newer groups.

If you were unable to attend one of these live webinars, the series is available with your member login via the ALA Academy portal at www.ALAforVeterans.org. And, while you’re in the ALA Academy, be sure to complete the other courses offered.



Suzanne Knapp is a 53-year member of the Auxiliary. She belongs to Harry Ollrich Unit 4 in Mount Clemens, Mich.



myAuxiliary MEMBER PORTAL

Have you seen the new features for members in the MyAuxiliary section of the redesigned website?

Using MyAuxiliary, members can now ...

Access the following information about themselves:

- The unit they belong to
- Member ID number
- Join date
- Their membership category, such as Paid Up For Life (PUFL), State Life Member, Honorary Life Member

- When their membership expires
- Whether they are due for renewal
- Their prior years' dues paid
- Their donation history

Take the following actions that were not previously possible:

- Pay dues for the current year and the previous year
- Print a current year membership card
- Print membership cards from previous years
- Update contact information
- Add additional addresses
- Opt out of national and department (state) publications and mailings

Log in today at www.ALAforVeterans.org



Fun for Adult and Youth Members! Everyone Wins in The American Legion Family Branding Game



With this exciting and interactive three-round game, Legion Family members will compare and discuss The American Legion Family brand and challenge each other to care for and promote our brand with a new awareness of how others see us.

The American Legion Family Branding Game objectives:

- ★ Learn more about branding and how it applies to The American Legion Family.
- ★ Discuss the importance of branding through review of company brands.
- ★ Discover the potential positive and negative consequences of branding.
- ★ Learn about and discuss public perception for both members and those who aren't familiar with our organizations.

Log in to the Members Only section at www.ALAforVeterans.org to download the free game

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Candidate: National President
KATHY DAUIDSTEL
 Department of Kentucky:
 Latonia Unit 203
Eligibility: Through father,

William Kaelin Jr., U.S. Army Korean War Era veteran.

Offices Held: Served in several unit-, district-, and department-level positions. National: national vice president; national committee chair: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Children & Youth, Poppy, National Security, Americanism, Membership, and Leadership; national committee vice chair: Junior Activities; NEC and alternate NEC.



Candidate: National Vice President
VICKIE KOUTZ
 Department of Indiana:
 Boonville Unit 200
Eligibility: Through

husband, James "Jim" E. Koutz, U.S. Army Vietnam veteran (in country).

Offices Held: Served in several unit-, district-, and department-level positions. National: NEC, Strategic Plan Committee, Future Focus Committee; national committee chair: Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Poppy, Legislative, ALA Girls State chair/ALA Girls Nation director, National Security, Membership, Constitution & Bylaws, Education, Children & Youth, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; national committee vice chair: Leadership, Community Service, and Junior Activities.

American Legion Auxiliary members elect five national division vice presidents, one from each ALA division.



Candidate: Central Division National Vice President
DENISE DELANEY-WROLEN
 Department of Indiana:

Gary Unit 279

Eligibility: Through father, George Evans Jr., U.S. Navy World War II veteran, who served in the Pacific; late husbands William J. Delaney, U.S. Marine Corps Korean War veteran, and John Wroten, U.S. Army Vietnam veteran.



Candidate: Northwestern Division National Vice President
DEE DEE BUCKLEY
 Department of Minnesota: Ben Krueger

Unit 49/Pequot Lakes

Eligibility: Through father, Loren V. Lien, U.S. Navy WWII veteran, and son Matthew Karvonen, U.S. Navy veteran of Kosovo campaign.



Candidate: Southern Division National Vice President
GABRIELE BARNETT
 Department of Georgia:
 Unit 192, Evans

Eligibility: Through late husband, Sgt. 1st. Class (Ret.) Maurice "Mo" Barnett, a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran.



Candidate: Western Division National Vice President
TONI GIMPEL
 Department of Idaho:
 Bonneville Unit 56 —

Idaho Falls

Eligibility: Through husband, Arthur L. Gimpel, U.S. Air Force (Ret.) Vietnam veteran; father, Thomas Keith Bowcutt, U.S. Navy WWII veteran; and son, Keith M. Gimpel, U.S. Air Force post-Gulf War veteran.

As of presstime, no candidate announcement had been received at National Headquarters from the Eastern Division.

The national historian completes a historical record of the administrative year in which she serves, maintains, and updates the historical records of the American Legion Auxiliary.



Candidate: National Historian
CAROL G. CAMPBELL
 Department of Virginia:
 Unit 10

Eligibility: Through father, James F. Gallagher Sr., U.S. Army, WWII veteran.

American Legion Auxiliary chaplains express our founding principle of service to God and country and celebrate diversity among people and faiths. They also provide spiritual and emotional guidance, sending dignity and respect to the occasion.



Candidate: National Chaplain
MARY CAUTHEN
 Department of Louisiana:
 Unit 145
Eligibility: Through

husband Gerhard Cauthen, U.S. Army, Cold War.



Candidate: National Chaplain
CAROL T. ROBINSON
 Department of Ohio:
 General Daniel "Chappie"
 James Unit 776

Eligibility: Through late brother, William A. Hawkins, U.S. Army Korean War veteran.



Candidate: National Chaplain
REBECCA (BECKY) MUELLER
 Department of Wisconsin:
 Krause-Kraft Unit 106

Eligibility: Through husband, Clarence Mueller, U.S. Army Vietnam era veteran; late first husband, Richard Young, U.S. Marine Corps Vietnam era veteran; and father, Anton Stilp, U.S. Army, 1957-1959.



Candidate: National Chaplain
LISA BOYER
 Department of Pennsylvania:
 Unit 210
Eligibility: Through son,

Herbert Dutter, U.S. Army, currently serving.



Candidate: National Chaplain
REBECCA VALDIVIA
 Department of California:
 Unit 377
Eligibility: Through

husband, Vincent D. Valdivia, U.S. Air Force Vietnam War, and father, William A. Flanders, U.S. Air Force, Korean War.

STILL ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR ALA YOUTH HERO AWARDS

We are so close to our goal of 100 awards for this administrative year! Youth Hero Awards are for youth who demonstrate a physical act of valor, like performing CPR, calling 911 in an emergency, getting people out of a burning house, and more. Download the nomination form today at www.ALAForVeterans.org.

IMPACT ALA!

WHAT'S NEW AT NHQ

AUXILIARY READER SURVEY GATHERS IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Some readers of *Auxiliary* magazine may be receiving a reader survey in May. Please fill it out — it helps us help you!

Every few years, American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters conducts a reader survey to learn more about our *Auxiliary* magazine audience, which articles are most read, overall satisfaction with the magazine, and more.

The previous reader survey was sent in 2018 electronically and by regular mail. Specific areas of inquiry included:

- Recipients' readership, use, and opinions of *Auxiliary*
- Their readership and use of the American Legion Auxiliary website

and social media

- Their engagement with other information resources
- A profile of their membership in the American Legion Auxiliary
- Personal and household demographics

Based on feedback from each reader survey, we are better able to tailor *Auxiliary* magazine toward what you, the readers, want to learn about and implement within your own units and departments to help our veterans, military, and their families.

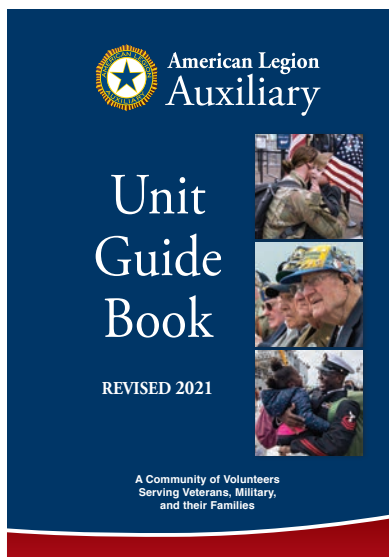
The survey is sent to a random sample of our 600,000-member organization. If you don't get a survey but still want to share your feedback,

we welcome your opinion! Email your thoughts to ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or write us at 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268.

Remember: *Auxiliary* is a membership magazine; it's all about you!

For the remainder of 2021, members can expect to see a variety of features covered in the magazine to help members with the mission. In the August and November issues, membership retention will continue to be a focus. Additional stories include highlighting the next ALA national president, how members' successes make membership meaningful, and a recap of ALA Girls Nation.

ALA UNIT GUIDE BOOK REVISED WITH SEVERAL UPDATES



The American Legion Auxiliary Unit Guide Book, which provides information, direction to desired information, and guidance to unit members about the history, mission, programs, membership eligibility, customs, and operations of an ALA unit, has undergone several updates to provide important information for unit members. Although many small changes were made to help improve the guide, primary changes include:

- Updated membership eligibility that went into effect after the ALA's 2019 National Convention as a result of the LEGION Act and

inclusion of male spouses.

- Gender-neutral language to be inclusive of our male spouse members.

■ Icons highlight important information for the unit.

■ The online version includes clickable links to referenced webpages or Facebook group pages.

The revised *Unit Guide Book* can be downloaded for free at www.ALAforVeterans.org in the MyAuxiliary member portal, and is available for purchase from American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales at emblem.legion.org or by calling 1-888-453-4466.

PLANNING A VISIT TO ALA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS? CALL AHEAD!

Summer is finally here!

Will you be traveling through Indianapolis soon? American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters is receiving visitors by appointment only due to pandemic restrictions.

Be prepared for your visit by calling us in advance to schedule a

tour. We would love to show you around the building!

We're happy to make arrangements to see you safely. To schedule your upcoming visit, email ALAHQ@ALAforVeterans.org or call (317) 569-4500.

See you soon!



What's happening in your American Legion Auxiliary unit? Tell us about it at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.

Provided by Mary Anne Casadei, National Chaplain 2019-2021 | www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAchaplains

MAY

“May the God of hope fill you with all the joy and peace and believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

— Romans 15:13

Hope is a gift from God. We must ask for it. It is placed deep in each human heart in order to shed light on this life, so often troubled and clouded by so many situations that bring sadness and pain.

We need to nourish the roots of our hope. We need to concentrate on God’s closeness and compassion despite whatever bad we have done. There is no corner of our heart that God’s love cannot get to. Whenever we make a mistake, God’s love and mercy is present.

He is all-forgiving, all-loving, and all-knowing. God’s love will give you peace. God has hopes for us too. He hopes we follow Him. He hopes we will embrace His teachings; He hopes we choose good over bad.

God is like the father in the parable, who keeps hoping for the return of his wayward son (Luke 15:11-32) or the shepherd who won’t rest until he finds the lost sheep (Luke 15:5).

So, if God hopes, no one should lose hope.

Hope is the incentive to keep moving forward. It is the power to keep moving toward the future and a changed and better life.

Hope is proof that God’s mercy can change your life. God’s mercy invites us to keep looking ahead, and put sin and evil behind us.

“Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

— Romans 5:5

“Dear God, thank You for never disappointing me. It is my hope that I will never disappoint You. I will never lose hope in You. I know that You are always with me. You will never abandon me. Amen.”

JUNE

“Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done wonderful things. His right hand and His holy arm have gained victory for Him.”

— Psalm 98:1

The question, “Why me?” can be interpreted two ways. Is it surprised or amazed? Or does it sound more like anguish? Kris Kristofferson had a country song titled, *Why Me?* and it was his biggest hit of his career, selling more than 1 million records. The lyrics tell a story of great humility and deep gratitude in asking why he deserves the blessing he’s received in his life.

The next time you open your mouth to ask, “Why me?” will it be in praise of God, or will it be in anguish and resentment? When you change your mindset to a “Why me?” of joy and astonishment, you feel deep appreciation for God’s blessings.

You can still give God your distress and confusion — He can handle it. But if you find yourself always asking “Why me?” with self-pity, pause to consider your heart. Our hearts should constantly be searching for the path toward thankfulness and God.

I will bet that when you take the mindset of surprise and gratitude when you think “Why me?,” many of God’s gifts will come to mind.

Too often we immerse ourselves in self-pity. Once there, it is so easy to stay there.

Self-pity has a sort of snowball effect on us. It just keeps rolling ... getting bigger and bigger, deeper and deeper. At times, it may seem impossible to overcome it.

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you with my righteous right hand.”

— Isaiah 41:10

“Dear God, I will turn my heart toward You and thank You for having everything under control. I look to You with gratitude. Amen.”

JULY

“As for you, my friends, you were called to be free. But do not let freedom become an excuse for letting your physical desires control you. Instead, let love make you serve one another.”

— Galatians 5:13

Freedom of religion is one of our country’s great values. We are free to choose the faith we follow; we are not forced to follow or worship a certain god. We can read of our chosen faith in a public place without fear, we can attend our chosen worship service, and talk about our faith without censoring.

In the Old Testament, Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den because he refused to bow to the king and refused to stop praying even though a decree against praying was published. You may feel uncomfortable when bowing your head in prayer in a restaurant because you don’t want people to look at you. But safety isn’t an issue. You do not have to worry about prison, labor camps, torture, or other repercussions. We live in the greatest country in the world. Our freedoms are protected for us; they are promised to us.

Seventy-five percent of the world faces severe religious restrictions, and religious persecution exists in more than 60 countries from their government or fellow citizens. Oh, how blessed we are to have religious freedom. America is the melting pot of religious freedom. It doesn’t matter where you chose to hang your religious hat — you are free to do it. It is a wondrous thing!

“Dear God, teach me to be tolerant, and to love my brothers and sisters. Teach me to serve my fellow man. Help me to grow in Your love. Amen.”



Mary Anne Casadei is a PUFL member of Henry P. Smith Unit 24 in Rome, N.Y.

Building ALA brand loyalty



BE BETTER BRANDED ON YOUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

If you've been on the national American Legion Auxiliary website in the last couple months, you may have noticed it's been updated. The site is better branded and clearer to the public on what we do as an organization. It may be time to update the branding on your unit/department website too.

The national site didn't undergo a rebrand — more of a much-needed update. And your site can too!

A well-designed, user-friendly website can help you attract new members and serve as a powerful education, resource, and communication tool in identifying your local ALA organization as the "go-to" authority on all things related to veterans, military, and their families in your community.

Here are a few simple tips to update your website/social media that will enhance branding, which will help reel in prospective members, volunteers, and donors:

BRANDING IMPORTANT DURING VIRTUAL EVENTS, SOCIAL DISTANCING

As virtual events and social distancing continue, it's more important than ever for members to continue branding themselves to get the ALA's name out to the public.

You've probably seen face masks while at the grocery store with

the emblem at the top of each page, both clearly visible. Our emblem is the main identifier of the ALA, and it's one of our most valuable assets.

A few reminders about the emblem on your website:

- The emblem should be prominently displayed at the top with nothing placed above it. The only exception is that the American flag may be placed above the emblem.
- The ALA's emblem should be legible and large enough to read the American Legion Auxiliary name.
- Do not place the ALA's emblem on a busy background.
- The emblem should not be used as a substitution for a letter or number, or as a design object or other element.
- Nothing should touch the emblem.
- Always identify the unit/department on your design.

Be sure to check out the *ALA Branding Guide* available at www.ALAFORVeterans.org for more information about emblem usage.

Do you have questions about

people's favorite sports team logo, the name of a business, or a slogan associated with a particular cause. Wearing a mask with the ALA emblem is an easy way to keep our name and emblem in the public eye.

Branding can also include shirts, hats, pins, scarves, jewelry, etc. Get creative with ways to show your ALA pride!

Website address

Make sure your website address is branded, i.e., includes "department" or "unit" in the address. For example, alaunit472.org or aladepaz.org. It's important to have keywords like these in your website address for online searching.

Name and emblem

Have "American Legion Auxiliary" and

using the emblem on your website? Email emblem@ALAFORVeterans.org.

'About us' section

You want the mission to be immediately obvious to your site visitor. Not sure what to put in this section? Model yours after the national website, which includes who we are, our mission and vision, organizational structure, and more.

Also, be sure to include the ALA tagline in materials where appropriate — A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families.

Photos

Have photos of your department or unit working the mission on your website. And of course, be branded in the photos, whether that's wearing branded masks, shirts, hats, etc.

Design

Use a clean, simple design with patriotic colors. Remember: Less is more! Again, feel free to look to the national site for inspiration in updating your branded design.

Social media

Don't forget about your social media pages! For example, use American Legion Auxiliary Unit 19, Midland, TX versus American Legion Auxiliary Unit, which gives you no clue on where the unit is located. Part of branding is being clear on who you are, and that includes where you are since our organization is spread out across the country and around the world. Set your profile picture to be the emblem or a photo of members branded while working the mission.

By having our name, emblem, photos, and more easily visible to the public, we can better showcase who we are, what we do, and why we matter to our local communities.

Not sure where to get your branded items? Check out American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales, which carries a variety of branded materials for all American Legion Family members. When buying from here, all proceeds go back to The American Legion Family. To order your next branded item, visit emblem.legion.org.

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ALL THINGS ALA GIRLS STATE



ALA GIRLS STATE PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITIES

For the second year in a row, ALA Girls State programs across the country are thinking “outside the box” on how to host a session as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Last year, 10-plus states decided not to cancel and transitioned their in-person sessions into virtual sessions. The staff of these programs knew it would be impossible to do everything they usually do, so changes were made to host abbreviated programs.

“When it came time to put a program together quickly, we had to make some tough choices about what stayed and what was left on the table,” said Jenise Gordon, education director of Tennessee’s ALA Volunteer Girls State.

Now, one year later, more programs are planning to host a virtual session. Even though the hope was to be in person this year, staff knew they needed to think about an alternative version. To help programs prepare for 2021, informational sessions were hosted by ALA National Headquarters, giving ALA Girls State directors and staff a chance to learn from each other and explore technology options.

ALA Volunteer Girls State Director Julia Wells and Education Director Gordon hosted a virtual session last year. They share their insights:

What worked well in the 2020 virtual session?

Julia: Last year, we made our decision in March to have a virtual program, and our dates were the last week of May. Therefore, we had very little time to plan and execute. Our number one goal was to have a session to honor the girls who had already been selected to attend. We had an abbreviated session using Zoom with guest speakers. We have such an amazing staff, that while it was continuous work to be ready, we had a very professional three days of ALA Girls State. The evaluations were overwhelming: “Thank you for not forgetting us.”

What surprised you last year?

Jenise: We were surprised by how engaged the girls were in this virtual setting. Many had to drive to public [Wi-Fi] hot spots just to participate, and even though they may have been booted off Zoom due to a poor connection, they tenaciously continued to join again and again.

What are the benefits of a virtual session?

Jenise: When delegates, staff, and counselors join ALA Girls State virtually, they can join from their own homes, which really provides much more access to the program. Additionally, being virtual provides more opportunities for “big name”

speakers to attend who might not have had the time to travel to a specific location.

What do you plan to do differently this year?

Julia: We will have five full days that will replicate the in-person session as much as possible. Delegates will have the opportunity to enjoy city life and to form friendships with a small number of delegates. Each day, we will have both assemblies and city meetings.

What advice do you have for other programs?

Julia: We suggest that you commit the time and resources necessary to have a quality program. Remember that your audience is not just going to be the citizens, but, in many cases, you will have siblings and parents watching. This is a great opportunity for us to promote the American Legion Auxiliary and ALA Girls State.

Many other programs have contacted you for advice. What were the common questions, and how did you answer them?

Q: Will your staff come together in one location to manage the program?

A: No. We have no intention of getting all staff to the same geographic location. We have been meeting virtually via Zoom since last March, and it works beautifully for us.

Q: Will you adjust the length of the program?

A: Yes, we typically run the program from Sunday to Saturday. This year, the program will run Tuesday through Friday. Our daily commitment will be from around 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., with lots of breaks and energy shifts to reduce Zoom fatigue.

Q: Will you attempt the petitioning process?

A: Yes, we have a committee that has worked on the entire election process, and we have a plan to petition and run elections via Google Forms.



The Samsung American Legion Scholarship returns for 2021. American Legion Boys State and ALA Girls State participants who are direct descendants (or legally adopted children) of wartime veterans are eligible. To apply, go to www.ALAforVeterans.org/Scholarships.

ALA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

JUNIOR MEMBER LOYALTY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT PURSUES CAREER OF SERVICE IN PHYSICAL THERAPY



Anisa Cornett, 20, a sophomore at Texas A&M University and an ALA Junior

Member Loyalty Scholarship recipient, has been an active member of the American Legion Auxiliary since she was a toddler. She began by participating in her unit's flag ceremony on Veterans Day and Memorial Day each year at age 5 and would only get more involved. Upon attending the ALA Texas State Convention, Cornett would run and succeed in becoming the honorary department Junior secretary, honorary vice president, and eventually honorary president. Then, upon attending the National Southern Division Convention, Cornett would also run and become honorary Junior national Southern Division vice president.

Cornett has a strong passion for serving veterans, military, and their families. With a grandfather, father, and brother who all served in the military, Cornett has a close connection to our nation's heroes. However, she shared that her love for serving others has grown deeper during her time as an ALA Junior member, and it has influenced her decision to help others as a career — through physical therapy.

"My personal goal is to help people in the medical field, and by growing up in the ALA and helping veterans, it kind of instilled that I needed to help

people for my personal life goal," Cornett said. "The way physical therapists help — the recovery process, the way they connect with people — I really liked that aspect of the career."

Receiving the ALA Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship has been a big help in Cornett's journey in becoming a physical therapist. Paying for an undergraduate and graduate degree is no small feat, and this scholarship is helping Cornett and her family get through her undergraduate degree without having to take out loans. However, the scholarship also served another purpose to Cornett — recognition for her hard work and service as an ALA Junior member.

"I have been in this organization for as long as I can remember," she said. "Being recognized and just knowing that all the years paid off was really important to me. It just makes me want to stay."

Cornett pointed out how important ALA scholarships are to Junior members, and the huge impact made by those who donate and make ALA scholarships possible.

"I would just thank them so much for everything they do for this organization. It's people like them who keep this organization up and help support our youth and help send people like me to college to advance their education and hopefully get a good career at the end of it," Cornett said. "It's probably the best donation you could make."



WHAT SCHOLARSHIPS DO FOR ALA RECIPIENTS:

They help with the cost of tuition.

- Tuition rates are always climbing, and scholarships help students at all income levels gain access to a college education.

They give students more time to focus on their studies.

- Many students have to work while they attend college in order to make ends meet. For many, this can negatively affect their grades, it can stop them from graduating on time, and it can even force them to discontinue their education altogether. Scholarships give students the opportunity to work less and study more.

They help lower the debt of graduating students.

- The Class of 2019 graduated with an average \$28,950 in student debt. Scholarships help students graduate by taking out fewer loans and therefore have less debt as they embark on their new careers.

They help inspire students to be more philanthropic.

- Students who receive scholarships are direct recipients of the generosity of others, helping to inspire them to give back when they are financially capable.

Sources: University of Hawai'i Foundation, The Institute for College Access & Success



You can support talented and passionate students like Anisa Cornett by donating to national ALA scholarship funds. Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/Donate. Wanted! If you are a past recipient of an ALA national scholarship, contact us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.

Wise PERSON SAID

It's absolutely awe-inspiring how someone who has lost so much can give so much to others.

When she was 13 years old, American Legion Auxiliary member Vicky Tomasello's father, U.S. Navy veteran Robert G. Wankowski Sr., and her 4-year-old brother, Gregory, died in a house fire. Through the years, Vicky lost other loved ones, including her sister, Valerie, who died in 2002. Their mother, Dolores Anna Wankowski, died in 2011 from Alzheimer's Disease and cancer.

And her husband of 32 years, Navy Vietnam War veteran Allen Tomasello, died in 2018 from angiosarcoma, cancer of the blood vessels, from Agent Orange exposure from when he was in Vietnam.

Tomasello's life as a military wife had some challenges; Allen experienced PTSD and had his leg



amputated 4 inches above the knee. But their love was stronger than any difficulties they encountered on their life's journey together, Tomasello said.

She is a veteran's widow, but that doesn't stop her from supporting and honoring other veterans, servicemembers, and military families as an ALA member. Tomasello proudly serves the Auxiliary's mission of service through her ALA Unit 137 membership in Jacksonville, Fla.

"As part of the Auxiliary, I

help with the dinners and things. I'm in the kitchen cooking, serving, whatever is needed at the time. We take care of the veterans. We feel it is our duty to provide each of them a decent meal at a decent cost," she explained, adding that she also belongs to American Legion Riders Chapter 137.

Tomasello is a lifelong member of the ALA. Her eligibility is based on the military service of her father, who belonged to Post 469 in Cleveland, Ohio. He served in the Korean War.

VICKY TOMASELLO



(Photo: Richard Lane)

Please share a bit about your life as a military spouse.

I wasn't in the Vietnam War. I didn't serve. My war was at home. I had to be there for my veteran

husband when he fought to get better in efforts to keep his leg after the cancer diagnosis. I was the one changing his bandages after he underwent skin grafts. I was the one there with him for

the treatments. His anxieties. His nightmares. When he fell out of bed and wasn't able to get up, I helped him up. When it was time to get his VA benefits and he was too tired and pained to engage in the years' long pursuit and follow-up, I was his voice. I would never cry in front of Allen. I cried in the shower. Still, I don't regret a moment of caring for him. It was my honor to care for him.

How does staying active in the ALA and your local Legion Family honor your husband?

I was at the post five nights a week cooking and doing what I could to serve our veterans because my husband couldn't. I did

what he asked me to do — which was to do what he couldn't.

What wisdom can you share about surviving and thriving when faced with major adversities in life?

What got me through is knowing that no matter what I experienced, there's always someone who has it worse. So deal with what's in front of you. Try not to hate or stay angry. Try to find the positives and go from there.

What is the best advice you've received, and from whom?

We are to love one another and do for each other. I got that from my mom. I learned from the best: my mom, backed by my dad.



Who inspires you? Do you know someone with an interesting background or spectacular life story? Contact us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or (317) 569-4500.

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY *news*



LEGION FAMILY REPRESENTED ON RACETRACK MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

May in Indianapolis is known for racing, but did you also know that the Indianapolis 500 and events surrounding the famous race are steeped in traditions to honor the military?

The Indianapolis 500 and the 500 Festival traditionally honor veterans and servicemembers in several ways during the month.

This year, The American Legion will bring extra attention during the race to those we serve. That's because The American Legion emblem will be present on the racetrack. The No. 48 IndyCar driven by 2013 Indy 500 winner Tony Kanaan will prominently feature The American Legion Family. This is part of a multi-year sponsorship agreement between the Legion and Chip Ganassi Racing.

Before attendees see the Legion Family represented on the track, veterans and servicemembers will be honored, and those

who paid the ultimate sacrifice will be remembered. Pre-race ceremonies include uniformed military members marching down the straightway, American flags being unfurled in the infield, and a military flyover as the national anthem is performed. The pre-race also includes a military rifle team that fires a three-volley salute before a lone bugler plays *Taps* and *America the Beautiful* is performed.

Honoring and remembering the military doesn't just happen on race day. The American Legion participates in the 500 Festival Memorial Service at the Indiana War Memorial on the Friday before Memorial Day (National Poppy Day®). The American Legion Family is typically represented in the 500 Festival Parade the next day. In the past, The American Legion national commander and the American Legion Auxiliary national president have ridden on a float in the parade.

You can watch the Indianapolis 500 on Sunday, May 30, on NBC. Coverage will begin at 1 p.m. Eastern.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE AND COMMANDER'S TESTIMONY CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY

In the first week of March, American Legion Family members logged on to their computers, phones, and other devices for Washington Conference workshops and meetings that normally would be held in person in Washington, D.C. As has become the norm in our country, business was conducted virtually.

Commander James W. "Bill" Oxford's testimony to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs highlighted how members responded to vital needs in their communities during the pandemic. This included The American Legion's Buddy Check program, blood drives with The American Red Cross, making and purchasing face masks and protective gear, and providing food for those in need.

Oxford also told Congress about The American Legion's involvement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the technology company Philips to launch Project ATLAS. Under this project, Legion posts offer a place for veterans to have private virtual appointments with healthcare professionals.

The American Legion Legislative Agenda:

- Address toxic exposure and burn pits
- Improve health care for women veterans
- Telehealth/rural health
- Address the forever war
- Citizenship for honorable service
- Pay the Coast Guard
- Close the 90/10 loophole
- Military awards for minority veterans
- Peer support
- Protect the American flag
- Global War on Terrorism

Memorial

For more details on each of the priorities, visit www.Legion.org.



100 MILES FOR HOPE RETURNS

The American Legion's second annual 100 Miles for Hope is underway. The program encourages American Legion Family members to get active while supporting the Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation (V&CF).

"I am looking forward to once again supporting the American Legion Family," said American Legion Auxiliary President Nicole Clapp, who walked her 100 miles

during the first challenge at a state park near her home in Gladbrook, Iowa.

The American Legion has upgraded 100 Miles for Hope with these changes for the second edition:

- There are two ways to register. Through a new app called Kilter or via American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales.
- The registration fee has been cut to \$20, while rewarding every participant with a medal.
- Commemorative 100 Miles for Hope merchandise can be purchased through American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales to support the V&CF.
- Participants can download and customize their own "race bib" like those traditionally worn in 5Ks and other races.

For more information on 100 Miles for Hope, visit www.Legion.org/100Miles.

ATTRACT AND ENGAGE NON-MEMBER VOLUNTEERS TO HELP ACHIEVE THE ALA'S MISSION OF SERVICE

It's tough to put into words how much of a godsend reliable, responsible, and hardworking non-member volunteers are to the American Legion Auxiliary. Through most of the ALA's century of existence, volunteers who don't belong to the Auxiliary have assisted ALA members in achieving our mission to selflessly serve veterans, military, and their families, mentor youth, and contribute positively to local communities.

How wonderful is it that there are people willing to give of themselves to help or honor others — and ask for nothing in return? ALA members understand that because they, too, are volunteering their time and efforts for a greater good. The American Legion Auxiliary is a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ALA has seen non-member volunteers step up and help work on our numerous

mission-focused events, activities, and outreach. As it turns out, many individuals are experiencing a greater level of compassion now. They are looking for ways to make a difference in the lives of others. The ALA offers opportunities to do that.

There are plenty of impactful ALA mission-focused projects that non-member volunteers can safely participate in, such as tending to a

There's something special about people who are willing to give of themselves to help or honor others and ask for nothing in return.

community's unity garden, or assisting at a local food pantry specifically for veterans, servicemembers, and military families in need. The possibilities continue from there.

When seeking non-member volunteers for Auxiliary events and activities, be sure to get the word out well ahead of time. Share the information about your upcoming

ALA event and include a callout for volunteers. Use well-known social media outlets like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Remember to include a contact name and number, or email address, and be sure to respond to any inquiries in a timely manner.

Traditional media also is an option for spreading the word and seeking volunteers. Local television news programs sometimes spotlight community organizations and tell their stories. The same is true for many local newspapers. Frequently, papers publish community news, events, and happenings. If you are interviewed for a television news segment or newspaper article, consider mentioning who the event will help and why the ALA wants to help them. Speak sincerely and from the heart.

Putting up posters in public places, where permitted, is another idea. List the basics — the who, what, when, where, and why. Don't forget the contact info: a telephone number or email address.

When the event or activity is over, thank the volunteers for their participation. Small gestures, such as a handwritten thank-you note or phone call, go a long way to show your appreciation. You might even recruit a new member because of those extra steps.

Allowing interested individuals to volunteer with the ALA has another benefit: It allows people to learn more about the ALA and its members. It's an opportunity for the Auxiliary to show its story instead of only telling it to the public. What people see and experience tends to make more of an impact on them than what they're told. While it's not the intended purpose of seeking help from the community for Auxiliary events and activities, a non-member volunteer could decide to become an ALA member someday if eligibility criteria are met. Even if they don't join the Auxiliary — or aren't eligible to do so, non-member volunteers who are compassionate, reliable, and responsible can be invaluable helpers.

MAKING THE CASE FOR VOLUNTEERISM

Although there seems to be more people interested in volunteering these days, others may still need to be gently persuaded. To make the case during a casual one-on-one conversation — without pressuring the person — talk about the people, place, or thing being impacted by the project. Also, consider sharing some of Volunteermatch.org's "Great Reasons to Volunteer" listed below.

- Help others
- Make a difference
- Find purpose
- Feel involved
- Meet new people
- Connect with your community
- Contribute to a cause that you care about
- Enjoy a meaningful conversation
- Use your skills in a productive way
- Develop new skills
- Explore new areas of interest
- Meet good people
- Expand your horizons
- Get out of the house
- Make new friends
- Feel better about yourself





American Legion Auxiliary social media

Visit our social media at www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media    

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNITS ACROSS THE COUNTRY CONTINUE TO FIND WAYS TO SERVE VETERANS, MILITARY, AND THEIR FAMILIES.



 @USO Alaska
USO and the American Legion Auxiliary, C. Russell Huber Unit 57 welcomed home servicemembers!

 @VANIHCS
Thank you to the Indiana American Legion Auxiliary for their donation of gift bags for our inpatient veterans during National Salute to Veteran Patients Week.



 @AmericanLegion
AuxiliaryNM
ALA Department of New Mexico presented a \$300 check for the Veterans Affairs Coffee program.

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Many additional Poppy items available on our web site!

* Proceeds support American Legion Family programs

American Legion Emblem Sales

1-888-453-4466

Emblem.Legion.org

AUX MG 0521

Auxiliary Sudoku answers from page 26:

4	7	5	9	1	8	3	6	2
3	9	6	2	5	4	7	8	1
1	8	2	7	6	3	5	4	9
9	5	4	1	3	7	6	2	8
8	6	7	4	2	5	1	9	3
2	1	3	8	9	6	4	7	5
7	2	1	3	4	9	8	5	6
6	3	8	5	7	2	9	1	4
5	4	9	6	8	1	2	3	7

3	2	1	9	8	5	6	4	7
6	8	5	7	1	4	9	3	2
9	4	7	2	6	3	5	1	8
2	1	8	5	9	6	3	7	4
5	6	3	1	4	7	2	8	9
4	7	9	3	2	8	1	6	5
8	3	2	4	5	1	7	9	6
7	5	6	8	3	9	4	2	1
1	9	4	6	7	2	8	5	3
1	4	6	9	5	3	8	2	7
9	7	5	1	2	8	6	3	4
3	2	8	6	4	7	5	9	1
6	9	7	8	3	4	1	5	2
2	5	1	7	9	6	4	8	3
8	3	4	5	1	2	7	6	9
7	8	2	3	6	1	9	4	5
4	6	9	2	7	5	3	1	8
5	1	3	4	8	9	2	7	6

Spread the word about the work your unit is doing. Share pictures on social media and tag us @ALAforVeterans and use #AmericanLegionAuxiliary.



How do American Legion Auxiliary members keep the mission momentum going during a global pandemic? We diffuse our message in digital form, of course! Be sure to visit our social media accounts @ALAforVeterans so you can share the poppy artwork above with your followers, friends, and family. Remember: It's our job "to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars," as stated in our Preamble. Engage with our social media today so you can be part of the thousands participating in this promotional campaign.



New ALA Recruiting Flyer for Units!



Does your ALA unit host a regular carry-out dinner night, or does your post home provide food for carry-out?

Consider adding these flyers to the takeout boxes! They're convenient, fillable PDFs with an efficient 3-up design for easy printing on a home computer. You can also take them to your local print shop so you'll always have extras on hand.

Start today:

- 1) Go to the MyAuxiliary member portal at <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/resources/flyer-templates>.
- 2) Download the PDF.
- 3) Click onto the fillable field at the bottom of the flyer to type in a unit contact person's name, phone, or email address.
- 4) Print on color paper (we suggest blue), and cut in thirds.
- 5) Tape a flyer to each takeout box.



American Legion Auxiliary

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Serving Veterans, Military,
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Monthly Giving: **The possibilities are endless!**

Monthly giving is one of the best ways you can support our nation's heroes and your fellow Auxiliary members. It's easy to budget, comes out automatically each month, and you can direct it to a fund that means the most to you!

\$10 A MONTH: Provides art supplies to help veterans heal through artistic expression

\$25 A MONTH: Builds shelves for a veterans food pantry

\$50 A MONTH: Provides a washer for a veterans homeless shelter

\$100 A MONTH: Gives Auxiliary Emergency Fund grant assistance to an ALA member in need after disaster strikes

\$250 A MONTH: Provides one ALA Junior member a college scholarship

These are just a few ways your monthly gift could help veterans, military, and their families. To start your monthly gift, go to www.ALForVeterans.org/Monthly-Gifts. Remember: You're not just giving our nation's heroes long-term support — you're providing the kind of help they need...when they need it!