



American Legion  
Auxiliary



Holiday Greetings  
December 19, 2024

Dear Members of the American Legion Auxiliary,  
Heartfelt thanks to YOU for your selfless devotion to the American Legion Auxiliary mission “to advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace, and security.”

Thank you for your support of our Gift Shops in Spokane VAMC/WDVA, Retsil (WDVA Port Orchard), American Lake VAMC, and Walla Walla VAMC/WDVA. Many of the gifts in storage from Orting’s closed Gift Shop were received by Spokane, Walla Walla, American Lake and Seattle VAMCs. We are looking forward to sharing with you reports and statistics of those that were served at the *DEC Mid-Winter Meeting* in Lacey.

As the New Year approaches, the focus will shift to promote opportunities for youth with our *Americanism Essay Contest*, Department and National *Scholarships*, and The Legion’s *Constitutional Speech Contest*.

Eva Wallace, Department Americanism Chair, has a detailed list of items for our “Star Spangled Kids” kits to assist in educating children in United States history, Americanism, and the U.S. Constitution. Entries will soon be due for Grades 3-12 including students with special needs. The theme this year is “*What does America the Beautiful mean to me* (regarding veterans and our military)?

Chelse Callahan, Department Education Chair, requests “*that we distribute scholarship information to our schools and other sources such as libraries, where students can use the opportunities for furthering their education.*” There are 4 Department and 4 National Scholarships available. Deadlines for these applications will also be due soon.

The American Legion’s High School Oratorical Scholarship program known as “*A Constitutional Speech Contest*” is for students, homeschoolers in Grades 9-12. Registration deadline is February 4, 2025. Please see: <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org/>

Also, keep in mind that the Department of Washington is looking for a *Unit Member of the Year* leadership award candidate. Although this deadline is during the spring, it is now time to think about who you would like to nominate and to prepare a written narrative of 1,000 words or less for your nominee.

**January is Legislative and National Security Month.** At the National American Legion’s Legislative - Grassroots Action Center website <https://www.votervoicenet.com/AmericanLegion/home>, you can sign up to receive notices to respond to your congressional representatives regarding important bills for veterans, military and their families.

My project this year is the *Auxiliary Emergency Fund* (AEF). AEF is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary up to \$3,000 as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis. Tina Loomer, Department AEF Chair, has issued a *\$100 AEF Challenge to Units* to donate to this fund. For each \$100 donated, Units will receive entry into a drawing for a ***Wooden Custom Eagle Flag*** made by “Rustic Creations.” The drawing will be held at the *2025 Department Convention*. Use the Department’s *Unit Donation form* and check item #549 Department President’s Project and write AEF Donation on the memo line of the check. *“Happy Trails lead to Helping Hands!”*

At the recent Seattle VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) meeting a list of needs was given for their Mental Healthcare Unit 7-West and South Lucille Street VA Clinic – the *Community Resource and Referral Center* (CRRC). Please see the flyer with the list of needs on the *VA & R tab* at the Department’s website: <https://www.walegion-aux.org>

We are happy to announce that National President Trish Ward will be visiting our state March 15-18, 2025. Trish wants to meet as many members as possible. Please RSVP as soon as the flyer notice is published. The locations of meetings are scattered throughout the state in Districts 8 (Chewelah), 9 (Ephrata), 6 (Yakima), 4 (Dupont) and 2 (Bellingham, plus one other).

The ***2025 DEC Mid-Winter Meeting*** will be held at the Lacey Community Center on Saturday, February 1. Please register by January 5 to take advantage of the *Early Bird* pricing for the lunch that Post 94 will be providing. All ALA members and guests are invited to register to attend. There will be a 50/50 Drawing and red *Credit Card* wallets available to raise funds for the Department’s *Ways and Means*. *National ALA Award Citations* will be presented and Evergreen Girls Nation Senators Reagan Ricker and Lilah Moore will share their experiences at ***Girls Nation***.

*Evergreen Girls State*, for girls who will have completed their junior year of high school are invited to apply for *Evergreen Girls State* which is scheduled for Sunday, June 22 - Friday, June 27, 2025. Applications may be submitted at <https://www.evergreengirlsstate.com/>

Thank you for your huge support of the *USO Northwest*. Donald Leingang, Commander U.S. Navy (retired) Executive Director says *“Thank you again for your support and please know your gift is much appreciated!! I wish you all good health this holiday season.”*

With that same sentiment I close this greeting sincerely thanking YOU for all that you have done to make our ALA mission possible.

God bless you and God bless America.

*United in Service – Happy Trails!*



Diana Hagen  
American Legion Auxiliary  
2024-2025 Dept. of Washington President