

Troop Safety in Social Media

April Kollmorgen, ALA Central Division National Security Chair

You may be asking, What is Troop Safety? How is this something we're discussing within the ALA? We are volunteers who want to help our Veterans and Servicemembers, right? Well, yes, we are, but this is a subject we probably don't talk about enough because we have a lot of excitement around caring for our Troops, and sometimes in that excitement, the best intentions can turn into an inadvertent problem.

In today's modern age of social media, we have so many ways to connect and stay in touch and get news from anywhere. At the same time, we can also share things we maybe shouldn't. It is easy to become complacent and relax our standards, but the world, and especially the internet, is not always a good place.

For those who don't know, my husband retired a few years ago from the Navy. He also served on Submarines, so we had very different deployments from what many of you see and attend, so please keep an open mind in what I'm sharing here and understand my advice comes from experience, but also the side of caution.

Troop safety, when talking about social media, put simply, is this: not posting any information about military deployments or movements, or even saying where they are and for how long they may be there.

The internet is permanent, especially for family and friends. It is never a wise to post about service members' departure or arrival in real time. **Keep it to yourself.** You can ask our parents – unless they were in the same room as me during a deployment, they never had an exact date of coming or going. It was my responsibility to safeguard the deployment information that was granted to me, and I still take that very seriously, as it was a privilege. There were even a couple of times, I did not know the return date and had to just wait for the call the day before because of too many issues with others on social media.

As my husband told me while writing this, it's easier to have the service members' schedule change than it is to simply remove what's been put out onto social media. Inevitably, it's been seen, and it's too late.

While we often share things for fun or support, it's crucial to remember that some people may misuse sensitive information against our military. The saying "loose lips sink ships" still holds.

As part of our ALA mission, we may be invited to participate in Troop Deployments with our American Legion Family. If you haven't yet, consider volunteering your support—it's a rewarding experience. Here are some key things to remember about troop safety during these events:

- Follow **ALL** rules and information given to your group by the command in charge of the deployment. This information will usually be provided in advance so you can be ready to go.
- If they need a list of volunteers to vet access, please don't add last-minute names. They need time for everyone's security and safety.
- If permitted by the command, absolutely post pictures from the event.
 - Only post approved information about the event.
 - Only take/post photos of your members and tables, etc.
 - Wait a day or two to post – and say something like "We recently participated in" – never give actual dates/times or locations.
- Don't announce your participation in a deployment in advance, as it could lead to changes or make it private.
- Don't "go live" on socials either. It's another way to track troop movement.

All these things may also depend on what kind of deployment is happening. Some are more secret and need more care than others. It's always best to be cautious and follow instructions given by the command; they will guide you in anything sensitive.

This may seem like a lot of "no's" and "don't do this", and I don't put this out there to be fussy or scare anyone, but the simplest way to say it is this: In any dealings with our Active Duty and Deployments, just remember that less is more. Keep doing all those amazing activities and celebrations, and events you are doing. Use a little caution when using socials, and everything will be just fine.

Thank you for your attention to this and for all you do as volunteers for our Veterans, our Active Duty, and their families.

The American Red Cross, More than Blood Drives

Jane McKnight, Southern Division National Security Chair

The mission statement for the Red Cross is “The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors”.

Disaster Relief, Military & Veterans, Blood Drives, and Training

The Red Cross offers shelters, food, and support to individuals affected by disasters. Ninety-five percent of disaster relief workers are volunteers, and they respond to an average of 65,000 disasters each year. On average, the Red Cross responds to an emergency every eight minutes.

The Red Cross teaches lifesaving skills and distributes international humanitarian aid. Services include training in CPR and AED, First Aid, BLS (Basic Life Support), Babysitting, Caregiving, Water Safety, and more.

The Red Cross supports veterans, military personnel, and their families by maintaining a presence at over 380 military installations and deployment sites worldwide. They process more than 1,300 emergency communications daily and provide care and comfort to over 561,000 patients each year through hospital rehabilitation and morale programs.

They supply about 40% of the nation’s blood supply. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood or platelets. Each year, approximately 6.8 million people in the U.S. donate blood.

For more information, visit redcross.org or call 1-800-REDCROSS (800-733-2767).

WARRIOR WEDNESDAY

Department National Security Chairs
Have you completed your assignment?

I have asked that you share the link to recognize someone for Warrior Wednesday. It does not need to be someone you know, but there must be at least one person in your department who has a connection, and the link can be sent to share their story.

So, let’s complete the assignment, and then you can give yourself an **A+++**. Also, others will become better informed about the lives of those who are protecting our freedoms.

Thanks for your immediate attention to this task.

Norma Tramm, National Security Chairman

**The link below will navigate you to the Formstack*

The Salute to Servicemembers Award: Jammie Phillips, National Security Vice-Chairman

This national award honors one enlisted servicemember (E1–E9) from each military branch, including the National Guard and Reserves, totaling seven awards.

- Nomination Process: To nominate someone, complete the Formstack and write a narrative (up to 1,000 words) explaining why the individual deserves recognition. **Be sure to highlight their military honors and community impact.** An endorsement letter from their command group and a current photo in uniform (preferably an official DOD photo) are also required. The deadline for nominations is June 1, 2026. You can find the nomination form here:
<https://www.legion-aux.org/salute-to-servicemembers-award-form>
- Have questions? Join us for an informational Zoom meeting on February 3, 2026, at 7:30 PM EST. We will review the nomination process and provide examples. This meeting is open to **ALL** members. Register here:
https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/salute_to_servicemembers_nomination_review
- Need even more inspiration? Check out last year's award recipients here:
<https://member.legion-aux.org/Blog/2025-ALA-Salute-to-Servicemembers-Award-winners-ho>