

**American Legion Auxiliary  
Department Of Minnesota  
Unit Guide 2025~2026**



***Robin Dorf  
Department President***

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

## **DEDICATION**

This 2025-2026 Unit Guide is dedicated to the service and sacrifices of our veterans and active military. Also, to their families and the sacrifices they make when their loved one serves. Thank you to the department chairman for all of their work in preparing their program information and to the department office for compiling the information and making a wonderful resource for Department of Minnesota members.

As you review this unit guide, remember our theme this year of

***“Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs.”***

This unit guide is for you, our members. Share the information with your unit members and use the information to have a wonderful year serving our veterans.



**2025-2026 American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Minnesota  
President Robin Dorf**

Theme: *Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs*

I am a proud PUFL member and a 50-year-old member of Monticello Unit 260 in the Tenth District. I am eligible for membership through my late father Emil W. Dorf, Jr, who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean Conflict.

At the unit level I have held many chairmanships and was President two terms.

On the district level, I has served as St. Cloud VA Social Activities, Junior Activities multiple years, Education, Girls State, Legislation, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Children & Youth, Poppy, Leadership, Membership, Past Presidents Parley, Secretary three years, Treasurer, Executive Committee member, Second Vice President, First Vice President and served as the 2014-2015 Tenth District President.

I have enjoyed my time serving as the department chairman of Junior Activities, Leadership, Public Relations, Membership, Children & Youth, Community Service, Legislation, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chairman, served on the Strategic Planning Committee, and a past Girls State counselor. I have held the offices of Chaplain, First Vice President, and Second Vice President.

On the national level, I served as the 2018 ALA National Convention Vice Chairman, Northwestern Division Membership Chairman, Children & Youth Committee Vice Chairman, Junior Activities Committee Vice Chairman, and the Northwestern Division Leadership Chairman.

I have been employed with Wright County for 18 years and I am currently the Wright County Health and Human Services Kinship/Child Foster Care Recruiter Case Aide.

Family is especially important to me. My late mother, Mary Dorf, was my biggest supporter and mentor. My sister Renee Suess and I grew up as junior members and have continued our membership in honor of our parents. My brother-in-law Aaron, and nephews Chase and Cameron are Sons of the American Legion members. And my niece Emily is a member of the American Legion Auxiliary and is a past junior member.

I am honored to represent the members of the Department of Minnesota. This organization, and you the members, have given me opportunities to gain experience, learn, and contribute in ways I never thought possible. We need to continue to encourage each other, support new ideas, and celebrate both individual achievements and the collective success of our department.

## 2025-2026 American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota President's Project



Honor Flight Network is a national nonprofit organization with independent hubs working together to achieve the Honor Flight mission.

### The Honor Flight Mission

To celebrate America's veterans by inviting them to share in a day of honor at our nation's memorials.

### The Honor Flight Vision

A nation where all of America's veterans experience the honor, gratitude, and community of support they deserve.

In 2021, the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters entered a formal partnership with Honor Flight Inc. to support their mission to celebrate America's veterans by inviting them to share in a day of honor at our nation's memorials by enabling our units and departments to directly donate funds generated from the distribution of our poppy — the symbol of the sacrifice of service made by our veterans, military, and their families.

Participation in an Honor Flight trip gives veterans the opportunity to share this momentous occasion with other comrades, remember the fallen, and share their stories and experiences with other veterans. Honored veterans always travel free of charge, thanks to generous donations.

While initially focused solely on America's World War II era veterans, Honor Flight Network has expanded its mission to include those who served during the Korean War and the Vietnam War eras. The Honor Flight TLC program also honors veterans of any service era who are critically ill.

### 20 years in operation

- ♥ Over 128 hubs across the country form Honor Flight Network.
- ♥ As of July 4<sup>th</sup> – 317,128 veterans honored since 2005
- ♥ As of July 4<sup>th</sup> - 46,380 veterans on waiting list
- ♥ 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

### Minnesota

- ♥ 87 counties with 295,703 Minnesota veterans
- ♥ 6 hubs that support Minnesota counties
- ♥ Lone Eagle - program of Honor Flight that serves veterans not served by a hub

**Goal to raise \$35,000 to split evenly between the 7 so that each gets \$5,000**

### **FREEDOM HONOR FLIGHT, INC.**

Home City: La Crosse

Departing Airport: La Crosse Regional Airport (LSE)

*Minnesota counties: Houston, Wabasha, and Winona*

### **HONOR FLIGHT NORTHLAND**

Home City: Duluth

Departing Airport: Duluth International Airport (DLH)

*Minnesota counties: Koochiching, Itaska, Aitkin, St Louis, Carlton, Pine, Lake, and Cook*

### **HONOR FLIGHT TWIN CITIES**

Home City: Minneapolis/Saint Paul

Departing Airport: Minneapolis/ St Paul MN Airport (MSP)

*Minnesota counties: Anoka, Benton, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Washington, and Wright.*

### **MIDWEST HONOR FLIGHT**

Home City: Sioux Falls, SD

Departing Airport: Sioux Falls Regional Airport (FSD)

*Minnesota counties: Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, Rock, Nobles, Jackson*

### **NORTH STAR HONOR FLIGHT**

Home City: Adams, MN

Departing Airport: Rochester International Airport (RST)

*Minnesota counties: Blue Earth, Dodge, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Mower, Olmsted, Steele, and Waseca*

### **VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT OF ND/MN**

Home City: Fargo

Departing Airport: Hector International Airport (FAR)

*Minnesota counties: Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Beltrami, Polk, Red Lake, Pennington, Clearwater, Norman, Mahnommen, Hubbard, Clay, Becker, Wilkin, Ottertail, Douglas, Grant, Traverse, Stevens, Swift, Big Stone, Pope, Todd, and Wadena*

### **LONE EAGLE**

Program of Honor Flight that serves veterans not served by a hub.

Departing Airport: Closest to Veteran

*Minnesota counties: Brown, Cass, Chippewa, Crow Wing, Goodhue, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lake of the Woods, Lesuer, McLeod, Martin, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Nicollet, Renville, Sibley, Stearns, Watonwan, and Yellow Medicine.*

## **AMERICAN LEGIONAUXILIARY**

### **Mission Statement**

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

### **Purposes**

In fulfillment of our Mission, the American Legion Auxiliary adheres to the following purposes:

- To support and advocate for veterans, active military and their families
- To support the initiatives and programs of The American Legion
- To foster patriotism and responsible citizenship
- To award scholarships and promote quality education and literacy
- To provide educational and leadership opportunities that uphold the ideals of freedom and democracy and encourage good citizenship and patriotism in government
- To increase our capacity to deliver our Mission by providing meaningful volunteer opportunities within our communities
- To empower our membership to achieve personal fulfillment through Service Not Self

### **Values**

Our statement of values is predicated on the founding purposes:

- Commitment to the four founding principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy, Loyalty
- Service to God, our country, its veterans and their families
- Tradition of patriotism and citizenship
- Personal integrity and family values
- Respect for the uniqueness of individual members
- Truthful open communication in dealing with the public and our members
- Adherence to the adopted policies and rules

### **Preamble**

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;

to maintain law and order;

to foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism;

to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;

to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, State and Nation;

to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good-will on earth;

to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;

to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion;

to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness

## ***2025~2026 Department Officers and District Presidents***



Sitting: Department 1<sup>st</sup> VP Linda Kelly, Department President Robin Dorf,  
Department 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Jody Hassing

### **District Presidents**

Standing (left to right): District 1 – Wanda Prescher, District 2 – Kristen Donnelly,  
District 3 – Ann Bovy, District 4 – Sandy Gibson, District 5 – Becky Nelson, District 6 – Wendy Grittner,  
District 7 – Mary Kuperus, District 8 – Tamara Martin, District 9 – Denise Milton,  
District 10 – Brandi Christensen

### **National Executive Committeewoman & Alternate National Executive Committeewoman**



**Jean Walker**



**Raleen Tolzmann**

## DISTRICT PRESIDENTS



**1<sup>st</sup> District**  
**Wanda Prescher**

Theme: Serving Those Who Served  
Symbol: Poppy  
Project: Mini Golf Course at Preston Veterans Home  
Estimated Cost: \$5000.00



**2<sup>nd</sup> District**  
**Kristen Donnelly**

Theme: Be the Helping Hand That We All Desire  
Symbol: Helping Hand Tree  
Project: Collect funds to be split between Eagles Healing Nest in Redwood Falls and Bravo Zulu House in Martin County  
Estimated Cost: \$4000.00 - \$2000 each



**3<sup>rd</sup> District**  
**Ann Bovy**

Theme: Veterans Are Our Sweethearts  
Symbol: Three red roses with Auxiliary Emblem  
Project: Garden and landscaping at Hastings Veterans Home and disc golf course at St Peter Regional Treatment Center  
Estimated Cost: \$4000.00 - \$2000.00 each



**4th District**  
**Sandra Gibson**

Theme: Let Freedom Soar  
Symbol: Eagle Carrying an American flag  
Project: Special meals at Minneapolis Veterans Home and Monthly BINGO at VMAC  
Estimated Cost: \$1800.00



**5th District**  
**Becky Nelson**

Theme: Red, White and Blue the Color of Freedom  
Symbol: American flag  
Project: Joint project at Minneapolis Veterans Home  
Estimated Cost: \$2000.00



**6th District**  
**Wendy Grittner**

Theme: Honoring our Past – Empowering our Future  
Symbol: Dog tag with patriotic minion  
Project: Joint project for funds for ATVs and safety equipment and beach volleyball court at Legionville  
Estimated Cost: \$10000.00



**7th District**  
**Mary Kuperus**

Theme: Giving Veterans our Upmost Respect  
Symbol: Patriotic Gnome  
Project: Activity fund at Montevideo Veterans Home  
Estimated Cost: \$2000.00



**8th District**  
**Tamara Martin**

Theme: Bee Kind, Bee Friends, Be the One  
Symbol: Winne the Pooh  
Project: Silver Bay Veterans Home  
Estimated Cost: \$1500.00



**9th District**  
**Denise Milton**

Theme: Reach for the Stars for Veterans  
Symbol: Star  
Project: Joint project for Legionville with the 9th Dist. Comm.  
Estimated Cost: \$7000.00



**10th District**  
**Brandi Christensen**

Theme: POPPY-Preserving Our Past for Protecting Your Future  
Symbol: Poppy  
Project: Funds for the Gift Shop and Veterans Pantry at Minneapolis VA  
Estimated Cost: \$4000 - \$2000 each

**DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2025-2026**

President	<b>Robin Dorf</b>
First Vice President	<b>Linda Kelly</b>
Second Vice President	<b>Jody Hassing</b>
National Vice President	<b>Jody Hassing</b>
Committeewoman Alternate	<b>Jean Walker</b>
NEC	<b>Raleen Tolzmann</b>
Sargent-at-Arms	<b>Lorinda Kies</b>
Department Secretary	<b>Christie Avant</b>
Department Treasurer	<b>Judy Ackerman</b>
Department Chaplain	<b>Marsha Bible</b>
Department Historian	<b>Karla Otterness</b>
Honorary Jr President	<b>Anastasia Donnelly</b>

**DISTRICT PRESIDENTS**

First District	<b>Wanda Prescher</b>
Second District	<b>Kristen Donnelly</b>
Third District	<b>Ann Bovy</b>
Fourth District	<b>Sandy Gibson</b>
Fifth District	<b>Becky Nelson</b>
Sixth District	<b>Wendy Grittner</b>
Seventh District	<b>Mary Kuperus</b>
Eighth District	<b>Tamara Martin</b>
Ninth District	<b>Denise Milton</b>
Tenth District	<b>Brandi Christensen</b>

## **DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN - COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Americanism	<b>Tamara Thayer</b>
Children and Youth	<b>Sandy Wersal</b>
Community Service	<b>Tamara Martin</b>
Constitution/Standing Rules	<b>Carol Kottom</b>
Education	<b>Cari Lamb</b>
Finance Chairman	<b>Judy Ackerman</b>
Finance Committee 1	<b>Cavalene Regan</b>
Finance Committee 2	<b>Tonia Bettermann</b>
Finance Committee 3	<b>Jill Davis</b>
Finance Committee 4	<b>Patti Coleman</b>
Girls State Chairman	<b>Wanda Prescher</b>
Girls State Committee 1	<b>Renee Suess</b>
Girls State Committee 2	<b>Jen Stolz</b>
Director	<b>Peggy Tesdahl</b>
Education Director	<b>Amelia Tesdahl</b>
Americanism	<b>Tamara Thayer</b>
History	<b>Karla Otterness</b>
Junior Activities	<b>Brandi Christensen</b>
Leadership	<b>Mary Kuperus</b>
Legislation	<b>Jody Hassing</b>
Membership	<b>Kollett Kaehlert</b>

Memorial	<b>Marsha Bible</b>
National Security	<b>Anna Eells</b>
Parliamentarian	<b>Norma Tramm</b>
Past Presidents Parley	<b>Sharon Cross</b>
Poppy	<b>Hope Wilson</b>
Public Relations	<b>Michelle Weaver</b>
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation	<b>Linda Kelly</b>
Gift Shop Chairman	<b>Becky Nelson</b>
Gift Shop Committee	<b>Sharon Voltz</b>
Risk & Compliance Chairman	<b>Kathy Kessler</b>
Risk & Compliance Committee 1	<b>Deanna Meyer</b>
Risk & Compliance Committee 2	<b>Sandra Fredrickson</b>

#### **SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS**

Auxiliary Emergency Fund	<b>Joanie Krantz</b>
Servicemen's Center	<b>Jean Walker</b>
Advisory Board Committee 1	<b>Chris Ronning</b>
Advisory Board Committee 2	<b>Darlene Wondra</b>
Advisory Board Committee 3	<b>Raleen Tolzmann</b>
Advisory Board Committee 4	<b>Carol Kottom</b>

#### **SPECIAL CORPORATIONS**

Brain Science Foundation	<b>Barbara Hopewell</b> <b>Patti Gunderson</b> <b>Bethany Dickert</b>
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## **VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM & MN VETERANS HOME REPRESENTATIVES**

Bemidji Veterans Home	<b>Denise Milton</b>
Fargo VA Medical Center	<b>Becky Olson</b>
Fergus Falls Veterans Home	<b>Doris LaFayette</b>
Hastings Veterans Home	<b>Darlene Wondra</b>
Luverne Veterans Home	<b>Jeannette Mertens</b>
Minneapolis Veterans Home	<b>Sandra J Gibson</b>
Minneapolis VA Medical Center	<b>Janet Thompson</b>
Montevideo Veterans Home	<b>Sandy Wersal</b>
Preston Veterans Home	<b>Wanda Prescher</b>
Silver Bay Veterans Home	<b>Tamara Martin</b>
Sioux Falls VA Medical Center	<b>Diane Strassburg</b>
St. Cloud VA Medical Center	<b>Janet Benson</b>

### **Articles for VA Medical Centers / Minnesota Veterans Homes**

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

**Be certain to check with the Representative at the Hospital/Home to make sure they can use the items you are sending.**

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

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

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

## DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF



***Christie Avant ~ Department Executive Secretary***

**651-224-7634**

***christie@mnala.org***



***Pa Yang ~ Accounting Technician***

**651-224-7634**

***pa@mnala.org***



***Jocelyn Yasis ~ Administrative Assistant***

**651-224-7634**

***jocelyn@mnala.org***

## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Department of Minnesota - State Veterans Service Building

20 W 12<sup>th</sup> St Room 314 - St Paul, MN 55155

(651) 224-7634

E-mail – [deptoffice@mnala.org](mailto:deptoffice@mnala.org)

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

### **Fall Conference**

Fall Conference will be held October 24-25, 2025, at  
River's Edge Convention Center 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S, St. Cloud, MN 56301

### **Department Convention**

Department Convention will be held July 9-11, 2026, at  
Wilmar Conference Center 240 23<sup>rd</sup> St SE, Wilmar, MN 56201

## DEPARTMENT OFFICE INFORMATION

### **Embroidered ALA Emblems & Poppy Magnets**

The Department office once again has ALA Emblem magnets available.

The ALA Emblem magnet patches are \$8.00



The poppy magnet patches are \$7.00 each. (while supply lasts)

Both items will be available at Department Fall Conference and through the Department office.

### **Using Current Forms**

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

**Thank you!**

### **Items to be Ordered or Sent:**

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

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

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

The Dispatch  
National American Legion publication  
Available electronically only

### **Mail to:**

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

National Emblem Sales  
The American Legion  
Box 1050  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
1-888-453-4466  
[www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org)

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

[www.legion.org/subscribe](http://www.legion.org/subscribe)

## **2025-2026 SOLICITATION OF FUNDS**

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

For this 2025-2026 Auxiliary year of *Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs* the following is the list of those solicitations that have been **approved** by the Department Executive Committee. Your support is needed and appreciated.

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

### **Programs**

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

#### **Auxiliary Emergency Fund**

##### **Children and Youth**

Legionville

Child Well Being

TFA (Temporary Financial Assistance)

##### **Education**

###### ***\*Department Scholarship Fund***

The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund

##### **Finance**

The American Legion Family Hospital Association

American Legion Auxiliary Foundation

Brain Science Foundation

##### **\*Girls State Program**

##### ***\*Junior Activities***

Honorary Department Junior President’s Project

##### **National Security**

Armed Forces Service Center

##### **Past Presidents Parley**

###### ***\*Health Care Scholarship Fund***

##### **Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation**

###### ***\*ALA (American Legion Auxiliary) Hospital Program***

###### ***\*\$5.00 Dollar Bill Shower***

Minnesota Fisher Houses

##### **\* Gift Shop**

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

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

## **Special Projects**

**Department President Robin's Project** – Honor Flight Network, raise funds for the 6 hubs that support Minnesota and the 1 Lone Eagle that supports veterans not served by a hub.

**Honorary Department Junior President Terianna's Project** – Legionville, to replace some plumbing at the camp.

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

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

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

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR UNIT TREASURERS**

1. Please make all checks payable to the American Legion Auxiliary.  
Use the current year's Donation form to list your Unit's donations. These have been approved by the Executive Committee for 2025-2026. You may list multiple donations on 1 sheet, but please do not add other organizations to this list. You may donate directly to other organizations if you choose.
2. All donations should be included on one (1) check.  
Please remember that all contributions for approved Department projects are to be mailed to the Department Office, earmarked for the proper program(s) so that we can credit your Unit accordingly.
3. Separate checks are needed for:
  - a. Membership dues
  - b. Poppy orders
  - c. Supply orders
  - d. Donations
4. Check to make certain your check is made out properly, the amount is correct, and it is signed.
5. Send **District** items to your District Treasurer – (District Dues, District Presidents Project, etc.)
6. Monetary donations for the ALA Hospital Programs benefit all 12 of the VA Hospitals and MN Veterans Homes that we support. They should be sent to the Department Office.
7. Monetary donations for the Gift shop should be sent to the Department Office.

## **SUPPLIES**

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

2026 Unit Guide	\$ 5.00 each
2025 Book of Annual Reports	\$ 5.00 each
ALA Emblem Magnets	\$ 8.00 each
Poppy Magnets	\$ 7.00 each

## **POPPIES**

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

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

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

## **CERTIFICATES OF MERIT 2025-2026**

Certificates of Merit will be awarded to Units for the most outstanding work in:

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

Ten Certificates of Merit based on the Unit Annual reports may be awarded by the Department Chairman in each of the four membership categories based on the Unit Annual Reports. An additional five Certificates may be awarded if warranted regardless of the category. No special entry is needed. (Based on current membership as of March 31<sup>st</sup>):

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

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

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

## **PLAQUES AND AWARDS 2025-2026**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Awards will be presented at the Department Convention.

## **VOLUNTEER HOURS 2025-2026**

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

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

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

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

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

## **MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY DATES**

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

1. Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion; and
2. Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, granddaughters and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who served in either of the following periods: April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918 and any time after December 7, 1941 who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during either eligibility period and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge;
3. Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, granddaughters and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941, who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during either eligibility period and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and
4. To those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion. A woman who is eligible for American Legion membership is eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary regardless of whether or not she is a member of The American Legion. However, eligibility of her female relatives (sister, mother, direct descendants) and/or spouse depends upon her membership in The American Legion.

### **Eligibility Dates**

April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, and any time after December 7, 1941, who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge.

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

**National Military Personnel Records Center**

**Telephone: 314-801-0800**

**[www.nara.gov](http://www.nara.gov)**

# DEPARTMENT CALENDAR ACTIVITIES 2025~2026

## SEPTEMBER ~ JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

*1st 2026 Dues Notices sent to All Senior Members*

Citizenship Day Sept 16th  
National Children & Youth Conference Sept 26-28  
National Americanism Conference Sept 26-28  
Gold Star Mother's Day Sept 28th

*Labor Day Sept 2nd*

## OCTOBER ~ EDUCATION CONSTITUTION & STANDING RULES

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

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

**Fall Conference Oct 24-25th**  
**River's Edge Convention Center - St. Cloud**



*Happy Halloween*



## NOVEMBER ~ PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

*American Legion Auxiliary 105th Birthday Nov 10th*

Veteran's Day Nov 11th  
American Education Week Nov 17-21st  
National Family Volunteer Day Nov 24th  
Thanksgiving Day Nov 27th



*Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!*

## DECEMBER ~ VETERANS AFFAIR & REHABILITATION

Poppy Orders due to the Dept Office by Dec 1st

*Gift Shop for Veterans  
Pearl Harbor Rally Dec 7th*

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



*Happy Holiday's!!*

## JANUARY ~ NATIONAL SECURITY & LEGISLATION

*Unit Dues Forms for 2027 Due Jan 31st*

New Year's Day Jan 1st  
2026 2nd Renewal Notices  
Martin Luther King Day Jan 19th

*Happy New Year*



## FEBRUARY ~ AMERICANISM

**Time to Contact the schools for  
Girls State**

*Valentine's Day Feb 14th  
President's Day Feb 16th  
Washington Conference DC*

*Happy Valentine's Day*



### MARCH ~ COMMUNITY SERVICE



Appreciation Rally March 14th,  
Bloomington - DEC meeting in AM  
The American Legion 107th Birthday  
March 15th

All Scholarship Applications Due March 15th  
Palm Sunday March 29th

Girls State Reservation Due March 31st

Happy  
Easter



### APRIL ~ CHILDREN & YOUTH

Department Junior Conference April 10th & 11th  
1st District Hosting  
Good Friday April 3rd - Easter April 5th

Unit Reports & Award Entries Due April 15th  
National Volunteer Week April 20-26th



Think Spring!

### MAY ~ POPPY

Girls State Enrollment Forms Due May 1st  
National Leadership Conference May 2-5th  
Mother's Day May 10th

National Poppy Day May 22nd  
Memorial Day May 25th  
Last Unit Mailing Goes out!



### JUNE ~ GIRLS STATE

Department Convention Strength June 11th

Unit Officers List Due June 15th  
79th Session of Girls State  
Bethel University  
June 14-19th



Flag Day June 14th



### JULY ~ DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Independence Day July 4th

Department Convention July 9th-11th  
Wilmar Conference Center



### AUGUST ~ NATIONAL CONVENTION

#### NEW ADMINISTRATIVE YEAR BEGINS

National Convention August 28th -  
September 2nd  
Louisville, KY

2027 Membership Year Begins  
2026 - 2027 Auxiliary Year Begins

# ***Americanism***

## ***Tamara Thayer ~ Chairman***



This is an exciting year celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. What a great opportunity for us to get into the classrooms and speak about our 250 years of history, 250 years of Americanism. You have a chance to offer programs to youth and the community about Americanism, pride in our flag, flag etiquette, what patriotism means to you, and many other topics. This is an opportunity to invite a veteran into the classroom with you as a guest speaker. Please share what ideas your unit is doing to promote Americanism as we celebrate this milestone birthday.

I've already met with our superintendent, principal, and guidance counselor, on all the ways the American Legion Auxiliary has taught Americanism and been involved with our local schools in a variety of ways in the past in hopes to continue the connection. A past member, our Education Program Chair, and I as my units Americanism Chair were part of this meeting to kick off the year with cooperation. I suggest you get in your local schools now too, so they know who the Americanism chair is to contact. This is when you can set up a date to teach the Pledge of Allegiance to the youth and hand out American Flags. It isn't too early to hand out the Americanism essay contest forms because the classrooms can add them to their sub folders or plan this essay topic discussion and classroom writing assignment for a rainy day anytime between now and next March when they are due. Arrange now in the Fall with the Art Teacher plans to have the students draw flags and make cards to send to the veterans throughout the year. We offer to buy the supplies.

The Americanism Essay contest this year is "Celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday and the Veterans who Fought for Our Freedom." The contest is for students in grades 3 -12, including students with special needs, divided into six classes. DUE DATE to Dept. is: March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026, as that gives Dept one week to judge them and mail the winners to national on time. As you advertise this contest in local schools, please include the home school children, and private and charter schools. There will be prizes for the first 3 places in each of the 6 categories.

Rules for the essay contest:

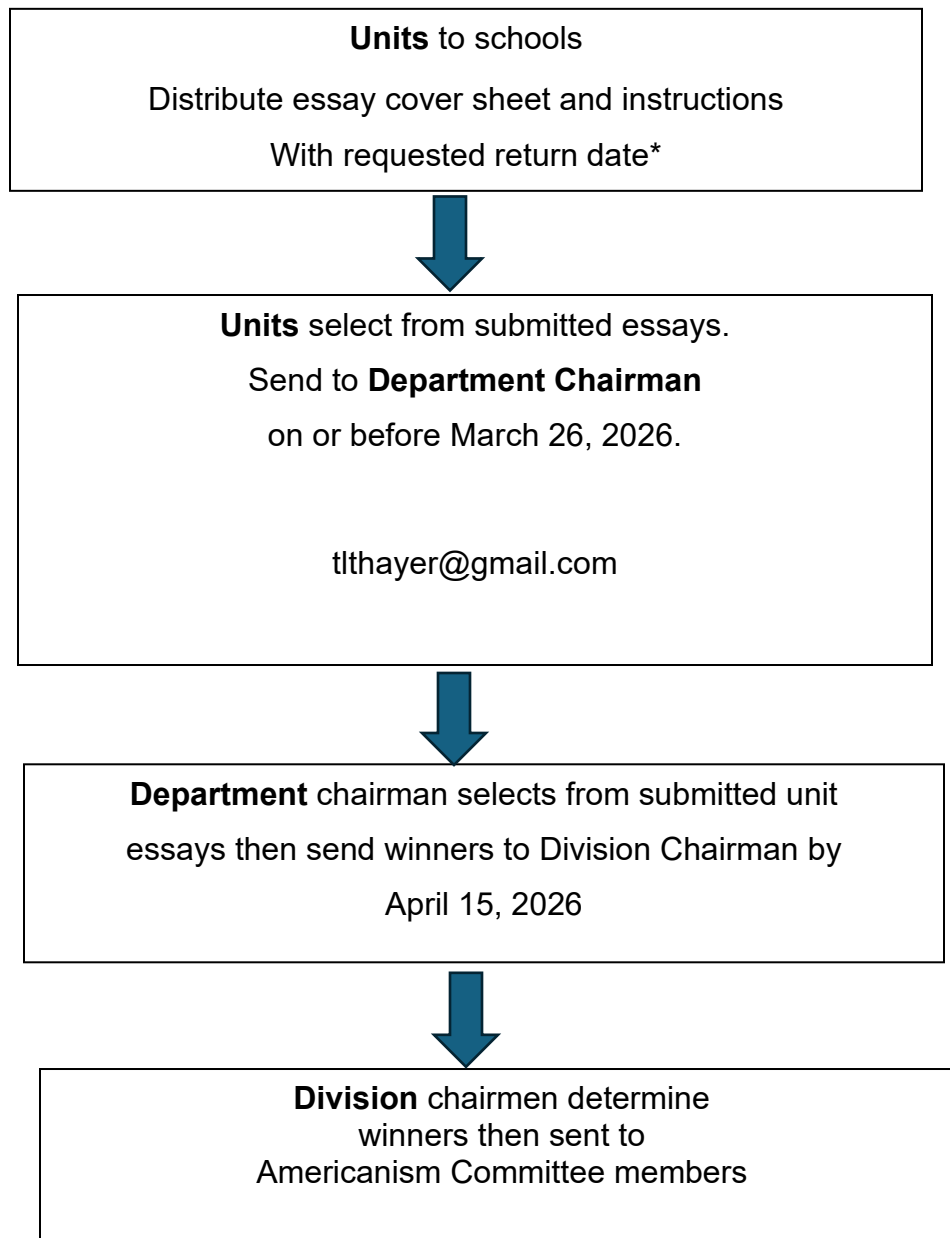
1. Typed or neatly written conforming to the word requirement for class
2. Entry must include the signed cover sheet
3. Entry due to Department Americanism Chair NO Later than March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
4. Essays are disqualified if they are unsigned, do not have a cover sheet, or received after the due date.

Americanism is showing our love for our Country and our veterans, please share your ideas.



### Americanism Essay Contest flow chart

Visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) for more information and required cover sheet



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

# **AEF**

## **Joanie Krantz ~ Chairman**



*The Auxiliary Emergency Fund was established in 1969 and is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary during times of financial crises or weather-related emergencies and natural disasters and promote awareness and knowledge of the program.*

Learn more at: [aef@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:aef@ALAforVeterans.org)

The following core rules apply to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund:

- a. Temporary assistance to eligible members during:
  - A time of financial crisis when no other source of aid is readily available to pay for shelter, food, and utilities.
  - Weather-related emergencies and natural disasters, for food and shelter.
  - Educational training for eligible members who lack the necessary skills for employment or to upgrade competitive skills.
- b. Assistance will not be granted to pay accumulated debts or medical expenses. The intent is to help members who have suffered a financial setback and is meant to be a bridge offering a helping hand until financial stability is re-established. Incomplete applications and missing documentation will significantly slow processing the case file.
- c. Eligibility: persons who have been members of the American Legion Auxiliary for at least the immediate past two consecutive years and whose current membership dues are paid at the time the emergency occurs (three consecutive years' dues) may apply for assistance.
- d. Assistance provided: the maximum grant amount is \$3,000, disbursed as the Auxiliary Emergency Fund Grant Committee determines.

Information to Share at your Unit meetings:

Pass out Auxiliary Emergency Fund brochures available from the Department Office. These brochures can also be printed by going to the Department website, [www.mnala.org](http://www.mnala.org). There is also a frequently asked questions sheet available at [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org). Take time at a meeting or a "Members helping Members" night to discuss the Auxiliary Emergency Fund and what your unit can do to help fund this program.

Applications can be acquired from your Unit President, Department Office or online at [www.mnala.org](http://www.mnala.org). Go to Forms the ALA Emergency Fund Application.

# ***Children and Youth***

## ***Sandy Wersal ~ Chairman***



The Children and Youth program emphasizes protecting, caring for, and supporting children and youth. Particularly those of veterans and military families.

National has two awards to recognize and reward the positive actions of our children and youth.

Good Deed Awards: For youth 18 years of age or younger who have contributed in a special way to society through a community project that demonstrates leadership in community service by planning, organizing, and executing a service project.

The Youth Hero Award: Recognizes someone less than 18 years of age who performs a heroic act of physical bravery.

April 15th is Purple Up Day, it is the official day for military children.

April is the month of the Military Child.

Units consider donating to the following funds through the Department Office.

Child Well Being Foundation— To educate members and the public about the Child Well-Being Foundation (CWF), its mission, and to provide financial assistance to The American Legion in their efforts to award grants to youth-serving nonprofit organizations.

Legionville - Is a safety educational center offering quality instruction in school safety patrol methods and areas such as swimming, canoeing, first aid, intro to firearm safety, cyber safety, bus safety and much more.... Any organization or parent can sponsor a camper.

American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) - Awards cash grants up to \$1,500 to current active-duty service members or American Legion members with minor children at home. Help families in need meet the cost of shelter, food, utilities, and health expenses. [Legion.org/FinancialAssistance](http://Legion.org/FinancialAssistance)

Items to collect and report on at year end: Ronald McDonald Pop Tabs, total pounds collected.

Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2): This is a recognition program for military children who experience extended separation from their military parent or parents.

Resources a Unit can use: [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org)

Have a wonderful year working for the Children and Youth Program.

# ***Community Service***

## ***Tamara Martin ~ Chairman***



### **“Serving Veterans, Serving Communities”**

#### **Objectives**

The American Legion Auxiliary Community Service Program seeks to:

- Promote service as a core value of the Auxiliary by engaging members in meaningful projects.
- Honor and support veterans, military, and their families through visible and impactful community outreach.
- Build stronger communities by collaborating with local organizations, schools, and civic groups.
- Inspire future generations of leaders through youth involvement and education.
- Strengthen the American Legion Family by working together on projects that demonstrate unity and shared purpose.

#### **Goals for the Year**

1. Increase Member Engagement
  - Encourage every member to participate in at least one community service project.
  - Provide flexible, family-friendly volunteer opportunities.
2. Promote National Days of Service
  - January: Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service
  - September: 9/11 National Day of Service
  - September: POW/MIA Recognition Day
  - April: American Legion Family Day (last Saturday of April)
3. Mobilize Support for Military Families
  - Recognize Blue Star Families and support deployed service members with care packages and outreach.
  - Partner with local organizations to provide resources for families facing hardship.
4. Expand Youth Involvement
  - Encourage Junior members and youth groups to take part in service events.
  - Provide opportunities for youth to learn about patriotism, civic responsibility, and volunteerism.
5. Build Partnerships
  - Strengthen collaboration with the Legion, SAL, and Riders.
  - Partner with schools, churches, and civic groups for community impact.
6. Plan Seasonal & Emergency Support
  - Organize drives for school supplies, coats, hygiene kits, and food baskets.
  - Be ready to respond to local emergencies with volunteers and supplies.
7. Track and Celebrate Impact
  - Record volunteer hours, donations, and project outcomes.
  - Share stories in newsletters, on social media, and in Department reports.
  - Recognize outstanding volunteers, youth, and partners.

#### **Closing Commitment**

Together, we can make this a year of intentional, compassionate, and impactful service. When we give our time, talents, and hearts, we honor our veterans, inspire others, and strengthen our communities.

# ***Constitution & Standing Rules***

## ***Carol Kottom ~ Chairman***



The constitution & bylaws contain the “internal” rules of an organization. They are the rules and ordinances made by a corporation for its own government.

The bylaws typically contain:

- The name of the organization
- It's Object
- Members
- Officers
- Meetings
- Executive Board
- Committees
- Parliamentary Authority
- Amendment process

The units should become familiar with the Constitutions at all levels - Department, District and Unit. Constitutions are found on the website every year along with the Department Policies. Review your governances at one of your first meetings and update your standing rules as needed. Standing rules should not repeat or alter any of the rules stated in the Constitution & Bylaws.

The Standing Rules should pertain to anything specific to your Unit or District. Some examples are:

- Time, day, and place of the meetings
- List of fundraisers
- The dues the unit pays for – anyone who is ill or maybe all over 75 years of age
- Sending cards to those who are ill or family of deceased
- How much the unit dues are
- Do you pay mileage for conducting unit business, and, if so, how much

In other words, the things that differ from unit to unit.

Standing rules should be reviewed and changed annually. Although you may change them throughout the year, it is not a recommended method. If you find you need to make frequent updates to your rules, you may want to consider rewriting them totally to better fit your unit's needs. Make sure your rules are written clear enough for everyone to understand. Remember that you can not make a rule that you, at that level of our organization, cannot change.

To change any of the documents, submit the completed three-column proposal form found on the National website. That can be used for Unit, District, Department or National Constitutions and Bylaws and also for Department Standing Rules.

Everyone should be familiar with the governing documents – read them all!

# ***Education***

## ***Cari Lamb ~ Chairman***



The Education Program promotes the American Legion Auxiliary's role in providing quality education for children and adults through classroom activities, literacy programs, scholarship promotion and support of education beyond high school, with special emphasis on children of veterans and service members.

American Legion Auxiliary Scholarships.

National Scholarships snapshot: [www.alaforveterans.org/scholarships](http://www.alaforveterans.org/scholarships) for applications

- 1. Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior Members**
- 2. The Non-Traditional Student Scholarship**
- 3. Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship**
- 4. Department of Minnesota Scholarship**
- 5. Children of Warriors National Presidents Scholarship**
- 6. Department of Minnesota Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarship**

More scholarship information can be found on the following websites along with all the instructions that need to be followed.

[www.mnala.org/schlarships](http://www.mnala.org/schlarships) or [www.alaforveterans.org/scholarship](http://www.alaforveterans.org/scholarship)

### **Veterans in Community Schools**

Veterans in Community Schools is an activity endorsed by The American Legion that brings history to life by connecting military veterans with students in classrooms or at school assemblies in conjunction with history lessons about World War II, The Korean War, The Vietnam War or Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom. The ever-decreasing numbers of healthy veterans from World War II points to the fleeting nature of the opportunity to pass on these important lessons.

Veterans are important pieces of American history. The American Legion Family believes accounts of their experiences while in uniform and because of their military service should be preserved and shared with others. Veterans have witnessed monumental events in history. They can help students learn from and appreciate the sacrifices individuals and their families have made. In addition, including how to help a family who has a deployed military service member, how to show support for the troops, and proper respect for the flag.

Veterans' sharing of their military experience with an appreciative audience can help them heal psychological wounds from combat, deployment or family separation.

### **Give 10 to Education**

This is an easy program and really a lot of fun, so it's my hope that all Units will take part in it. In your mailing you will receive a list of items that the schools/teachers would appreciate for their classrooms. All your Unit has to do is collect 10 items of the same thing, so if you spread out the list, each person could pick up those items or work in teams, then it's not so expensive for one person. Perhaps you have a member who is very creative/crafty who would be willing to make a display for your Post members to join in. (Idea: Get a tree branch and decorate with fall leaves or apples (both paper) and hang from the branches with items from the list you received- with a poster/signage that reads "10 to Education")

## ***Finance***

### ***Judy Ackerman ~ Chairman***



**Does your unit have or need a budget?** Every unit should be working with a budget. This is a “estimate” of what your unit’s income and expenses will be for the coming year. Once a budget is approved by the members, the treasurer can write checks according to the budget expenses without approval of the members. This is helpful when a quorum is not met, and bills can be paid.

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

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

- National organization - \$18
- Minnesota - \$12 which is allocated as follows:
  - American Legion Family Hospital Association - \$0.25
  - Department National Leadership Fund - \$0.20
  - Department Junior Conference Fund - \$0.10
  - Auxiliary program support and Department staff expenses - \$11.45

Junior membership dues sent to Department are \$6.00. These dues are allocated as follows:

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

Other Fundraising – is your unit planning any other ways to raise funds for the year? If so, this would make up the balance of your unit’s income.

#### **What expenses does your unit have?**

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

Donations – Please consider donating to our Auxiliary programs first. The approved programs are listed in the unit guide by programs.

The Department President’s project and the Honorary Department Junior President’s project should be considered when making your budget. Please consider including the District President’s project and the Honorary District Junior President’s project. The Department and District Presidents projects that were brought before the Department Executive Committee were approved.

Any other expenses that your unit has should be listed in your budget. Don't forget to include the unit bonding fee. (This is due every three years, and this year is the year.) Hopefully your income is greater than your expenses.

Any expenses not listed in the budget need to be approved at a unit meeting prior to the treasurer paying the bill.

**Best practice is to have two signatures on each check.**

The General Funds and Poppy funds need to be separated. The monies do not need to be in separate accounts, but you must have separate ledgers to keep the funds and expenditures in the correct places.

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

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

The information can be found on the national website – [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org) – programs – poppy. Member log-in is necessary. (Your membership number is required.)

**Donations**

To donate to our Auxiliary Programs, please use the donation form that will be in the first unit mailing. The forms can be found at [MNALA.org](http://MNALA.org). Go to forms and scroll down to find the donation form.

Make a separate check for the programs where poppy funds are allowed and another check for all other donations. A separate check is NOT NEEDED for each program donation.

**Make checks payable to:** "American Legion Auxiliary"

**Send checks to:**

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

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

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

Every unit and district is required by law to file Form 990 each year with the IRS. If you need assistance with this, please contact the risk and compliance chairman or your District President.

This year we will be **“Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs”**. We will work together to support our programs financially. Every dollar counts – no amount is too small to make a difference. It is up to all of us to further the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Thank you for all the donations.

The Finance Committee is here to assist you if needed.

Judy Ackerman / Finance Chairman

Finance Committee members are:

Cavalene Regan

Tonia Betterman

Jill Davis

Patti Coleman



# ***American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State Wanda Prescher ~ Chairman***



ALA Minnesota Girls State is a once in a lifetime opportunity in citizenship and empowerment for young women. It is a diverse group of young women who share a common desire to learn. From small towns to urban areas, the citizens' diverse backgrounds add spirit to the program.

The purpose of the ALA Minnesota Girls State program is to provide Americanism and good citizenship training and to inform our participants about the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of government as practiced by a democratic society. To spend time and share common interests and understand those who have a different perspective from their own. They leave with a deeper understanding of our government, a renewed sense in patriotism, and appreciation for our veterans.

The week may also help a student make their college decision, give them lasting memories, friendships and possibly change career goals.

Our job is to work with local high school educators to identify girls who have this kind of interest and try and recruit them for our program. It is not an easy job in today's world to get into schools like in the past, that is where technology will come into play. I encourage everyone to try and embrace this tool for coming year! Our committee has a great deal of knowledge to share and help you. You just need to reach out to us! We look forward to another exciting year at Girl's State with your continued support for this awesome program!

## **Your Committee:**

Wanda Prescher - Chairman  
Peggy Tesdahl - Director  
Ameilia Tesdahl - Education Director  
Renee Seuss - Committee Member  
Jen Stolz - Committee Member  
Tamara Thayer - Americanism  
Chairman



# ***History***

## ***Karla Otterness ~ Historian***



History is a verbal treasure chest of time. When you unlock the chest, you receive written and photographic treasures from the past, that are priceless. But it is up to you the auxiliary members to unlock the chest, door, or cabinet. Then read it and share it with your unit members, for all to enjoy.

Please be mindful of where your unit is storing your unit history. Make sure it is safe from disaster. Maybe you should scan in keepsake photos and documents to save them digitally. Keep old valuable photo books in a fireproof safe to preserve history. But make sure you take them out for special occasions.

### **What is a Historian?**

As a historian you need to develop a system to organize important communications: like newsletters, notebooks, checkbook registers, secretary minutes, newspaper clippings, blogs, brochures and programs that will help with writing history.

As a historian: you could keep a dated log, some might call it a diary of events

As a historian: when attending an event ask for members to share their photos

As a historian: Collect information from other members, we can't be at everything that is happening. So, don't be shy, ask for help from people that are in attendance.

As historian: please help advise your junior historian to write their history and participate in the patch program. It just might give them the self-esteem boost they need.

Awards: Each district has its own awards, please follow their guidelines and procedures for them.

Department Awards will be listed on the award sheet with directions on how to apply.

### **District Historians**

You are to read all the histories that the units send you from your district and write a report on this information. Most of the historians that I have worked with do a fantastic job here. But.... Don't forget to add what your district is doing.

- Did your District have an officer's installation? Write about it!
- Did your District host Midwinter? Write about it!
- Did your District have a membership turn in? Write about it!
- Did your District do something fun? Write about it!
- Did the Past Presidents meet? Write about it!

My personal Writing challenge to all units in the Department of MN, will be: In 2026 our wonderful United States will turn 250 years old. I thought it would be fun for our units to unluck their treasure chest and find out who has the oldest minutes, documents, photos, what kind of memorabilia was kept, and is it stored where members can see. etc.

I am also looking for units or districts to honor a member by sending in a photo and a brief description of what this member has done. To leave a remarkable impact on the American Legion Auxiliary organization. These will be published on Facebook in the month of March. To commemorate women's history month.

# ***Junior Activities***

## ***Brandi Christensen ~ Chairman***



**“Purpose:** The purpose of the Junior Activities Committee is to inspire active participation in members aged 17 and under so they become engaging, productive members who will want to continue their American Legion Auxiliary membership into adulthood.” – [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org)

Encouraging and mentoring young members from ages birth to 17 years of age is a big part of the Junior Program. Let junior members have a voice and to share that voice with the people around them. If you have a small group you can always get together with another unit that is near you or as a whole District and do a Fun Day and a service project. You can also invite young Sons of American Legion members to join you as well. This way they can make friends and get together with old friends do something fun and meaningful as well.

Be mentors to junior members. Include them into your meetings and fundraising or any other events you do as a unit. Make them memorable and fun. Most if not all just want to feel included.

Teach them to be future leaders I know that Minnesota has some great juniors who will some day serve this wonderful organization and be very proud to do so. They are amazing girls.

The patch program is a great program to get junior members involved in Auxiliary programs and to learn about them. These can be found on the Department website as well as the National website.

There are also e-learning courses on the National website for junior members to learn about protocols and parliamentary procedures.

There is a National Junior Meeting this year in Minnesota! Please plan to have your juniors attend! It is November 15<sup>th</sup>. Registration can be done on the National website.

There are also scholarships available to junior members. These are:

- Spirit of Youth Scholarship: must have 3 consecutive year membership and must keep current membership throughout the 4 year scholarship period.
- Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship
- James H Parke Scholarship

# **Leadership**

## **Mary Kuperus ~ Chairman**



**Purpose:** The purpose of the Leadership Committee is to better equip members to serve in leadership positions with confidence and skill. *Standing Rules #6, National Committees – Member/Organizational Support*

**Key strategies that we will follow are:**

### **Raise awareness of ALA leadership development opportunities.**

There are many opportunities to attend leadership training. Mission Training will be held in Minneapolis and Albany, NY on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025; Indianapolis, IN and Las Vegas, NV on January 31, 2026; and Atlanta, GA on February 7, 2026. Registration is now open and can be completed online at [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org).

On the Department level, leadership workshops will be held at least two times throughout the year. These workshops are open to any member of the American Legion Family. Junior and young SAL members who are 10 years old and up are also invited to attend.

Consider having leadership classes in your districts. Leaders are found in many places throughout our Districts and Department. Encourage leaders in your area to participate in classes that Districts sponsor.

Not all members want to be leaders. Encourage all members to participate in any workshops or classes near them. All members can learn about our awesome organization.

Consider attending leadership opportunities in your communities. Share the American Legion Auxiliary story wherever you can.

### **ALA Unit Member of the Year Award**

This is an opportunity to nominate a member of your Unit. It is open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been, in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president. Watch for procedures for nominating your member in the Department Awards list.

### **Promote participation in the ALA Academy.**

The ALA Academy provides tools to members to help grow the Auxiliary's mission, and the organization as a team. The ALA Academy offers self-paced courses you can take from any device. These are designed for you to take whenever you have time with no need to pre-register. There are many courses that you can choose from. Also available are Live virtual webinars: These courses are free but are offered live and you will need to register in advance. If

you miss a previously live webinar, you can watch a recording at a later time. ALA Academy can be found on [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org).

### **Enhance knowledge about ALA history, programs, and organization.**

Information can be found in many places about our ALA history, programs, and organization.

Leadership workshops and classes can be found throughout the Districts and Department. Share the information that you learn with members who are unable to attend.

Department resources include and can be found at [mnala.org](http://mnala.org):

- Unit Guide Book
- Constitution and Bylaws
- Standing Rules

National American Legion Auxiliary Resources include and can be downloaded from [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org):

- Unit Guide Book
- Constitution & Bylaws
- Department Operations Guide
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Many other ALA guide books are available on the national website. Use these to learn about our organization and share with other Auxiliary members.

Leadership is an opportunity for members to share information with members of the American Legion Family. A good leader should have integrity, self-awareness, courage, respect, compassion, and resilience. Not all members strive to be a leader. Members can be supporters, worker bees, or someone who wants to learn about our organization. Mentors are everywhere and are willing to help when a learning opportunity arises.

# ***Legislation***

## ***Jody Hassing ~ Chairman***



As members of the American Legion Family, we support veterans through Auxiliary programs and by advocating for impactful legislation. The GI Bill has served veterans for 80 years, the PACT ACT was recently enacted, and we continue to urge legislators to back additional bills benefiting veterans.

The CTF (Commanders Task Force) brings together representatives from nine Minnesota veterans' organizations to discuss legislative priorities. The Auxiliary legislation chairman has been invited to attend as a guest. A leadership summit is scheduled for this week, where key issues will be addressed. Details will be shared in an upcoming Auxiliary Unit Mailing.

Stay informed by meeting with your legislators or their staff to discuss which veteran bills they support. If they don't back the American Legion Family's priorities, ask them why. Invite candidates to speak annually—not just during election years—to ensure continued support for your cause. Involve the American Legion Family in these discussions and follow up by urging your own legislator to support key bills.

The websites listed below provide important information regarding the legislative program for the American Legion family:

- The Auxiliary has an information guide available - either purchase from Emblem Sales or download at: <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Guides/Advocacy-Guide>.
- This handbook has a downloadable copy of the Legion Family Legislative Handbook: <https://legion.org/publications/223496/legislative>
- This site is where you can sign up to receive American Legion Legislative alerts when Family members are asked to act.  
<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register>

The American Legion Family does not endorse political candidates. Be sure to vote and consider candidate positions on veteran issues when deciding.

# ***Membership***

## ***Kollett Kaehlert ~ Chairman***



### **Utilize Creative Ways to Integrate Membership with Celebration**

### ***"Make It Fun!"***

#### **2026 Department of MN Membership Awards & Department Trophies for Districts**

##### **Adam Victory Plaque**

Goes to the first District to reach Goal in the 2025-2026 membership year.

##### **Jergens Plaque**

Goes to the first District to reach All Time High in the 2025-2026 membership year.

##### **Scallen Carlson Plaque**

Goes to the District with the highest percentage of goal by the 2025 Fall Conference. The cut-off date of Fall Conference applies.

##### **Carlson Hollenbeck Plaque**

Goes to the District with the highest percentage of membership by July 2026, the exact date in July based on the membership bulletin.

#### **Department Unit Awards**

##### **Department Presidents Citation**

To all Units reaching their 100% membership goal by January 31, 2026.

##### **Unit Membership Chairmen**

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

##### **District Membership Chairmen**

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

##### **Recruiting Our Future Stars Award**

Any unit who recruits 3 Junior members will be entered into a drawing for \$25.00 to be used to promote Junior Programs.

##### **Outstanding Individual Recruiter**

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

## 2026 Department Goal Awards

50%	October 25, 2025	Fall Conference – St Cloud
75%	December 6, 2025	Pearl Harbor Rally - Buffalo
85%	March 14, 2026	Appreciation Rally - Bloomington
95%	May 23, 2026	National Poppy Day

### Rally Dates and locations are subject to change

Lottery drawing at the end of membership turn in for \$75.00 for all units that have reached goal designated for each rally. (One Winner per rally)

Additional Dates & Awards per the National Membership Team

85%	March 15, 2026	The American Legion Birthday
95%	May 23, 2026	National Poppy Day
100%	July 4, 2026	Independence Day
102%	July 26, 2026	30 Days Prior to National Convention

### Unit Awards from National

Units reaching 100% by January 31, 2026, will receive a ALA Key Chain with phone standard cleaner, 2 per unit for the unit president and unit membership chairman.

New Chartered Units between 9/1/2025 thru 7/31/2026 will receive a Unit Guidebook & ALA National Constitution & Bylaws from Emblem Sales.

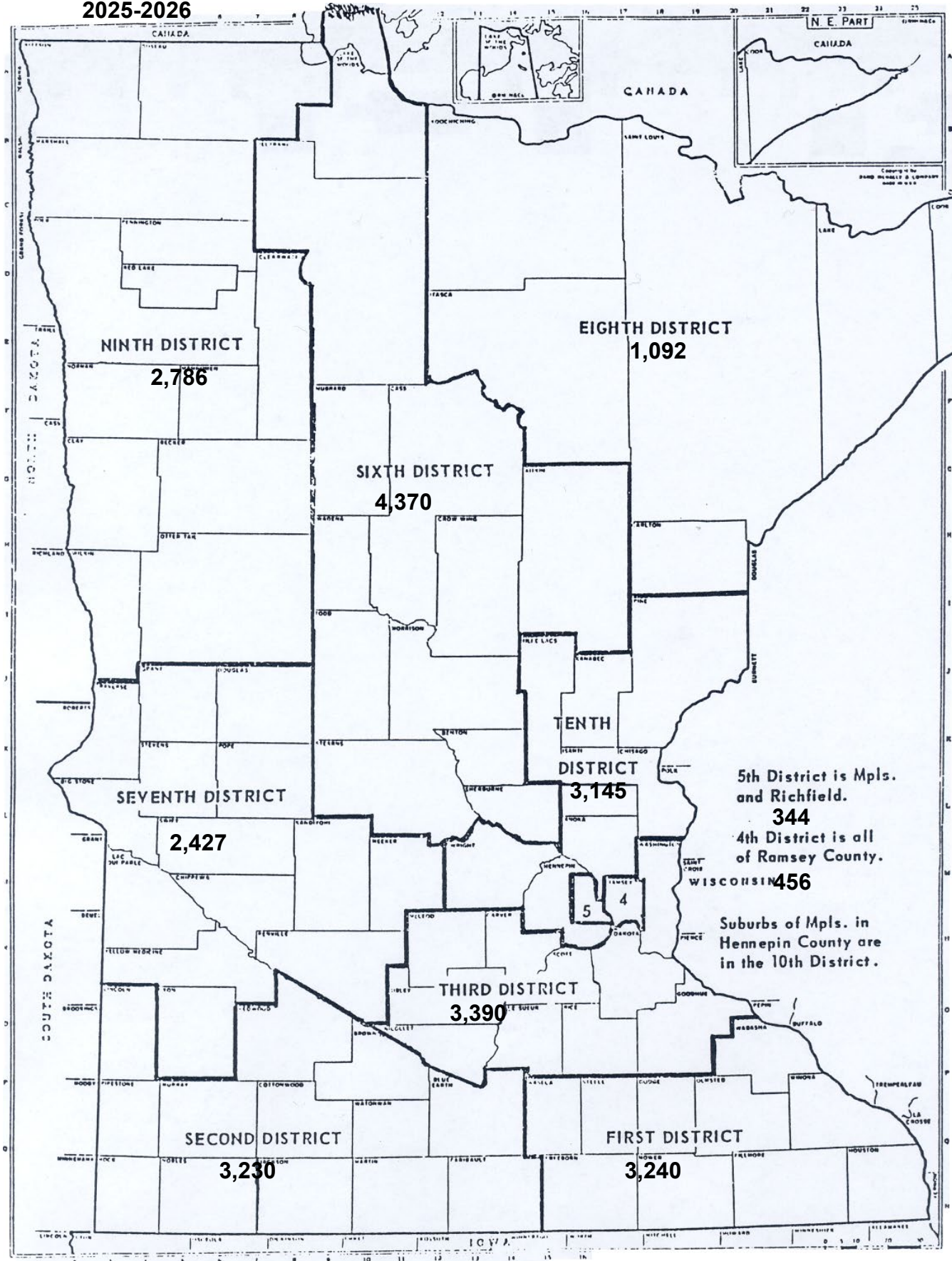
### Member Awards from National

Recruit/Rejoin 10 -Any combination of Jr & Sr members by 6/6/2026 - will receive a special gift selected by the National Membership Chairman (1 entry per recruiter/member)

Family3 – Members who recruit 3 New Legion Members, 3 New Auxiliary members & 3 New SAL members – will receive a special gift selected by the National President.



**2025-2026**



# ***Memorial\Chaplain Marsha Bible ~ Chairman***



Every unit and district should have a Chaplain. The Chaplain is the spiritual leader of your unit. It is important to remember that the American Legion Auxiliary does not promote any one religion. The Chaplain should attend all meetings and be prepared with an opening and closing prayer at each meeting. It is also helpful to have a grace prayer available when food will be served. Prayers may come from any source: Reflections in the quarterly Auxiliary magazine, from our national website <https://www.legion-aux.org>, self written prayers or those found anywhere else. An important reminder for all chaplains is that the American Legion Auxiliary does not promote one religion. Our American Legion members, the veterans who have served and protected our country, come from a variety of religious backgrounds. Be aware of your unit membership or the group you will be offering prayers to when selecting your prayers.

As members we open our meetings with our Preamble and the words "For God and Country". Remember God is always with us.

Some ideas activities that chaplains might consider:

- Report the names of members who are ill or have entered alternative care facilities (nursing homes, assisted living, etc.) and send them cards signed by your members at a meeting;
- When a member dies, send a sympathy card and/or memorial to the next of kin. If the family requests, visit the funeral visitation and have members present a Memorial Service for the deceased member;
- Drape your Unit's charter at a Unit meeting and invite the family members to attend for the draping. (This sometimes works as a great membership tool for longtime members who always paid their children and grandchildren's dues. They realize how important their family member was to the Auxiliary and want to continue to pay their own dues!)
- Keep in contact and recognize Gold Star Families whenever you can;
- Visit members and veterans in nursing homes or those who live alone;
- Visiting members and veterans in nursing homes or those who are shut-ins.
- Keeping in contact with Gold Star Families and remembering them on holidays.

Keep track of all Unit members who die April 1<sup>st</sup> thru March 31<sup>st</sup> of the year. You will be for this information later in the year.

Members and Units are encouraged to donate funds as Memorials in honor or memory of deceased members. Memorials can be made to any of the programs that are found on our donation form. There is a special page to use when sending in a memorial. It has a space to indicate who the donation is in memory of and information on notifying next of kin. This is a great way to honor our deceased while maintaining some very special programs.

This year I am asking members and units to help create a prayer resource for all of our members. I'm asking you to send me prayers, inspirational poems, etc. to share with everyone. Each month, I will print as many prayers as I can on this Chaplain's page. Prayers can be sent to [marsha.bible@gmail.com](mailto:marsha.bible@gmail.com) or mail them to me at the address above.

Resources that may help you:

- American Legion Auxiliary Chaplains Resources: <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/resources/haplain-resources>
  - Includes Chaplains Manual, Chaplains Prayer Book & Manual of Ceremonies
- American Legion Chaplain's "How To..." Manual: [mnlegion.org/wp-content/uploads/Chaplains-How-To-Manual.pdf](https://mnlegion.org/wp-content/uploads/Chaplains-How-To-Manual.pdf)

Additional prayers are available through the American Legion Auxiliary Chaplains' Prayer Book: • Download for free at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). • Purchase a copy through American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales at [emblem.legion.org](http://emblem.legion.org) or by calling (888) 453-4466.

# **National Security**

## **Anna Eells ~ Chairman**



The National Security program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families.

January is National Security month. Special dates to remember under this program:

September 11 - National Patriot's Day - plan a remembrance service in the Community

September 16 - POW/MIA recognition day (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in September). Commemorate and honor this Nation's Prisoners of War and those who are Missing in Action as well as their families. Continue to urge and demand the fullest accounting of All POW/MIA'S from all wars.

Remember Everyone Deployed (R.E.D.) Wear red on Friday to help bring awareness to your community. Red Friday shirts can be ordered online and at Flag & Emblem Catalog.

Gold Star Families have experienced the loss of a loved one - an immediate family member- who died because of active-duty military service. Those who die in service to their country leave behind parents, siblings, spouses, children and extended families. The title is meant to honor the service members' ultimate sacrifice while acknowledging their family's loss, grief & continued healing. The term Gold Star family is a modern reference that comes from the Service Flag.

These flags/banners were first flown by families during World War I. The flag included a blue star for every immediate family member serving in the armed forces of the United States, during any period of war or hostilities in which the armed forces of the United States were engaged. In the event of a death, that blue star is replaced with a gold variant - the highest honor.

The ALA through National Security calls upon our members to maintain strong communities at home. Part of that includes being prepared for natural and man-made emergencies that might occur. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed a program to prepare citizens for emergency responses.

FEMA'S Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)Program educates community members on disaster preparedness in their local communities. Training is offered on four topics: fire safety, light search and rescue, team organizations and disaster medical operations. Once trained CERT members can assist their community in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

Training is a great way for an individual ALA member to fulfill her/his service obligation independently. It is also a great opportunity for an ALA Unit to organize a group of ALA members to train together.

Go to [www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams](http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams). Click on "Find Nearby CERT Programs". You will be redirected to a page where you can input your ZIP Code. This page will produce a list of CERT programs near you.

The Armed Forces Service Center has been located at the MSP Airport since November of 1970. They offer complimentary refreshments, sleeping bunk rooms for men and women, a nice lounge, playroom, dining room, luggage room, PC, CAC reader, shower and three bathrooms during the daily hours of operation. The lobby area is available 24/7.

The Armed Forces Service Center is open 8:00 am to 10:45 pm every day. It is located on Level 2 of Concourse A. The Center would not be able to be open without the many dedicated volunteers that work there every day. Donations are always welcomed for this very important center. Many military members use this center for some down time while waiting at the airport. Those eligible to use the facility are Active Duty, National Guard, reserves, Purple Heart, MIA, former POW, Retirees, Dependents, DoD and 100% DAV (with a DOD ID card).

The AFSC is a 501 ©(3) Non-Profit Organization.

The Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary donates money each year. Please continue to do so as they are very appreciative of all donations.

# Armed Forces Service Center (AFSC)

## Jean Walker ~ Representative



The Armed Forces Service Center has been at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport, since November 1970. Founded by Mrs. Maggie Purdum as a 501©(3) nonprofit, 8 months after her son Scott died in a plane crash in Vietnam, with no USO affiliation.

For traveling active duty military, Purple Heart recipients, and Department of Defense ID card holders (includes dependents, retirees in 100% DAV).

The AFSC is located inside security at the MSP Terminal 1, with free food, beverages, a TV lounge, computer, printer, CAC reader, luggage storage, dining room, playroom, separate bunk rooms for men and women with a crib, three bathrooms, lactation station and a shower.

Pre-pandemic the AFSC was open 24/7, since 1970. Currently, the daily hours of operation are 8:00 AM-10:45 PM. The lobby is available 24 hours a day for traveling military, dependents, retirees, and veterans. Free refreshments are available during hours of operation.

Over 1 million military guests assisted to date. In addition to the Center volunteers, we have a group of volunteers that double as Troop Greeters. Post 9/11, they have assisted over 500 military charter flights, deploying/returning troops, wounded military, and the arrival of fallen military at MSP. We also support the weekly departure of recruits joining the military, Twin Cities Honor Flight, SnowBall Express, and the annual arrival of training troops and military on Holiday Leave.

The Troop Greeter Program was created in October 2006 after we received a satellite call from a Marine LT in Iraq, requesting support for over 300 troops returning to HI. MSP was their first touchdown on American Soil.

The Armed Forces Service Center needs support from all of us, as thousands travel through our airport from and to anywhere in the US and Overseas. So monetary donations are needed to support our Service Center, as our Units prepare their budgets, please add the AFSC as a line item each year. When sending donation checks to the Department office please earmark in the memo line for the Armed Forces Service Center.

When the Center needs nonperishable items and snacks, I will put a list in the Unit mailing, and I will get them delivered to the Center.

Thank you for supporting the Armed Forces Service Center.



# ***Norma Tramm ~ Parliamentarian***



Why do we use Parliamentary procedure during our meeting?

There are three basic guiding principles in parliamentary procedure

Justice and courtesy for all

The right of the majority to rule

The right of the minority to be heard

What does this mean?

During discussion at the meeting, members must take turns speaking and only speak to the president or chairman. It is not proper to have a discussion between members at a meeting.

The resolution of any motion is that the majority vote is what will be the rule. All members have a voice and can share their opinion on the subject, but in the end it is the majority that will prevail.

The parliamentarian is an appointed position in the unit, district and the department. This member should be versed in Robert's Rules of Order and especially in our governing documents from the unit to the national organization.

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

The member parliamentarian has a big decision to make when accepting an appointment to the position. Because of the complete impartiality required, she/he is duty-bound to forego completely her/his right to vote on any question at any time, unless the vote is by ballot.

Much of the work of the parliamentarian involves assisting in the planning and preparation of the meeting. Checking the agenda and script to ensure correct procedures is an important part of this position. In general the parliamentarian's role is purely advisory.

A parliamentarian is available to give information to the president when guidance is requested. It is the president that makes the ruling based on the information available.

All members should be well versed in the governing documents of our organization as it is difficult to play the game successful if you don't know the rules. Your meetings will become more congenial when all members understand and practice parliamentary procedure.

## **References available:**

Parliamentary Authority – Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised – 12<sup>th</sup> Edition – shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state stature, the constitution, the bylaws or any special rules of order adopted by the organization.

I also like the book, Robert's Rules for Dummies. It has great information in easy to read and understand the language.

These books are best used as a reference and not just read from front to back.

The Department of Minnesota will be "Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs" under the leadership of Department President Robin Dorf.

# ***Past President's Parley***

## ***Sharon Cross ~ Chairman***



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

Every Unit has past presidents. A Unit Past President's Parley is made up of members who have served their Unit as a President. A District Past President's Parley is members who have served their District as President and likewise a Department Past President's Parley is members who have served as the Department President. If your Unit does not have an active Past President's Parley, this year please start one. Contact all your Unit Past Presidents. Set a small dues fee. Set a time and date to get together. Make plans for a project or fund raiser you may want to do. Donate to the Department Past President's Healthcare Scholarship fund. This scholarship is for any course of study in the medical field. There will be more information in the Unit mailings.

Dates to remember:

Past President's Parley month	November
Auxiliary's Birthday	November 10 <sup>th</sup>

Things to do:

Recognize and/or assist female veterans

Plan a fundraiser for the Past President's Parley scholarship fund.

Activate or re-activate your Unit Past President's Parley.

Assist your Unit, answer their questions, mentor your members.



# Poppy

## Hope Wilson ~ Chairman



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

Department President Robin Dorf's theme is "Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs". Please visit the National website, it has a lot of great information on the poppy program.

Beginning in 2021, the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters entered a formal partnership with Honor Flight Inc. to support their mission to celebrate America's veterans by inviting them to share in a day of honor at our nation's memorials by enabling our units and departments to directly donate funds generated from the distribution of our poppy — the symbol of the sacrifice of service made by our veterans, military, and their families.

### **1. Information about Honor Flights.**

#### **a. Honor Flight Network**

- i. 20 years in operation
- ii. Over 128 hubs across the country form Honor Flight Network
- iii. As of July 4th – 317,128 veterans honored since 2005
- iv. As of July 4th – 46,380 Veterans on a waiting list
- v. 501c3 nonprofit organization

#### **b. Minnesota**

- i. 87 counties with 295,703 Minnesota veterans
- ii. 6 hubs that support Minnesota counties
- iii. Lone Eagle - Program of Honor Flight that serves veterans not served by a hub.

Support essential aspects of Honor Flights in your area.

Ways poppy funds may be used to support our veterans participating in an Honor Flight.

#### **For the veterans**

- Food and nutrition
- Oxygen
- Wheelchairs
- Medical teams on each flight (one medic per bus — and there are sometimes up to six medics per flight — funds cover the medic's food, identifying apparel, medical supplies, travel expenses, and hotel)
- Wheelchair-accessible buses

#### **For the guardian (companion/caregiver who attends with the veteran)**

- Airfare to accompany veteran on the trip
- Food and nutrition
- Hotel accommodations to remain with veteran during the trip
- Guardian training and associated needs to execute necessary tasks — food, room rental, medical training, and identifying articles of clothing
- When required — transportation to the airport and hotel the night before the flight with veteran

***All Honor Flight Poppy donations should be sent to the Department office to support President Robin's President's Project***

## 2. Use of funds for Veterans and active military

### FUNDS COLLECTED BEFORE/AFTER AMERICAN LEGION RESOLUTIONS OF 2013 AND 2014

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

- ★ The rehabilitation of veterans honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces after April 6, 1917.
- ★ The welfare of the families of veterans of the above-named period.
- ★ The rehabilitation of hospitalized military service personnel returning home and awaiting discharge who require treatment in service hospitals.
- ★ The welfare of veterans, active military personnel, and the families of veterans and active military personnel of the above-named period where financial and medical need is evident.
- ★ For the purpose of poppy kits and supplies used to make symbolic poppies and poppy items that will be distributed for donations to the Poppy Fund. All funds collected prior to the passage of this resolution be solely used for the intent and purpose of prior resolutions and not for active-duty American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program Guide 7 service members or families. New funds collected after approval of this resolution may be used for active-duty military and families as outlined. All efforts be made to manufacture the poppies or poppy symbol items by veterans first, but in the event that demand is greater than this supply source, use of a commercial vendor which conforms with the restrictions on the use of The American Legion or the American Legion Auxiliary name and emblem may be used.

## 3. Increase the number of poppy makers.

Same as last year we are down to a few Veteran poppy makers. The last few years we have had to purchase more poppies from other departments. This will cost the department to use funds that would be better spent on our veterans, because that is why we all are here. A fun way to do this can include:

- a. District Poppy Paloosa Challenges
  - ✓ Invite surrounding Posts/Units/Interested Poppy Makers to join us
    - Remember, Veterans get **paid** to make poppies!!
  - ✓ Poppy Snacks / Poppy Trivia / Poppy History / Large & Small Poppy Making
  - ✓ These are just a few of the things we can do.
- Each District that hosts a Poppy Paloosa will be placed into a drawing for a gift to be selected by President Robin which will be presented at Department Convention.
- The District that makes the MOST poppies between (September 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026) will receive a gift selected by President Robin and will be presented at Department Convention. (These are poppies that are made for **our Department** to help us from purchasing from other departments. All poppies made **MUST BE** verified with the Department Poppy Chairman for an accurate count. Call me or email me with your made poppy total that you have sent to Department.)



The Poppy order form will be out in the September Newsletter. Remember to order early. Orders are due by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

### ITEMS THAT CAN BE PURCHASED FROM DEPARTMENT OFFICE:

- |                       |                                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Small Poppies      | \$25.00 sold per 100 *         |
| 2. Large Poppies      | \$18.00 sold per dozen *       |
| 3. Poppy Patch Magnet | \$7.00 each*                   |
| 4. Poppy Bookmark     | \$.50 each or \$39.00 for 100* |

\* Shipping & Handling



3



4

Units can purchase the small Poppy Making Kit and keep it at their unit; cost is \$250.00 for 1,000 Poppies. If you have any questions, please let me know. If I don't know the answer, I will find it and get back to you.



- The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) has long stood as a powerful force for good—uplifting veterans, supporting families, educating youth, and strengthening communities. Yet despite our remarkable legacy, many outside our doors still don't know who we are or what we do. That's where public relations becomes our most vital tool—not just for promotion, but for invitation, inspiration, and impact.

- As Public Relations Chairman, I believe our visibility should match the depth of our impact. Every program—Girls State, Poppy Days, Scholarships, Veteran Support Services—deserves to be seen, understood, and celebrated. Every volunteer opportunity, from unit projects to statewide initiatives, is a chance to invite new voices into the fold.

When people see what we do, they realize they can be part of it. When stories are shared widely, doors open—to new members, new supporters, and new opportunities.

- We will focus our efforts on the following key areas:

- **Youth Engagement**

- Showcase youth involvement and leadership opportunities

- Drive engagement and grow Junior membership and volunteers

- Engaging with schools and civic groups helps amplify our mission and attract new allies.
- Offer free ALA presentations for classrooms, youth groups, and service clubs
- Host student contests (essays, art) themed around veterans and community service
- Co-sponsor awareness events with local organizations—many will promote on our behalf
- 🕒 “Mission Minute” at Every Gathering
- A simple but powerful tool to reinforce our message:
- Dedicate 60 seconds at meetings/events for a quick impact story, update, or veteran fact
- Reinforce key messages like “*Service, Not Self*” and “*For God and Country*”
- Promote ALA Academy courses, Girls State, and scholarships as leadership-building tools
- Create connection moments members can share with their circles

- Our Junior members aren't just tomorrow's leaders—they're today's teammates. To help them thrive:

- Invite Juniors to participate in meetings, planning committees, and events
- Recognize Juniors in newsletters, awards ceremonies, and social media
- Listen and encourage—mentorship begins with being approachable
- Embracing Fresh Ideas

- Say “yes” to innovation: TikTok campaigns, digital outreach, youth-led initiatives
- Ask “What can we learn?” to foster growth over tradition
- Assign real roles: Let Juniors lead projects with guidance, not control

**Mentorship is more than passing the baton—it’s running side by side.**

Let’s challenge ourselves to lean in, lift up, and learn. The future of the ALA isn’t waiting in the wings—it’s already here.

#### **Key Strategies for Promotion**

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • <b>Strategy</b>               | • <b>Action</b>  |
| • <b>Visibility</b>             | • Make our mission and tagline prominent in all communications               |
| • <b>Multi-Channel Outreach</b> | • Use newsletters, websites, press releases, social media, and post displays |
| • <b>Community Engagement</b>   | • Host open houses and events to showcase ALA work                           |
| • <b>Highlight Impact</b>       | • Share stories of care packages, scholarships, and volunteer efforts        |
| • <b>Personal Connection</b>    | • Use thank-you notes and calls to foster belonging and retention            |

#### **ALA Mission & Vision**

##### **Mission Statement**

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

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.

#### **Call to Action**

- Encourage each unit to:
- Identify 1–2 outreach goals for the next quarter
- Use provided templates for their next event or campaign
- Submit stories and photos for statewide sharing

## **Risk and Compliance ~**

**Kathy Kessler ~ Chairman**

**Sandra Fredrickson ~ Committee Member**

**Deanna Meyer ~ Committee Member (not pictured)**



Risk and Compliance Committee is responsible for working with District Presidents on Unit Tax Exempt Status.

The main focus of the Risk and Compliance Committee is to assist District Presidents on Unit Tax Exempt Status. Each Unit has a responsibility for operating as a business.

Treasurers must file IRS Form 990 annually to retain status. If your fiscal year ends June 30, your filing due date is November 15. If your fiscal year ends September 30, due date is February 15. If your fiscal year ends December 31, your federal filing due date is May 15.

It is strongly recommended that ALA entities have written policies and procedures that document the organization's review process for their annual returns. Although a 990-review policy is not legally required, having one written reflects good management practices and good governance of the organization.

Consequences of losing your federal tax-exemption may include:

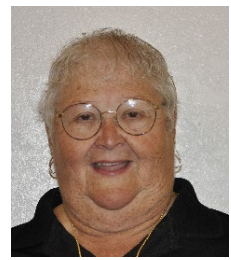
1. Your ALA entity is no longer exempt from Federal income tax.
2. You do not have the ability to receive tax-deductible donations.
3. You cannot participate in Poppy distribution or have fundraisers.

ALA entities may contact the IRS Exempt Organization Division at (877) 829-5500 to check exemption status. This IRS group is specially trained in tax-exempt issues and may be able to help answer questions and give direction for ALA entities that have had their tax-exempt status revoked by the IRS.

For more information visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) and [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov) for resources, updates and more information or contact the ALA at: [compliance@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:compliance@ALAforVeterans.org)

# ***Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation***

## ***Linda Kelly ~ Chairman***



Who: every man and woman that raised their hand to recite a pledge to the USA, not knowing what they would be doing and where they would be serving

What: this program has many projects that benefit our veterans, young and seasoned, residing in a veteran's home or their own home, past or current military.

Where: anywhere there is a veteran

When: every day

Why: these men and women stepped forward to protect you and me, our great country. They may have served in the thick of war, at posts all over the world, or on our homeland.

How: they did what needed to be done – so let's see how we can help

Many of our veterans reside in a local veteran's home. We have eight homes within our borders that house over 750 veterans and their spouses. We also have four VA medical centers that can house over 675 veterans while they receive medical care. We can make their lives more enriched by providing them with needed personal items, entertainment, and just being there when they need to talk. Our auxiliary has a home representative that covers every home and medical center, but they can't do it alone.

All facilities are always looking for volunteers – check it out. Volunteers can help on a regular basis or just once in a while. Donations to the VA&R program are always greatly appreciated. Checks should be mailed to the Department office. Donations that are earmarked for a specific facility will be credited for the use of that facility. Your donations provide more for our veterans.

Quilts of Valor honor our veterans, while showcasing the talents of our members. The beauty of seeing a veteran wrapped in the beautiful work of art is something you will not forget, especially the smile on their face and probably the tears running down it. If you quilt or belong to a quilting group, consider making a quilt.

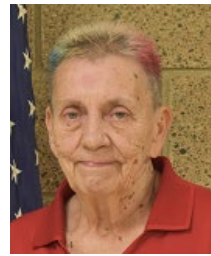
The Honor Flight program is a national program that invites our veterans to fly to Washington DC to visit our nation's memorials. This experience is a way for us to honor them and show our gratitude to them. This is a once-in-a-lifetime event for many of them. It is remembering time for them.

Creative Arts is program for all veterans that are registered with the VA system. They don't need to live in a veteran's home, nor do they need to receive medical care from the VA – they just need to be registered. Their mission gives our veterans a way to showcase their art as a way to promote self-expression and transform their healthcare experiences. Each medical center has its own contest, with some winners being asked to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival to display their art.

There are many other projects that fall under our VA&R program and they all help our veterans: Standdowns, the elimination of homelessness among our veterans, sewing items for our home residents, the annual Gift Shop where every veteran in one of the homes or hospitals receives a Christmas gift for themselves and one for their spouse, the \$5 bill shower where all they receive a cash gift – recently given for Valentines' Day. We will be having a silent auction at our Department Convention in July in Willmar that will benefit the VA&R program.

Again, I ask you "What can we do?" I encourage your unit to consider one or more of these activities to enhance the lives of our veterans.

***Gift Shop***  
***Becky Nelson ~ Chairman***  
***Sharon Voltz ~ Committee Member***



The Gift Shop is to provide a gift to a Veteran and Family.

The Hospital and Home Reps are the working volunteers of this program, without them There wouldn't be a Gift Shop program.

Your donations to this program are needed every year to keep this program going. Donations were down last year I'm asking you to please put the Gift Shop in your budget this year.

All Gift Shops are held from the last week in November through the second week of December. We now have 8 MVH and 4 VAHCS, the budget this year is \$55,000.00 so you can see that we need all the donations we can get.

**Becky Nelson**  
**Gift Shop Chairman**

**Sharon Voltz**  
**Gift Shop Committee Member**

***The Brain Science Foundation ~  
Barbara Hopewell, Chairman  
Patti Gunderson, Committee Member  
Bethany Dickert, Committee Member***



The Brain Sciences Center (BSC), located at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center, is an interdisciplinary research institute that aims to understand the mechanisms underlying healthy brain function and brain disease.

Brain Science Center staff collaborate on a variety of research topics. Current BSC staff represent a cross section of academic disciplines including neuroscience, clinical psychology, cognitive psychology, biophysics, physics, neurology, and neurophysiology.

The BSC utilizes advanced neuroimaging methods, including magnetoencephalography, to assess brain function and neural network activity, as well as magnetic resonance imaging to study brain structure and function. Additionally, the BSC employs various laboratory techniques such as genotyping, in-vitro cell experiments, and enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays.

**Studies include:**

**Gulf War Illness:** Examines genetics and foreign antigens and their relation to GWI symptoms, inflammatory markers, autoantibodies, brain communication patterns, and MRI-based measurements of brain structure.

**Healthy Brain Aging:** Examines how women's brains change with age.

**Human Connectome Project:** Currently utilizing open access, neuroimaging data to examine various topics including heritability of functional brain connectivity, age-related brain changes, and sex differences in brain aging.

**Immunogenetics:** Focused on immunogenetics and the protective role that certain Human Leukocyte Antigen genes play in disease outcomes.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder:** Focuses on the origin of PTSD and the neural mechanisms underlying its development, as well as biomarkers of PTSD and resilience in women Veterans.

Brain Science Website: [brain.umn.edu](http://brain.umn.edu)

