



**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Minnesota**

2026-2027

Department President

Linda Kelly

October 2026 Unit Mailing

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

Minnesota was well represented at our National Convention in Louisville. I met a lot of incoming Presidents from our other 51 departments. We were installed there along with our new National President, Coral May Grout from Massachusetts. She will be visiting Minnesota in April. Watch for details to come and join us in welcoming her to our state.

There was a lot to do in Louisville. Some checked out the bourbon sampling, some toured Churchill Downs and the city of Louisville, some toured the Louisville Slugger Factory and of course, the food.

I also attended Camporee at Legionville last week. I understand that in the past they had a dunk-tank for the leadership of our four organizations of the American Legion Family. It was different this year, which I was very happy about!!! Attendees voted with a donation to Legionville, voting for the leader that they wanted to be doused with ice water. With urging from the hecklers in attendance, they were encouraged to douse the top TWO winners. I lucked out – it wasn't me. SAL Commander Chuck Stone and Vice Commander James Olson (filling in for Commander Pam) were surprised with the bucket of water. They were nice to us in that they covered our clothing with a big garbage bag. It was all done in fun and added to the money raised for Legionville.

The weather was good (it only rained overnight) – the company was great – bingo was good, except I didn't win and the food was outstanding! The Snack Shack provided breakfast and other goodies. The 6th and 10th districts served great meals. I was invited to attend their membership rallies held right there at Legionville.

I am looking forward to our Fall Conference later this month - lots going on. Thursday evening will be a learning opportunity. We will learn about the registration process for residency at a Veterans' homes. We will get a lesson on Facebook and other social media and how we can use it for the benefit of our units. Social Media is rather new to some of us, but the number of people that check it out several times a day is unbelievable - it is the "go-to" place for people wanting to be in the know. This is our opportunity to tell people, "who we are, what we do, and why we matter". It is also a place we can see what others are doing. I don't agree that you "can't teach an old dog, new tricks" – I plan to take lots of notes. As

usual, starting Friday, you will hear from our chairman about their programs, and you will be able to ask questions. Friday afternoon we will be privileged to have the American Legion Family's keynote speaker, Jessica Lynch. Please stay as it is deemed to be very good. Friday night we will be making poppies (yes, our order has arrived) and I am inviting you to make greeting cards for your unit to mail to service personnel from your community.

There will be a few changes, and I ask that you be open to them. We are still in the planning stage, but we hope to have a short joint opening with the Legion/SAL on Friday morning. All of our family's leadership will have a place of honor and will be recognized. District flags are welcome and they will be placed up front prior to our start. The American Legion's leading candidate for National Commander 2027-2028 will be in Minnesota and he has asked to speak to our American Legion Family.

Just a reminder: I ask that all membership chairmen send in their dues payments as they receive them. Please don't hold them. We also have ALAMIS available for units to make changes, add members, and make payment electronically.

October days to remember:

October 13: Navy Birthday – established in 1775

October 26: "National Day of the Deployed" in honor of our service members that are deployed away from home.

October 28: Birthday of the Statue of Liberty – it was dedicated on this day in 1886

2026 Fall Conference – Registration - Go to mnala.org, all the information you will need to register is at your fingertips.

**Fall Conference Program
American Legion Auxiliary
Rivers Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, Minnesota
October 22-24, 2026**

Department Headquarters	Opportunities Suite, Clarke Room
General Sessions	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
Silent Auction – AEF	Opportunities Suite, Weidner Room
Thursday Evening Session	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
Flag Room	Opportunities Suite – Edelbrock Room

Thursday, October 22

10:00 am	Finance Committee	Board Room
1:00 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Opportunities Suite, Bell Room
1:00 pm	Registration	Hotel Lobby of the Kelly Inn
3:00 pm	Convention Corporation Meeting	Board Room
3:30 pm	Community Service Project	Neighborhood in St. Cloud

Silent Auction items can be taken to the Opportunities Suite – Weidner Room Thursday afternoon. See Joanie Krantz, AEF Chairman or stop in the Department Office.

Thursday Evening, October 22 Seminar

7:00 pm – 8:00 pm Learning Session
VA Home Admissions – Member Porthole, all it has to offer - Navigating the MN ALA website and the new **Fillable Annual Report Forms**

Friday, October 23 – morning

7:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration	Hotel Lobby of the Kelly Inn
8:00 am	Call To Order (Joint Opening)	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
9:30 am	Chairman Presentations	
11:30 am	Recess for Lunch	

Friday, October 23 – afternoon

12:30 pm	Session Reconvenes	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
	Chairman Presentations	
	Presentation of Past Department Presidents and Distinguished Guests	
3:00 pm	Motivational Speaker - Jessica Lynch, Iraq War POW	

Silent Auction Bidding Closes at 4:30 pm

Friday, October 23

4:30 pm	American Legion Family Hospital Meeting	University B, Kelly Inn
7:00 pm	American Legion Family Gathering/Social	Grand Ballroom, Kelly Inn
Poppy and Greeting Card Making, Cash Bar & Music		

Saturday, October 24

8:30 am	Call to Order and Chairman Presentations 2025-2026 National Awards Poppy Contest Winners Auxiliary Emergency Fund Program - Emergency Silent Auction Report	Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall
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Membership Payoff - Celebration!

Program subject to change



Jessica Lynch

**Keynote Speaker at Fall Conference
Rivers Edge Convention Center
Friday October 23, 2026 - 3:00 pm**

The Department of MN Legion Family are invited to hear Jessica speak during a joint session of the Legion, Auxiliary and SAL.

On March 23, 2003, Lynch was serving as a unit supply specialist with the 507th Maintenance Company when her convoy was ambushed by Iraqi troops during the Battle of Nasiriyah; Lynch was seriously injured during the offensive and captured by Iraqi soldiers shortly afterwards. Her subsequent recovery by U.S. special operations forces on April 1, 2003, received considerable media coverage as it was the first successful rescue of an American prisoner of war since World War II and the first ever of a woman. She received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and POW medals.



A combat camera video shows the April 1, 2003, footage of Lynch on a stretcher during the rescue in Iraq.



Retired Army veteran Jessica Lynch shares her experiences from the Iraq War — including her capture, injuries and journey of survival and resilience — during a speaking event held October 2025

**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Minnesota
Fall Conference**

**Thursday, October 22, 2026 ~ 7-8pm
Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall**

***Have You Ever Wondered how to
Register for a Spot at one of the
VA Veterans Homes?***

Cindy Wilkens, Public Affairs/Volunteer Coordinator
Montevideo Veterans Home

***The American Legion Auxiliary Member
Portal and What it has to Offer***

Linda Kelly, Department President

***Navigating the Department of MN ALA
Website and How to Use the new
Fillable Annual Report Forms***

Christie Avant, Department Secretary
Pa Yang, Department Accounting
Technician

AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

Fall Conference

PEOPLE
PURPOSE
COMMUNITY
TOGETHER



LEGION
VETERANS SERVING
VETERANS



AUXILIARY
SERVICE NOT
SELF



SAL
HONOR
TRADITION
SERVICE



AMERICAN LEGION
RIDERS
RIDERS
VETERANS
ON A MISSION

One
Family.
Stronger
Together.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Community Service Project



Thursday, October 22nd

4:00PM



Clean up of Neighborhood or
Park area.

To sign-up email Brandi at brandichristensen21@gmail.com
Day of - meet in the BW Kelly Inn lobby at 3:30pm
Supplies are being provided by the city of St. Cloud

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY
VOLUNTEERS WANTED

LEGION | AUXILIARY | SAL | RIDERS

CLEAN
COMMUNITIES
STRONGER
VETERANS
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS

SERVICE
BEYOND
SELF

Cleaner
Communities
Stronger
Tomorrow

VETERANS ★ FAMILIES ★ COMMUNITIES

BLOOD: THE GIFT OF LIFE

We have the opportunity to make a difference.

There are many ways you can help, but most importantly, we hope you come out to donate. When you commit to donating, you save lives.

**Oct. 22, 2026,
12 p.m. to 5 p.m.
State Room at the Kelly Inn**

To Register:

Visit redcross.org and enter zip code “56301” and the date.

If you prefer to call and reserve your spot, call [866-236-3276](tel:866-236-3276).

If you have trouble, contact Blood Chair Terry Larson at [651-470-7431](tel:651-470-7431), and he can manually add you

Each pint of blood we collect can help save up to three lives and will touch the lives of so many more. What a great way to pay it forward and make an impact on people in our Legion community and across the country.

THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY



ATTENTION:

FALL CONFERENCE SILENT AUCTION

Support the Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Where: River's Edge Convention Center
10 Fourth Ave S St. Cloud, MN 56301

When: Friday, Oct. 23, 2025

Time: Receiving & setting up items from 3 pm to 7 pm. Thursday
Open for bidding, 8 am to 4:30 pm Friday

Bring new or slightly used items, theme baskets, quilts, patriotic items, jewelry, jams, jellies, baked goods, munchies, pies & etc.

\$2 Grab Bags & more!

Also, Units, Districts and Individuals bring your monetary donations.



There will also be a District Challenge, results will be posted on Saturday morning.



A special Thank You will be given to individuals donating \$50 or more.



Department of Minnesota American Legion Family Service Project at the 2026 Fall Conference

The 2026-2027 Department project is to collect supplies for the Creative Arts program. This program is open to ALL veterans, with the only stipulation that they are registered with the VA. They do not need to live in a veterans' home, nor do they need to receive medical services through the VA – just be registered.

The VA's Creative Arts Program uses therapeutic arts—including art, writing, music, drama, and dance—to help Veterans heal from physical and emotional trauma. Part of the VA's Recreation Therapy Service, it aids in managing PTSD, reducing social isolation, and improving motor skills.

All donations will be split between the eight veterans' homes and four VA Hospitals serving Minnesota.

Wish List

Colored pencils, Gel pencils
Crayola crayons
Crayola washable markers, Sets of colored SHARPIE markers (Sharpie brand in particular), Dry erase markers, Watercolor markers, Chalkboard markers
Pencil sets for sketching and small sketchbooks
Unlined and Lined journals
Erasers
Glue gun and hot glue sticks
Elmer's Glue, Roll on glue sticks, Tacky glue, Wood glue, Non-toxic model glue
Mod Podge
Scotch tape, Glue tape, Painters tape
Adult Coloring books (simple, mandala patterns and wildlife)
Stencils
Assortment of colored pipe cleaners
Reams of construction paper
Cardstock (12x12) prints, designs, and colored
Non-toxic model paint, Craft paints-all colors
Variety sizes of paint brushes, including foam brushes
Stickers
Cotton balls
Colored Pom Poms
Color by sticker books
Paracord & Buckles
Aprons (for both male & female veterans)
Wooden craft kits
Craft kits from oriental trading all together for certain holidays, time of the year, etc.
Simple ceramic pieces to paint
Stain glass projects

Please bring your items from Thursday, October 22nd to 9am on Saturday October 24th to the Glen Carlson Exhibit Hall where the Auxiliary session will be held.



Jody Hassing endorsed for 2027-2028 Department President

10th District Past President's Parley and Bloomington Unit 550 proudly endorses Dr Jody Hassing for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota President for 2027-2028.

Jody is an Honorary Life Member of Earl C Hill Bloomington Unit 550. She is currently serving as Unit President. She is eligible for membership through her husband, Paul Hassing, Past American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander, retired with 32 years of service in the Army Reserve and her son, Joshua Reinhardt, a Navy Veteran.

On the Unit level, Jody has served in many positions including President for several terms, membership chairman, sunshine chairman, 1st/2nd Vice President, and several committees. At the District level, Jody has served as Servicemen Center chairman, Poppy Chairman, National Security Chairman, Membership Chairman, Executive Committee, Finance, and District Treasurer for several years. She also served as 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, and was the 10th District President 2017-2018. Jody has served at the Department level as Secretary, Finance Committee member for four years, Finance Chairman 2023-2024, and Legislation Chairman 2025-2026. Jody is currently serving as Department 1st Vice President and VA and R Chairman.

In addition, she is active with the American Legion Riders. Jody is a Past American Legion Riders Director. She was Chairman of the Legacy Run for 4 years and is the current Chairman of the Fund 85 Run.

Jody is married to Paul Hassing. They have 5 children, and 10 grandchildren all are members of the American Legion family. She has been employed by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota for 18 years and is a Principal Business Analyst in Medical Management.



Hope Wilson endorsed for 2027-2028 Department ALA 1st Vice President

Unit 278 Brandon and the 7th District Executive Committee proudly endorses Hope Wilson for 1st Vice President of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota 2027-2028.

Hope has consistently demonstrated unwavering commitment to the mission of the Auxiliary—honoring and supporting veterans, military families, and our communities. She is eligible for membership through her husband, Carl Wilson, Past District 7 Commander and current 7th District Commander At-Large, reflecting her deep personal and family connection to the American Legion.

Hope and Carl have been married for 11 years and share a beautiful, blended family of four children, three sons and a daughter. They are proud grandparents to four grandchildren in North Dakota and have also welcomed two self-appointed grandsons in Kansas, who are close to their hearts. Hope devotes

herself full-time to what she loves most: her husband Carl, their 7th District Junior Shooting Club, and the American Legion Auxiliary.

Throughout her Auxiliary service, Hope has held numerous leadership roles at every level of the organization. Her experience includes serving as Unit Co-President, Unit President, Membership Chairman, and Girls State Chairman. At the District level, she has served as 1st and 2nd Vice President, District President, Legislative Chairman, Membership Chairman, and Parliamentarian.

At the Department level, Hope served as Department Membership Chairman 2024-2025, Department Poppy Chairman 2025–2026 and is currently serving as Department Legislative chairman and MN ALA 2nd President 2026-2027, continuing her passion for honoring our veterans and promoting Auxiliary programs statewide.

Her tireless work to grow membership, mentor future leaders, and elevate youth-focused programs such as Girls State and the Junior Shooting Program has left a lasting impact across the organization. As 1st Vice President, Hope Wilson will bring experience, heart, and a forward-thinking vision to the Auxiliary's leadership team. Her loyalty, integrity, and passion for service make her the ideal candidate to help lead our organization into a bright and purposeful future.



Kollett Kaehlert endorsed for 2027-2028 Department ALA 2nd Vice President

The American Legion Auxiliary Mankato Lorentz Unit 11, Mankato, MN, proudly endorses Kollett Kaehlert for the office of Second Vice President for the Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary for the year 2027-2028.

Kollett is eligible through her late husband, Bill Kaehlert, a Viet Nam era veteran. Kollett would also be eligible through her late father Ray Vulcan who served in the Army Air Force during World War II. Kollett has 2 daughters, one son, eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Kollett lives in North Mankato and attends Grace Lutheran Church in Mankato.

Kollett has been an auxiliary member for 44 years. She has served as Unit President for Unit 172 in the 10th District as well as Unit 510 in the 3rd District. She has served as Chairman of the Auditing and Budget committee, Membership, Community Service, Education, ALA Emergency Fund, Co-Chairperson for VAR, and Unit Secretary.

Kollett served as the President of the 2nd District Auxiliary 23-24 and 24-25 as well as being Membership Chairman and the Veterans Service Center Chairman for the 2nd District. Kollett has also served on the Executive Board in the 10th District as well as holding Chairmanship for the Veteran Service Center Chairman, Co-Captain for North Hennepin Membership for two years and as the ALA Emergency Fund chairman for the 10th District.

Kollett has served as the Chairman for Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Americanism, Membership and is Currently the Leadership Chairman for the 26-27 Auxiliary year.

Kollett retired from Internal Revenue Service and is active with the VITA program for low income and senior citizens in Mankato as well as her church.



**Dorf endorsed for Minnesota's candidate for
Northwestern Division National Vice President 2028-
2029**

The members of Monticello Unit 260 have endorsed Robin Dorf as Minnesota's candidate for the American Legion Auxiliary Northwestern Division National Vice President for the year 2028-2029.

Robin has been an active member of Monticello Unit 260 for over 50 years and is a PUFL member. Her eligibility is through her father, Emil W. Dorf Jr., who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War.

At the unit level she has held many chairmanships and was President two terms. On the district level, she has also served many chairmanships, three terms as Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Committee member, Second Vice President, First Vice President and served as the 2014-2015 Tenth District President. She currently serves on the Finance Committee.

She has served our department on the Strategic Planning Committee, past Girls State Counselor, Junior Activities, Leadership, Public Relations, Membership, Children & Youth, Chaplain, Community Service, Legislation, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, and served as the 2025-2026 Department President. She is currently serving as the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State Director.

On the national level, she served as the 2018 ALA National Convention Vice Chair, Membership Committee Northwestern Division Chair, Children & Youth Committee Vice Chair, Junior Activities Committee Vice Chair, Leadership Committee Northwestern Division Chair, and is currently serving as the Membership Committee Northwestern Division Chair.

Robin has been employed by Wright County for 18 years. She currently works in the Wright County Health and Human Services Department as a Child Foster Care Recruiter Case Aide, supporting efforts to recruit and assist foster care families.



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Americanism Chairman,
Barbara Klehr
babsklehr@hotmail.com

Did you do something fun last month to promote Americanism? Please send me short summaries of what you did and lots of pictures. I can brag to National what our Units in Minnesota are doing and you just might end up in the National News!

The Americanism Essay Contest topic this year for 2026-2027 is: "How Can You Be A Beacon Of Light For Our Veterans?"

Please promote this in your schools, home school programs, and also your community youth in government programs, which is a great place to find students who would be interested in the competition. Included this month, is a copy of the Essay Contest Rules and The Cover Sheet. Remember every entry needs a cover sheet. We have also discovered that we need the addresses of the students' parents to send awards and money to if they are selected. When you send in your winning entries you could attach that as separate information because at the time of our Awards, schools are closed and it is hard to get a hold of the students.

Special patriotic events you could promote this month: Honor our local fire departments as October 4th through 10th is Fire Prevention Week. Pick a day this month to have them come and put on a fire prevention class for our Juniors and SAL Juniors or even our Senior Citizens. October 5th is Child Health Day. October 12th is Columbus Day or Discovery Day. Host a bicycle parade in the park, with their bicycles decorated as the Nine, Pinta and the Santa Maria for our Juniors! October 24th is of course "Make A Difference Day", you can work with your communities as I am sure most of them are planning something. October 28th is Statue of Liberty Day! Have someone dress as the Statue of Liberty or recite what is written on the base of the statue at your post. And the whole month is National Disability Employment Month. Think of our veterans who are disabled and struggling from their time in service. It's a Presidential birthday month too with birthdays for Jimmy Carter, Rutherford Hayes, Chester Arthur, Dwight Eisenhower, Theodore Roosevelt and John Adams!

Any of these special events can bring together Community Service, Juniors, and Veterans, and a chance to work with your other chairmen in your units. Let our communities know we are patriots and "grounded in our roots".



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST

Contest Rules

The American Legion Auxiliary's Americanism Essay Contest is for students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs, divided into six classes. One award in each class will be presented in each division. Winners will receive a \$50 check, and a \$50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund.

Essay Title: *"How can you be a beacon of light for our veterans?"*

Essay Classes:

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement*
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level

1. The Americanism Essay Contest cover sheet must be filled out **legibly** and **completely**. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
2. Student or Parent/Guardian contact information is required in order to notify winners.
3. Departments (states) will determine the deadline for the local unit contests.
4. Essays are due from the state department chairs to the Americanism Division chairs by April 15.
5. Essays received after the contest deadline will not be accepted.
6. Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through submission of an essay, contestants and their legal guardians grant non-exclusive reproduction and publication rights to the works submitted and agree to have their names and writing published for commercial use without additional compensation or permission.
7. The essay shall be the work of only one individual.
8. Use of AI in writing essays is not allowed. Essays will be checked for use of AI. Any essay determined to be 30% or more AI written will be disqualified.
9. Essays will be scored using the following rubric:

Word Count	Essay does not comply with applicable word count = 0 Essay complies with applicable word count = 5	5
Cover Sheet	Cover sheet is incomplete = 0 Cover sheet is fully complete = 5	5
Topic/Theme	Essay does not address topic = 1 Essay thoroughly addresses topic = 25	25
Content - Original thought	Essay does not display original thoughts = 1 Essay displays original thoughts = 25	25
Grammar	Essay is not written well grammatically and contains many spelling errors = 1 Essay has no grammatical or spelling errors = 10	10
Clarity/Coherence	Essay is not easily understood = 1 Essay is clearly stated and easily understood = 10	10
Organization	Essay is not organized = 1 Essay is organized = 10	10
Correct Word Usage	Essay does not use correct word choices = 1 Essay uses correct word choices = 10	10
	TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE	100

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES SHALL BE FINAL.



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST 2026 Cover Sheet

The American Legion Auxiliary's Americanism Essay Contest is for students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs, divided into six classes. One award in each class will be presented in each division. Winners will receive a \$50 check, and a \$50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund.

Essay Title:

"How can you be a beacon of light for our veterans?"

Essay Classes:

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement*
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES SHALL BE FINAL.

Essay Checklist:

- ☐ Class competing in _____
- ☐ Sponsoring ALA unit _____
- ☐ Typed or neatly written essay conforming to the word requirement for class
- ☐ Completed essay cover sheet as first page of essay
- ☐ Word count of essay _____
- ☐ Due date for student to return to ALA unit _____

To be completed by the student and parent/guardian:

*** Please write legibly in ink.**

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Student or Parent/Guardian Address (Street, City, State, ZIP): _____

Student or Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

Student or Parent/Guardian Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Name and Signature: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher Name: _____

School City/State: _____

Auxiliary Use Only (Must be completed for entry to be considered.)

Sponsoring Unit Name/Number: _____

Signature of Unit Americanism Chair: _____

Unit Winner Due to Department on: _____ Department: _____

Signature of Department Chair: _____

Department Winners Due to National Americanism Division Chair by April 15, 2027



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Memorial Chairman,
Sandy Wersal
sandywersal@gmail.com

Fall Conference is October 22-24, 2026, in St. Cloud, if you hand in or email me before the conference I will have a pin for you to wear, it's a tree with a heart and cross on it that you can wear all year long and for years to come. You can bring prayers, poems, and scriptures and hand them to me at Fall Conference, the first 60 members will receive a pin.

This year's prayer book for President Linda, will be posted on the department websites in a printable form so members and units can print a copy, if they wish. It is open to all the Legion Family. The four Minnesota Chaplains plan to work together this year as a team. If you have a need for a chaplain any one of us are willing to come visit you or attend an event. We believe in working together as a Legion Family.

A PRAYER TO LIFT UP ON HARD DAYS (#seekandfindthegood)

Lord, I come to you today with open hands and an open heart.

The struggles of this season weigh heavily on me. As fear and uncertainty grow louder, quiet the noise so that I may hear your voice.

Lord, through every trial and hardship, you are good. I pray for wisdom and guidance, peace and patience, that not my will but yours be done.

Grant me understanding when the outcome does not go my way. Remind me that your plans are far better than my own. Open my eyes to your provision as you help me surrender control. Provide me with the strength to endure all that is yet to come.

When I am full of doubt, show me your mighty hand at work.

When I am scared, grow my faith bigger than my fear.

When I am disheartened, guide me to seek you in the pain.

When it feels like too much, let your presence feel near.

Lord, you come that I may have life and have it to the full. Guide and direct me as I live it out. Thank you for every moment you have seen me through that has led me to this day. May all the glory be yours. Amen



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Community Service Chairman,
Brandi Christensen
brandichristensen21@gmail.com

With fall upon us there are many things unit members or units as a group can do for your communities. With your Junior members as well you could help clean up neighbors yards and parks to get ready for the Winter snow that we all know will unfortunately be coming soon.

Lots of small communities rally around the local high school football team for games on Friday nights. Think about holding a community dinner before the football game. It's a great way to get the community together for fellowship.

Remember the Community Service program involves in making our local communities a better place to live. This is not directly with a veteran.

There is one thing that many units can do without having to plan a lot. You can at a meeting or two you have members bring in food items for a local food shelf.

You can also have your unit and junior members write cards to residents in local nursing homes or assisted living centers. Even cards can brighten up someone's day!

Remember to keep track of any hour you spend volunteering in community events or service projects



October 2026 Unit Mailing Education
Kelly Kauss Department Education Chairman
602-717-7612
kelly.kauss@gmail.com

Happy Autumn, I always enjoy a personal story as this one is “grounded in our roots” as President Linda Kelly’s pin states. This BLOG from *Thursday, 10 September 2026* and Alaska’s *Rachel Anderson* received a 2026 Children of Warriors National Presidents’ Scholarship is heart touching. “ALA scholarship recipient starts her professional journey to be a pilot:”

<https://www.legion-aux.org/scholarships>

Everybody has a story lets help give the tools to make dreams come true. This is why we do what we do. Kelly

NEW for 2026-2027

"Give 20 to Education" is a community service initiative by the [American Legion Auxiliary \(ALA\)](#) celebrating the 20th anniversary of their ongoing support programs for students and teachers.

Key Details

- **The Campaign:** For the 2026–2027 school year, local ALA units are stepping up the historic "Give 10 to Education" campaign into "Give 20".
- **The Goal:** Collect new school supplies—such as 20 pencils, 20 notebooks, 20 folders, or other essential classroom items—to help local students and educators.
- **Participation:** You do not need to be an official Auxiliary member to contribute; anyone from the community can donate supplies.
- **How to Help:** Drop off new school supplies at your local American Legion Auxiliary unit.

“Box Tops for Education” is a program that allows families to earn cash for their school by purchasing participating products and scanning their receipts with the Box Tops app. To get the app go to: www.boxtops4education.com



START PLANNING for Veterans Day on Wednesday November 11, 2016

Please take pictures of your local Veterans Day’s activities and I will include them in my reporting for Fall Conference. When you invite your Veterans to speak at your local school have students carry small flags or make thank you cards to give them.

It always helps to start planning early and plant seeds so “the roots will grow through renewals and new members.” Our future graduates are already planning their futures. Lets help them.

“American Legion Education Scholarships”

More information www.mnala.org/scholarships. The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) proudly supports the educational goals of students through a variety of scholarship opportunities. These scholarships are designed to help ease the financial burden of higher education and encourage the pursuit of academic and career dreams. By investing in future generations, the Auxiliary continues its mission of service, honoring veterans by empowering young people to achieve their full potential.

Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship

Three \$5,000 scholarships are awarded annually per geographic division, for a total of 15 scholarships. These scholarships are for undergraduate study only at an accredited college or university, and may be used for tuition, books, fees, room, and board.

Non-Traditional Student Scholarship

The Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund is an umbrella that supports three separate scholarship opportunities for participants in American Legion Auxiliary programs. The Spirit of Youth Scholarship is one of the ways the American Legion Auxiliary gives back to its members. This scholarship is for current Junior Members who are seniors in high school pursuing an undergraduate degree or technical program at an accredited school.

Spirit of Youth Scholarship

The Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund is an umbrella that supports three separate scholarship opportunities for participants in American Legion Auxiliary programs. The Spirit of Youth Scholarship is one of the ways the American Legion Auxiliary gives back to its members. This scholarship is for current Junior Members who are seniors in high school pursuing an undergraduate degree or technical program at an accredited school.

Member Loyalty Scholarship

American Legion Auxiliary Junior members are the future of our organization. To reward those who retain their membership into adulthood, the American Legion Auxiliary offers the Member Loyalty Scholarship to current college students. Ten scholarships, in the amount of \$2,500 each, will be awarded to current college students. Two scholarships will be awarded in each division of the American Legion Auxiliary.

VAVS Scholarship

Each Veterans Affairs medical center may nominate one Veteran Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS) Student Volunteer to be considered for this scholarship.



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Education

Give 10 to Education

Suggested Donation Items and Tracking Sheet

Suggested Item	Quantity	Monetary Value
Books		
Backpack/Book bag		
Loose Paper		
Notebooks		
Folders		
3-Ring Binders		
Pencils		
Pens		
Erasers		
Highlighters		
Crayons		
Colored Pencils		
Markers		
Pencil Box/Pencil Case		
Scissors		
Glue/Glue Sticks		
Ruler		
Calculator		
Craft Supplies		
Kleenex/Paper Towels		
Hand Sanitizer		
Disinfecting Wipes/Baby Wipes		
Mentoring/Reading		
Donation to School		
Donation to Library		
Donation to Scholarship		
Clothing		
Patriotic Item		
Sports Equipment/Games		
Box Tops 4 Education		
Totals:		



**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA SCHOLARSHIP 2026-2027**

ELIGIBILITY:

Department scholarships are awarded to deserving sons or daughters, grandsons or granddaughters of a veteran who need financial assistance to avail themselves of higher education at the post-secondary level. These scholarships are to be applied only toward the expenses of tuition, books or similar fees, at an accredited institution of higher learning. Each scholarship will be paid directly to the school, in the amount of \$1,000.00 for any one year. Satisfactory progress must be made with grades reported to the Department of Minnesota.

To be eligible to apply for these scholarships, the veteran must have served in the federal active duty in the United States Armed Forces since December 7, 1941 and have been honorably discharged or is still serving.

A candidate for these scholarships must be:

1. A resident of the State of Minnesota or a member of the American Legion Auxiliary (includes Junior membership), The American Legion, or Sons of The American Legion, Department of Minnesota.
2. A high school senior/graduate or college student/graduate, seeking further education with a scholastic record and average of at least "C".
3. In need of and deserving of financial assistance.
4. Of good character, with ambition to continue their education.

APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE:

1. A letter from the superintendent, principal or counselor of the school presently attending, or have attended regarding scholastic record, aptitude and ambition.
2. A letter from a business, clergy or professional person (not related) with whom you have been associated.
3. An essay of not more than 1,000 words (typed, double-spaced) from the applicant telling of their plans for higher education, career goals, extracurricular and community activities and the need for financial assistance.
4. A copy of high school/college grad transcript.

An application check list is included for the convenience of the applicant and/or Unit.

Applications must be submitted by March 5th to the Unit President of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit located in your school district or the Unit that holds your membership. This application must be received in the Minnesota Department Auxiliary Headquarters by March 15th:

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

All applications will be considered for all scholarships available, and the final decision will be made by the Department Education Chairman. Up to eight (8) \$1,000.00 scholarships will be awarded.



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA SCHOLARSHIP 2026-2027

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of Birth _____ Telephone _____

Email Address _____

1. Date of Graduation from High School _____
2. Name of Guardian/Parents _____
3. Name of veteran by which applicant is eligible _____
Dates of Service _____ Relationship _____
If veteran is a member of the The American Legion – ID# _____
If applicant is a member of the The American Family – ID# _____
4. Annual Family Income \$ _____
(Use gross income from last year's Federal Income Tax 1040 Form, line 22)
Number of dependent children under 18 years of age _____
Number of dependent children 18 years of age and over _____
5. Occupation of Guardians/Parents:
A. _____ B. _____
6. Total monthly Government compensation or pension received by guardian/parent and/or children (self).
7. Guardian/Parent _____ Children Self _____
8. What school do you plan to attend? _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip _____
 - Course of Study _____
 - Length of course _____
 - Cost of course _____
9. What date will you enter school? _____
10. Do you anticipate any other Financial Assistance? _____
If so, what amount is anticipated? _____

Failure to complete the application or attach all required documents will result in disqualification.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Unit President or Secretary

Date

Unit Number and Location



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
MN American Legion Auxiliary
Girls State Chairman, Jennifer Stolz
jstolz.de@gmail.com

Exciting Updates for Girls State 2027!

Planning is underway for an exciting Girls State 2027! The Girls State Committee is working on new ways to strengthen communication, support recruitment, and help units share this life-changing leadership opportunity with more young women across Minnesota.

Let's Get Connected

Unit Presidents: Please send your Girls State Chairman's name, email address, and phone number to Jen Stolz at jstolz.de@gmail.com and the Department Office at deptoffice@mnala.org. Having one primary contact for each unit will help important updates reach the right person quickly and consistently.

Help Inspire Future Citizens

If your unit sponsored a participant this past summer, invite her to share her Girls State experience at a unit meeting, school visit, or classroom presentation. Her story can spark excitement, answer questions, and help juniors see themselves as future Girls State citizens.

We Are Ready to Support You

Questions, ideas, concerns, or requests for recruitment support are always welcome. Together, we can build momentum, strengthen sponsorship, and make Girls State 2027 our best year yet!

Girls State Committee Contacts

Jen Stolz, Chairman | jstolz.de@gmail.com | 763-234-1198

Robin Dorf, Director | RobinLDorf@yahoo.com | 612-483-4076

Renee Seuss, Education Director | rsuess3@gmail.com | 763-300-2226

Kelli Frederickson, Committee Member | ksfred98@gmail.com | 651-829-7778

Ashley Kuperus, Committee Member | ashleypaige309@gmail.com | 320-894-7850

Yolanda Dailey, Americanism Chairman | Yolanda.dailey@icloud.com | 262-227-6815

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Minnesota

Karla Otterness
Department Historian 26/27

*"Grounded in Our Roots Growth Through
Renewals and New Members"*

History

In genealogy, a tree symbolizes family history. Its branches represent the different parts of a family, while its deep roots reflect where we began. President Linda chose the tree as our organization's symbol for 2026–2027 because it honors our 105 years of history and points toward our future. The records left by past historians give us glimpses of earlier years and help us preserve their legacy. As members of the American Legion Family, let us continue to strengthen our documentation, deepen our roots, and create a beautiful tree this coming year rich with our auxiliary events and recognition of each other.

Calendar for Special Events

that your unit or district might participate in

October



23–25th Dept. Fall Conference
31 Halloween



November



10 Happy Birthday American Legion Auxiliary
11 Veterans' Day
26 Happy Thanksgiving



December



5th Pearl Harbor Rally
25 Merry Christmas



Tools we use



Camera, phone, website,
Facebook, newspapers, minutes,
checkbook, notebook, Friends



Record – Who was involved
What happened
Where and when it took place



Planning – Always carry a pen and
notebook, Use your phone camera
to help document events.



Help – We can't be at everything so
know what is coming up and ask other
members for help.

**NEW,
NEW,
NEW!**

**Pictorial history scrapbook
book contest**



*"Either write something worth reading or do something
worth writing."* Benjamin Franklin



American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Minnesota
Karla Otterness Historian 2026/27

Grounded in our Roots Growth Through Renewals and New Members

History

In genealogy, a tree symbolizes family history. Its Branches represent the different parts of the family, while its deep roots reflect where we began. President Linda chose the tree as our organizations symbol for the 2026-2027 because it honors 105 years of history and points towards our future. The records left by past historians give us a glimpse of early years and help us preserve our legacy. As members of the American Legion Family let us continue to strengthen our documentation, deepen our roots, and create a beautiful tree this coming year rich with auxiliary events and recognition of each other.

Calendar for Auxiliary Events Get your notepad ready!

October

23-25 MN DEP Fall Conference
31 Halloween / Trunk or Treat



November

10th Happy Birthday American Legion
Auxiliary
11th Veterans Day
26th Happy Thanksgiving



December

5th Pearl Harbor Rally
25, Merry Christmas



Tools we use

Caera, phone, website, Facebook,
newspapers, minutes,
checkbook, notebook, friends



What we do

Record

Who was involved
What Happened
where and where it took place



Planning

always carry a pen and notebook,
use your phone's camera to help
document events,



Help

We can't be at everything so
know what's coming up and ask
members for help.



NEW, NEW, NEW

Pictorial history scrapbook contest See
following page for rules

**Eighter write something worth
reading or do something worth
writing**

Benjamin Franklin

2026 – 2027 DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN AWARD

THE PICTORIAL HISTROY AWARD

Best Pictorial History Book

Karla Otterness

t.d.news2share@gmail.com

Sponsored by: Karla Otterness. Historian 2026-2027

Awarded to the Unit or District Historian that submits the Best Pictorial History Book in the Department of Minnesota. The Book can be submitted electronically (but will be accepted by snail mail to.) to the Department Historian on or before April 15. of each year. Photo books, Scrapbooks and Historical Picture Books will be judged by submitting a Scrapbook or an electronic version of the book or e-mailing separate attachments: by USPS mailing of scrapbook, between 30 pages to the Department Historian. The pages sent, can be copies or photos of the entire page and must include from the list below 1.) – 3.) a. – k. (l., m. & n. are optional)

1.) The cover of the

Book 2.) Title Page that includes:

- a.)** American Legion Auxiliary UNIT Name and number, DISTRICT number
Department of Minnesota History
- b.)** ALA Administration year: month/year – month/year
- c.)** Name of Historian and List Unit name & Address or District

3.) Body Content (due to the nature of the book, these pages can be combined to include additional subject matter).

- a.)** Forward or Dedication
- b.)** A Prayer
- c.)** Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America
- d.)** First Verse of the National Anthem – “Star Spangled Banner”
- e.)** Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary

*For photos, please choose either **unit history** or **district history***

- f.)** Photo of Unit or District President with name listed.
- g.)** Photo of elected and/or appointed Officers for the current year with names listed
- h.)** Photo of Chairman or Committee appointments with names listed
- i.)** List or photo of National Officers and appointed Committee Members from your Department for the current administrative year. That serves from your unit or district.
- j.)** List of Department and National awards received at the previous convention to your unit or district.
- k.)** Photos and or Pages of events and activities in chronological order.
- l.)** Brochures, Pamphlets, Clip art, Graphics, Drawings, Bulletins, Illustrations, Programs and extra materials can be added.
- m.)** Highlighting National ALA Initiatives or Programs
- n.)** A copy of the written History can also be added as a separate history, and these pages will not count towards your pages in Pictorial History Book

4.) Appearance

- a.)** Scrapbook type, Photo Book, booklet form
- b.)** Paper art, font stickers, computer artwork and embellishments can be used

5.) No submission should be more than 30 pages of your book.

The winner will be announced at the Department Convention and earn a Plaque.

Also note all scrapbooks can be picked up at the convention in Wilmar.



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Junior Activities Chairman,
Sharon Cross
sharon.6thdistala@yahoo.com

This month our Junior Activities focus is on Membership and the upcoming Education month including, inspiring, mentoring and participating.

Build your Junior Activities program one member at a time by giving Junior members a voice and an opportunity to participate.

- Plan mission-related activities that are interesting and inspiring to Juniors.
- Participate in Wreaths Across America Day by volunteering to lay wreaths at local cemeteries.
- Hold graduation ceremonies to recognize Juniors who will move to ALA senior membership. status.
- Pay first year of senior membership to encourage retention.
- Pair older Juniors with less experienced Juniors to promote mentorship.
- Share information about the ALA's scholarship program:
 - Member Loyalty Scholarship
 - Spirit of Youth Scholarship
 - Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship
 - Samsung Scholarships

Are your Junior members located in your community or are they far from you. It does not matter. Education month is just around the corner. Encourage your Junior members to help in their community with honoring their teachers and school employees. First ask them to participate. Second talk with them after their event. Just ask and write down what they did. They are your Junior members so remember to record their activities and report them in the Junior History year end reports. Juniors can work membership by inviting other kids in their community to join them and see how much fun participating can be. Teach your Juniors to just ask their peers if they have family that has served in the military. Junior members and non-members should all be informed about the scholarship opportunities the Auxiliary and Legion offer to our youth.

Growing your Junior membership gives your Auxiliary Unit a future when you mentor and include them in your activities. Include your Juniors at your meetings. Have you used the National website, ALAforveterans.org as an informational resource? Just ask a younger member of your community or a family member to assist you if needed. Information is also available on mnala.org which is our website in Minnesota.

FROM THE 2026-2027 NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

2026-2027 ALA National President Dr. Coral May Grout



American Legion Auxiliary member Dr. Coral May Grout of the Department of Massachusetts became National President of the American Legion Auxiliary at the 105th National Convention, held Aug 29th - Sep 3rd, 2026, in Louisville, Kentucky.

National President's Focus

The 2026-2027 ALA administrative year emphasizes education, expanding the Spirit of Youth Scholarships to two military spouses, and celebrating the 20th anniversary of Give 10 to Education. To mark that anniversary, we are also adding Give 20 to Education.

Read more here: <https://member.legion-aux.org/National-President-focus>

SAVE THE DATES

Legislative Quarterly Zooms

Q1 - October 14, 2026, at 7:00 PM ET

Department Legislative Chairs register here: <https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/legislative-quarterly>

Q2 - January 26, 2027, at 7:00 PM ET

Q3 - April 27, 2027, at 7:00 PM ET

Washington, DC Conference: February 27-March 3, 2027

2026-2027 Mission Training

November 14, 2026 –Omaha, NE*

January 30, 2027– Albany, NY*
& Springfield, IL

February 6, 2027 – Atlanta, GA
& Las Vegas, NV*

ALA Mission Training &
National Junior Meetings

*Events will be held with The American Legion National Information Conference and the SAL Regional Meeting.

Register at: <https://www.legion-aux.org/Meetings/Mission-Train>

2026 Legislative Agenda, Point Papers, and Priorities now available

As we start our year together, please ensure your members are familiar with The American Legion's legislative priorities by visiting this site:

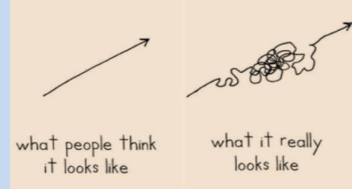
<https://www.legion.org/advocacy/legislative/legislative-agenda-point-papers>

Register for the Grassroots Action Center to contact lawmakers directly and receive updates on priorities. Stay tuned for upcoming newsletters with more information.

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home>



Who remembers **School House Rock**? “I’m just a bill, and I’m sitting on Capitol Hill!” The good old days when the legislative process looked easy and with a catchy tune.



Unfortunately, the legislative process looks more like this.....

Our voters and we on the legislative team often get frustrated with the red tape and the long timeframes it takes for our bills to reach committees. I've been working on a bill in New Jersey for nearly four years to get it through the Transportation and Appropriations Committees. We need to remember and remind others that legislation is not a sprint; it is a marathon. While we can't force legislation to speed up single-handedly, we can exert our momentum onto other targets.

Track Active Bills: Follow the progress of current legislation at Congress.gov. Search to see where a bill is stalled and what committees are delaying its motion.

Contact Your Representatives: Call or email your lawmakers directly. Track down your state representative using the Congress.gov Member Directory to let them know which pieces of legislation you want them to prioritize.

Get Involved Locally: Policy often changes faster at the local level. You can reach out to your local city and county representatives to advocate for more localized policy updates.

Most importantly, keep up the good work! What you are doing matters! Rosa Parks said, “To bring about change, you must not be afraid to take the first step. We will fail when we fail to try.”

Submitted by ShannonLee Widmer, Eastern Division Chair



We want to hear from **YOU**! How is your department advocating for local, state, and national legislation that impacts veterans, military, and their families? Send your division chairs stories and pictures so we can all share new ideas. Remember our purpose: The purpose of the Legislative Committee is to provide information and assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion.

2026-2027 Legislative Committee Contacts:

National Chair

Barb Washburn (NE) bwashburn827@gmail.com

National Vice-Chair

Sonia Wiley (KS) s.wiley160@gmail.com

Central Division Chair

Brittany Schofield (IN) Brittany.schofield@duke-energy.com

Eastern Division Chair

ShannonLee Widmer (NJ) bestill46.10@aol.com

Northwestern Division Chair

Jean Walker (MN) jmwalker1992@hotmail.com

Southern Division Chair

MaryAnn Paul (TX) mapminmol@gmail.com

Western Division Chair

Kathy Amery(AZ) luv2p8@gmail.com

National HQ Program Liaison

Clay Wright legislative@ALAforVeterans.org

Want to learn more about the ALA Legislative program? Check out the GET INVOLVED tab on the National website using the link below:

[GET INVOLVED!](#)

Join us on Facebook:

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



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Membership Chairman,
Wendy Grittner
wgrittner@gmail.com

Happy Fall Minnesota!

I hope you all have seen the new changes that were made in who now qualifies to become a new member in either the Auxiliary or the SAL. We are more than happy to welcome new members to our tribe.

Speaking of Tribes, have you been working on yours? Making sure you have your immediate members accounted for first and then going to look for new ones? I can't wait until Fall Conference to see who's made goal and who's torch will stay lit!

For those of you who are asking, the renewal notices have been sent out so I'm sure you will be seeing them in the mail soon if you haven't already received them.

I know we are just getting started with our Membership goals for Minnesota, but I know our state has the hardest working members, so one goal at a time, one challenge at a time!

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Membership Bulletin 5 as of 9/23/2026

2027 Membership

Survivor Minnesota

Outsmart~Outmaneuver~Outlive
Leading the Tribes Wendy Grittner

DISTRICT	# of Units	Goal	Period Gain	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership LY 9/16/2025	Difference from Last Year
One	47	3,114	148	486	15.61%	431	55
Two	68	3,073	160	464	15.10%	486	-22
Three	42	3,267	157	489	14.97%	513	-24
Four	5	414	8	32	7.73%	52	-20
Five	7	303	12	34	11.22%	13	21
Six	57	4,274	231	621	14.53%	633	-12
Seven	47	2,260	88	181	8.01%	252	-71
Eight	20	1,035	53	121	11.69%	131	-10
Nine	42	2,707	186	402	14.85%	321	81
Ten	40	2,969	104	345	11.62%	409	-64
1982	1	371	57	68	18.33%	68	0
Depart. Total	376	23,787	1,204	3,243	13.63%	3,309	-66
Group 1 (Even) <i>Hope Wilson</i>	190	11,765	556	1,583	13.46%	1,711	-128
Group 2 (Odd) <i>Jodi Hassing</i>	185	11,651	591	1,660	14.25%	1,598	62

RANKINGS

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
15.61%	15.10%	14.97%	14.85%	14.53%	11.69%	11.62%	11.22%	8.01%	7.73%
1st District	2nd District	3rd District	9th District	6th District	8th District	10th District	5th District	7th District	4th District





Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
National Security Chairman,
Wanda Seidler
claricekeith2014@gmail.com

In 2011 a U.S. Senate resolution established the nationwide observance of National Day of the Deployed as October 26th. The observance had its beginnings in 2006 in North Dakota, by a woman who was a volunteer for the Soldiers' Angels. She wished to honor her cousin who was deployed in Iraq at that time. It is a day to recognize and honor our deployed troops. It is also a day to acknowledge the families those troops are separated from. If your local National Guard/Reserve Unit is to be deployed your Unit can plan or participate in community send-offs and welcome home celebrations upon their safe return. To help plan these events go to the National ALA website (alaforveterans.org). Under the heading How We Serve and under Supporting Veterans, Military & Families you will find Troop Welcome Home/Send-Off information. This is also where your Unit can locate ideas for what items to include in Troop Care Packages you plan to send. Ship Thrifty, an ALA partner, donates back a percent spent to support the mission of the organization. Go to www.shipthrifty.com/rf/ala to create a free account or type ALA into the affiliate code. Remember our deployed troops in your prayers!

Salute to Servicemembers Award

Do you know someone in your community or have a family member who is an enlisted servicemember? **Nominate them for the Salute to Servicemembers Award!** The eligibility is as follows...currently serving in the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Space Force, or U.S. National Guard/Reserve with a pay grade of E1-E9. One enlisted servicemember from each branch of service will be recognized at the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. They are invited to attend the National Convention as guests of the Auxiliary. Read the nominating requirements and have the nomination form and supporting documents submitted by June 1st.

What activity can every Unit participate in for the National Security program?

R.E.D. Friday!
Remember Everyone Deployed!



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Department Parliamentarian,
Norma Tramm
normatramm@gmail.com

What is the definition of Parliamentarian? This is what I found.

(a person who is expert in the formal rules and procedures of deliberative assemblies and other formal organizations.)

Now I am not an expert, but I do have Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition and have enjoyed looking up many situations that have come to my attention. I welcome questions that your unit may have concerning the rules that are followed by the American Legion Auxiliary.

As unit president you should have selected a parliamentarian, and this should be approved by the executive committee. The parliamentarian does not need to be an expert but should be willing to look up information and to seek out answers.

Does your unit have a quorum? Quorum is the minimum number of voting members who must be present at a properly called meeting in order to conduct business in the name of the group.

Roberts Rules says a quorum should be as large as can be depended upon for being present at all meetings when the weather is not exceptionally bad.

Each unit needs to set their own quorum as it depends upon how many are attending the meetings. A quorum can also be changed to less or more members. It is important that when a quorum is changed the meeting is held with the current quorum.

Helpful hints to make your meeting better. Think about the FIVE "P's"

Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance.

It is the responsibility of the president to provide for a smooth meeting.

- The first and most important item is an agenda.
 - Your parliamentarian can be of assistance by checking the agenda to assist in making sure the meeting order is correct.
- Maintain control of the meeting. Make sure all members are able to be heard and that the majority rules.
- Use Unanimous Consent or General Consent

Unanimous consent is a remarkable tool for handling any motion when it is clear that the members wish to pass the motion. It will speed up the process and make the meeting shorter.

 - To obtain unanimous consent the chair states that "If there is no objection ...the action is decided upon."
 - Or the chair could say "Is there any objection to.... the action is decided upon."
 - If a member objects to the unanimous consent you can simply take a vote.

Remember: The rules in Robert's Rules aren't set up to give one side an edge over the other. They exist to help you arrive at the true will of the assembly with due consideration for all points of view.



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Poppy Chairman, Mary Kuperus
wmkuperus@tds.net

Fall Conference will have two Poppy contests.

Contest #1: make a 4X6 greeting card using art supplies you may have with a picture of a poppy included. No actual poppy is to be used. Make sure to include a greeting and an envelope to meet the challenge of Department President Linda wanting us to send greeting cards to our military members to let them know we care about them.

Contest #2: use the symbol and theme of Department President Linda. Her symbol is a tree, and her theme is "Grounded in our Roots, Growth Through Renewals and New Members." Using a small tree, no more than a foot high, decorate it with small poppies and other items using her symbol and theme. Be sure to remove the white tags before using the poppies. You can use fake trees or even just a branch. Use your imagination!

Please be sure to bring an envelope with your name, Unit number, and your District number on the inside. The envelope should not be attached to the contest submission. Place it under your poppy contest item.

Poppy posters are an opportunity for students to participate in the Poppy Program. Contact your local schools, home schools, Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts, SAL members, Junior members, or other organizations to promote the Poppy Poster Contest. Units will need to follow the District Level Poppy Poster Contest deadlines. The winners of the District Level will need to be sent to me before **May 15, 2027**.

Poppy Poster Contest Requirements:

1. Each poster shall have a fitting slogan not to exceed 10 words. Articles "a", "and," "an", "the" are not to be counted as words. The words "buddy" and "buy" cannot be used.
2. The words "American Legion Auxiliary" must be used in the design of the poster and will not be counted in the 10-word count.
3. Each poster must include a red poppy.
4. The department shall determine the closing date of the unit contest. The poster shall be on 11x14" poster board. (Drawing paper will not be accepted).
5. The United States flag may be used as long as there are no infractions of the flag code.
6. Posters will be judged using the following criteria:
 - 50% - poster appeal (layout, message, originality)
 - 40% - artistic ability (design and color)
 - 10% - neatness

7. Media used shall be watercolors, crayons, powder or oil paint, handmade paper cutouts, ink or textures, acrylics, pencils, and markers.
8. Written in ink on the back of the poster (not attached) shall be the class in which the entry is submitted, the name, address, age, and grade of the contestant and the name of the department.
9. Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through submission of artwork, contestants and their legal guardians grant non-exclusive reproduction and publication rights to the works submitted and agree to have their names and artwork published for commercial use without additional compensation or permission.
10. The poster shall be the work of only one individual.
11. The label "In Memoriam" from the veteran-made poppy may not be used.

Poppy Poster Contest Judging and Awards

1. Each department shall establish its own procedure for judging.
2. A citation will be given for the most outstanding poster in each classification within the five divisions.
3. Unit members should follow deadlines and process for the department. All department entries are due to the division chairman by June 1.
4. While ALA representatives will do their best to return all posters, it is not guaranteed. We recommend participants take a picture or scan their poster for their records.
5. Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through submission of artwork, contestants and their legal guardians grant nonexclusive reproduction and publication rights to the works submitted and agree to have their names and artwork published for commercial use without additional compensation or permission.

We continue to look for volunteers to make poppies for the Department of Minnesota. If you are a veteran, you are eligible to be paid \$.10 per poppy. You do not need to be a veteran to make poppies in Minnesota! Please, contact the department office or me for more information about veteran-made poppies. Let's make it a goal for the Department of Minnesota to not buy poppies from another Department!

American Legion Family members will be making poppies again at Fall Conference. Please join your district and sister district to be the top poppy makers of the Department of Minnesota at Fall Conference!



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
VA&R Chairman, Jody Hassing
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Wreaths Across America is a national 501c(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring and remembering fallen United States service members. Wreaths Across American is supported by our VA&R Program. There are many cemeteries in Minnesota that participate in the program, including Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Each December, volunteers honor those laid to rest there by placing bright green wreaths with red bows on the graves of our nation's heroes and saying each veteran's name aloud.

You can sponsor a wreath at www.wreathsasscrossamerican.org. It is only 17.00 dollars to Sponsor a wreath. On that same website, you can also register to volunteer to lay wreaths at one of the Cemeteries on Saturday, December 19, 2026.

Your home and hospital representatives are meeting at the end of September to plan the coming year. Any donations to the VA&R program should be mailed to the Department office. You can earmark your donation for a specific facility, and the money will be credited for the use of that facility. Thank you in advance for your monetary donations. Throughout the year, I will share in the Unit mailings what, if any, physical goods are needed at each of the Minnesota facilities. I will also introduce you to our home and hospital representatives over the next few months so you can put a face to the name of those that are helping our veterans living in our Minnesota veterans' homes.



In 2025 the Gift Shop provided over 1690 gifts to veterans in the 12 VA facilities Minnesota Auxiliary Units support.

Some of the gifts included:

Whitman's Chocolates, Gift Cards, Canteen Credits, Sweatpants and Sweatshirts
Flannel Shirts, Watches, Travel Mugs, Purses, Gift Baskets

To ensure the Gift Shop program meets the needs of our hospitalized Veterans or the Veterans living in one of the 8 homes we **NEED YOU!** We **NEED \$45,550!** This is \$25 per gift.

Help us bring a little Holiday JOY to our Veterans.

- 1) **Make a cash donation – mail donations to the Department Office**
- 2) **Donate your time. Reach out to the VA Rep at the closes VA hospital or home to volunteer.**



St. Cloud VA Hospital 2025



Sioux Falls VA Hospital 2025

**Please Donate to the American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop.
We really Need Each and Every one of your Assistance.**



Department of Minnesota
October 2026 Unit Mailing
Secretary's Notes

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 3-4: Disabled Veteran Turkey Hunt, Legionville
Oct. 22-24: Department Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center & Kelly Inn, St. Cloud
Nov. 9-11: Veterans Day Observance, displays of military items over the years, Willmar City Auditorium
Nov. 11: Veterans Day, local observances
Nov. 26-27: Thanksgiving – Department Office Closed
Dec. 5: Pearl Harbor Rally, Brewster Post 464
Dec 19: Wreaths Across America
Dec. 24-25: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day – Department Office Closed
Dec. 31 & Jan. 1 – New's Eve & New Year's Day – Department Office Closed
Feb. 13 Sweetheart Rally – Details to Come
March 15: Department DEC Meeting
April 9-10: ALA Junior Dept. Conference, tbd
April 7-10: National President's Visit
April 11-14: National Commander's Tour of Minn.
July 15-17: Department Convention, Willmar
Aug. 27-Sept. 2: National Convention, Kansas City, Mo.

Reminders

Membership

- Send in \$35 per membership being processed
- Please ensure all forms being sent to the Department Office are filled out completely.
- Use ONLY the 2027 Transmittal form
- List members alphabetically by last name
- All new membership submissions **MUST** be submitted with a transmittal, check and application
- When new applications are being filled out, ensure that the Legionnaire's member number is filled in for those applying under a living Veteran. Membership Applications **CAN NOT** be processed without the Legion member number. This is being strictly enforced.

Please email pictures of What's Happening in your Unit or District. We all love to see what's going on and the great things the American Legion Auxiliary does!