



Welcome National President
Pam Ray



*Come join us for dinner hosted by
McCullough-Wagner Post 109
March 14, 2026 at 6pm
15921 S. Houghton Rd, Corona de Tucson, AZ*

Please make checks payable
by March 11th to:
McCullough-Wagner Post 109
15921 S. Houghton Rd
Corona de Tucson, AZ 85641

Italian Dinner \$25
No host bar,
5pm-545pm

Hotel: Hampton Inn -
Tucson Tech Park
9095 S. Rita Rd
Tucson, AZ 85747
520-407-5521





THE AMERICAN LEGION
Veterans Strengthening America

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE

PO BOX 1055, INDIANAPOLIS, IN, 46206-1055 • WWW.LEGION.ORG • P: (317) 630-1200 • F: (317) 630-1223

DD214 RETENTION
FOR
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Effective immediately, the Adjutant or Secretary at each Unit shall verify a member's eligibility by reviewing documentation such as a DD214, then promptly return the document to the individual. No copies or electronic records containing Personally Identifiable Information shall be retained.

Some Units currently maintain decades of archived DD214s, including those of deceased members. These records should be securely destroyed to reduce exposure to identity theft and mitigate potential legal liability.

This policy should be communicated to all membership staff and incorporated into Unit and Department procedures effective February 4, 2026.

Regards,

Mark C. Seavey, J.D.
National Judge Advocate

TIDBITS FROM THE WEBSITE MANAGER FEBRUARY 2026

--25-26 YEAR-END REPORT FORMS ARE READY AND UPLOADED TO WEBSITE

<https://aladeptaz.org/12-dept-report-forms>

Contact Deb Munchbach with errors and questions right away. munchaz@msn.com

--I went on to the Fry's Foods website to renew my Girls State Foundation selection for Fry's Rewards. And guess what??? You no longer have to renew it every year ! It stays the same.

--Girls State white cards were snail mailed to Unit Chairmen on February 12, 2016.

--Unit 115

Please remove Cassandra Johnson as Secretary.

No replacement at this time.

--Unit 133

Please change email for Unit President June Moss to

Auxiliarypresident@alpost133az.org

--Unit 132

President	Secretary	Membership	Membership Processing
Chris Kennedy 520-405-3951 ovunit132@gmail.com	Lori Oehlert 920-319-6700 15oehlert@gmail.com	Onita Davis 908-344-8149 ov132@gmail.com	Chris Kennedy 520-405-3951 ovunit132@gmail.com

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA
LEADERSHIP/MISSION TRAINING
2025-2026 SCHEDULE

03/21/2026 **DATE CHANGED**
kmartinez63468@gmail.com

William David Hood Unit #54

Kerry Martinez
623-693-3449

JUNE 06 THRU 13, 2026

A **AMERICAN**



L **LEGION**



L **LAW**



E **ENFORCEMENT**



C **CAREER**



A **CADEMY**

WWW.ALLECA-AZ.ORG

- AGES 14 TO 19, MALE & FEMALE
- APPLICATIONS ON-LINE @ WWW.ALLECA-AZ.ORG
- DEADLINE MAY 10, 2026
- 45 YEAR PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP
- DEPT. OF AZ AMERICAN LEGION
- AZ DEPT. OF PUBLIC SAFETY
- 520-289-5113

ALLECA 2026 is on the horizon, scheduled for June 6 - 13, 2026 at Emmanuel Pines in Prescott! Open to youth ages 14 -19, applications can be found on-line at www.alleca-az.org, application deadline is May 10, 2026. Spots are filling up fast, get yours in today. Please message me if you have any questions!

2027 MEMBERSHIP DUES

July 2026 – Dec. 2027

Non-legible forms will be Returned.

Department is raising it's portion of Dues to \$12.00 Effective July 1st, 2026. Units will send \$30.00 to Department to cover National and Department dues for the 2027 membership year.

It is HIGHLY suggested that units raise their 2027 dues, so they have operational capitol.

The dues amount indicated below will be printed on the 2027 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICES that is mailed to senior members in your unit. Also requested is the address to be printed on each renewal notice showing where and whom to mail the dues for your Unit.

Completed forms for 2027 dues must be returned to Department Headquarter on or before May 5, 2026. NO EXCEPTIONS!!

You can mail or email the completed form to secretary1@aladepaz.org OR mail to Department Headquarters, 4701 N. 19th Ave. Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ 85015.

If your unit fails to return the needed information by the due date, the current information on file with the Department will be sent to National.

Units making Changes after May 15th, 2026, will be charged \$30.00 FEE!

UNIT NUMBER: _____

2027 Junior Dues \$ _____ 2027 Senior Dues \$ _____

Address where membership dues will be mailed to.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIP CODE: _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ DATE: _____

Name of Person Competing this Form: _____

TITLE _____

DATE: _____

DUES COMPARISON WITH INCREASE FOR DEPARTMENT PORTION
2026-2027

2025-2026

Member Pays	30.00
Amount sent to Department	25.00 (Dept. keeps 7.00 and sends 18.00 to National)
Unit keeps	5.00

2026-2027

If member pays the same	30.00
NEW amount sent to Department	30.00 (Dept. will keep 12.00 and send 18.00 to National)
Unit keeps	0.00 Nothing. If you rely on some of the dues money to meet Unit expenses you will need to increase the amount each member pays.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Department of Arizona

SUBJECT: Names and addresses of elected 2026-2027 Unit Officers

NOTE: Since this mailing will be sent to the OUT-GOING OFFICERS, it is THEIR responsibility to send the requested information to the Department Office. Even if you are REPEATING an office, *it is necessary to complete and send this form to the Department Office.*

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

UNIT NAME AND NUMBER _____

UNIT MAILING ADDRESS _____

MEETING DAY _____ **TIME** _____ **PLACE** _____

PRESIDENT: _____ ID# _____

Phone # _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

SECRETARY: _____ ID# _____

Phone # _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

MEMBERSHIP: _____ ID# _____

Phone # _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

TREASURER: _____ ID# _____

Phone# _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

CHAPLAIN: _____ ID# _____

Phone# _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

HISTORIAN: _____ ID# _____

Phone# _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

Please complete and return this form. We must have this information to prepare the Department Directory and to notify National. **Form must be into Department no later than June 19, 2026.**

Mail form to: American Legion Auxiliary, Dept. of AZ, 4701 N. 19th Ave., Ste 100, Phoenix, AZ 85015

You can email this form to secretary1@aladeptaz.org.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Department of Arizona

SUBJECT: Names and addresses of elected 2026-2027 District Officers

NOTE: Since this mailing will be sent to the OUT-GOING OFFICERS, it is THEIR responsibility to send the requested information to the Department Office. Even if you are REPEATING an office, *it is necessary to complete and send this form to the Department Office.*

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

DISTRICT NUMBER _____

DISTRICT MAILING ADDRESS _____

MEETING DAY _____ **TIME** _____

PRESIDENT: _____ ID# _____

Phone # _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

VICE PRESIDENT: _____ ID# _____

Phone # _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

SECRETARY: _____ ID# _____

Phone # _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

TREASURER: _____ ID# _____

Phone# _____ Publish Yes No

E-Mail _____ Publish Yes No

Please complete and return this form. We must have this information to prepare the Department Directory and to notify National. **Form must be into Department no later than June 19, 2026.**

Mail form to: American Legion Auxiliary, Dept. of AZ, 4701 N. 19th Ave., Ste 100, Phoenix, AZ 85015

You can email this form to secretary1@aladepaz.org.

ATTENTION PLEASE

Americanism Essay Contest submissions must be sent to the Department Chairman by MARCH 15, 2026, so she can have them judged and forwarded to the Americanism Western Division Vice Chairman by April 15, 2026.

Department Chairman is: (NEW CHAIRMAN AS OF 1-31-2026)

Maggie Montijo

520-904-1814

azamericanism@gmail.com

Enter "essay contest" in subject line

OR

PO Box 155

Pomerene, AZ 85627



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:
"Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans Who Fought for Our Freedom"

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. Departments (states) will determine the deadline for the local unit contests.
3. Essays will be due from the state department chairs to the Americanism Division chairs by April 15. (Essays must reach DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN BY MARCH 15.)
4. Essays received after the contest deadline will not be accepted.
5. 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.
6. The essay shall be the work of only one individual.
7. 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.
8. Essays will be scored using the following rubric:
 - Word Count: 5pts.
 - Cover Sheet: 5pts.
 - Topic/Theme — Does the Essay Answer the Topic Question?: 25pts.
 - Content — Original Thought: 25pts.
 - Grammar: 10pts.
 - Clarity/Coherence: 10pts.
 - Organization — Introduction, Body, and Conclusion: 10pts.
 - Correct Word Usage: 10pts.

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES SHALL BE FINAL.



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST 2026 Cover Sheet

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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: _____

Address (Street, City, State, ZIP): _____

Student or Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

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 Winner Due to National Americanism Division Chair by April 15, 2026

American Legion Auxiliary

YEAR-END IMPACT REPORT FORMS (THIS IS THE REPORT THAT GOES TO NATIONAL AND ULTIMATELY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS.)

Why report these numbers?

Every hour, every dollar ALA members invest in our mission of helping veterans adds up. It not only gives each member a sense of pride, but it allows us to demonstrate our effectiveness to the world. Each small sum of numbers gets added into the collective numbers that are called Impact Numbers. These numbers proclaim our impact and make membership in the ALA meaningful.

These numbers are also reported to The American Legion, which includes them in its annual report to Congress. To make this process easier for you, it has been simplified and the form has been condensed to essential information. If you aren't sure, even giving an estimate is better than not reporting at all.

How to complete the Impact Report Form

1. **Each ALA member** should fill out the Member Form and give it to the unit president. This probably happens in April, but check with your unit.
2. The unit president (or designee) compiles all of the member data on the Unit Form and adds any additional data not reported individually by unit members. This form then gets forwarded to either the district/county (if applicable) or department, which compiles all the records.
3. It is more important that you report information in one section of the form only rather than worry if you have selected the right category. For example, if you provide a service for children, it should go in either Service for Military Families (for example, camps for military children only) or Service for Children & Youth (Legion Family camps for all children) but not in both places.
4. Please round to whole dollar values (for example, \$149.50 should be \$150).

Report Simplifications

1. All service for all military whether active duty, retired, or reserve component is now combined in one section.
2. Each section has better defined examples of the service that should be reported.
3. **For Units, Districts/Counties, and Departments:**

“Line numbers” and “Obtain Total From” columns assist in transferring data from form to form. For example, units can find the number of Volunteer Hours for Military Families on Line 5 of the Member Form.

A downloadable fillable monthly tracking worksheet and annual report form is available under the Members Only, Annual Report Forms section on the national website: www.ALAforVeterans.org

Thank you for taking the time to REPORT your VALUABLE SERVICE and helping us TELL OTHERS about our INCREDIBLE IMPACT!

REMEMBER TO FORWARD THIS COMPLETED UNIT REPORT TO YOUR DISTRICT PRESIDENT BY MAY 1, 2026.

UNIT Year-End Impact Numbers Report

Unit # _____ Unit Name _____

Department _____ Unit President _____

Your Name (if other than president) _____

Your Email _____

Number of Member Impact Reports _____

Here is what our unit did in the last 12 months.

1. Our ALA Service for Veterans/Active-Duty/Reserve Military

	Service for Veterans/Military	Obtain Total From	Member	Unit	Total
Line 1	Total hours members volunteered	Member Form Line 1		N/A	
Line 2	Total dollars spent	Member Form Line 2	\$	\$	\$
Line 3	Total number of veterans/military assisted	Member Form Line 3			
Line 4	Total number of "Veterans in Community Schools" presentations facilitated	Member Form Line 4			
Line 5	Value of in-kind donations received*	Unit Records	N/A	\$	\$
Line 6	Number of poppies or poppy items distributed	Unit Records	N/A		
Line 7	Dollars raised from poppies	Unit Records	N/A	\$	\$

*Estimated cash value of non-cash donations from **NON-MEMBERS** of goods (like paper goods, clothing) or services (like pro-bono CPA services from a local firm)

2. Our ALA Service for Military Families

	Service for Military Families	Obtain Total From	Member	Unit	Total
Line 8	Total hours members volunteered	Member Form Line 5		N/A	
Line 9	Total dollars spent	Member Form Line 6	\$	\$	\$
Line 10	Number of military families served	Member Form Line 7			

3. Our ALA Service for Youth

	Service for Children & Youth	Obtain Total From	Member	Unit	Total
Line 11	Total hours for ALA Girls State	Member Form Line 8		N/A	
Line 12	Dollars spent for ALA Girls State	Unit Records	N/A	\$	\$
Line 13	Total hours for other Legion Family youth activities	Member Form Line 9		N/A	
Line 14	Dollars spent on goods for youth activities	Member Form Line 10	\$	\$	\$
Line 15	Dollar amount of direct cash aid to help a needy child	Member Form Line 11	\$	\$	\$
Line 16	All other UNIT expenses (parties, dinners, paper goods, trophies)	Unit Records	N/A	\$	\$
Line 17	Total number of children/youth served	Member Form Line 12			
Line 18	Donations to all other child service charities	Member Form Line 13	\$	\$	\$

4. Our Service Representing the ALA in Our Community

	For any service not included in Sections 1-3	Obtain Total From	Member	Unit	Total
Line 19	Total number of hours	<i>Member Form Line 14</i>		N/A	
Line 20	Total dollars spent	<i>Member Form Line 15</i>	\$	\$	\$

5. Scholarships Presented/Awarded by Our Unit

	Scholarships	Obtain from	Total
Line 21	Number of unit scholarships presented/awarded	<i>Unit Records</i>	
Line 22	Total dollar amount of unit scholarships	<i>Unit Records</i>	\$
Line 23	Total dollar amount donated to department scholarships	<i>Unit Records</i>	\$

When completed, send to: _____ *by* ____/____/____
 (Get name and date from district or county, if applicable, or department)

**CONGRATULATIONS---YOU DID IT! THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO
 AND FOR REPORTING YOUR UNIT'S IMPACT!**

**REMEMBER TO FORWARD THIS COMPLETED UNIT
 REPORT TO YOUR DISTRICT PRESIDENT BY
 MAY 1, 2026.**

END OF YEAR IMPACT REPORTING

FAQs

- Question: Where do I report my service for a National Guard “Welcome Home” activity?
Answer: *Service for ALL members of the military, whether they are retired, active-duty or in the reserve component such as the National Guard is now reported in “Section 1: My Service for Veterans, Active-Duty, and Reserve Military.”*
- Question: Do I report my VAVS (Veterans Administration Voluntary Services) on the Impact Form since I already sign in at the VA when I volunteer?
Answer: No, the ALA receives those hours from the VA on a yearly basis.
- Question: Does time shopping for care packages for deployed military count as service?
Answer: *Yes, shopping for care packages counts as service hours under Section 1.*
- Question: So.... does driving my daughter to Junior Meetings count as service?
Answer: *Sorry, that falls within your responsibility as a parent. You get kudos for being a great ALA parent though!*
- Question: My unit volunteered at a summer camp for military kids. Where should I report this service?
Answer: *You may report service for summer camps open only to military kids under “Section 2: My ALA Service for Military Families.” If the camp is open to ALL children, then your service would be reported under “Section 3: My ALA Service for Youth.” But don’t worry if you don’t remember. Just report it somewhere.... once!*
- Question: My neighbor is deployed, so I help her husband by babysitting their children once a week. Does this count?
Answer: *Absolutely! Report this under “Section 3: My ALA Service for Military Families.”*
- Question: What if I don’t know exactly where on the form to report my service?
Answer: *You can always report it under “Section 4: My Service Representing the ALA in My Community.”*
- Question: Can I count hours spent taking care of a veteran who lives with me but is not a blood relative?
Answer: *As long as you are not receiving compensation in return for your role as a caregiver (such as when you care for your spouse), you may report it under “Section 1: My ALA Service for Veterans, Active-Duty and Reserve Military.”*
- Question: Can I count hours spent preparing meals for Legion meetings and administrative support for TAL commanders as hours spent in Service to Veterans?
Answer: *Those hours count but should be reported under “Section 4: My Service Representing the ALA in My Community.” Some of our members aptly describe those activities as family chores.*

THANK YOU FOR SERVING *AND* REPORTING!

☘ American Legion Auxiliary – Department of Arizona

Chaplain's Message – February 2026

February is often called the month of love, but in the Auxiliary, we understand love in its deepest form — not as sentiment, but as service. Love is the casserole delivered to a caregiver who hasn't had a full night's sleep in months. It's the card sent to a veteran who feels forgotten. It's the quiet moment of prayer for a military family facing another deployment. These small acts, done with great heart, are the very soul of who we are.

This month, I invite each of us to practice *intentional compassion*. Not the kind that waits for the perfect moment, but the kind that steps forward even when life feels busy or uncertain. Our veterans and their families continue to carry burdens that many never see. Let us continue to embody the values of service, unity and devotion that define the American Legion Auxiliary. A kind word, a listening ear, or a simple gesture of appreciation can be the spark that reminds someone they matter. Small acts of care – checking on a neighbor, supporting a caregiver, remembering a veteran's sacrifice – create ripples of healing beyond what we can see.

February also brings us closer to **Four Chaplains Day**, a moment in history that embodies the highest calling of service. On February 3, 1943, four military chaplains — of different faiths, different backgrounds, and different traditions — linked arms in unity and sacrifice aboard the sinking USAT *Dorchester*. Their final act was one of courage, compassion, and unwavering devotion to others.

Their legacy reminds us that:

- Service transcends differences
- Faith calls us to action
- Love is strongest when shared

As we honor their memory, may we also honor their example by living with the same spirit of unity and selflessness.

For those who are struggling this month — with grief, loneliness, or the weight of life's challenges — May you feel surrounded by the love and support of your Auxiliary family. You are held in our prayers and in our hearts.

Wishing you a month filled with purpose, kindness, and the quiet strength that comes from serving others.

In service and faith,

DeDe

Department Chaplain

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Arizona

 **American Legion Auxiliary – Department of Arizona**

Chaplain's Message – March 2026

March invites us into a season of renewal. As the desert begins to warm and the days grow longer, we're reminded that growth often begins quietly – sometimes in the places no one sees. Our service to veteran's, their families, and our community is much the same. Small acts of kindness, steady compassion, and faithful presence create the foundation for healing and hope. It's the quiet moment of prayer for our military and their families facing another deployment/war. These small acts, done with great heart, are the very soul of who we are. Please remember our troops during this very stressful time of the unknown.

This month, let us recommit ourselves to being sources of encouragement. Whether through prayer, a phone call, a handwritten note, or a simple moment of listening, each of us has the power to lift a spirit and lighten a burden.

Reflection for the month:

“Where flowers bloom, so does hope.” – Lady Bird Johnson

Hope is not passive. It grows when we nurture it – through gratitude, service and connection. As Auxiliary members, we are called to be the gardeners of hope in the lives of veterans and their families in the time of need. Let us plant generously. Our veterans and their families continue to carry burdens that many never see. Let us continue to embody the values of service, unity and devotion that define the American Legion Auxiliary.

As spring events and service projects begin, let's keep spiritual care at the heart of our work. Remember that chaplaincy is not only about prayer – it's about presence, encouragement and compassion in action.

Wishing you a month filled with purpose, kindness, and the quiet strength that comes from serving others.

In service and faith,

DeDe

Department Chaplain

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Arizona

Education

March 2026

The 2nd semester is under way! Each month I am focusing on one of the areas mentioned in the August newsletter. This month: **Assist and support military children with educational opportunities.**

There are several ways that Members and Units can assist military children with educational opportunities:

- Identify and reach out to military children in your local classrooms.
- Encourage Junior members to contact their school guidance counselor and volunteer to be a mentor to new military children at their school.
- Offer individual tutoring/assistance to a military child who is struggling.
- Provide your local school with a copy of the *Educator's Guide to the Military Child During Deployment*:
[Educator's Guide to the Military Child During Deployment \(PDF\)](#)
- Inform schools of a free tutoring website for military children: [Free Tutoring for Military Spouses & Families - Tutor.com & more \(mymilitarybenefits.com\)](#)
- Assist schools in working with military children. Resources are available at www.militarychild.org
- Organize a classroom recognition event for military children to share the accomplishments of their relative who is serving.

I look forward to hearing how your Units promote the Auxiliary education programs throughout the school year.

In the Spirit of Service, not for self,
For Veterans, God, and Country,

Julie Vietri

Education Chairman
Department of Arizona
jvietri@msn.com
480-495-1558



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

February 2026

Issue #6

FROM THE 2025-2026 NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Year-End Reports

Amazing things are happening throughout our Units and Departments in support of our ALA Education program. Reporting not only highlights these great things, but it also gives well-deserved recognition to the people behind the activities.

Every Unit and Department should submit a year-end report so all members can see the impact our organization has on students in our communities. Whether it is teaching students about veterans and our flag, or awarding scholarships, the American Legion Auxiliary places the highest emphasis on education. YOU help us get the word out through your reports.

Your year-end report should be no more than 1,000 words and have examples of the activities presented. Did Units participate in Give 10 to Education, American Education Week, Teacher Appreciation Week, or Veterans in the Community Schools? Were there standout members or Units who went above and beyond? Be sure to give them a shout-out. The purpose of reporting is to give you the opportunity to toot your own horn, so blast away!

In addition, include how you promoted scholarships. Does your Unit or Department have its own scholarships? Tell us about your eligibility rules and the total amount awarded. Did you actively promote our National Scholarships? Explain how you disseminated the information to eligible students. How did you support and celebrate those who earned scholarships?

A picture tells a thousand words, so include photos of your events. Please be sure to caption your photos and include the names of members. Your photos must be high resolution (300 DPI or higher) and select "actual size" when attaching them to your report. Who knows? Your photo may even be included in National Chairman, Barb's, platform remarks at our National Convention!

Department reports are due to your Division Chair no later than **May 15, 2026**. Be sure to also copy Barbara Washburn (bwashburn827@gmail.com) with your report. A great report not only tells the story but also shows just how amazing we are in our work for Education. Be AMAZING! Refer to the reporting guidelines at this link: <https://member.legion-aux.org/Member/Education-Annual-Reporting-Guidelines>

NEW FOR 2026

You may choose to have both your end-of-year report AND your award form submitted concurrently: <https://member.legion-aux.org/National-Awards-Form>. You must submit **BEFORE** 11:59 PM ET on May 15 for your report/award to be a concurrent submission. For year-end reports submitted **AFTER** the May 15 deadline, please email them directly to your division chair and complete the awards form separately.

Unit & Department Awards

Each year, awards are given in each Division to the Most Outstanding **Unit** Education Program and the Best **Department** Education Program. We have already seen excellence throughout our Units and Departments, so these outstanding Units and Departments deserve recognition. Award submissions are separate from year-end reports but may include the year-end report as part of the submission. To nominate a deserving Unit or Department, you must complete the electronic form accessible through the ALA National website:

<https://member.legion-aux.org/member/awards/education-program-awards>.

Your submission must include a narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Give specific examples of how the Unit or Department delivered mission-related service through Education. Explain why you believe the Unit or Department deserves to earn the award. Again, this is a great opportunity to highlight your stand-out Units or exemplary Department. We want to give credit to those who work so hard to promote education and recognize them with National awards to thank them for their dedication. Include photos in your award submission as well.

All award submissions are due no later than **June 1, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET**. We would love to see award submissions from every Department highlighting fantastic Units and Departments promoting Mission-Driven and Family-Focused Education.

Submitted by Valerie Hardy,
Western Division Education Chair



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

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

February 2026

Issue #6

FROM THE 2025-2026 NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE



Education Dates

The Science of Samsung ALA Academy – February 25, 2026, 7:00 PM Eastern

Join us for an informative webinar that provides an overview of the Samsung Scholarship and the application process. We will review the key components of the Samsung scholarship and information for those ALA members assisting ALA Girls State/TAL Boys State citizens in completing the application.

[Register here](#)

Scholarship Application Deadline – March 1, 2026, 11:59 PM Eastern

Q3 Zoom - April 7, 2026, at 7:00 PM Eastern

Unit 360 and Post 360, Weatherly, PA got together today and presented a “Veteran in the Classroom” presentation to Mr. McGee’s 6th grade class at the WASD Middle School. Retired Navy Seabee Construction Electrician Third Class E-4 Ray Desrosiers spoke about his experiences being a Navy Seabee. He related about many of the different projects he helped to complete during his Navy years, which helped when he left the Navy and returned to civilian life. He even did electrical work when the current Weatherly HS was built.

Georgeann Herling, Department of Pennsylvania

“NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY!”



New London Unit 537 in Minnesota led a US Flag presentation to six kindergarten classes. They learned the meaning of the flag, questioned them on the colors and where they go on the flag, and what to do if a flag is not serviceable anymore. Each student received a small flag to take home on Veterans Day.

Mary Kuperus, Department of Minnesota



Navigating ALA Scholarships 101 Flyer

If you’re looking for a great way to share the news about the ALA National Scholarships, check out the flyer on the National ALA website on the Education page. The flyer is new this year and can be found in the left-hand column under Education Key Resources. This one-page flyer is easy to read and full of helpful information.

<https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/education>



If you would like to share your stories and pictures or see what others are doing to support the Education programs, join us on Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALA_Education/



EDUCATION DATES

March 1 - National Scholarships due at 11:59PM Eastern

April 7 - Q3 Zoom Meeting

April 15 - **Purple Up** for Military Children

May 3-9 - Teacher Appreciation Week

May 15 - Department chairmen reports are due to Division chairman with cc to National Chairman, Barb Washburn

June 1 - Unit & Department award submissions due



Students at Capps Middle School in Heber, AZ have an Americanism bulletin board on their campus presented and maintained monthly by Overgaard-Heber Unit 86
Julie Vietri, Department of Arizona



Canton ND Unit 53 hosted a New Year, New Supplies bingo party for the elementary students. Any "prizes" left over were taken to the school. They donated 255 items.
Jan Seibel, Department of South Dakota

Military Child Education Coalition - What Is It, and How Can We Engage?

When you navigate the ALA Education Committee page, you may have noticed a link for the Military Child Education Coalition. If you have not clicked on the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) link, you should! The mission of the Military Child Education Coalition is to ensure quality educational experiences for military children. The MCEC is an organization that the American Legion Auxiliary promotes as we share the same mission - to take care of military children.

Let me illuminate what the MCEC is, and how we can share resources. MCEC is a national non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting the children of our military service members as they navigate the challenges of the military lifestyle, especially the military move. The MCEC helps children with social, emotional, and academic challenges with the goal of connecting schools, organizations, and other resources to make sure these students are college, work, and life-ready.

The three principal areas of MCEC focus are *education*, *advocacy*, and *collaboration*. You can find MCEC collaborating with teachers, school staff, and parents to understand the unique needs of military children. They offer educational programs and resources designed to empower parents and give their children the tools they need to succeed, along with training and resources to give insight into educators' need to serve the children of those who serve. Their advocacy includes help to ensure the child can enroll in the desired school and their credits transfer. They collaborate with education agencies to ensure state-to-state learning paces and curriculum tracks are standardized and that students can transfer and be accepted into special programs. They advocate with schools, military installations, and policy makers to improve the enrollment process. They also collaborate and build partnerships with other non-profits, military commands, and organizations like the ALA to create dedicated support for our military families.

What can you and the ALA do to help the MCEC and our military families? The MCEC aligns with several of our programs, and we can support them through our participation in our education-focused activities. Their resources are available for our use when we Purple up for Military Children in April. When we advocate for our military families during the Washington Conference, the MCEC website contains ample data to support our cause. I recommend that you share information about this organization at your ALA meetings, during community events, and when collaborating with teachers during National Education week.

You may ask why this matters? It matters because two organizations working together to make education stronger and safer for military children will make our military families feel stronger, safer, and valued.

Submitted by Carol Westergren, Southern Division Education Chair





March 1

All applications are due **ONLINE** by 11:59 p.m. eastern time

NO EXTENSIONS!



March 5

ONE designated contact will receive the applications from ALA National Headquarters (this will come from the education email, so remember to check spam/junk folders)



March 31

Department winners and runner ups must be submitted via Formstack **ONLY ONCE.**



April 8

Department winner applications are sent to Education Division Chairs for judging.



April 28

Division winners due to Education Committee Chair, Barbara Washburn



May

Scholarship winner letters will be mailed via USPS

Departments and education chairs will be notified of the scholarship winners

Scholarship winner names will be posted on the website

Scholarship Judging Timeline



WREATHS — across — AMERICA

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA TEACH CURRICULUM

The American Legion Auxiliary has a unique relationship with the Wreaths Across America program. Many American Legion Auxiliary members and their families have participated in the December program of laying wreaths at our service men and women's grave sites. BUT... Did you know there is even more to this amazing organization?

The Wreaths Across America organization has a comprehensive K-12 curriculum developed to empower ALA volunteers, educators, and youth leaders to share a legacy of honor and remembrance. The curriculum is free and helps students explore American History through the lens of military service. Lessons emphasize character development, leadership, respect, and the importance of civic responsibility. It provides ready to use lesson plans, discussion guides, activities, and multimedia resources and service-learning opportunities.

This curriculum aligns directly with the ALA mission assuring no veteran is forgotten and offers tools to bring to your local schools, units, and youth groups.

Check out the available information by clicking on the link below. You will be glad you did!

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/Resources/Educational>

Submitted by Nancy Babis, Education Committee Member



Bennington, VT students made several Valentine's Day Cards for Veterans that ALA Unit 13 Members hand-delivered to the Veterans at the Vermont Veterans' Home in Bennington

Donna Stone, Department of Vermont.

According to the Mayo Clinic, volunteering in schools offers three key health benefits:

Improved Physical and Mental Health

Volunteering has been linked to lower stress levels, increased physical activity, and a sense of purpose that contributes to overall well-being. Studies have shown that those who volunteer regularly experience lower rates of depression and anxiety.

A Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment

Helping others fosters a sense of achievement and satisfaction. Volunteers often report feeling more connected to their communities, leading to improved self-esteem and emotional resilience.

Social Connection and Reduced

Isolation – Engaging with students, educators, and fellow volunteers helps build meaningful relationships. This social interaction is vital for mental health and can lead to lasting friendships and mentorship opportunities.

To learn more, click the link below

[**Mayo Clinic Health Systems**](#)



Finance

March 2026

The clock is ticking Arizona, and the following 18 Units have not paid their mandates and the amounts owed are also listed as follows:

Unit 1	\$81.10	Unit 37	\$34.30	Unit 84	\$46.70
Unit 9	\$138.30	Unit 44	\$256.70	Unit 88	\$36.70
Unit 19	\$149.10	Unit 46	\$59.90	Unit 125	\$17.10
Unit 52	\$155.90	Unit 133	\$23.50		
Unit 69	\$95.10	Unit 141	\$21.50		

Per Constitution and ByLaws, Article VIII

Section 3 –"Units not having their current District, Department and National Mandates paid thirty days prior to Department Convention shall not be entitled to vote."

Department Constitution and ByLaws, Standing Rule 11, Page 15 - "All Units failing to turn into Department per capita tax, dues, etc., shall be given a period of thirty days from the close of Convention before Charter, monies and material may be confiscated, provided the Executive Committee has approved such action."

30 Days prior to Convention is May 25, 2026

Please make arrangements to pay before the deadline. Thank you.

Yolanda Bonilla, Chairman, 602-989-3321, yodobo@msn.com

Penny Maklary, Member, 520-364-5038, ahhpenny@aol.com

Barbara White, 602-908-2980, barbara.white99@gmail.com

Members by Virtue of Office: Stacey Mayberry, President, NEC, Rose Ficklin, Sec/Tres. (no vote)

AZ GIRLS STATE DELEGATE & ALTERNATE CHECKLIST

1

WHITE CARD

Neatly complete the white card and have the back side notarized. Add a photo. Scan both items.

DELEGATES & ALTERNATES

Make sure you complete the necessary forms before the deadline.

2

QUESTIONNAIRE

Fill in (TYPE) the Delegate/Alternate Questionnaire and save as a PDF.

3

SIGN THE POLICY FORMS

Read and sign Bullying/Social Media Policy and the Media Release. Scan both items.

4

SUBMIT THE GOOGLE FORM

Complete the Google Form with Delegate/Alternate information.

Scan the QR code, or go to <https://tinyurl.com/AZGSregistration26> to add your information.

5

BE ON THE LOOKOUT

More information will be coming for Delegates, Alternates, and Parents in April or May.

**PLEASE SCAN ALL
DOCUMENTS SEPARATELY
AND UPLOAD THEM TO THE
GOOGLEFORM.**





American Legion Auxiliary
Arizona
Girls State

Sponsored by The American Legion Auxiliary
Questionnaire Form 2026

I. Student Information

Name:

Date of Birth:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP:

Student E-mail Address:

*Provide a personal email, not one from school.

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Shirt Size: XS



Name of High School You Attend:

Parent E-mail:

II. In Case of Emergency and Parent/Guardian Contact

Guardian A /
Father Name:

Cell Phone #:

Employer
Name:

Occupation:

Guardian B /
Mother Name:

Cell Phone #:

Employer
Name:

Occupation:

III. Personal Information / Preference Questions

Will you be able to attend the FULL SESSION of Arizona Girls State May 31-June 7, 2026?

Select One: Yes

Explain any NO
response:

Do you have any problems that would prevent you from FULL participation in the Girls State program? (Girls State necessitates long hours and long walks to classes and activities in the Arizona heat.)

Select One: No

Explain any YES
response:

Do you have any objections to sharing a dorm room or "rooming" with another girl during the session? Or, is there any reason why you would need a single room? (The roommate will not be from your school.)

Select One: No

Explain any YES
response:

Personal Information / Preference Questions, continued

Do you have any dietary restrictions or allergies that might impact your participation at Girls State? Please explain in detail. (i.e. Food allergies, Celiac, Vegetarian, Vegan, etc.)

What are your plans after high school?

Select one: College

Explain:

Did any of your family members or relatives attend Girls or Boys State?

Select One: **Yes**

If YES: Who? When?

Where?

Is/Are any family member/s currently/actively serving in the US Military?

Select One: **Yes**

If YES: Whom? Branch?

(if known)

Are any family members Veterans who have served in the US Military?

Select One: **Yes**

If YES: Whom? Branch?

(if known)

Which courses have you taken that will help you at Girls State (Ex: history, drama, government, public speaking, leadership training)?

List any scholastic/honorary awards and any extra-curricular activities in which you have participated (with date):

In 100 words or fewer, please explain why you believe you should be chosen to participate in the Arizona Girls State program. (Use an additional page and attach, if needed.)

American Legion Auxiliary Department of Arizona Girls State

Policy on American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Social Networking, Media Use and Bullying

Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick or put down another person with the intent to hurt another. Bullying happens when a person or group of people wants to have power over another and use their power to get their way, at the expense of someone else. Bullying is luring and holding a person against their will or for alternate purposes/motives to play a prank on them. Bullying can also happen through cyberspace: using e-mails, text messaging, instant messaging and other less direct methods. This type of bullying can also lead to persons being hurt during or after the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State session and be especially hurtful when persons are targeted with meanness and exclusion. At American Legion Auxiliary Arizona Girls State **bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying.** Our position on bullying is based on our goal of providing the most outstanding, unique and coveted educational opportunity available to young women.

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Arizona recognizes and supports its American Legion Auxiliary Girls State participants' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of online social networks. In this context, however each delegate must remember that participation in the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program is a privilege, not a right. As a delegate, you represent the American Legion Auxiliary and are expected to portray yourself, your school and the Auxiliary in a positive manner always. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with federal and state laws, University of Arizona rules and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State rules, regulations and policies (including the Guidelines listed below).

Guidelines

If you participate on a social networking site or use social media, you must keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Everything you post is public information--any text or photo posted online is completely out of your control the moment it is posted--even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, comments and posters may be accessible even after you remove it.
- Think before you post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it is wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Post only pictures and comments that you would be comfortable sharing with the public.
- Use caution when adding someone or inviting someone to be a friend (this includes The American Legion Boys State citizens).
- Limit information about your whereabouts and plans to minimize the potential of being stalked, assaulted or the victim of other criminal activity. Post about where you've been, not where you're going.

- What you post may affect your future. Many colleges’ admissions officers and employers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments and posts).
- Like comments made in person, you should be respectful online. The American Legion Auxiliary will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online such as:
 - Derogatory or defamatory language and/or images.
 - Comments that create a danger to the safety of another person or that constitute a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
- Take the high ground. Don’t pick fights or engage in fights online.
- Respect yourself; respect others; respect the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program.
- No interaction on web sites for adults in any form. Immediate dismissal.

Monitoring and Consequences

The American Legion Auxiliary reserves the right to have American Legion Auxiliary Girls State staff members review and/or monitor delegates’ social networking sites and postings. Any violation of law or of the University of Arizona and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State’s rules, regulations or policies or evidence of such violation in your online content, is subject to investigation and possible immediate censure by the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State staff and/or law enforcement agencies. Internal consequences may include, but are not limited to, notice to remove the content and dismissal from the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program.

As an American Legion Auxiliary Girls State participant, I attest that I have read, understand and agree to abide by this policy: If I do not abide by this policy, I will be dismissed from the program and school notified.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Responsible Adult if the above is a minor

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian/Responsible Adult

Date Signed: _____



ALA Girls State Participant Media Release
Permission to Use Photographs/Videos

Subject American Legion Auxiliary Arizona Girls State

Location University of Arizona Tucson, Arizona

I grant to the American Legion Auxiliary, its representatives, and employees the right to take photographs and/or video of me and my property in connection with the above-identified subject. I authorize the American Legion Auxiliary, its assigns and transferees to copyright, use, and publish the same in print and/or electronically.

I agree the American Legion Auxiliary may use such photographs/video of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including, for example, such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising and web-related content.

I have read and understand the above:

Signature_____

Printed Name_____

Date_____

Signature of Parent or Guardian

PREPARE TO FILL OUT THE GOOGLE FORM

Please Scan the Following:

1

Scan **BOTH** sides of the notarized Delegate/Alternate White Card (PDF or image).

2

Type into and **SAVE** the Delegate/Alternate Questionnaire as a PDF.

4

After signing, scan **BOTH** pages of the Bullying Policy (PDF or image).

4

After signing, scan **BOTH** pages of the Media Policy (PDF or image).

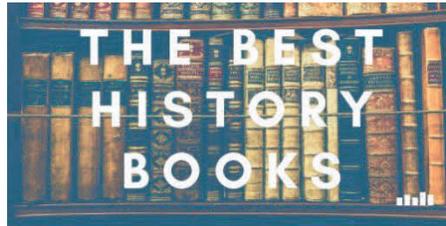
Acceptable File Types for submission to the Google Form are PDF (preferred), Google Doc, or PNG or JPEG.

Google Form Link



<https://tinyurl.com/AZGSregistration26>

Historian Report March 2026



Happy March Everyone

HOW ARE YOUR HISTORY BOOKS COMING ALONG? DO YOU NEED A LITTLE REVIEW?

A. Appearance – 10 - points.

1. Cover: Soft cover binder for loose-leaf paper, preferably blue with 2.5-inch gold foil American Legion Auxiliary seal centered on the cover or a regulation binder with imprinted seal.
2. Paper: Plain white, 8 ½ x 11 inches.
3. Page Setup: a.
 - a. Margins - Left and right margins should be 1.25 inches; top and bottom margins should be 1 inch.
 - b. Pagination - Page numbers should begin on the first page of the Historical Content They should be centered and placed 0.5 inches from the bottom of the page.
 - c. Spacing: Double-spaced except for the introductory pages. (i.e. Title Page, Foreword or Dedication ...), which shall be centered in the middle of the page. Paragraphs may be indented or in block form.
 - d. Text: 12-point font Times New Roman or Arial Style font. Paragraphs may be indented or in block form.
 - e. Technology: Computer preferred, however a typewritten or handwritten history is permissible. If typewritten or handwritten, the page set up should not vary from what is required of computer users.

B. Arrangement – 10 points

1. Written in third person.
2. Clear, concise language with correct spelling.
3. No decorations, computer graphics, pen or ink drawings, illustrations, extra materials, or newspaper clippings.
4. Be original and unique in thought and presentation.

C. Introduction – 10 points

1. Title Page:
 - a. History of Unit (Name and Number).
 - b. Department of Arizona.
 - c. Date (2024 - 2025).
 - d. Total Membership:
 - e. Unit Historian Name and Address should be in the lower right-hand corner of this page.

D. Historical Content - 70 points

1. List of elected and/or appointed Unit Officers for current administrative year.
2. List of Unit Chairmen and committee appointments for current administrative year.
3. List of Department Officers and Chairmanships held by Unit members.
4. List Department Awards and Citations won by the Unit at the previous Department Convention.
5. History shall be written as factual narrative in chronological order of events beginning with the Installation of Unit Officers at Department Convention and follow through the end of the administrative year as closely as possible.
6. The signature block of the Unit President and Unit Historian on the last page, placed under the end of the last paragraph of the history.
7. Index (optional).

History books are due no later than noon Friday at Arizona Department Convention!

**I want YOU
in the Department History
Be sure to post on Ring Your Bell
And send me your meeting minutes!**

Stephanie McMullen
Department Historian, American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Arizona
historianaladepaz@gmail.com
(623) 910-4716

Leadership/Arizona Mission Training

March 2026

Greetings to members of this great organization! Time is moving fast for the end of year reports and awards. Has your Unit selected a Member of the Year yet? Or perhaps a Vickey Zwall Mentor of the Year? I am sure that those of you who attended an Arizona Mission Training this year learned the importance of reporting all that you do. And if you want to make your Unit or District look really GOOD write a narrative for an award. Selected items from your narratives are sent on to the Western Division and National Chairmen and are often included in their convention reports. It is a great feeling for your members to be recognized for their achievements!

The criteria for Leadership awards “Lavan Erickson Leadership Plaque” and “Unit Member of the Year” plaque have been included in past bulletins. Please check the Department web site (aladeptaz.org) for past bulletins, report forms and awards in each program. This month I include **the “Vickey J. Zwall Mentor of the Year Plaque.”**

The plaque will be awarded at the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona Department Convention and will be retained by the recipient. A new plaque will be furnished each year, financed by Vickey J. Zwall.

Any member can be placed into nomination for the Mentor of the Year Plaque, and can be nominated by any Auxiliary member. A not-to-exceed 1,000 word resume of the nominees’ activities for the current year must be submitted. The resume will be sent to the Department Leadership Chairman no later than the date set annually at the Officers and Chairmen meeting at the beginning of the program year. The Department Leadership Chairman will choose a committee of three individuals to assist in judging.

I hope to receive many report forms and award narratives by May 1st. If you have further questions please text and I will return your call and do my best to help you.

Karen Smith, Chairman

(520) 249-1119

ksmith111@cox.net

1133 Carmelita Drive

Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

Leadership is not about a title or designation. It's about impact, influence and inspiration. Amy Luft

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA
LEADERSHIP/MISSION TRAINING
2025-2026 SCHEDULE

03/21/2026 **DATE CHANGED**
kmartinez63468@gmail.com

William David Hood Unit #54

Kerry Martinez

623-693-3449

Advance Armed Forces Lethality

Maintain U.S. military superiority through modernization.

Congress Must:

- Increase defense R&D funding
- Invest in the National Defense Strategy
- Expand shipbuilding capacity
- Secure critical minerals through domestic and allied supply chains

Pass H.R. 3151/S.1541 – Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for America Act

End Veteran Homelessness

Veteran homelessness stems from complex, interrelated challenges requiring a comprehensive response.

Congress Must:

- Increase project-based HUD/WASH vouchers
- Permanently authorize Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
- Fully fund the Grant Per-Diem program as authorized

Pass H.R. 1957 – End Veteran Homelessness Act
Pass H.R. 3869 – Every Veteran Housed Act

Strengthen our Domestic Supply Chain and Promote Veteran Entrepreneurship

Veterans face barriers to pursuing entrepreneurship, especially in gaining access to start-up capital and competing in federal contracting.

Congress Must:

- Strengthen veteran entrepreneurship and domestic economic opportunity
- Create opportunities to provide veterans with access to capital
- Prioritize veteran-owned small businesses in federal contracting

Pass H.R. 865, The Service Disabled Veteran Opportunities in Small Business Act.

Pass S. 3171, Veteran Entrepreneurship Empowerment Act



Protect the U.S. Flag

Since a 1989 Supreme Court decision defined deliberate acts of U.S. flag desecration as protected by the First Amendment, The American Legion has led efforts to restore penalties for physical desecration of the U.S. flag.

Pass H.J.R. 101/S.J.R. 58 – Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing the Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States

The American Legion's Legislative Agenda & Point Papers

Scan the QR code to read the full list of legislative priorities of The American Legion.



1608 K St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 861-2700

legislativedivision@legion.org

[legion.org/advocacy](https://www.legion.org/advocacy)



THE AMERICAN LEGION is the largest of all U.S. veteran service organization with nearly 1.4 million members working through more than 11,000 local posts in communities worldwide. We proudly advocate for veterans, military strength, youth and patriotic values. The following priorities for the second session of the 119th Congress are presented here, in no particular order, followed by the legislation The American Legion supports that can address these issues. They are all important and driven by resolutions passed by the organization's all-volunteer, all-veteran membership.

Winning the War Within

Veteran suicide remains a national crisis and The American Legion's top legislative priority. Barriers such as access to care, social isolation and economic stress continue to put veterans at risk.

Congress Must:

- Expand community-based outreach and prevention
 - Fund evidence-based mental health treatment
- Permanently authorize the SSG Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program*
- Pass H.R. 3627 – Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act**
- Pass S. 3346 – Freedom to Heal Act**
- Pass H.R. 4837/S. 3314 Written Informed Consent Act**

Balance Community Care

The American Legion supports the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) as the primary coordinator of care, with community care as a necessary option when VA services are unavailable.

Congress Must:

- Protect access to community care
 - Strengthen VA-community provider coordination
 - Expand transportation options
 - Improve oversight of the Office of Community Care
 - Expand telehealth through partnerships and rural broadband grants
- Pass S. 275/H.R. 740 – Veterans ACCESS Act**
- Pass H.R. 1107 – Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act**



Improving Compensation & Pension Exam Processes

Compensation and Pension (C&P) exams are the gateway to VA health care and disability benefits. Inconsistent quality of Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs), often due to insufficiently trained or unqualified examiners, has created barriers and unequal access for veterans within a system that now fulfills 93% of VA exam demand at a cost of approximately \$5 billion annually.

Congress Must:

- Improve examiner qualifications and training
 - Strengthen quality control and oversight of DBQs
- Pass S. 2493 – Medical Disability Examination Improvement Act of 2025**

Improve Care for Women Veterans

Women are the fastest-growing veteran population, totaling 2.3 million nationwide. Many face age-related and service-connected health challenges that remain under-researched.

Congress Must:

- Invest in gender-specific care at the DoD and VA
 - Increase research on reproductive health
- Pass S. 1245 – Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support (SAVES) Act**
- Pass S. 609 – Building Resources and Access for Veterans' Mental Health Engagement (BRAVE) Act**
- Pass H.R. 219 – Improving Menopause Care for Veterans Act**

Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity

National Guard and Reserve members serve at home and abroad yet lack equal access to earned education benefits.

Pass H.R. 1423 – Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2025

Strengthen Defense, Honor Service

Rising costs of living and limited access to services undermine retention, recruitment and readiness.

Congress Must:

- Pass FY27 NDAA amendments addressing housing, dining facilities, childcare, spouse employment, and education benefits
- Correct an inequity for combat-injured, medically retired veterans by authorizing full concurrent receipt of DoD retirement pay and VA disability compensation

Pass H.R. 1827/S. 847 – Child Care Availability and Affordability Act

Pass H.R. 2102/S. 1032 – Major Richard Star Act



February 6, 2026

Membership Team:

We had a quiet week for membership—perhaps a well-deserved break after last week’s great news?! But now it’s back to business!!!

This week’s highlights:

- Unit 32 in Safford jumped over 10 percentage points to just over 92%
- Unit 57 in Ash Fork jumped nearly 6 percentage points to reach 91%
- Unit 1 downtown Phoenix jumped 10 percentage points to 82.45%
- District 11 took over first place from District 7 at a whopping 89.31% (up from 86.51%)!!!
- But don’t count District 7 out! They are right behind at 87.77%!
- District 12 holds onto 3rd place with 83.96%

Looking forward:

- Now is a good time to reach out to members who have not renewed. They should be receiving their 2nd and final notice to renew shortly (some have already received them).
- Don’t have time to call or text? Post cards are available at Department Office. I’ve attached the order form.
- Don’t forget about your Junior members! Our renewal rate on Junior members is WAAAYY lower than our senior members.

I hope you are excited as I am about our organization’s growth! A strong organization is a growing one—and our veterans, military, families and community are counting us to remain vibrant and strong.

Marge

Marge Christianson
VP/Membership
Department of Arizona
American Legion Auxiliary
(763) 234-9852 talk or text

February 13, 2026

Happy Friday!

We now have 4 Districts getting bling poppies by making 85% membership goal by March 15:

In First Place: District 11 at 89.97%. All but one Unit in the District added members this past week!

2nd Place: District 7 at 89.06% (yikes, right on District 11's bumper!)

3rd Place: District 3 at 88.63% . Unit 45 in Benson led the way by reaching over 100% of goal while Unit 52 Sierra Vista jumped over 20 percentage points!

4th Place: District 12 at 86.36%. Units 41 and 65 in Phoenix really stepped on the gas!

District 1, 2 and 8 are at 84.xx%. I'm busy making poppies!

District 3, 5 and 6 are coming up fast.. Oh boy, I better get going!

District 4: We are all rooting for you!

Arizona is currently 3rd in the nation!!!! Keep up the momentum and keep having fun doing it.

Have a great weekend,

Marge

Marge Christianson
VP/Membership Chair
Department of Arizona
American Legion Auxiliary
(763) 234-9852 call or text

February 20, 2026

Hello Membership Team;

I'm so pleased to say that the Department of Arizona is still in 3rd place in the country (behind Hawaii & Florida). Keep up the great work. We can meet our 100% membership goal!

Two more Districts hit the 85% goal before March 15: [Congratulations](#) Districts 2 & 8. More bling poppies! That makes 6 Districts so far, including Districts 3, 7, 11 & 12. Let's get them all!

We had two Units go over the 100% mark this week: Unit 107 Phoenix and Unit 62 Peoria. RIGHT ON!!!!

First Place is District 11 with 91.77%

Second is District 7 with 89.58%

Third is District 3 with 89.33%

Check out the attached to see how tight this race across country is!

Have a great weekend,

Marge

***Marge Christianson
VP/Membership Chair
Department of Arizona
American Legion Auxiliary
(763) 234-9852 call or text***

February 27, 2026

Hello Membership Team:

Arizona is holding 3rd place in the Nation!!! Stay focused. Let's get ahead of Hawaii and Florida (it rains there every day—we're better than that!).

Here in Arizona, we had another great week! Two more Districts hit the 85% mark (Districts 1 & 6). Two more Districts to go!

District 1: jumped 6 percentage points lead by Unit 46 Bouse. Not only have they reached the 85% mark, they have moved into 4th place!

District 2: nearly every Unit increased from last week and are now at 86.67%. Steady as she goes—I love it.

District 3: is less than 1 percentage point from reaching 90% and is in 5th place. Keep up the great work.

District 4: jumped 16% points!!! That little pink roadster is catching up! Casa Grande Unit 8 reached 100%; Unit 51 Coolidge jumped to 98.61%.

District 5: made it over the 80% mark. So close to bling poppies!

District 6: moved into 3rd place passing the 85% mark and straight to 91.13% . Unit 69 Payson jumped 25 percentage points to lead the way.

District 7: is holding 2nd place at 92.73%. I see 100 % in their near future!

District 8: Unit 40 Chino Valley jumped 9 percentage points to bring the district just over 88%.

District 11: Holding on to first place at 93.02%. Wow—keep up the great effort!

District 12: needs less than one percentage point to be in the 90's. What will next week bring?

Attached are the details—please keep sharing with your Units.

You are amazing.

Marge

***Marge Christianson
VP/Membership Chair
Department of Arizona
American Legion Auxiliary
(763) 234-9852 (call or text)***

MEMBERSHIP FEBRUARY 27, 2026

		UNIT	CITY	OBJECTIVE	JUNIOR	SENIOR	TOTAL	PERCENT	20-Feb
		0100	Phoenix	166	4	158	162	97.59%	96.99%
		Total		166	4	158	162	97.59%	96.99%
	Total			166	4	158	162	97.59%	96.99%
01		0019	Yuma	182	4	164	168	92.31%	89.01%
		0046	Bouse	63	1	58	59	93.65%	77.78%
		0056	Yuma	72	1	59	60	83.33%	79.17%
		Total		317	6	281	287	90.54%	84.54%
Total			317	6	281	287	90.54%	84.54%	
1		0113	Quartzsite	0	0	10	10		
		Total		0	0	10	10		
	Total			0	0	10	10		
02		0007	Tucson	46	1	34	35	76.09%	69.57%
		0036	Tucson	243	2	219	221	90.95%	88.89%
		0059	Tucson	127	3	108	111	87.40%	86.61%
		0066	Green Valley	883	0	799	799	90.49%	89.24%
		0068	Tucson	56	2	46	48	85.71%	85.71%
		0073	Tucson	25	1	14	15	60.00%	56.00%
		0109	Vail	440	7	368	375	85.23%	83.64%
		0125	Tucson	15	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%
		0131	Green Valley	601	0	509	509	84.69%	84.53%
		0132	Oro Valley	77	2	63	65	84.42%	80.52%
		Total		2513	18	2160	2178	86.67%	85.40%
Total			2513	18	2160	2178	86.67%	85.40%	
03		0011	Douglas	116	4	123	127	109.48%	109.48%
		0016	Bisbee	48	0	42	42	87.50%	87.50%
		0024	Tombstone	450	11	392	403	89.56%	89.33%
		0045	Benson	45	4	43	47	104.44%	102.22%
		0052	Sierra Vista	183	0	131	131	71.58%	71.58%
		0141	Pearce	20	0	22	22	110.00%	110.00%
		Total		862	19	753	772	89.56%	89.33%
Total			862	19	753	772	89.56%	89.33%	
04		0008	Casa Grande	27	1	26	27	100.00%	96.30%
		0009	Florence	191	0	105	105	54.97%	54.97%
		0051	Coolidge	72	11	60	71	98.61%	1.39%
		0054	Coolidge	81	1	66	67	82.72%	82.72%
		0129	Queen Creek	31	1	26	27	87.10%	87.10%
		0133	Maricopa	23	2	23	25	108.70%	108.70%
		Total		425	16	306	322	75.76%	59.06%
Total			425	16	306	322	75.76%	59.06%	

05		0004	Globe	42	2	26	28	66.67%	66.67%
		0028	Clifton	89	0	45	45	50.56%	48.31%
		0032	Safford	139	0	129	129	92.81%	92.81%
		0095	Solomon	82	6	75	81	98.78%	97.56%
		Total		352	8	275	283	80.40%	79.55%
	Total		352	8	275	283	80.40%	79.55%	
06		0030	Springerville	94	1	87	88	93.62%	85.11%
		0037	Holbrook	36	0	31	31	86.11%	75.00%
		0069	Payson	112	0	79	79	70.54%	45.54%
		0086	Overgaard	468	11	437	448	95.73%	94.44%
		0147	Payson	0	0	1	1		
		Total		710	12	635	647	91.13%	84.65%
	Total		710	12	635	647	91.13%	84.65%	
07		0003	Flagstaff	68	3	54	57	83.82%	79.41%
		0013	Williams	74	3	56	59	79.73%	74.32%
		0014	Kingman	131	5	116	121	92.37%	89.31%
		0022	Golden Valley	146	4	126	130	89.04%	84.93%
		0042	Grand Canyon	42	5	33	38	90.48%	90.48%
		0057	Ash Fork	68	2	61	63	92.65%	91.18%
		0081	Lake Havasu City	759	4	670	674	88.80%	84.98%
		0087	Bullhead City	124	3	160	163	131.45%	129.84%
		0088	Dolan Springs	39	0	43	43	110.26%	110.26%
		0103	Meadview	53	0	58	58	109.43%	109.43%
		0123	Seligman	35	0	20	20	57.14%	57.14%
		0136	Yucca	15	2	13	15	100.00%	100.00%
		Total		1554	31	1410	1441	92.73%	89.58%
	Total		1554	31	1410	1441	92.73%	89.58%	
08		0006	Prescott	304	6	309	315	103.62%	103.62%
		0025	Cottonwood	336	6	280	286	85.12%	83.93%
		0040	Chino Valley	97	0	85	85	87.63%	78.35%
		0078	Humboldt	148	1	112	113	76.35%	76.35%
		0079	Yarnell	172	0	149	149	86.63%	84.88%
		0090	Black Canyon City	65	1	56	57	87.69%	86.15%
		0093	Camp Verde	117	0	95	95	81.20%	79.49%
		0108	Prescott Valley	31	3	23	26	83.87%	83.87%
		0135	Cornville	42	6	31	37	88.10%	80.95%
		0140	Prescott Valley	17	4	4	8	47.06%	47.06%
		Total		1329	27	1144	1171	88.11%	86.46%
	Total		1329	27	1144	1171	88.11%	86.46%	

11		0001	Phoenix	114	1	96	97	85.09%	84.21%
		0005	Phoenix	61	0	52	52	85.25%	85.25%
		0012	Wickenburg	219	1	201	202	92.24%	89.04%
		0029	Glendale	240	7	186	193	80.42%	80.42%
		0053	Buckeye	38	0	42	42	110.53%	110.53%
		0061	Avondale	239	2	209	211	88.28%	85.36%
		0062	Peoria	1122	18	1119	1137	101.34%	101.16%
		0105	Phoenix	299	8	237	245	81.94%	77.59%
		0115	Glendale	37	4	30	34	91.89%	91.89%
		0145	Peoria	25	0	14	14	56.00%	56.00%
		Total			2394	41	2186	2227	93.02%
	Total			2394	41	2186	2227	93.02%	91.77%
12		0002	Tempe	101	0	78	78	77.23%	74.26%
		0026	Mesa	251	1	200	201	80.08%	80.08%
		0027	Apache Junction	2039	11	1897	1908	93.58%	91.12%
		0034	Cave Creek	318	1	270	271	85.22%	84.59%
		0035	Chandler	295	5	263	268	90.85%	88.47%
		0039	Gilbert	636	11	551	562	88.36%	88.21%
		0041	Phoenix	351	10	286	296	84.33%	81.20%
		0044	Scottsdale	314	0	259	259	82.48%	82.17%
		0058	Fountain Hills	411	5	378	383	93.19%	91.73%
		0064	Phoenix	16	0	15	15	93.75%	93.75%
		0065	Phoenix	358	18	259	277	77.37%	76.26%
		0084	Sacaton	60	5	45	50	83.33%	83.33%
		0091	Chandler	308	19	311	330	107.14%	105.84%
		0107	Phoenix	215	3	216	219	101.86%	100.47%
		0114	Scottsdale	9	1	7	8	88.89%	88.89%
		0117	Phoenix	243	0	190	190	78.19%	78.19%
		0124	Guadalupe	29	5	30	35	120.69%	120.69%
	0138	Mesa	138	2	94	96	69.57%	68.12%	
	Total			6092	97	5349	5446	89.40%	87.85%
	Total			6092	97	5349	5446	89.40%	87.85%
Total	Total			16714	279	14667	14946	89.42%	87.21%

Family Readiness Groups (FRGs)

Submitted by Central Division Chairman April Kollmorgen

Family Readiness Groups or FRGs are command-sponsored organizations that coexist alongside the military to assist families of servicemembers. While available all the time, the main function is usually seen during deployments. An FRG is an official military program that serves to provide information and social activities for families.

In years past, these groups were called wives clubs or family associations, but they have been structured differently now to include all family members, regardless of servicemember rank. What was once seen as a clique-y officer wives-only group is now all-inclusive. Spouses and family members hold no rank, and it's refreshing to see everyone on the same level getting along. I can tell you from personal experience, some of those officer wives are amazing people, and you just might become close friends with the Captain's wife and form an almost two-decade friendship.

Each service branch's FRG function (and name) can be a little different, due to the differences in deployments and family needs. In the Navy, for instance, the FRG is comprised of all volunteers, and a command representative and the Ombudsman would bring us any updates at one of our monthly meetings. Sometimes this was our only communication. In the other services, the experience may be a little less formal.

All FRGs are there to support families through communication, providing information on community resources, being of assistance when something inevitably breaks during deployment, and, in general, giving you all the tools you need to be ready and resilient during deployments.

So, what can we in the American Legion Auxiliary do to support the FRGs?

- Find any local FRGs and ask what support they could use from their community. Oftentimes, they will not want to ask anyone – you have to go to them.
- Offer a free dinner at your Post home.
- Provide babysitting for a night.
- If you have a servicemember in another state, you can also reach out to them to see what support you can provide remotely. Maybe sending family care packages could be helpful. There are always military families in need, as they are generally stationed in areas that have a higher cost of living or are very remote.

Any support you can provide can be helpful. You may even find a new contact for sending care packages to deployed servicemembers too.

FRGs Continued

If you have family members new to the military, definitely ask if they have FRG information. Also, point them to their base family centers that will have a wealth of information, too. If you encounter an FRG that is not very active, ask what you can do to assist them. Maybe it's a lack of fundraising to have any get-togethers during deployment. We all know how great the ALA is at fundraising. It could be a wonderful opportunity for all.

Just remember that these families, overall, are not used to asking for help. They may not even admit to themselves how tired or stressed they are. Relating to the younger generations can be a challenge, but you just might make a new friend, give them a reason to smile, or even change someone's life. And in the end, isn't that a big part of why we do what we do? We come together in The Legion Family to support our veterans and active-duty members and their families. Partnering with an FRG to support those families will be more rewarding than you realize. Those families will remember you. Their servicemembers will remember you. Imagine being deployed and knowing your family had an extra support system in place – it's so simple yet means so much.

A good resource to pass on for anyone new is the Military One Source website. Also, here is an article specific to Family Readiness that can help

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/military-basics/extended-family-friend/find-readiness-support-for-military-life/>



THE POW/MIA EMPTY TABLE

Missing Man Table, POW/MIA Remembrance Table, Fallen Comrade Table, Fallen Soldier Table, Fallen Warrior Table, Missing Hero Table, the White Table Service are some names for the POW/MIA Empty Table Setting.

There are many variations of the POW/MIA Table, but whatever it is called and wherever it is set up, the meaning is the same. We honor those who have been Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action. When used as a ceremony, it can be a very meaningful and moving moment for the viewer as a reminder of fallen, missing or imprisoned Service Members.

Setting up a separate table to honor prisoners of war and those missing in action has been a tradition since the end of the Vietnam War. It appears across all branches of the service. Its exact origin is unknown, but it was born from the efforts of family members and veterans who have lost loved ones in war. Although there are differences, the main elements are the same. It is a way to keep those unaccounted service members in the public eye.

Although not part of the National Security Program K-9 Corps assists our Servicemembers K-9 CORPS K9 Veterans Day - March 13th

Several heroes from history include Sgt. Stubby, the original war dog who begins his military service and becomes the most decorated military dog of World War I.; Chips, the most decorated dog in World War II; Lex, who retired with his fallen owner's family; and Cairo, the Navy Seal working dog on the bin Laden raid.

The first-time dogs officially became a part of the U.S. Armed Forces was on March 13, 1942, when the Army began training for its new War Dog Program, the "K-9 Corps.

During WWI, European forces used dogs as messengers, hauling supply carts, machine guns, medical kits, and locating wounded soldiers. In WWII, serving in various branches, dogs acted as scouts, guarding supply posts and camps, rescuing downed pilots.

The largest deployment of dogs in U.S. Military history was during the Vietnam War. Canines proved invaluable in the jungle environment of Southeast Asia, with the Military greatly refining techniques for handlers and K-9s alike. Unfortunately, fewer than 200 Military working dogs made it back home from 20,000.

Today, working dogs detect explosives and narcotics. They must graduate from the 120-day Military Working Dog Training Program to enter Military Service. After successful completion, most canines qualify for dual duty: Patrol & Sniff out explosives or Patrol & Sniff out drugs, staying with 1 duty along with their human comrade. The two form a special lifetime bond! In the DOD Community, Military Service Dogs provide crucial support by performing a range of specialized tasks from opening doors to detecting seizures. They have much better welfare thanks to the Military learning from its past mistakes. The Military provides premier state-of-the-art veterinary care and facilities.

National K9 Veterans Day, March 13th, established by Vietnam War Veteran Joe White, is a day to honor, commemorate, and raise awareness of the services and sacrifices of American Military and Working Dogs throughout history.

Check out the following for more information.
<https://nationaltoday.com/k-9-veterans-day/>

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Boyer, Eastern Division Chairman

POW/MIA Empty Table Continued

Each item including the table and chair has special significance. The table is usually set off to the side with a single chair. It is set for one symbolizing the powerlessness of the prisoner against his captors. The empty chair means the soldier is not there. The white tablecloth is a symbol of purity in the individual's response to the call for arms. An inverted wine glass shows that the fallen and missing cannot partake. Grains of salt symbolize the tears that have been shed by families. Slices of lemon on a bread plate represent the bitter fate of those lost. A single red rose standing for the blood that was shed to protect our country. A burning candle is for everlasting hope for a reunion with loved ones. As I have said before, there are variations of article that are used including a black napkin, the Bible, an American flag, yellow ribbon and other items that have significant meanings.

I have often seen the Empty Table displayed in many places, usually Legion Posts, VFW Posts and Lodges. It has appeared at many banquets and military ceremonies where I have been in attendance. It never fails to get my attention when I see it in other places such restaurants and hotels, but it surprises me more when I see the empty table displayed at Scheels or Walmart near Memorial Day. These businesses recognize the sacrifices that have been made and have created an awareness to the general public.

The POW/MIA Empty Table or whatever it is called near you is a symbol of our deep gratitude and love for those prisoners of war who have been returned or those who have not yet been returned that have paid the Ultimate Price for our Country.

<https://www.war.gov/external-content/story/Article/2776327/the-powmia-or-missing-man-table/>

<https://goatlocker.org/resources/nav/powmia.htm>

<https://vawarmemorial.org/the-missing-man-table/>

*Respectfully submitted by Deb Albers,
Northwestern Division Chairman*

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

March 2026

By 2nd Vice – Lynda Griffin



VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION PROGRAM

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) program is committed to promoting, supporting, and providing services that enhance the lives of veterans and their families. It, along with the other of the Four Pillars, is among the premier programs of our organization.

Ways by which this commitment can be met are numerous and are not limited to activities within VA Medical Centers. Acts of service directed toward veterans and their families in the community setting are included under VA&R.

Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Volunteering at VA facilities
- Providing assistance to veterans in the community
- Conducting *Buddy Checks*
- Promoting awareness of the *Be the One* suicide prevention mission
- Donating hygiene, leisure, and comfort items to VA facilities according to their “wish lists”. Be aware of what each VA Medical Center will accept, as it varies.
- Raising awareness about homeless veterans, many of whom have children.
- Participating in *Christmas Gift Shop* and *Christmas wrap* events.
- Supporting *Veterans Creative Arts Festivals*
- Providing support to caregivers of veterans, family members, and survivors
- Collaborating with organizations that support our mission, such as *Wreaths Across America*, *Honor Flight, Inc.*, and the *Military and Veteran Caregiver Network*.
- Participating in a stand down event
- Sending cards to hospitalized and homebound veterans for holidays
- Contributing to *National Salute to Veterans Week* events

The Department VA&R program has a special project each year. Units are urged to learn about, contribute to, and support that project.

Reminders:

Members can assist veterans without ever leaving their own home. Crocheting, knitting, and sewing items for veterans are important contributions. Donations of items should always be handled through the VAMC Center for Development and Community Engagement (CDCE) office, formerly known as the Voluntary Service office, accompanied by a letter from the unit listing the donated items.

Resources

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM DOWNLOADS:

[VA&R One Page Quick Reference Guide](#)

[Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service \(VAVS\) Program Brochure](#)

[FACT SHEETS](#)

[Wreaths Across America](#)

[Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors \(TAPS\)](#)

[Quilts of Valor](#)

[Military & Veteran Caregiver Network \(MVCN\)](#)

[Honor Flight Network](#)

[BE THE ONE](#)

[Be The One Brochure – Local](#)

[Be The One Brochure – National](#)

[BT1 Mini Trifold Brochure](#)

[BT1 – Card 1](#)

[BT1 – Card 2](#)

[BT1 – Card 3](#)

[BT1 – Card 4](#)

[Let us all remember the ALA Mission Statement in everything we do!](#)

In the spirit of Service, Not Self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

SHARE:

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ALA eNEWS: *CONNECTING WITH YOU MONTHLY*



FEBRUARY 2026

Save room in your calendar for these upcoming ALA Academy webinars!

Using Social Media to Promote Your Local ALA

When: Feb. 17 @ noon ET

In this webinar, we'll cover the dos and don'ts of using social media to promote your American Legion Auxiliary unit's activities, events, and mission outreach. Positivity isn't just for meditation. It's a must when it comes to the content you post.

Webinar topics:

- Longevity of the internet: Did you know that the internet lives forever? Yep — we'll teach you how to avoid pitfalls.
- Teamwork matters — why you shouldn't manage your page solo.
- Comments section: How to respond and take care of issues before things get out of hand.
- Content calendars and how they work.
- Resources available.

To register, click [here!](#)

The Science of the Samsung Scholarship

When: Feb. 25 @ 7 p.m. ET

Join us for an informative webinar that provides an overview of the Samsung Scholarship component and the application process.

Overall goal: to review the key components of the Samsung Scholarship and information for ALA members assisting ALA Girls State/American Legion Boys State citizens in completing the application.

To register, click [here](#)!

AEF Disaster Preparedness: Resources, Readiness, and Relief

When: March 10 @ 7:30 p.m. ET

This session is designed to empower ALA members with practical knowledge and resources to prepare for potential disasters and emergencies. The webinar will highlight ways to increase personal and community resilience, navigate emergency response, and access assistance through the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) in times of need.

By the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the types of natural disasters and emergencies that could impact their region or community.
- Identify key preparedness strategies and resources to help mitigate risk and improve readiness.
- Understand the AEF, including eligibility requirements and how to apply for assistance after a disaster.

To register, click [here](#)!

Wanted: Veterans, guardians for ALA-sponsored Honor Flight in April

The national American Legion Auxiliary is sponsoring an all-female veteran Lone Eagle Honor Flight that will provide our nation's heroes with an opportunity to see memorials for the wars they served in. To nominate a veteran or apply to be a guardian, click [here](#). The deadline for both veterans and guardians is Feb. 15.

Read more about the ALA-sponsored Honor Flight on the [ALA blog](#).

Membership FYI: New ruling on DD214 retention

ALA members: Please share the following information with your units, districts/counties/councils, and departments.

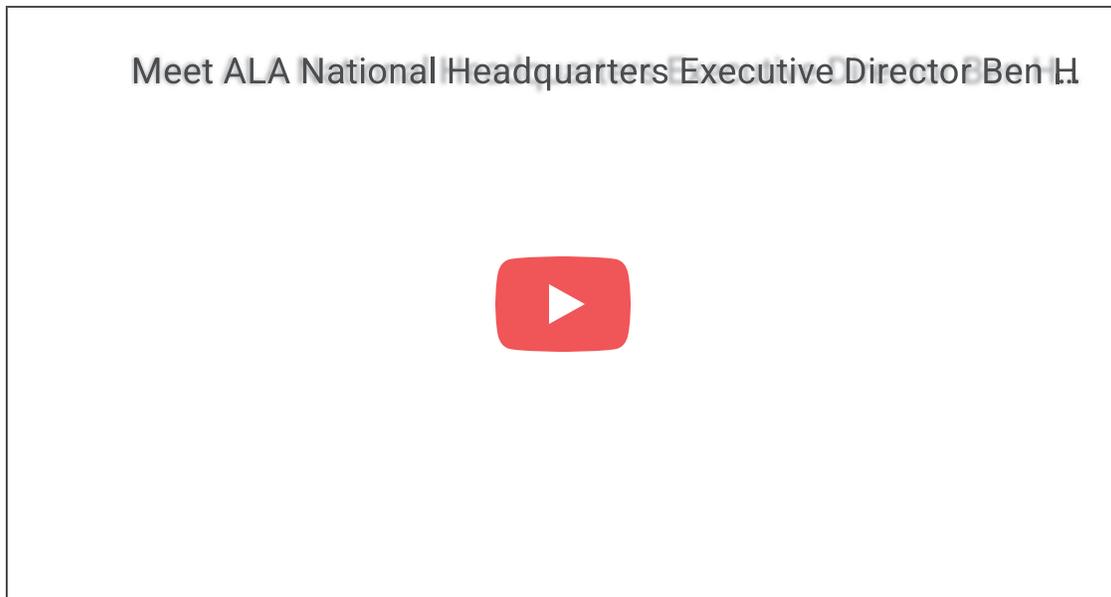
From Mark Seavey, The American Legion's national judge advocate: Effective immediately, the adjutant or secretary at each American Legion Auxiliary unit shall verify a member's eligibility by reviewing documentation such as a DD214, then promptly return the document to the individual. No copies or electronic records

containing Personally Identifiable Information shall be retained. Some units currently maintain decades of archived DD214s, including those of deceased members. These records should be securely destroyed to reduce exposure to identity theft and mitigate potential legal liability.

Meet Ben Hendricks, ALA National Headquarters' executive director

The American Legion Auxiliary's structure includes multiple levels: units, districts/counties/councils, departments/states, divisions, and national. The Indianapolis-based ALA National Headquarters works with all these entities to support members serving our veterans, military, and their families. Ben Hendricks, National Headquarters' executive director, is responsible for implementing the policies and directives of our national governing board.

Learn more about Ben in this short video!



Don't wait: Apply now! ALA scholarships' deadlines approaching

The Auxiliary has four scholarship funds that members and non-members are eligible to apply for: Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship, Non-Traditional Student Scholarship, Spirit of Youth Scholarship, and Member Loyalty Scholarship. The deadline to apply online is March 1.

- Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship: 15, \$5,000 each, gift scholarships are awarded.
 - Given to high school seniors who are direct descendants, or adopted children, of U.S. wartime veterans.
- Non-Traditional Student Scholarship: Five, \$2,000 each, gift scholarships are awarded.
 - Awarded to American Legion Family members, veterans, and veteran and active-duty spouses who are pursuing a college degree later in life

or pick up their education from when it was interrupted.

- Spirit of Youth Scholarship: Each department/state will award one \$1,000 gift scholarship. From each department/state, the national ALA Education Committee will select five recipients for a \$5,000 gift scholarship, instead of the \$1,000 scholarship.
 - Awarded to current ALA Junior members who are high school seniors and have been a member for the past three years.
- Member Loyalty Scholarship: 10, \$2,500 each, gift scholarships are awarded.
 - Awarded to current college students who were Junior members and retained their membership into adulthood.

To learn more and to apply, click [here](#).

If you need help navigating the application process, click our [Navigating ALA Scholarships 101](#).

If you have any questions, email education@ALAforVeterans.org.

To donate to scholarship funds, click [here](#)!

Salute to Servicemembers Award nominations open now!

We've made it much easier to submit for the Salute to Servicemembers Award! An ALA member/entity simply makes the nomination, rather than the servicemember, to effectively tell the story of why they feel this person is "head and shoulders" above their peers and worthy of this award.

A simple narrative (no more than 1,000 words), a picture of the servicemember (preferably official Department of Defense photograph), and the endorsement from their command group are the only requirements.

The nomination form is live now, and you have until June 1 to enter. [Click here to fill out the form!](#)

This award acknowledges the servicemember's contributions that go beyond their military career, displaying their impact on their community.

The goal is to have every branch of the military represented: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, and the National Guard/Reserve.

Enroll in the USA 250 Challenge to celebrate America's birthday

Join this challenge culminating with America's birthday on July 4. Participants have three areas — fitness, mental wellness, and/or community service — they can engage in as part of a team, like an ALA unit, or as an individual. You can do one category or go the extra mile and do all three!

[Register here](#) for \$30 and get a USA 250 Legion Family T-shirt and donate to a good cause. For more information on ways to fulfill the categories, go to [the USA 250 Challenge website](#). Want more than a T-shirt? Click [here](#) to look at other USA 250 Challenge merch!

Look at what Auxiliary members are doing for the USA 250 Challenge

Florida member Dara Oliver tackles all three initiatives of the USA 250 Challenge. Read about how she's joining the Legion Family cause by [clicking here](#).

The Shakopee American Legion Post 2 members in Shakopee, Minn., put together 250 back-to-school kits for the USA 250 Challenge. Read more [here](#).

Watch [National President Pam Ray's video](#) for ideas on the community service category.



Special awards are available for fundraising!

To keep the USA 250 momentum going, The American Legion has awards available for those who hit certain fundraising goals with three fundraising tiers:

- For \$250 in donations raised, participants receive a USA 250 Challenge hat pin.
- For \$500 in donations raised, participants receive a USA 250 Challenge coin and a personalized certificate of appreciation.
- For \$2,500 in donations raised, participants receive a personalized plaque signed by American Legion National Commander Dan Wiley.

To support donors, the Legion will send a commemorative challenge coin and a special poster to **each individual** or group (like a unit) that donates \$250 or more to the Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation.

To learn more, click [here](#). Have questions regarding fundraising for the USA 250 Challenge? Click [here](#) to learn more.

MEMBER BENEFITS

CELEBRATING WOMEN OF SERVICE

MARCH 2026

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

AMERICAN
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AUXILIARY
FOUNDATION



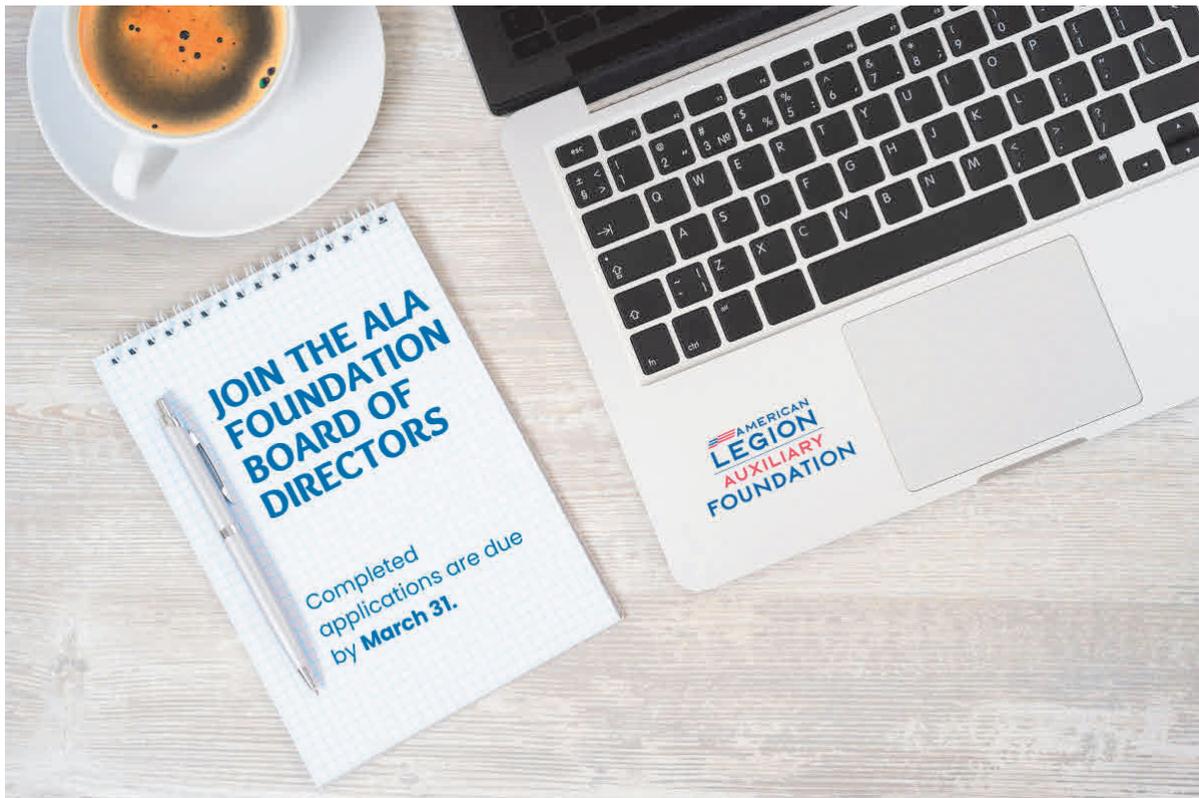
Join us to celebrate our women of service

You know her. You are her. She's the one who always shows up. The one who checks in, steps in, and stays late when something needs to be done. She doesn't do it for recognition. She does it because she cares.

On March 8, join the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation for the fourth annual Celebrating Women of Service Day, dedicated to women who lead by showing up, pitching in, and lifting others as they go. They don't seek the spotlight. Instead, they lead with care and shared purpose, strengthening their communities and advancing the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Honor a woman who leads with purpose by making a gift in her name to the ALA Mission Endowment Fund, an investment in the future of the ALA mission and the women who carry it forward. Because leadership rooted in service changes everything.

Make a gift in her honor by texting WOMAN to 1-844-940-3450 or by visiting our website, donate.legion-aux.org.



The ALA Foundation is looking for leaders for its board of directors

The ALA Foundation invites passionate, purpose-driven leaders to consider serving a three-year term on its board of directors. This dedicated group of volunteers helps shape the future of the Foundation by inspiring generosity, strengthening connections with supporters, and championing a mission that sustains the American Legion Auxiliary's vital programs and services. Board service is an opportunity to lead with impact, give back in a meaningful way, and help ensure our mission continues to thrive for generations to come. Apply [here](#) by March 31!

Where can your member benefits take you?



Use the full potential of your ALA membership and sign up for BenefitHub

Enjoy discounts, rewards, and perks on thousands of brands, including Hertz, Sam's Club, Walt Disney World, Toyota, Skechers, and more! BenefitHub is your single-source site where you can find extensive savings through an easy-to-use, exclusive discount marketplace. Enter the exclusive ALA member referral code **HZE7XG** when creating your account.

Sign up [here!](#)



Wellcare is proud to be the official Medicare Advantage plan provider for American Legion Auxiliary.

At Wellcare, we are delighted to partner with American Legion Auxiliary as your official Medicare Advantage plan provider. We're here to offer education on the various plans available to you, along with coverage that meets your unique health needs. Learn more about your options today.

If you have Medicare and Medicaid, limited income, recently lost employer coverage, are turning 65, or you've just moved, you may be eligible for one of many qualifying events that allow you to enroll now.

The coverage you need & more

Call to speak with a licensed Medicare Advantage representative.



844-363-1726 (TTY: 711)
8 a.m. - 8 p.m., 7 days a week
ala.amwins.com

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GOOD TO KNOW

Missed a webinar? Go to ALA Academy to review recordings and see what other webinars are coming up. Click [here!](#)

Have an idea for an Academy course? Email ALAAcademy@ALAforVeterans.org to send your ideas for potential courses.

The February *Auxiliary* magazine has hit mailboxes! Read features about how our AEF program helps members and how our nation's youth are making a difference. A digital copy is available on our [website](#). Tell us your thoughts on this edition by emailing PR@ALAforVeterans.org.



ALA COMMITTEE FACEBOOK GROUPS ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

These national committee groups are spaces on the social media platform for ALA members to discuss or share ideas about topics related to each committee. Groups provide a safe place for organic discussion about your local programs or services and support efforts to grow our organization's awareness. Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media to join the groups you're passionate about.

ON THE ALA BLOG

Using data to support the mission

A new study from the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy found that under 1% of charitable giving in the United States is given to organizations serving veterans, military, and their families.

[Read more](#)



Recruiting and retaining members part of everyone's role

High-quality leadership gets people interested in participating in organizations, according to 2025 research in Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. And poor leadership often drives them away.

That means to keep members and the community engaged in efforts to support our mission, the American Legion Auxiliary needs effective leaders and mentors.

[Read more](#)



SAVE THE DATE



February: Black History Month
February: Americanism Month
February: American Heart Month
Feb. 6-22: Milano Cortina Winter 2026 Olympics
Feb. 14: Valentine's Day

Feb. 15: Susan B. Anthony Day
Feb. 16: Presidents' Day
Feb. 17: Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday)
Feb. 17 – March 19: Ramadan
Feb. 19: U.S. Coast Guard Reserve Birthday
Feb. 28 – March 4: American Legion Washington Conference
March 3: National Anthem Day
March 8: Daylight saving time begins
March 8: International Women's Day

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

“Being a member of the American Legion Auxiliary represents a deep and enduring commitment to honoring and supporting those who have served our nation. I view my involvement as both a privilege and continuation of my family’s proud legacy of military service. Through meaningful acts of service, I strive to strengthen veterans, their families, and my community.”

— Tiffany Orlando, West Virginia

LEGION FAMILY NEWS

Legion Family Media & Communications Contest open

The annual American Legion Media & Communications Contest has begun for the 2026 year to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of our American Legion Family members who positively promote and educate the public on the Legion Family on local, district, and department levels. All Legion Family members are encouraged to submit entries into the contest that showcase their work in various media channels.

Rules of the contest:

- All entries must have been published during the 2025 calendar year.
- You may enter submissions in one or multiple categories.
- Each submission costs \$5.
- Deadline for submissions is April 15.
- All entries must be original. Plagiarized entries or content from other publications will result in automatic disqualification.

To enter the contest, [click here](#).

Winners of the contest receive a plaque and are considered for the Innovation Award and Chairman's Award, which includes a plaque and a \$50 Emblem Sales credit.

To learn more about the contest, [click here](#).

Legion to Congress: Letter sent to urge passage of Veterans Member Business Loan Act

The American Legion and the Defense Credit Union Council (DCUC) sent a joint letter to congressional leadership to advance [H.R. 507](#) and [S. 110](#), the Veterans Member Business Loan Act, Jan. 21. This legislation would expand access to capital for veteran-owned small businesses at no cost to taxpayers.

S.110 and H.R. 507 have both been introduced to their respective legislative bodies. To keep track of the bills' progress, go to [Congress.gov](#).

If you wish to show your support for the passage of H.R. 507 and S.110, contact your state representatives and senators in both the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

Listen to The American Legion podcast *Tango Alpha Lima*

This podcast aims to engage veterans and The American Legion Family with authentic stories, education, and entertainment, while also building a virtual community.

Available on various listening platforms, such as [Spotify](#), [YouTube](#), [Amazon Music](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), and [iHeartRadio](#).

To learn more about the podcast, [click here](#).

Be the One online training available for the Legion Family

The American Legion is partnering with Columbia University to develop training for American Legion Family members who want to learn more about interacting and responding with veterans who are in crisis.

These trainings will teach participants how to:

- Use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to determine at-risk individuals
- Identify risk factors and warning signs
- Outline the types of suicidal ideation and four behaviors that indicate imminent risk
- Effectively communicate with individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves

Upcoming dates:

- Feb. 19 @ 2:30 to 4 p.m. ET
- Feb. 24 @ 2:30 to 4 p.m. ET

To register and learn more, click [here!](#)



ALA Membership

Where does your department stand in Auxiliary membership? [Click here to log in and view the latest reports.](#)



The American Legion Legislative Center

The ALA supports the legislative agenda of The American Legion. [Get involved.](#)



American Legion Auxiliary | 3450 Founders Rd | Indianapolis, IN 46268 US

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