



American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota Unit Mailing

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

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Volume 1 – Mailing #1

Welcome to 2020-2021 Year

Welcome to the 2020-2021 Auxiliary year. 2020 will certainly be remembered in our Auxiliary history books as a year unlike no other. So much has occurred since March when Governor Walz issued a stay at home order and essentially brought the business of the American Legion Auxiliary to a halt. I am so proud of our members. Many of you were stunned by the news and didn't quite know what to do or how to do it because we had never had such an experience. But so many of you took a pause of a month or so and then stepped up and tried at something different. We even did at the Department office. Our March Department Executive Committee meeting was held with half of the members physically present and half participating via conference call so that we could adhere to the Governor's restrictions. And guess what? It worked. As time progressed, we purchased our own Zoom account and have been conducting business throughout the department using this new tool. Several department committees and districts have also used this account and we are all getting better at it each time we use it.

If your unit hasn't had the opportunity to meet because your Post home is still not open or because your members are fearful of participating just yet, why not consider holding meetings in a different style. Some units have met while sitting in chairs in front of their cars which were all parked in a circle, some have met in their community park, some have met via free conference calling and others have met via Zoom. It doesn't matter how you make it work – what matters is that we continue the mission of serving our veterans, military and their families. They need us now more than ever.

Department Secretary Sandie Deutsch retired on July 17th after 9 years of service to our department. I was hired and began training on April 6th so that I would have plenty of time to learn how our spring and summer activities were planned and completed from start to finish. All of that was well planned out pre-COVID but it didn't stop the plan. The Department office was not considered an essential workplace so for the months of April and May we all took turns working remotely and in office. The mail didn't stop coming into the office and we handled that daily. Technology allowed us to tap into our desktop computers from home and work as if we were at our office desk. We were able to process annual reports, membership information, dues and keep our loyal poppy makers supplied so that they could keep making our poppies for the upcoming year. Everyone came back to the office full-time in early June.

I officially began as your Department Secretary on July 18th. Many of you will know my name or know me. My name is Marsha Bible and I served as Department President in 2009-2010. I am a 54-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary and am eligible for membership thru the service of my late father, Donald Willson, who served in the US Navy during World War II and the Korean War. I was an active Junior member and continue to be just as active as a Senior member. I am married to Douglas Bible and we have one adult son, Geoffrey. We are all members of the American Legion Family.

You will notice that this Unit Mailing has a different look than any you've seen before. The information in this mailing have all been compiled by the chairmen

of the various department programs. It will be our goal to keep members informed as quickly as possible.

BOOK OF ANNUAL REPORTS

Since we were unable to hold a convention in July, we wanted to make sure that units received their citations and Book of Annual Reports in a timely manner. This mailing includes citations and a copy of the Book of Annual Reports for every Unit. Special awards and the President's Award of Excellence will be presented at Fall Conference.

STAYING IN TOUCH

The **Unit mailing** is distributed every other month from September thru May to the Unit President. It can also be found on the Department website as well. We also have a department Facebook page that we have been keeping updated as well. Latest needs and items of interest can be found at American Legion Auxiliary – Department of Minnesota. Our national organization also has lots of information to share in addition to the **National News**. Any member can register to receive the ENews & eBulletin. Go to the national website at ALAforVeterans.org and sign up. We also post information in the **Minnesota Legionnaire** on a monthly basis. Legionnaire's are sent to every Unit President and Unit Secretary complimentary. Any member may purchase a subscription to the Legionnaire by sending \$20.00 for one year or \$35.00 for two years to: American Legion Department of MN – ATTN: Editor.

IT'S ALL IN A NAME

The American Legion Auxiliary began accepting spouses of female veterans as members following the 2019 national convention, so we are no longer a women's organization. So, remember that our official name is **American Legion Auxiliary Unit No.** and not American Legion Post Auxiliary No. or American Legion Women's Auxiliary. This information should be correct on everything that you have printed including your check blanks, letterhead, etc.

WHY WE NEED 2020-2021 OFFICERS LISTS & DUES INFORMATION ON A TIMELY BASIS

The request for 2021 dues information was sent to all units via the unit mailing beginning in September last year. We are doing the same thing this year for the 2022 information. Why do we send it out so early? The dues notices are printed at national with the first notification going out in mid-September.

Inputting this information from all our units takes time and lots of checking and double checking to make sure that the information is accurate. We are required to have this information submitted to national by the end of May for a September mailing. Any information submitted after the deadline costs our Department \$30 and we require the unit making the late change to pay the fee before it is submitted.

The officer's lists are used primarily as our point of contact with your unit. Even if you have not changed officers, it is your responsibility to submit a list annually with the information requested. Susie may continue as the unit president again, but we don't know that or that she moved or got a new email address. This information is vital to keep the lines of communication strong. We understand that no one met from March until at least early this summer and some of your units have still not had a meeting. If you haven't sent your form in yet please do so today. A blank form is on the department website.

A NOTE FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT OFFICE

A lot of thought was put into how we should start out the new year of the new century of service to the American Legion Auxiliary. We want the Unit Mailing to be the go-to resource that can assist all members in search of how they can work the mission. Our goal is to give you as much information as we can so you can get your answers when you want them, not just during our workday.

The new format of this unit mailing will be printed continuously back to back, and program information will be listed alphabetically whenever possible. Forms will be printed one-sided and will be at the back of the mailing with a list of what is included in that mailing. You can always print an individual page from the website if you wish. At this point we have decided not to staple the unit mailing since some units take it apart and distribute it to chairmen and officers. This will always be available on our website www.mnala.org for everyone to access.

Encourage all members to find it and read it. It comes out every other month. We will also post this in PDF format on our Department Facebook Page without forms. Printing it this way will hopefully save us paper and postage. That money will be used in the future to fund our mission which is our purpose!

We'd like your input on the changes but only via email or mail. We'd love to hear what your thoughts are in writing.

Marsha Bible, Dept. Secretary

Jan & Jocelyn

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY FALL CONFERENCE
BREEZY POINT RESORT – BREEZY POINT, MN
Thursday, Oct. 22 – Saturday, Oct. 24, 2020**

Our special guest will be



Nicole Clapp, National President 2019-2021

Thursday, Oct. 22

Dept Exec Meeting 1:00 p.m.
Legion Family Blood Drive 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Law & Order Panel 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Open to American Legion Family

Speakers include:

*Janelle Kendall, Stearns County Attorney; Kelly Lake, Carlton County Sheriff;
Robin Dorf, Wright County Truancy Case Aide and possibly a retired judge*

Friday, Oct. 23

Auxiliary Conference 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Reception for Sandie Deutsch following session
Hospital Association Meeting
 4:30 p.m.
Legion Family Membership Fun
 6:30 p.m.

***Auxiliary Silent Auction all day
Bidding closes at 5:00 p.m.***

Saturday, Oct. 24

Auxiliary Conference 8:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

[Registration information is included in this mailing.]

**Please note – If you have not pre-registered for the conference you will not receive a Program Booklet.
You will only receive a copy of the daily program for the organization you register with.**

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT'S PROJECT

Department President Mary Hendrickson will continue using the same theme as last year **Remember, Honor, Serve**. The response to last year's project was successful and she was able to complete them in full. So, for this 2020-2021 year she will change her project. This year with the help of all of you, she would like to assist our 87 County Veterans Service Offices. The role of the County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) is to assist service members, veterans and their family members to efficiently navigate the Veterans Administration benefits system. They assist veterans to help them get the federal, state and county benefits they have earned.

Many of the veterans who visit their CVSO are also in need of a helping hand and they can offer emergency resources. President Mary's project will be to purchase gift cards for items such as gasoline and groceries so that they can distribute them when needed.

General funds, poppy funds and charitable gambling are acceptable to use. Donations should be made payable to: ALA Department of Minnesota earmarked President's Project and sent to the department office.



*Department President Mary Hendrickson (West Duluth Unit #71)
Honorary Department Junior President Emily Seuss (Monticello Unit #260)*

Honorary Department Junior President Emily Seuss will also continue to use the theme **Catching Veterans Hearts** with the softball as her symbol. The juniors raised \$6,965.00 that was distributed among the five veterans homes last year.

With such a great response for supporting our veterans' homes, Emily is changing the project for this year to raise funds to support the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VA Health Care Systems. The funds raised will be split evenly between the two facilities to provide similar items to the veterans who reside there.

DONATIONS TO EITHER OF THESE PROJECTS CAN BE NOTED ON YOUR GREEN 2020-2021 DONATION FORM FOUND IN THIS MAILING AND ON OUR DEPARTMENT WEBSITE

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND 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



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 \$2,400, 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. There is also a frequently asked questions sheet available at 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. Go to Forms the ALA Emergency Fund Application.

Joanie Krantz Department of MN Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chairman
Cell: (218) 469-3518 Email: jkrantz@wiktel.com

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND SILENT AUCTION AT FALL CONFERENCE



ATTENTION MINNESOTA AUXILIARY
MEMBERS!!!

The time is now! FALL CONFERENCE

Support the Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Where: Breezy Point Resort, Pequot Lakes, MN
When: Friday, Oct. 23, 2020 (Oct. 22-24)
Time: 9 am to 5 pm

Units and Districts are encouraged to bring an item(s) to donate to the Silent Auction. Please bring your donation of **NEW** or **LIKE NEW** items to the Pelican Room on 2nd floor on Thursday between 4 pm to 7 pm.

Suggested items are theme baskets, jellies, jams, tools, books, knick-knacks, pictures, handmade items, crafts, household, jewelry, etc. Please help us by writing a description of your donated item(s) and place a minimum bid (not required) on a white index card or 5x7 sheet of paper. (Index cards will be available).

\$1.00 Grab Bags. Have some fun stuff that would fit in a paper bag lunch bag. Have members of your Unit bring a couple grab bags each to your meeting in Sept. and Oct. and bring them or have your Unit bring items for a theme basket, BE CREATIVE!

President Mary's continued theme is "REMEMBER-HONOR-SERVE" with the Poppy as her symbol. Poppy Ribbons by District for Units and American Legion Family members wishing to make a monetary donation. All monetary donations of \$10 and over will be attached to the Ribbons. For anyone making a personal donation of \$25 or more, there will be a donation sheet to write your name on and donation amount at the table. Personal donations of \$50 or more will be given a "Members helping Members" Auxiliary Emergency Fund Pin.

District AEF Chairman and Unit members, please consider volunteering for an hour or two on Thursday evening from 4 pm – 7pm and/or Friday from 8 am – 6 pm. I will have a volunteer sheet with two hour increments, just call or text message me at (218) 469-3518, email at jkrantz@wiktel.com or mail me at 505 Main St. S, Karlstad, MN 56732.

It was brought to our attention at Department organizational that Unit mailings are not getting passed on to Unit Chairman. District AEF Chairman please connect with Unit AEF Chairman to see if they are receiving the information needed to succeed the AEF program.

CHILDREN & YOUTH ROBIN DORF, CHAIRMAN

The Children and Youth program is continuing to emphasize the protection, care and support for our children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families.

Each unit mailing, I will be emphasizing key points from the National Program Action Plan. You can find this plan on the National American Legion Auxiliary website at alaforveterans.org. We will focus on supporting our children and youth in our communities, support our veterans and military children, support our American Legion Children and Youth programs, and I will offer other unique resources for your units.

Halloween is just around the corner. What is your unit planning for the safety, and fun, for the children in your communities?



The American Legion Auxiliary Halloween coloring book has been updated with a new look!

You can download for the National website, under the Children and Youth tab, for free. Or they are also available from American Legion Flag & Emblem and you can order for 30 cents each or 50 for \$12.50. Order directly from www.emblem.legion.org.

There is a continued emphasis on the Youth Hero and Good Deed Awards this year. This is a way that we can recognize the youth in our communities who demonstrate good citizenship, either through a brave physical act or a good deed.

Clarification on the difference between the two:

- ✓ Good Deed Award – Youth demonstrated a leadership role in community service, specific deed should be present
- ✓ Youth Hero Award - Youth demonstrated a physical act of valor

Units can contact local schools, local law enforcement, churches and youth groups to make them aware of these awards. Make sure to leave unit contact information, someone within your unit who will follow up with the phone call or email, so if they have questions, they can have someone to contact.

New this year – the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award Nomination Form is available on the national website and it is a fillable form for easier use, or you can still print. The form requires two-unit members to sign. The completed form must be mailed to our Department Secretary who will verify and forward to national headquarters. On the form it asks who the unit wants to have the award shipped to. I would suggest having sent to representative of your unit, so you can present to the recipient at a special event.

Make sure to read the Children and Youth page in the unit guide when you receive it and most importantly make sure to share this information with you unit chairman.

If you have any questions or ideas for the Children and Youth program, please contact me.

**Robin Dorf
Children & Youth Chairman
Cell: (612) 483-4076 Email: RobinLDorf@yahoo.com**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE
DIANE HAYES, CHAIRMAN**

As we continue with COVID – 19 Pandemic remember to follow the COVID – 19 Guidelines in your community.

- Donate or Volunteer Safely with Food Banks and Pantries
- Deliver Meals and Groceries those who are unable to get out also check your local Meals on Wheels to learn ways to volunteer.
- Give Blood: Blood donations have decreased dramatically. Help fill the need by contacting your local Red Cross or other blood donation sites.
- Stay in Touch: Check on your neighbors, friends, and family - especially those who are older or may be alone. A phone call, text, or a conversation through the door, or a message written on a poster board could brighten their day.
- Sewing Masks: If your community needs more or distributing free/ low cost face masks to community needs more.
- Yard Work, Window washing, caring for flowers, shrubs, road ditches etc.
- Check with your local Nursing homes to see if you can bring cards or mail them so they can pass them out to residents to help brighten there day or a bouquet of home grown flowers or boughten flowers once a week, twice a month or monthly.

Maybe your local radio and TV stations share information on other organizations looking for volunteers or items needed.

Visit your local volunteer opportunities; visit your State Service Commission's website for details, check with your Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to see if there are any events coming that you can volunteer for while following the guidelines for COVID – 19 in your communities.

ALA suggested days of service that will soon be here:

- September 11th - 9-11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (observed annually)
- October 24th - Make a Difference Day
- November 11th - Veterans Day
- November 21st - National Family Volunteer Day

**Diane Hayes
Community Service Chairman
Cell: (218) 849.5322 Email: papadon@arvig.net**



CONSTITUTION & STANDING RULES CAROL KOTTOM, CHAIRMAN

It is that time of year again. The Unit constitution is on the website under the "About", "Constitution" tab. The Unit Bylaws are under the "About", "Standing Rules" tab. These two documents can only be changed by resolution at the Department Convention. It is essential that all members read and have a basic knowledge of our governing rules. Well worth your time to review these two documents at your first meeting of the year.

Second – Unit Standing Rules. The members of each unit create their Unit's standing rules. This governing document should contain the things pertinent to YOUR unit. Does your unit pay dues for any of your members? Do you have specific fundraisers? When and where you meet. These are the things that belong in your standing rules. You cannot have a rule that contradicts anything in the Constitution or Bylaws. Your executive committee is defined in the Constitution, not in your standing rules.

Take the time to review your governing documents. The Department Committee will be reviewing all governing rules this year so if you have any changes you would like to see, please notify me and I'll make sure we address your concerns.

Carol Kottom
Constitution & Standing Rules Chairman
Cell: (763) 360-6102 Email: ckakottom@gmail.com

HISTORY REPORT KARLA OTTERNESS, DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN

HOW TO WRITE A HISTORY

The purpose of writing a history is to record how a unit and/or District has accomplished the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary for the current year.

The following **Should** be included in a History:

A History **should** be about the Unit and/or District accomplishments.

- A history should focus on the facts about events people involved and what occurred.
- A history should be written as a third person narrative- as if the historian is witnessing an event then describing it to others.
- A history should be written in clear concise language with correct spelling.

History **Should Not....**

- A history should not be a detailed log of the unit or district presidents' travels.
- A history is not recap of unit and or district minutes.
- A history is not written to focus on one person's accomplishments.
- A history is not a recording of the historian personal thoughts or comments on events, the people involved, and what occurred.
- As September rolls in, a new Auxiliary membership starts, and a new year begins. In our history program we have a few new ideas, we hope you help us with.
- **First-there** is a new form to fill out for your midyear reporting. This is included in your mailing.

- **Second-** the District historians and I are looking for our famous unit members. If you have any celebrities, politicians, or notable members please let us know. We would like to have a collage at our department functions.
- **Third-** If you have active Junior members, I would like to hear from them. I want them to write their own histories. They should submit their history to the District Historian in April, who will submit them to the Department Historian.

**Karla Otterness
History Chairman
Cell: (320) 360-6102 Email: karotter@tds.net**



**LEADERSHIP
MARY KUPERUS, CHAIRMAN**

“Back to the Basics” workshops will continue this year. As the Leadership Chairman; my goal is to reach more American Legion Auxiliary members throughout Minnesota. We will answer questions and ensure all members, whether you want to learn more about the ALA or are a leader, attain information about our history, programs, and basic information about the American Legion Auxiliary. More information will be in the next Unit mailings.

I hope that attendees will become knowledgeable about our organization and distribute the information you receive. We all can learn from each other and we can have fun along the way!

Due to COVID-19 no Mission Trainings are currently scheduled.

Please encourage members to participate in the ALA Training Academy curriculum which includes and can be accessed online at alaforveterans.org:

- **ALA 101:** is the introductory course to the ALA Academy
- **ALA Communication Methods:** is an introduction to how the ALA uses E-Communication.
- **ALA Leadership: Living Our Motto of Service Not Self:** reviews what it means to be a leader and that leadership is not only a title - it is helping others to stay mission-focused and leading by our guiding principles.
- **Establishing an ALA Culture of Goodwill:** is a thought-provoking course designed to help ALA members better understand how our attitudes, beliefs and behaviors impact ALA membership and the ALA's ability to serve our mission.
- **ALA Branding and Why It Matters to Me:** ALA members will learn that branding is more than just a logo – it is also how the public perceives our organization and our values.
- **ALA Juniors E-Learning Course** is designed with younger members in mind. Juniors will learn about the purpose of the program, how to excel as leaders, tips for speaking to groups, and much more.

- **The ALA Fundraising course** teaches members about the four different ALA Foundation grants and how to apply for them, how to plan a fundraiser, how to market a fundraiser, and much more.
- **How to Deal with Conflict:** How you handle conflict determines whether it turns into a major battle or leads to a deeper understanding of others and a more positive relationship.

As we continue to *Celebrate our Auxiliary Centennial*, we encourage members to become interested in taking leadership roles so our legacy of service can continue into our next one hundred years.

Mary Kuperus
Leadership Chairman
 Cell: (320) 354-4741 Email: wmkuperus@tds.net



MEMBERSHIP REPORT
SHARON THIEMECKE, CHAIRMAN

Welcome to our American Legion Auxiliary 2021 Membership year. Working with our American Legion Family to Remember, Honor, Serve our veterans. We need every member to be a recruiter! Our history shows that when we are seen in our communities working our programs that our membership grows. Whether you are in your community teaching youth Americanism and Patriotism, caring for our veterans, active duty military and their families, or actively participating in your community's safety and security, **BE VISIBLE!** Be Branded with the Auxiliary Logo and remember that you are an ambassador of the largest patriotic organization in the world. Be there with a smile and good will in your heart and mind. Be Proud of Who We Are, What We Do and Why We Matter! On that note our FIRST Department Membership Rally is at Legionville in Brainerd Saturday afternoon at 3pm on September 12, 2020. That is correct this rally is before the first dues mailing for the Auxiliary. All Unit Presidents and officers pay your dues now. Membership chairmen get your Unit Honorary Life Members' dues turned in to the Department Office. Every Unit should be off the "goose egg" for this September Rally. Come and join us for some fun.

This certainly has been an unusual year as we have the opportunity to continue to Celebrate Our Veterans. Fall Conference is a school of instruction on our programs. We work hard to bring you the information and Friday evening we will have an opportunity for some fun. Fall Conference this year we will "Round Up Our Gems" as we continue "Mining For Members, They Are Our Gems." Get out your boots and cowboy hats and bring a member that has never attended a Department function. The American Legion will have a special gift for you and your guest for attending a Department rally or event. The round up is on Friday night October 23, 2020. More Fall Conference information is in this mailing. Contact your District Membership Chairman and ask what you can do to help. Please share the new information enclosed with your Unit membership as there are changes in the membership incentives and Awards for 2021.

Sharon Thiemecke
Membership Chairman
 Cell: (218) 209-1124 Email: sharon.6thdistrictala@yahoo.com

**POPPY
SANDY WERSAL, CHAIRMAN**

We will be having 2 Contests at Department Fall Conference. The contest is open to every Auxiliary member. If you cannot attend Fall Conference send your entry with your president or fellow member who is attending. Include a sealed envelope with your creation that has a paper with your name, unit number and district number on it.

***Deadline for entries to be on the Poppy Table Friday, October 23rd 10 a.m.
Entries may not be picked up until after the awards have been presented***



CONTEST #1 POPPY PIN

A red poppy pin of any material, NO more than 2-inch diameter with something related to the State of Minnesota on the pin. This is a special contest with the winning pin being used for National President Nicole's corkboard map that will be presented to her at the National Convention in Phoenix, AZ. You will not get the pin back.

CONTEST #2 POPPY DISTRIBUTION BASKET

A basket that you or your unit can use to distribute the poppy on poppy day. Must be no larger than 14-inch round or square. Must use one or more large or small poppies made by our veterans with the white tags removed.

**Sandy Wersal
Poppy Chairman
Cell: (320) 354-4517 Email: jeffwersal@tds.net**

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION REPORT
LINDA KROPUENSKE, CHAIRMAN

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of Veterans, military, and their families.

Today our Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation mission is more important than ever with the Covid-19 pandemic. While the daily normal for our veterans have changed, the veterans and their family's needs have not. We need to continue the support of our veterans. This year, it is different in the way we will approach the support.

Many of you have attended The Gift Shops in the past to help the veterans choose gifts for themselves and their immediate family. At this time, we are uncertain as to our ability to hold The Gift Shop as we have previously done. The Gift Shop Committee and Hospital and Home Representatives will be working with the various facilities to determine the best way for The Gift Shop is to be handled in their facility. We expect to have 9 different faces to our Gift Shops this year. We are confident that we will be able to facilitate each Gift Shop to comply with the facility's need. To comply with CDC's mandates, there will not be volunteers helping with The Gift Shop. This has provided Gift Shop Chairman Mary French and Committee Member Lynn Olson with a huge new challenge. Thank you, Mary and Lynn. When The Gift Shop was established its name was set as "THE GIFT SHOP". Please do not add Holiday, Christmas, etc. to the name. There are veterans of many beliefs and we wish to have every veteran participate. It has evolved over the years that The Gift Shop distribution has taken place during the festive time of year; however, it is still The Gift Shop. Please continue to send The Gift Shop donations to our Department office.

The Department Executive Committee at their August meeting voted to continue the Covid-19 Reimbursement program. You may receive reimbursement of up to \$50 once per year for items you are making for the VA Hospitals and Home. You may only receive the reimbursement for the masks, gowns, head covers etc. made for one of our 9 supported VA Facilities. Please send these requests to the Department Office. You must provide original receipts with your request. If you received reimbursement prior to August 31, 2020, you may, again, apply for reimbursement beginning September 1, 2020. These items are still needed for our facilities. Once the amount of \$7,500 has been exhausted, no further reimbursements will be made.

Before you incur expenses and spend your valuable time making items, it is extremely important that you contact the Hospital/Home Rep of the facility. Each facility's needs are different. Be sure to thank these ladies when you see them. You have nine very hard-working Reps and a very dedicated Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee.

Let me introduce them to you:

REPS:	Fargo VAHCS	Lynette Andel	701-412-7010
	Fergus Falls Veterans Home	Doris Lafayette	218-493-4514
	Hastings Veterans Home	Darlene Wondra	507-744-2503
	Minneapolis Home	Sandy Gibson	651-636-3899
	Minneapolis VAHCS	Mary Ann Davis	651-690-3272
	Luverne Veterans Home	Jeanette Mertens	507-828-7656
	Silver Bay Veterans Home	Phyllis Mealey	218-834-4379
	Sioux Falls VAHCS	Diane Strassburg	507-290-0011
	St Cloud VAHCS	Jan Benson	320-252-5949

VA&R:	Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman	Linda Kropuenske	763-360-4740
	Service to Veterans Chairman	Sandra Locker	763-786-5415
	Gift Shop Chairman	Mary French	651-455-1841
	Gift Shop Committee	Lynn Olson	651-415-1240

In September we will be holding our Annual Hospital/Home Rep meeting. We will publish this year's needed patterns in the Oct-Nov Unit mailing. I am sure our Reps will have suggestions for you that I will pass on. We hope to have an update as to when volunteers may begin to return to the facilities.

There will be additional Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation information and resources in the Nov-Dec Unit mailing and Unit Guide. It is never too early to begin planning for the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program in December. What are you going to do?

I will be asking for a Mid-Year report due to me December 7. Keep track of all you are doing and the sewing you are/have done since April 15. I will include a simple form for you fill out in the Nov-Dec Unit mailing. Watch for the form and send it so that I receive it by December 7. *Please do not* send it to Department Office.

Stay Safe – Stay Well – Keep doing what you do for our Veterans, they and I thank you.

Linda Kropuenske
Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chairman
Cell: (763) 360-4740 Email: LindaKropuenske@gmail.com



GIVING TUESDAY DEPARTMENT CHALLENGE

From now until #GivingTuesday, December 1, 2020, our national organization will be accepting donations to the ALA Foundation via this link: <https://donate.legion-aux.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/QDSQ9AAB#c>

After December 1st, national will be tallying up how many donations came from each department, and the department with the most donors (number of unique donors, not dollar amount) will be crowned the #GivingTuesday Department of the Year!

The winner will be announced on ALA National Headquarters social media.

Spread the word amount your members. Remember, only donations made through this link or made via check to the ALA National Headquarters, marked for #Giving Tuesday will count towards your total.

Thank you for your participation, and remember 100% of every gift given to the ALA Foundation goes directly to supporting veterans, military, and their families.



Wow! We put out the call and our members answered it. And not just once. We are so proud of all of our members. Thank you everyone who has made and/or continues to make masks for our veterans, their families and our communities. We want to encourage you to track who has made masks for COVID until it is Annual Report time in the spring. Everyone hasn't donated masks to the same place so we want to get an idea of how many members have been making them and where they have been donated.

When it comes to annual reporting time, mask making will be divided into two programs: Service to Veterans and Community Service.

Service to Veterans – masks made for any of the VA Healthcare Systems or the 5 Minnesota Veterans Homes

Community Service – All other masks, except those made for immediate family members will fall under the Community Service program.

Masks made for your own family, regardless of whether any of them are veterans, do not count. It is expected that we all take care of our families as we need to.

Our National President will be visiting us for Fall Conference October 22nd – 24th. We'd love to be able to tell her an approximate number of masks that have been donated so far. Could you take a few minutes and send this report to us (preferably by email) to give us the information requested below? Send to deptoffice@mnala with the subject line – Mask Makers – Unit # **no later than October 19th please.**

Number of masks made for Service to Veterans program _____

Where were they donated? _____

Number of masks made for Community Service program _____

Where were they donated? _____

Do you have any mask makers who made over 100 masks? If so, could you please include their name and the number of masks made and where donated.
