



*The American Legion Auxiliary  
 Department of New York, Inc.  
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*2020*

*Important Updates*

**2021 Department Calendars** – As of November 13, 2020, only 318 calendar stubs and checks have been sent in. All County Presidents received these calendars back in the first week of August to distribute to the units. If your unit did not receive any, please contact your County President for them. As this is the only fundraiser for the Department. It is important that you do what you can to help support this. If every unit could take one, that would be fantastic! Please send the stub together with the check as soon as possible. There are many members calling requesting 2021 calendars and they have been advised to call their County President as there are none in the Department office.

**Bonding and Day Fund Taxes** – As of November 13, 2020, there are still 13 Counties that have not sent in their Taxes which were due November 1, 2020. County Presidents please make sure your County Treasurer sends this in as soon as possible.

**Unit Membership Chairmen** – Please make sure that your transmittals are in alphabetical order by last name. Please do not use nick names as we do not know them by their nick name. Refer to your unit roster for the correct spelling and ID number. Please try to make sure that your transmittal is legible, a lot of time gets wasted trying to read all the different handwriting. If you take the time to put your transmittal in alphabetical order, it makes it easier for the office to process membership and keep it up to date.

**Updated Unit and County Report Forms** – were mailed out to all Unit and County Presidents. They are also on the department website – deptny.org.

*Department President's Message.....Linda S. Tome*

What a difference a year makes! Last year at this time I was so excited to tell you about my County Visitations with Commander Mike and Detachment Commander Dennis, our Fall Conference visits with the Vice Presidents, Veterans Day Parade in NYC and the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference . . . this year things are obviously a little different . . .

We did make two District Visitations – thank you to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> District for your hospitality in these social distancing times. Everyone was very cordial and respectful of the COVID-19 requirements. It was SO very good to see everyone even though there was a no hugging rule – but seeing everyone did bring a little “normalcy” to things. Thank you all so very much! Our 8<sup>th</sup> District Visitation has been cancelled since there has been an uptick in COVID-19 cases. We all appreciate and respect your decision to cancel. We will see what next year brings!

I am still doing the Facebook monthly videos – and will hopefully continue throughout this administrative year. They are really kind of fun to do and I feel a little more “connected” to you all!! Hope you enjoy them and are getting a little something out of them! (Go to Facebook: American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York President)

Upcoming events . . . Mid-Winter Conference! Please be sure to put a HOLD on your calendars for January 23 as we will be holding our conference **virtually!** Stay tuned for more information from our Department Leadership Chairman Amy McEathron and our Department Junior Activities Chairman Diane Butler! Sounds like fun!!! You may want to plan to meet at the Post or at someone’s home for coffee and donuts the morning of January 23<sup>rd</sup> and make it a “party” of sorts – with all the social distancing measures of course!!

I know that we are not able to hold all of our fundraisers, or visit with our Veterans at the VA or even gather at the Post for socializing; however, I am hoping that you are still thinking creatively and getting a call or a note out to our veterans to show you care; putting articles in the newspaper letting your community know what we do for our veterans and community; as well as thinking out of the box for your fundraisers. I want to hear what you are doing! Our veterans still need all the support that we can give them be it socially or monetarily. Please do not sit back and just wait for this COVID to end . . . you still need to be involved and advocate for our veterans . . . somehow! Write letters to your congressmen or senators to let them know what our veterans need. They need you now more than ever!

On a positive note, I just wanted to report to you some of the information that was shared with me from my Department President’s Project last year - Stop Soldier Suicide! My contacts have reported that so far in 2020 they have received 80 requests for help of which, 40 of those converted to clients that they were able to provide help for and 11 of those were specifically classified as high-risk. The donations made during my year as President truly helped them to provide assistance where needed and helped to save these veterans’ lives. And I have you all to thank for that! My heart is full as last year we were able to donate to them over \$74,482!! And I know we would have had more to donate if this pandemic did not hit when it did! But they are overjoyed at the amount of money that we were able to donate especially at a time when it was most needed. Thank you all! Did not get a chance to donate last year or do you still want to donate?? Well, you are in luck! There is still time to donate this year as I have a Department President’s Award (remember that blue glass award?) for the Unit that donates the largest single donation to Stop Soldier Suicide (check must be sent to the Department office).

In closing . . . I would like to wish everyone a most wonderful Thanksgiving and a Very Merry Christmas!! However, you may be celebrating these holidays, please stay safe and remember to social distance, wear your mask, and wash your hands!! Happy Holidays to one and all and please keep our veterans, active duty military and their families in your thoughts and prayers!

*Membership.....Mary E. Farley, Chairperson*

I hope everyone reading this newsletter is safe and sheltering in place.

Membership is coming in nicely, even in a pandemic. We are currently ahead of last year, as of November 18, 2020 we have 23,224 or 62.27% paid members for 2021. Keep doing what you are doing, it’s working. It is not too late for the Department to reach 75% to get a National Award of \$250.00 - Peral Harbor Award December 7, 2020. Membership must be received and entered the system.

We have had some award winners. The following awards have been achieved:

**Milestone #1 100% by October 1, 2020:**

Unit 63 reached it with 108.7%

Unit 1634 reached it with 100%

Congratulations to our winners!

I would like to wish everyone a wonderful Holiday Season, it may be a little different, but it will not be like this forever. And may all our servicemen and women and our veterans share in the same joys of the season. I am looking forward to seeing everyone real soon. Happy Holiday's.

*VA&R / Service to Veterans.....Nancy J. Babis, Chairperson*

Hello fellow Auxiliary members! I know you all have been very busy keeping your families and selves safe from COVID-19. Along with that comes some great opportunities to work the mission of our great organization – Service to our Veterans.

A quick reminder that there are new report forms for this committee available on the Department website. It is not to earlier to start thinking about applying for Department and National Awards. From the Department of NY there is six (6) available awards including awards for juniors, Senior members, and year-round service to our Veterans. Nationally there is an outstanding Unit VA&R award along with recognition for volunteer hours and the James H. Parke Scholarship.

The National Creative Arts festival is taking place November 28 – December 5 in St. Petersburg Florida. This is a fantastic program and truly expresses the Auxiliary motto of Service not Self. Check out the live streaming of the Opening act on Facebook.

I had the honor of zoom conferencing with all the VA&R Representatives and Deputies as well as Gift Shop Chairman. The Gift shop program is undergoing changes to adapt to the rules COVID-19 has forced upon us. Please continue to support your gift shop program at the VA near you. Our partnership with the VA is more important than ever even if we are not allowed to physically be in the building, our donations help with activities to provide distractions and bits of fun and laughter in an otherwise visitor less environment.

This year the Auxiliary will be partnering once again the Sons of the American Legion for the annual walk-a-thon. Start planning now for a spring event in your community. Stay tuned for more information on dates and how you can participate.

Until next time, stay safe and wear your masks.

*Children and Youth.....Karen St. Hilaire, Chairperson*

While 2020 continues to present many challenges, members have become highly creative in adapting our programs to social distancing regulations. Units reports drive through Trick or Treating and are planning the same for Christmas.

Units that are able to hold fundraising events have contributed to youth programs, schools, and other community activities. Please continue to send donations to The Child Welfare Foundation.

Three Youth Hero and four Good Deed awards were presented for this reporting period. It should be noted that the American Legion Auxiliary Youth Hero and Good Deed awards are available for all youths age 18 or under. It should be noted that junior members are not the only eligible recipients for the American Legion Auxiliary Youth Hero and Good Deed awards. Applications may be sent in for all youths, age 18 or under.

*100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ALA.....Colleen McDaniels, Chairperson*

Greetings to all my fellow ALA Family. Thanks to COVID-19 we are continuing to celebrate our 100th anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary. This month we officially turned 101 years old, but we need to continue to celebrate, to let people know all the good work that we do. You have all heard my ideas for larger celebrations over the past year, but we need to think how we can responsibly celebrate during a pandemic and promote social distancing. This means we have to think outside the box as we continue to shine our light on our amazing organization.

Also, just because you may have already celebrated, or you have plans, it does not mean you cannot do more.

Recently I was brainstorming ways to work our mission with my Juniors and the ideas they came up with inspired me. Although these are simple ideas, they are very appropriate for promoting our 100th anniversary. Create a press release or use social media to post 100 words about one of the following topics: why you are a member; thank your veteran; what your unit, county or district does for veterans; tell about your favorite program; and don't be afraid to tell why you love our organization. The list is endless, the cost is your time, the positive light for the ALA is priceless.

I am confident that I will have great things to report to our Department President and National if we all continue to focus on the future, our mission, our membership, and continue to celebrate our 100th as we think outside the box to have a glorious jubilation.

*Americanism.....Terri D. Wallace, Chairperson*

**Americanism** is promoting patriotic education among youth, adults, and our communities. How can you support the ALA's Americanism program in your community?

**Americanism Essay Contest** - "How can we address the health and well-being of our veterans, military and their families?" (Reminder: Essays are due to your Unit for judging by February 15th and to the Department Americanism Chairman by March 15th. All details in Plan of Action Supplement page 45 or Plan of Action pp 7-8. This is the same topic as last year, but students may not re-submit last year's essay. Due to COVID, prepare an electronic packet that can be emailed to classroom teachers or school principals. Don't forget about family members and your Juniors and Young Sons.)

**Flag Etiquette** - Does your Unit teach Flag Etiquette or the Meaning of the 13 Folds of the US Flag? (There are many ideas on pages 7-14 in the Plan of Action. Due to COVID, how can you still get your message out?)

**Star Spangled Kids** (moved from the Children & Youth Program last year).

"**Star Spangled Kids**" is an initiative to educate children and youth in the history of the United States from the aspect of patriotism, Americanism, and the U.S. Constitution. Auxiliary members can partner with the American Legion Family, team with their Education chairman, and bring veterans or active duty military into the classrooms to talk about what their service means to defending the Constitution. (Due to COVID, this may be virtually. Teachers may have them visit via Zoom). The goal is to educate youth on the history of the United States from the aspect of patriotism, Americanism, and the U.S. Constitution. Idea: share "Fascinating Facts about the U.S. Constitution" each month in your unit newsletter, in tweets, or in a Facebook post.

*American Legion Family College.....Debby Herrmann, Liaison*

*Auxiliary Emergency Fund.....Carol Flaherty, Chairperson*

This has been a tough year for the auxiliary. With the closing of Posts and units there have been no meetings for men or women. The COVID-19 -19 virus does not seem to be going away anytime soon. I hope with all my heart that the members of the auxiliary are fine and that we will soon be going back to our meetings.

*Chaplain.....Susan Britton, Chairperson*

Never has the job of a Chaplain been so critically important as it is now. Our nation is coping with not only a global pandemic, but a contentious election. The power of prayer is one positive outlet for our members to try and help cope with what is currently happening across our nation and the world. You, as chaplain can be a

driving force for calm. In the midst of all the chaos, your leadership can guide the way to creating a sense of peaceful serenity.

**SAD NEWS:** I have received many death notices where no next of kin is noted to have a sympathy card sent to. Whenever your unit loses a member, a death notice needs to be filled out immediately and sent to me with all of the information filled out. It is VERY important that a next-of-kin name and complete address be given so that we can honor the deceased member in a timely manner. This notice can be found in your 2020-2021 Supplement. PLEASE do not wait months before filing the death notice. No family wants to be sent a sympathy card months after their loved one has passed away.

**Attention ALL Members:** With the upcoming holidays, members will be busy with preparations and gatherings (as small as they may be). **PLEASE** remember to take time now and share a prayer or devotional thought with me for Department President Linda's Prayer Book. Your prayer can note the occasion of our 100th Anniversary celebration during her administration or your prayer might reflect on these difficult times we are all facing together. Please submit any special prayer you might have. Whatever you wish to share, please get them in to me ASAP. I will need time to compile the book in time for convention.

**PRAYER TO USE DURING THIS TIME:**

Heavenly Father, during the most troubling of times, you have led us from the darkness into the light of hope and peace that comes with prayerful thought and spiritual inspiration. We pray that you grant peace and guidance as we approach each new day. We ask your loving presence during times that we cannot understand or times of fear. Grant us the courage and strength to comfort those in need during this time of crisis. Grant our loved one's safety, security and stability. Let us work together to rebuild our lives, our friendships and our organization and make the world a better place in which to live. In your name, we pray....  
AMEN. GOD BLESS!

*Community Service.....Desiree Smith-McPherson, Chairperson*

Thank you for your November reports. It is great to have received such amazing reports of the services in which you all have done. So many acts of kindness were done, as well as many other services. I did not include N.Y.S. Food drives, servicing food pantries, home visit, phone calls, walking dogs, elders, etc. as we are all encountering this pandemic and social distancing that has caused many of us into quarantine. So, our community service has been limited, but our auxiliary community service will keep up with the great serving of the many ways they have shown. Remember we are entering the holidays where most feel lonely and unhappy. Continue to keep them in mind, give a call, send a card, package, or any heartfelt message. Show kindness we are all in this together. Looking forward to receiving your next reports. Also remember to put County, & districts on report.

*Constitution and Bylaws/Resolutions.....Marie Mock, Chairperson*

The holidays are rapidly approaching. I hope that you are all safe and well and that you remain that way throughout the season. We often put our inspection of our governing documents on hold during this busy time, but that does not need to be the case. The updating of the documents does not need to be daunting or require large amounts of time. If you go to the department website, you can download the Curriculum and Bylaws template. After you check to make sure that the template matches your current documents except for the necessary updates, all you have to do is fill in the blanks. If your unit follows the standard format for your documents, the update should not take more than 10 or 15 minutes. You do need to pay attention to what you write because the number of people that are needed for a quorum becomes important now that some people do not want to attend meetings. You can't make decisions for the unit if you don't have a quorum present, or a small number of people at a meeting may make unpopular decisions because they constitute a quorum to make the decisions legal and binding.

The standing rules may be more time consuming because you need to make sure that you are not contradicting your constitution or repeating what is already in the previous materials. Some units have only the two mandatory standing rules which identify the dues. These units vote on all of the things that other units put

in their standing rules. Typical things that go in the standing rules for some units are donations that are made whenever a member or relative dies, the unit sponsored funds for conventions or conferences, or donations to specific charities that are made every year. The amount may be listed as "as per the unit budget" or may be designated. It is usually better to have fewer donation amounts listed to avoid having to change the amounts in the standing rules as your yearly budget changes.

You may also want to include some provision for online or distance meetings.

The governing documents are your road map when there is a question about how your unit is going to function. The more clarity and precision you have, the less controversy will be generated when things come up. We often don't think about the rules until someone makes a decision that we don't agree with, and we want to stop them but have nothing in writing to justify our objections. We need to be sure our documents say what we think they say and what we want them to say.

*Education.....Cynthia Babb, Chairperson*

Communication is the key to participating in the Education Committee. Please contact your local schools to see how you can educate students about veterans. Also, please get scholarship applications to high school seniors that may be eligible to apply and need educational assistance. Also note that under the unusual circumstances of this year, the SAT/ACT requirement for scholarship applicants will be waived for the 2021 scholarship applications. The score should be included if the student is able to take the test, otherwise the student should include a notation with their application that they were unable to take the test due to COVID-19 restrictions.

I want to thank all the county chairmen that have either emailed me reports or sent me reports via the postal system. Emailing your reports to me: nyalaeducation@gmail.com or texting reports to (845) 417-3797 are probably the best ways to get reports to me. Please note that in the middle of this reporting cycle my address has changed. Although my mail is being forwarded, please make a note of my new address:

2000 Curry Road Unit 17  
Schenectady, NY 12303

Thank you for your participation in the Education Committee during these challenging times. Please continue to stay safe.

*ALA Empire Girls State.....Jennifer Farley, Chairperson  
.....Members Wendy Privitera, Kris Dziduch*

Greetings American Legion Auxiliary Members!

WE LOVE ALA EMPIRE GIRLS STATE!!

Our love and dedication for the ALA EGS program has no bounds. We appreciate your patience as we determine how to best and safely plan for the ALA EGS 2021 session amid a global pandemic. The safety of the citizens and volunteers is a priority. Please bear with us as we sail these uncharted waters together!

\*\*\*Sr. Counselor, Jr. Counselor and job descriptions are available on our website (under the Empire Girls State section in Programs) or in the Plan of Action. We are still accepting applications!

**Special Notes about the 2021 Empire Girls State Program!**

- Dates: **TBD**- some have asked, and we can assume that it would be the last week of June 2021; June 27- July 3, 2021
- Make sure you return the **Quota form** that was in the Plan of Action to Vice Chairman Wendy!
- Please consider supporting the ALA EGS program by purchasing an **Ad and/or Booster!** See the flyer for more information!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of us!

*Finance Committee/Audit..... Cathleen MacInnes, Chairperson  
.....Linda Moseman and Violet Brosart Members*

Dues for 2020-2021 are due on or before January 31, 2021. You might wonder why we ask for dues to be paid so early in the year? Dues are an important part of every Unit's budget. The difference between the amount collected for dues and the amount sent to Department should cover basic Unit obligations: distribution of membership cards, payment of bonding and Department Day taxes, and payment of other assessments to County and District, if any. Many Units structure their dues to cover Unit costs as well.

But what happens to the money the Unit sends to Department? Here's the breakdown of the \$20.00 sent for each Senior member:

Amount	Paid to	Covers
\$12.00	National	National Committee Chairmen's work; subscription to <i>Auxiliary</i> magazine; and operation of National Headquarters, including the ALA Academy.
\$0.50	District Presidents Fund	Expenses for the 10 District Presidents for travel and for work within their Districts.
\$0.25	Children & Youth (C&Y) Fund	Department and District Scholarships, Department awards, and Department C&Y Committee Chairman's expenses; may also be used for other programs directly benefitting children, as decided annually.
\$0.25	Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Fund	Funds for special programs at each of New York's 13 VA Medical Centers and 5 New York State Veterans' Homes; meeting expenses for VAVS Representatives and Deputies; Department awards, hours pins and bars; expenses for Department VA&R, Past Presidents Parley, Warriors Family Assistance (WFA), and Poppy Chairmen; may also be used for WFA and other programs directly benefitting veterans, as decided annually.
\$0.75	County	Paid directly to the member's County; use of funds is decided by each County Committee.
6.25	Department	Expenses for all other Department Committee Chairmen (except ALA Empire Girls State, which is self-supporting); operation of the Department Office, including rent, utilities, staffing, insurance, financial services, printing, and postage; and administrative support for all programs.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact one of us!

A quick reminder: have you completed the Unit Audit Data form and sent it to the Department Office? If not, please be sure to do so before December 31st. Thank you!!

*Historian.....Barbara Neddo, Chairperson*

The history reports have been coming in slowly. All counties have not yet reported. I know we are in a different time and circumstances are difficult for everyone. However, any thing you do with your Unit, County or District is our history. Please take notes at events so you can report it. I know I need to do that to keep dates, times, and places straight.

Again, I'm asking for pictures, newspaper articles that apply to President Linda, maybe when she visited your District. Please stay safe and healthy so we can hopefully all be together soon. Happy Thanksgiving.

*Junior Activities.....Diane Butler, Chairperson*

Sadly, we are still in the midst of a pandemic. Many Juniors are holding meetings virtually in order to conduct business while staying healthy. There is information in the Junior eBulletin, "Tips for online meetings and virtual meeting etiquette" to assist our Juniors with their meetings. Due to the pandemic, mid-winter conference will be a virtual conference. Juniors will conduct their business and election virtually. Watch for more information to come.

Juniors can still be helpful while also keeping everyone safe. Include your Juniors in planning of Legion/Auxiliary functions. We just honored our Veterans for Veterans Day, Juniors made Veterans Day cards from their homes to honor our Veterans. With the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons upon us, Juniors can stay busy making cards and assisting with virtual Christmas parties. Juniors may make and send cards to deployed troops in order to brighten their holidays. They can also assist with food drives for homeless shelters or Veteran groups for the holidays.

Some Legions are holding Wreaths Across America ceremonies in December, Juniors can help with laying of wreaths at the cemetery with social distancing and the wearing of masks. Juniors can also work on the patch program at home. Participating in the patch program is a terrific way to be involved in learning about the Auxiliary and our Legion family, volunteering in the community, and serving our country's veterans.

When sending your Junior report in March 2021, please include photos of what your Juniors are doing during this pandemic. In closing, I came across this quote...very appropriate for the year we are having, "This is not the year to get everything you want. This is the year to appreciate everything you have."

*Leadership.....Amy McEathron, Chairperson*

*Legislative.....Maureen Morgan, Chairperson*

November is a remarkably interesting month with the Presidential Election, early voting, long lines, and the American people making their voices heard. It was interesting with how we had to vote. There was social distancing, wearing a mask and making sure you stayed 6 feet apart while in line sanitizing all the machines when a person was done. Now we wait for the new or old administration to take over to see how they are going to go forward and support the Veterans Bills. Please make sure that Veterans get the vaccine that supposedly is coming out for the COVID. Let us remember that we need to stay connected to what the government is doing, so check the nylegion.net for any updates on what the National Commander is supporting. Read the Dispatch when it comes in, look at the Auxiliary Legislative e-newsletter or the American Legion e-newsletter and [www.capwiz.com/legion](http://www.capwiz.com/legion) to see what is going on.

I wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Let us keep our chins up. Also please remember the Buddy check system. Check on those who cannot get out or are home alone.

*National Executive Committeeperson..... Deborah Morris*

I want to note highlights of the weekly briefings that we all receive from National HQs, which I find it so important to remind us in the coming weeks.

Reminder if you wanted to apply for one of these new National Committees. **The Inclusion & Diversity Special Committee or The National Code of Ethical Conduct Review Committee.** If so, log in on the member portal at [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org), go to the Members Only sign in, you must apply by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>. Click on the link below. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ALASpecialCommittees> Please note these new



committees may meet as often as weekly via videoconferencing, so you need technology skills and reliable internet.

Important reminder, **The 2020 National Creative Arts Festival** is November 30<sup>th</sup> - December 4<sup>th</sup>. An opportunity for our members to see how our efforts positively impact veterans. Follow **@Sports4Vets** on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

**On behalf of The National American Legion Auxiliary Officers, NECs, Committee Chairs and HQ,  
~We're Wishing you all Joy & Happiness this Holiday Season~**

*National Security.....Peggy M. Martin, Chairperson*

With the Christmas season fast approaching, let us please think of and remember our Military and their families in this time of turmoil, questions, and COVID-19. No matter what is happening around us and with our government, they are still the priority of the American Legion Auxiliary National Security Committee. Please remember the mission of our program is to maintain and support a strong National Defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families.

I know many units are reporting no activity, but I am sure there is, just with many of us not meeting, we aren't sure who or what to report. Sending packages, writing letters of support, helping their families with groceries or gifts are all still happening from the reports that I have gotten. Blood drives are still going on, and many remote and virtual things are happening. Please still try to give moral support for military families that we think are struggling with stress either from family members being overseas or away from them for any reason. Refer to the *ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide* for specific suggestions to the type of support military families may value. Keep your Unit Presidents up to date on things that you think are important, such as families that may need recognition with a blue or gold star banner.

I just want to wish you all a very merry holiday season and please make the best of what you have!

*Parliamentarian.....Patricia Hennessy, Chairperson*

Hope everyone is staying safe during this pandemic, but also enjoying getting ready for the holidays. I cannot wait til we can get back to being able to meet. Until then, remember that to be active in a club, association, or other group, learning the basics of parliamentary procedure is both desirable and achievable. A solid foundation of procedural knowledge can enhance credibility, result in better meetings, and make the difference between legitimate actions and illegal ones.

*Past Presidents' Parley.....Kimberly Quick, Chairperson*

I would like to say thank you to all of you whom have paid their Past Presidents Parley dues this year, and for the reports I have received. I know it is tough out there while we are still reeling from the pandemic.

Remember to keep your eyes open for future leaders of your Units and Counties. Now is the time to start compiling information for the Service Women of the Year and Unit Member of the Year candidates.

I wish you all a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season.

*Poppy.....Sophie Liberatore, Chairperson*

Many Poppy reports have been coming in the past few weeks. Units have been trying to find ways to distribute Poppy's and this has been exceedingly difficult due to many businesses have closed due to COVID-19. Many clubs have been on shortened hours if they are open at all. These Posts do have the donation cans in place, however, with the lack of hours and customers, they are lacking in funds.

Fewer funds have been reported, not for the lack of trying! Members are still trying to promote the Poppy Program with posters and setting Poppy donation cans in what businesses are open and are allowed. I have received reports of Units gathering to help in the making of poppies. They are fully masked and are practicing social distancing. This is a nice way to spend time together and assist in the making of the poppies.

As a reminder, poppies can be distributed year-round. Many Units and Counties have poppies left over from last year, so the orders have been reduced in numbers compared to last year. Those Units and Counties that will need to order, please make sure to order by the deadline of December 1, 2020. Orders received may not be able to be filled.

*Public Relations.....Carrie Davenport, Chairperson*

With COVID-19 still impacting our day to day lives, it is more important than ever to find ways to share with your community all that you are doing to support our Veterans and to support the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Doing so will help recruit new members when events and activities don't allow you to open your doors to the community like you traditionally would. A strong commitment to your unit's public relations efforts will help you in doing so.

One resource that is available on the National website (in the members only/PR media toolkit tab) that is a great way to promote the work of the American Legion Auxiliary is their printable posters. There are 17 posters that share the work of the ALA that can be downloaded and printed at your post home or taken to a print shop on a flash drive so that they can print it for you. The posters are formatted for 11 x 17 and 18 x 24 and it is recommended that they be printed on gloss paper. Personally, I have printed them on cardstock or poster paper, and they have come out great! Not interested in creating posters that are that large. While the sizes on the website are standard for posters, you can easily print a smaller version (e.g., 8.5 x 11") by simply selecting the "fit" or "reduce to fit" option from your home printer. A commercial printing store also can select this smaller size for you.

Think of the places in your community that you can post things like this on! Add a call out box in a bright color with your unit's information and contact information. Maybe attach a few membership applications. Are there community boards at the post office? What about a bulletin board at the grocery store? Any local businesses that might let you team up with them to put flyers in their check out bags.

Using print advertisements from the national website is great, but maybe you can use them to inspire someone in the unit to design a poster. Using pictures from your unit's events to design your own poster can help recruit people. Community members might see someone they know in the pictures and consider joining. A great free web-based resource that you might consider using is [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com). There are many free templates and sizes to choose from. You can upload your own images, select graphics, enter your own text. This online tool allows you to make social media graphics, posters about events, posters about the American Legion Auxiliary. Most importantly while working the public relations program during this tumultuous time in our county.

*Warrior Family Assistance.....Ann Greaney, Chairperson*

This year has been marked by uncertainty and turbulence. No one knows exactly how the future will play out. I see the opportunity to reach out in our communities, Post homes and VA facilities to inform them of the criteria to apply for a WFA grant. To date for this administrative year, not one WFA grant application has been received. Keep in mind that the WFA is in place to help currently deployed military and their families and those veterans honorably discharged within the last ten years. National Guard and Reservists who have been federally deployed within the last ten years are also eligible for assistance. They do not need to be a member of The American Legion to apply. Non-repayable grants up to \$1,200 are available for maintenance, medical or employment opportunities. Grant payments are always sent directly to the creditor; credit card debt is not eligible for payment. WFA brochures can be obtained from the Department Office. Reach out to your community and VA facility to spread the word about the WFA program. Eligibility requirements, application process and type of expenses covered can be found in the Plan of Action Supplement under Programs, scroll down to WFA. Request applications by contacting the Department Office or by emailing me at

[nyalawfa@gmail.com](mailto:nyalawfa@gmail.com). Thank you to the Counties that have responded with the names of members who are willing to be on a WFA review panel in their County. I look forward to receiving additional names, so consider serving on a panel. Even if you do not have a review panel, report how you are promoting the WFA program, any monetary donations sent into the Department Office and locations where you have placed brochures. Let us be able to give back, when asked for help.

Wishing you all the Hope, Wonder and Joy of the Holiday Season!

*Message from the Department Office.....Barbara and Caitlin*

- **Membership updates** - As a reminder, membership totals are updated each week by the Department Office on Wednesday. If you need up-to-date membership totals, you can email the office or call the Department office for up to date numbers for your unit and/or county meeting.
- **Please do not send DD214's into the office with applications.** Once the Post Adjutant/Officer signs the application, return the supporting documents to the member. The office only needs the completed – signed application with the dues and transmittal.
- **Members** – if you move, change any contact information, phone numbers, emails, etc., please send the change to the Department office so your information is updated in a timely manner. This also pertains to unit President, Membership Chair and Unit Treasurer

**Please DO NOT hold membership**, send it in promptly so it can be processed in a timely manner.

- **Newsletters** – E-mail copies of the Newsletter are available to any member wanting a free copy. Please e-mail anyone of us at the office with a valid email and we will get you on the list. The Newsletter is emailed to all Unit/County Presidents, Unit/County Membership Chairmen and Unit/County Treasurers if we have your email address. If you do not have email and someone in the unit/county would like to receive it on your behalf, please let us know so we can add them to the list. Also, County Committee Chairmen receive the newsletter via email. If you do not have anyone in the unit and/or county with an email to receive the email newsletter for you, please contact the Department Secretary for a copy.
- Mailed copies of the Newsletters are available at the cost of \$15.00 per year.

Please have a blessed Thanksgiving and remember those less fortunate. Please keep our Country and Military safe during these uncertain times. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year!

**The Department office is here to help you and we are only a phone call or email away**  
**American Legion Auxiliary, Department of New York, Inc.**  
**1580 Columbia Turnpike, Bldg. #1, Suite 3**  
**Castleton-On-Hudson, NY 12033**

**American Legion Auxiliary**  
**101 Years of Service Not Self**



**BE SAFE, WEAR YOUR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS AND PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING!**