



*The American Legion Auxiliary
 Department of New York, Inc.
 1580 Columbia Turnpike, Bldg. 1, Suite 3
 Castleton-on-Hudson, NY 12033
 518-463-1162 / fax 518-449-5406*



September 2019

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

“Preserve the Past ~ Focus on the Future”

Greetings American Legion Auxiliary Members!!

What a great start to our Centennial Year!! We will CELEBRATE all year this year – and for every accomplishment that each of us have! Can you believe that this organization is about to celebrate 100 years of service to our veterans, military and their families! That’s why the American Legion Auxiliary was created!! Be sure to CELEBRATE our 100 year birthday on November 10th and let us know what you did!!

CONGRATULATIONS to Past Department President Marie for a very successful year and Department Convention in Buffalo AND for heading up our delegation at National! The Department of NY certainly has a LOT to celebrate! Our very own MARY ANNE CASEIDI was elected the National Chaplain! Now that’s something to CELEBRATE!! WOOHOO!! Congratulations Mary Anne!! We all wish you the very best this year!!

The Department of New York also won some National Awards!!

AMERICANISM:

Best Department Americanism Program in the Eastern Division–Karen St. Hilaire – Department Chairman
 Americanism Essay Contest Eastern Division – Class IV – Trinity Kenney – Albany County

CHILDREN & YOUTH: Most Outstanding Unit Children & Youth Program in the Eastern Division – B. Leo Dolan Unit #410

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Most Outstanding Overall Department Community Service Program in the Eastern Division during the Administrative Year – Janet Elston – Department Chairman

NATIONAL SECURITY: Military Spouse Award – to the Department with the highest percentage of members actively participating in military spouse e-mentoring and connected to military spouses – Sandy Seacat

POPPY/POPPY POSTER:

Most Outstanding Department Poppy Program Report in the Eastern Division–Lorna Silinovich Department Chairman
 Poppy Poster Contest Class IV and V – Class IV – Child in the Eastern Division in grades 8 & 9 – Brook Christmas and Class V – Child in the Eastern Division in grades 10 & 11 – Katie Ammann

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Most Outstanding Overall Public Relations Program in the Eastern Division – Kimberly Quick Department Chairman

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION/SERVICE TO VETERANS: Best Department VA&R Program in the Eastern Division – Mary Farley Department Chairman

Congratulations to all the winners and THANK YOU for taking the time to write up your submissions to National!! WOOHOO!!

And in order for the Department of New York to continue to win these awards, our members, YOU, need to be sure to report EVERYTHING! That’s what their reports are made of – what YOU do and what YOU report to them! AND, the Department of New York wants to “clean up” and really CELEBRATE at National next year! But we need your help!!! All those projects you help with . . . you probably take for granted, but you need to report it!! CELEBRATE IT!!

We have even more to CELEBRATE and be proud of as many of our members received an appointment at the National level!!

Kathryn Harris	Constitution & Bylaws Vice Chairman
Carol Hassett	Southern Division Americanism Chairman
Marie Mock	Membership Committee Member
Marrick McDonald	Eastern Division Leadership Chairman
Sandy Seacat	Eastern Division National Security Chairman
Yvonne Brunner	National History Committee Member
Lucille Mozillo	Junior Activities Committee Member
Barbara Wong	Community Service Committee Member
Cathe MacInnes	ALA Foundation Board Vice President
Terri Wallace	ALA Foundation Elected Director
Carrie Davenport	ALA Foundation Elected Director

Congratulations!! We also have National Executive Committeeperson Debbie Kryczkowski as our liaison on the National level. How honored and excited we all should be to have these special women represent the Department of New York in these positions! Congratulations and thank you!!

We have already started our County visitations! WOOHOO!!! Thank you to everyone for being so gracious and helpful during our travels! It's been just a fantastic experience so far and I can't wait to continue through the rest of the counties in this great state of New York!

There are lots of changes coming up! You will hear more about them during our Fall Conference in October! Be sure to report back to your units! Can't wait to see everyone!!

Let's continue our legacy of Service Not Self well into the next century! Come CELEBRATE with the members of the State of New York American Legion Auxiliary and ME!!



*Fall Conference Schedule, American Legion Auxiliary, Department of New York
October 10, 2019 - October 16, 2019*

DISTRICT	DATE	CONFERENCE START TIME	CONFERENCE SITE	ADDRESS
2nd & 10th	10/10	12 pm Registration 1 pm Start	Babylon American Legion Post #94	22 Grove Place, Babylon, NY
1st & 9th	10/11	9 am Registration 10 am Start	Moses Tyler Jr., American Legion Post #136	1 Legion Way, Mt Kisco, NY 10549
6th	10/12	8 am Registration	Lt. Warren Eaton Post, Norwich Post #189	29 Sheldon St, Norwich, NY 13815
8th	10/13	7:30 Registration 8:00 Breakfast	Fredonia Memorial Post #59	156 East Main St., Fredonia, NY 14063
7th	10/13	1 pm Registration 2 pm Start	Double Tree Inn	1111 Jefferson Rd, Rochester, NY 14623
4th	10/15	8 am Registration 8:30 am Start	American Legion Post #1619 Morrisonville	219 Rand Hill Rd Morrisonville, New York 12962
3rd	10/16	8:30 Registration Cont. Breakfast 9:30 Start	American Legion Post #152 Joseph E. Zaloga	4 Everett Rd., Ext., Albany, NY 12205 (Off exit 5 of Rt 90 518-459-1520.
5th	10/14	8:30 Registration coffee 10 am Start	New Hartford American Legion Post 1376	8616 Clinton St, New Hartford, NY 13413

Message from National Commander and National President

James W. "Bill" Oxford and Nicole Clapp

8/30/19 INDIANAPOLIS

Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary now open to male spouses of U.S. veterans and servicemembers!

The American Legion has voted to extend membership in the American Legion Auxiliary to male spouses of U.S. veterans and servicemembers. During The American Legion National Convention in Indianapolis in August, delegates of The American Legion voted to replace the word "wife" with "spouse" in their constitution and bylaws, opening up membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.

Why are The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary making this change? Currently, 1.9 million women veterans are living in the United States, and 9% of the U.S. military is female. By 2045, it's estimated that 18% of the U.S. military will be comprised of women.

"As we welcome eligible male spouses into the American Legion Auxiliary, we gain another perspective on the needs of military families — enabling the Auxiliary to support even more veterans, servicemembers, and their families," said 2019-2020 American Legion Auxiliary National President Nicole Clapp.

This new membership eligibility has much promise for growth in the American Legion Auxiliary, leading to new resources, increased funding opportunities, and additional diversity and talent among our leadership, as well as general membership.

American Legion Auxiliary members, since the founding of our organization in 1919, have been committed to meeting the needs of veterans, the military, and their families. The American Legion Auxiliary will continue its century-old legacy of Service Not Self well into the future. An increasing number of veterans, servicemembers, and their families will need support. The American Legion Family is taking a "big picture" look at how to help these future families, and keeping our membership strong.

About the ALA: Founded in 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) helps to advance the mission of The American Legion. With more than 600,000 members, it is one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military, and their families. ALA members volunteer millions of hours annually, with a value averaging \$1 billion each year. From helping to draft the GI Bill in 1944 to advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, The American Legion Family has been instrumental in advancing legislation that improves the quality of life for our nation's veterans. To learn more and get involved, visit www.ALForVeterans.org

"LEGION ACT" signed into law July 30, 2019

In a significant legislative victory for The American Legion, President Trump signed a bill July 30 that declares the United States has been in a state of war since Dec. 7, 1941.

The American Legion sought the declaration as a way to honor approximately 1,600 U.S. servicemembers who were killed or wounded during previously undeclared periods of war.

The LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act) also opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to access American Legion programs and benefits for which they previously had not been eligible.

"Recognizing the service of these wartime veterans is the right thing to do and it is long overdue," National Commander Brett Reistad said. "The families of those who were killed or wounded during these wartime acts should take pride in knowing that we recognize their sacrifice and service. Moreover, we are proud to welcome any of the six million living veterans from the previously unrecognized periods into our organization and call them 'Legionnaires.'"

Now that the legislation has been signed, The American Legion's eligibility criteria immediately changes from seven war eras to two: April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to a time later determined by the federal government. No other restrictions to American Legion membership are changed.

The law's journey began on Feb. 14 when Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., introduced S. 504, along with Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C. A companion measure, H.R. 1641, was introduced in the House by Reps. Lou Correa, D-Calif., and Ben Cline, R-Va.

Commander Reistad expressed gratitude to the bipartisan members of Congress for passing the legislation. "We are grateful that President Trump fully acknowledges the importance of The American Legion by signing the LEGION Act in the White House today – just one week after it passed the House of Representatives," Commander Reistad said. "In an era of partisan gridlock, Republicans and Democrats in Congress overwhelmingly recognized the importance of allowing thousands of honorable but previously ineligible veterans the right to join the largest and most influential veterans' organization in the country."

Commander Reistad pointed out that existing American Legion Family membership applications are in the process of being updated but can still be used. "In the meantime, I recommend that prospective Legionnaires, Auxiliary, SAL's and recruiters write 'LEGION Act' in the eligibility date section of American Legion Family membership applications if they fall outside the previous war eras," Commander Reistad said. "The larger pool of veterans now eligible for The American Legion will also open their family members to eligibility in the Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary as well."

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

Wow!! We are celebrating our 100th Year. YAY! What a great accomplishment, to think that our organization has been around for so many years. Let's make sure we keep going into the next 100 years by renewing and recruiting our membership, and keeping it strong.

I came back from National Convention with lots of information and thought I would pass it on to you.

- Male spouses may now join the American Legion Auxiliary. The American Legion has voted to extend membership in the American Legion Auxiliary to male spouses of U.S. veterans and servicemembers. During the American Legion National Convention in Indianapolis in August, delegates of The American Legion voted to replace the word "wife" with "spouse" in their constitution and bylaws, opening up membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.
- With the passing of the Legion Act signed into law July 30, 2019, it expands eligibility in The American Legion to include veterans who served in U.S. military conflicts previously unrecognized by Congress as war eras. This also opens the door for us to get new members too.
- National as well as the Department of New York continue to waive their portion of dues for the first year for any female veteran you sign up. Ask that your unit and your county also waive their portion of the dues so that your new veteran member does not have to pay anything for their first year's membership in the Auxiliary.
- Make sure new members receive a Welcome Package. National will be making phone calls to new members to see how welcoming their new unit was.
- Attach a business card to a new member application. Be sure it has on your name and contact number or email, how much your membership dues are, and who/where to send the application to.
- Get to know your new members, try to keep them involved in volunteer activities that might best suit their skills and interests.
- PUFL distributions for 2020 dues will be done in the end of October.

Please remember to report to me how your unit/county is renewing their members and how they are recruiting new members.

Get your cameras out and start taking pictures of all you do to keep our membership going. Have fun and remember to celebrate this very special 100th year.

Congratulations to Unit #44 for the first "spouse" ALA member.

Department President's Project- "Stop Soldier Suicide".....Nancy J. Babis

Is reportable under VA&R – Their mission is to stop service member, veteran and military family member suicides. All donations and fund raising projects (include hours worked, number auxiliary members assisting etc..) should be reported. More info during the upcoming Fall tour. Stay tuned!

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

Greetings from the VA&R program of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York! I am honored to be your chairperson this year. I look forward to hearing about all the great things your units and counties are doing for our Veterans and their families.

Some basic reminders about what gets reported under this committee:

- **Service to Veterans:** Any service not performed for a veteran within a Veterans Affairs (VA) facility is counted under this part of the program. Care packages, greeting cards, burial services, cooking, sewing and shopping for Veterans are some examples of what to report.
- **Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service: VAVS:** If you work alongside VA employees in our VA hospitals and clinics your hours get recorded here. Make sure you sign in using the official VA volunteer computer system, that way your hours will be properly recorded towards earning your service bars.
- **Creative Arts:** Will be held in Michigan this year. The American Legion Auxiliary supports both the local and national programs. Please report any dollars donated here. Stay tuned for more information on this great program.
- **Comfort Warriors:** is a program of the American Legion. With the number of wounded service members rising there is an increased need for electronics, puzzles, cards etc.

A couple of numbers for you to put in your phones: Veterans Crisis Center: 1-800-273-8255. Keep this number in your phone so when you come in contact with a Veteran in need you can be prepared to share this number with them. Also, there is a Woman’s Veteran health care hotline: 1-855-829-6636. Share this number with your female veterans and get them involved in the VA health care system.

Don’t forget the first reporting period is Nov. 1 2019 all units report to their County chairperson. County Chairpersons must have their report to the Department Chairperson by Nov. 10, 2019.

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

As the American Legion Auxiliary begins our 100th year, let us begin our “Celebration” by supporting our Children and Youth Program. This program emphasizes protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families.

I am saddened to announce Josh Dogs / GI Josh are no longer available. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the company that manufactures Josh has closed. Another change this year “Star Spangled Kids” will be reported under the Americanism program.

I encourage all units and counties to look for children in their community that qualify for youth hero or good deed awards. Forms are in the plan of action. Remember when you are sending photos via email, use the highest resolution settings.

Did you know that the Children & Youth program started out as “Child Welfare program”? Let’s celebrate by donating to the American Legion Child Welfare foundation. I look forward to receiving your reports and reading about the unique ways you are celebrating our Children & Youth program.

100th Anniversary ALA.....Colleen McDaniels, Chairperson

On November 10th the American Legion Auxiliary will officially celebrate its 100th anniversary. Members from all walks of life represent the ALA’S mission of service toward our veterans, military, and their families. As we reach our centennial, we must strive to carry on the work created by our predecessors. We can do this by keeping our veterans and their needs always in front of us while assisting in programs for our military members, their families, and our youth. As Auxiliary members we must echo the past as they work to instill patriotism, love of country, and respect for the American flag. By now every Unit, County, and District should be trying to plan an event to celebrate as it is time to showcase our legacy!

There are many ways to celebrate: host a Centennial Ball, bury a time capsule for 50 or more years, work with your local elected officials to do a special proclamation, coordinate a centennial day at your local public library, adding to your post or unit history by submitting old pictures that you have to your local newspaper, and/or find the most senior member (in terms of membership years) in your unit and honor them. It is all about creating some excitement about our past! After all, it is a once in a lifetime experience.

Instead of spending, hard earned money on formal advertisement to help spread the word, try utilizing a few free alternatives to let your community know what’s happening. Many newspapers have a community calendar, which allows organizations to list events for free and local news stations could also be a great source. Check with local businesses to see if they would display a flyer with the details about your centennial celebration. Social media is only a click away. In addition to Facebook, there is twitter, Instagram, and Snap Chat. Don’t be afraid of social media, ask a junior or involve a new young member if you are having trouble. Please be sure to use one of our Centennial Hash Tags **#ALA100Centennial and/or #ALA100**. And don’t forget to report your amazing celebrations to your Counties and to me! Here’s to the next 100 years of Service Not Self!

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

The ALA Americanism Program is one of ten Mission Outreach Programs that our members focus on during the year. The goal of our Americanism Program is to promote patriotic education among youth, adults and communities. As a new school year begins for our youth, consider setting a goal to increase participation in the **ALA Americanism Essay Contest**, which is open to students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs. See your Plan of Action for the six classes, Word Requirement, and other details. The theme and Essay Title for 2019-2020 is, “**How can we address the health and well-being of our veterans, military, and their families?**” The student essays will be due to your Unit for judging no later than February 15, 2020.

While browsing your Americanism Plan of Action, review the Unit, County and Department-level Awards that are being offered this year. Members can promote this program by encouraging our ALA Juniors or their own children or grandchildren to participate in the essay contest. Offer to contact your school or youth organizations like the Scouts, 4-H or church/religious youth groups. Help your Unit judge the essays!

So get started this fall by having your Unit create an information packet explaining the contest rules, deadline dates, theme, and award opportunities! Then get these packets distributed to students in grades 3-12, and be sure to capture this in your November Unit Report for Americanism!

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

I am very excited about this upcoming year as the American Legion Family College liaison for the Auxiliary. Tim Collmer - College Dean, Bruce Ruthven – SAL liaison and I will be working closely together as we continue to evolve The Family College experience to be inclusive for everyone. The American Legion Family College of New York is a 3 day leadership weekend immersion into the American Legion Family programs and structure. More details can be found in the Plan of Action Supplement for 2019-2020 please review and contact me with any questions.

The 2020 session is scheduled for June 5-7, 2020 at SUNY Morrisville with the tentative cost of \$225.00 per student. There is a potential of an increase due to price increases at SUNY Morrisville.

I would like to reach out to any Auxiliary member that has already attended to ask for your feedback of your experience and suggestions for possible curriculum changes. Again I look forward to a great year. I am 100% invested in making the Family College concept exciting for everyone and something everyone would want to attend.

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

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund was created in 1969 to provide temporary financial assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund supports its members who need it due to natural disasters such as hurricanes to crisis. Last year the emergency fund collected close to \$15,000.00. The maximum grant awarded from the National organization is \$2400.00. Please give to help support our members.

Chaplain.....Susan Britton, Chairperson

As Department Chaplain, I have the privilege this year of guiding our members to be at the helm asking God to guide us in our work, in our community, with our children and with our veterans. Placing our trust in God, we ask for the preservation of freedom so that each of us may worship God in whatever way we feel is right and allow others the same right.

The role of chaplain can be a very rewarding experience and can be a true source of joy and deep satisfaction. As a serving chaplain, one crucial thing to remember is that The American Legion Auxiliary does **NOT** promote any **one** religion. We must, therefore, not offend anyone by promoting our own religion.

If you are serving as chaplain for your unit or county, there are certain suggestions for duties in your role. A chaplain should always attend all meetings and have an opening and closing prayer. You are the spiritual leader of your unit or county and should conduct all religious services. Some of the typical duties include:

- reporting the names of members that are ill, and preparing a card for those present to sign
- sending a sympathy card to the family and if possible paying a visit to the funeral home when a member passes away
- being in charge of any religious services including draping the charter or performing memorial services

- visiting members and veterans in nursing homes and hospitals
- visiting members and veterans who are home shut-ins
- keeping in contact with Gold Star Mothers and remembering them on all holidays
- volunteering in community projects
- making a prayer and devotional book for either the unit or county President
- encouraging members to send prayers and devotional thoughts to be used in the prayer book

The service of a chaplain should be used not only at meetings, but at the following types of events:

- dinners, new member initiations, funeral services
- dedication of halls and monuments
- Four Chaplains Services, POW/MIA recognition programs
- Veteran's Day, Christmas, New Year, Easter, Memorial Day, and 4th of July programs
- installations, Gift Shop openings
- Gold Star Mother gatherings
- Jr. to Sr. graduations, The American Legion Birthday events

At all times, while providing spiritual and emotional guidance to members and their families, confidentiality should always be of the utmost importance.

As your Department Chaplain, I will be compiling a prayer book for Department President Linda and would ask that every unit submit a prayer for her book. What a wonderfully powerful way to thank her for a year of service to our organization.

As we work to demonstrate God's love, may we always be "One Nation Under God".

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

Welcome back! Hope all had a safe & relaxing summer. As you all should know, it's time to start getting our reports ready and send them in on time in November. County Community Service Chairmen are requested to calculate the total value of unit information and send it in on the county report form found in the 2019-2020 Plan of Action Supplement. I am looking forward to receiving your reports on Community Service.

Constitution and Bylaws/Resolutions.....Sally Johnston, Chairperson

As a result of National Convention action held in Indianapolis, IN August 23-29, 2019, The American Legion voted to change the American Legion Auxiliary "eligibility" status. A Bulletin has already been forwarded to all the County Presidents by our Department Secretary for distribution to their respective Units. Additionally, as our Department President Linda Tome visits your county with the Department Commander and the Detachment Commander, this topic is being discussed. However, you can educate yourselves further by going to the American Legion Auxiliary website www.alaforveterans.org. Be sure to "share" the information with those members who do not have internet or computer capabilities.

To answer the question, "do we have to resubmit our Constitution & Bylaws again this year if we had them approved in the 2018-2019 administrative year"? The answer to the question is "**YES**". Why, because the language has now been changed to remove the female gender only and to include "spouses". Therefore, if you do not change your Constitution & Bylaws as part of your governing documents, your Unit / County / District, will not be in compliance with the National Organization. Remember whether or not you change your documents, the National Organization takes precedence overall and we must follow whatever the National Organization rules are.

You will note on the Constitution & By-laws templates that are available on our department website www.deptny.org that the "Dues" section has been removed from the "Bylaws" and a new section has been added, "Standing Rules". This was done by Department Convention Action in July of this year. Why? Standing Rules are adopted by a majority vote and may be amended by a 2/3 vote at any meeting or if notice has been given, by a majority vote. Standing Rules are intended to make changes when necessary. Unlike our Constitution and Bylaws that are amended by convention action and sends a "red flag" to the IRS if we are changing them frequently.

Also, when you are updating your "Standing Rules" you must remember to remove the female gender only and change them to include the "spouses".

This is a very special year for us. Our 100th Anniversary! Let's do our best to make this year outstanding as we "Celebrate" with Department President Linda. **PRESERVE THE PAST AND FOCUS ON THE FUTURE**.

Education.....Cynthia Babb, Chairperson

This chairman was privileged to attend the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention in Indianapolis, IN and represent the Department at the Education committee meeting. The chairman spoke about her time spent with the winners of the Samsung Scholarship and their plans and dreams for the future. One scholarship winner didn't want to just be a pediatric doctor; she wanted to specialize in Pediatric Oncology. Another wanted to be a Veterinarian at the Washington DC zoo, specializing in elephant reproduction. When you were 18, did you know what you wanted to do with your life? Did you know how you wanted to conquer the world?

The American Legion Auxiliary offers scholarships to help high school seniors with planned pursuits like those to achieve their dreams by attending college. Please check the 2019-2020 Plan of Action Supplement for the scholarships that are out there. The Supplement can be located online on the Department website. Please contact me if you have questions or need assistance.

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

We are so excited about yet another great year for the Empire Girls State program. The 2019 session was filled with many amazing young ladies and we are already working hard preparing for the 2020 citizens to arrive!

Please note a few important details for the program:

- **Dates: June 28- July 4, 2020**
- **Tuition: \$330.00 plus \$25 nonrefundable application fee by citizen's family**

There is a lot of great information in the Plan of Action! Don't forget to read it carefully! In addition to all of the great information, there are applications to join the awesome Empire Girls State team!! Please review the job descriptions and requirements and see if it's something you might enjoy doing! We have even added an additional job- check it out to see if you are interested!! Applications are due January 1, 2020 so that we can begin to look through them and select our staff! It's such a rewarding experience and we know that if you join us one year, you too will catch the "girls' state bug" like each of us have!

Don't forget to review your county quotas! This information is in the plan of action and requires your county's immediate attention! The Quota form needs to be returned to Wendy Privitera, EGS 1st Vice Chairman so that plans can be made to accommodate each and every county! If your county has additional funds and would like to be on the wait list, please indicate it on that Quota form. We use this information to determine which counties will be asked to sponsor additional citizens based on first come first served. Please be on the lookout for your packets with all of the applications and county and unit instructions sometime between the middle to end of October.

Happy Planning and let us know if we can help in any way!

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

Fall checklist for Finance/Audit Chairmen and Treasurers:

- Has your budget been developed and adopted by your Unit/County/District? A good budget will enable your organization to run more efficiently. Be sure to include funds for the Department President's Project, Stop Soldier Suicide, in your budget! Because this program directly impacts the welfare of veterans and active military with evident medical need, poppy funds may be used in making donations to the project.
- Have you completed and returned the Unit Audit Data form to the Department Office? Since your books should have been audited prior to the start of this year, take care of sending in the form now! Counties and Districts may also use this form to report their audits.
- Be sure that your Treasurer reports at EVERY meeting and has her/his books available for inspection at each meeting, should any member wish to do so. The Treasurer should also report on the books of any subsidiary groups (for example, a kitchen/catering account or a separate VA&R account) at every meeting; the keeper of those books, if not the Treasurer, should have them available for inspection at each meeting as well. The books belong to the Unit/County/District, not to the individual Treasurers.

Make the 100th Anniversary year a terrific one for your Unit/County/District with solid financial support of all the programs you are working! Please don't hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Finance Committee should you have questions or need assistance – we are here to help!

Historian.....LouCinda LaFountain, Chairperson

We are beginning a new year! We have old projects to finish and new projects to begin. I'm sure it is going to be an interesting year. I would love to hear the history on all the Units this year. This is one of the projects that our President Linda is looking forward to too. Look in attics, basements and newspaper cellars. Ask your older members for the (Good old times) stories. A lot of them love to talk about what they feel is special moments at the legion. Write them down and give me a shout. I really think that it is fantastic to hear the way it was. Don't forget to report in November, I'll be looking forward to hear from you all.

Junior Activities.....Diane Butler, Chairperson

The Junior Activities program inspires active participation in members age 17 and under so that they will become engaging, productive members who will want to continue their American Legion Auxiliary membership into adulthood. There is lots of excitement this year for Juniors!

November 10th marks the 100th birthday of the American Legion Auxiliary.....invite juniors to participate in Unit celebrations! Don't forget to post your pictures on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and use hashtag **#ALA100Celebration**.

National is offering a new scholarship: The Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship. Ten scholarships in the amount of \$2500.00 each will be awarded to a current college student for 2020. Candidates for this award shall have been Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary for the past three consecutive years (2017, 2018, and 2019) and must be a paid member for the current (2020) membership year. See the website for details www.alaforveterans.org.

The American Legion Auxiliary Juniors academy e-Learning Course is now available! Members may log into the members only section of the website to register. This is a great opportunity for Juniors to learn the history of the American Legion Auxiliary and focus on its mission.

Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary as well as school-aged Sons of the American Legion members, who often work alongside our juniors, may earn patches for activities in ALA programs such as Poppy, Leadership, Americanism, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, and more.

This year there is the introduction of a new patch "The Goodwill patch." Junior members between 4th and 8th grades are eligible for this patch. The program is to help our soon to be adult members promote good will. Examples of qualifying activities are:

- Recruit a new American Legion family member
- Organize a joint Legion family fundraiser
- Write an essay on kindness and goodwill.

A suggestion for the patch program is to fill color coded folders for different patch requirements, plan an activity for the patch and a senior member can sign off on the appropriate paperwork for the junior member at the time of the activity. Don't forget to visit our Facebook page American Legion Auxiliary Juniors. Participating in the ALA Patch program give Junior members the opportunity to increase their knowledge of patriotism, citizenship, leadership, health and fitness.

The Mid-Winter Leadership Conference / Annual Department Junior Meeting and Elections is in Albany, NY on January 24th through the 26th 2020. Juniors are encouraged to attend for a weekend of learning and FUN! This is also a great way for Juniors to network and learn from each other. Registration forms will be available on the website in December.

The Junior Activities Handbook was revised in 2019 and you may purchase a book from Emblem Sales or download it from the ALA website.

Leadership.....Amy McEathron, Chairperson

Welcome to the 2019/2020 Leadership year. I am so excited to be your leadership chair on this most exciting 100th anniversary.

Mid-Winter is going to be amazing. A lot of information will be shared from all the Auxiliary committees. Membership, guest speakers and so much more to celebrate our 100th anniversary. More information to follow.

DID YOU KNOW:

- There is an ALA Leadership Facebook Group? ALA LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
- ALA Basics Course, this was formerly known as the Leadership course (as this was administered through the Auxiliary Leadership Committee) this is a self-paced study course which has been renamed the “Auxiliary Basics Course”. This is online on the National Website.
- Every member is encouraged to enhance their membership by expanding their knowledge.
- There is a protocol quiz on the National Website
- There are Leadership Course PowerPoints, these are great tools and downloadable. If you would like this sent to you, I will print and mail it to you.

Please keep in mind you can nominate a fellow member for special recognition from the National President. (Please let me know if you need help) We all have special members in our Unit, County, District or Department of NY.

Please review the awards that are available. I can't wait to see ALL the wonderful things that the leaders in New York have.

Please send in your emails to show things you are doing to promote our leadership and celebrating our 100 years, and also post on your websites and tag the department and national organization.

Remember, most leaders are not born, they are made. In addition to leadership qualities such as integrity, vision and the ability to communicate effectively, a good leader knows as much as possible about the organization they are leading.

I am here to help so please email me at nyalaleadership@gmail.com

I will email information on Mid-Winter Conference as it is all coming together. Look forward to seeing over 500 members in attendance. Let's show President Linda how New York can celebrate 100 years with our National President Nicole Clapp.

Legislative.....Maureen Morgan, Chairperson

The American Legion (TAL), a congressionally chartered veteran's service organization, determines membership eligibility for the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA), through their own bylaws. This is because The American Legion created the American Legion Auxiliary through their bylaws. American Legion Auxiliary membership eligibility has never been under the control of the ALA, it has always been under the control of The American Legion. By making the amendment change, the ALA will be proactively ensuring that this section of our governing documents will never be in conflict with TAL's governing documents.

A lot has been going on with the Legislative Committee recently. Let's start with our Department Convention - In a significant legislative victory for The American Legion, President Trump signed a bill July 30 that declares the United States has been in a state of war since Dec. 7, 1941. The American Legion sought the declaration as a way to honor approximately 1,600 U.S. servicemembers who were killed or wounded during previously undeclared periods of war. The LEGION ACT also opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to access American Legion programs and benefits for which they previously had not been eligible. The American Legion's eligibility criteria immediately changes from seven war eras to two: April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to a time later determined by the federal government. No other restrictions to American Legion membership are changed.

During The American Legion National Convention in Indianapolis members voted to extend membership in the American Legion Auxiliary to male spouses of U.S. veterans and servicemembers. The American Legion voted to replace the word “wife” with “spouse” in their constitution and bylaws, opening up membership in the American Legion Auxiliary. So if you have a female veteran that joins the American Legion, then her spouse is eligible to join the Auxiliary.

As stated by our 2019-2020 National President, Nicole Clapp, "As we welcome eligible male spouses into the American Legion Auxiliary, we gain another perspective on the needs of military families — enabling the Auxiliary to support even more veterans, servicemembers, and their families."

On the State/Department level of New York, our legislative priorities have not changed. We are still paying attention to the opioid crisis, funding for the vet to vet program that supports our Veterans that need help and someone to talk too. As Auxiliary members we need to understand that our Veterans need our support; PTSD is a very big issue for our Veterans no matter when they severed.

As a Dual Member this is going to be a very interesting year for me to learn more about the how the legislative system works. I am looking forward to attending meetings with our representatives for the State of New York and Congress. If you have never attended a convention; I strongly encourage everyone to start thinking about attending a convention and see what you are missing.

National Executive Committee person.....Deborah Kryczkowski

The National communication staff has been focused on getting clarification on the eligibility criteria and updating the National website and social media information. Some changes on the ruling from the Judge Advocate on definition of "spouse". National Headquarters will be distributing a fact sheet soon to our departments and posting on website.

A field in our ALAMIS data base was put in place for gender which is now in use.

November 10th is the ALA anniversary date - it's getting very close. National Headquarters would like see departments to take advantage of their social media and all opportunities at your disposal. This is when we ask our Squadrons and Posts to support us for our 100th Anniversary by working together to help celebrate our achievements.

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

The National Security program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting service members and their families. Here are some ways to help:

- Support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve and transitioning military service members and their families.
- Assist military spouses in getting and maintaining employment.
- Support the National Security programs of **The American Legion**.

Our National President, Nicole Clapp, has declared our theme this year to be "Celebrate ". As we celebrate our 100th Anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary, we need to look back at where we started and all that we have accomplished and that there is so much more we can do. Our military continue to defend us, and we need them to know that their families are being supported here at home. Some ideas taken from our Plan of Action include the following:

- Let your unit know of any military families or businesses that should receive a Blue Star or Gold Star Banner in recognition of a service member's service.
- Become more informed about issues affecting a military family's home life and the resources available to help, such as PTSD, TBI. Domestic violence, financial literacy and other sources.
- Refer service members with financial assistance needs to the American Red Cross Armed Forces Call Center at (877)272-7337.

Please REPORT all that we do for National Security to our County Committee Chairman on November 1st, so that we can all CELEBRATE our accomplishments, and we can be proud of the work that we have done and know that we have made someone's life better or easier in some way. Also remember to include all activities from May to October of 2019.

I am excited to see all that our wonderful state has done to "strengthen and support" our military service members and their families. Thank you all in advance for your efforts on this committee.

Parliamentarian.....Patricia Hennessy, Chairperson

As a Parliamentarian, you are the advisor that insures proper procedures for meetings are followed. You cannot make motions or participate in any debates. Having knowledge, plus on hand references, of Robert's Rules of Order, the Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules is essential.

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

Past Presidents of every level have a treasure trove of knowledge and experience for members and officers to use for help and guidance. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. In our 100th year, our Past Presidents are ready to be a strong part of the Leadership of our organization.

Congratulations to our 2019 Unit Member of the Year, Deborah Benedict of Sherburne Unit 876, Chenango County, 6th District.

Who will be our 2020 nominees for Unit Member of the Year? Keep your eyes open! Also, keep your eyes open for nominees for Salute to Servicewomen.

Please read the 2019-2020 Plan of Action Supplement along with the Department 2018-2022 Plan of Action. I am looking forward to your reports which are due by November 10th. Happy Holidays.

Poppy.....Sophie Liberatore, Chairperson

Ready set! – order poppies! It’s time, order forms are in your 2019-2020 Plan of Action Supplement. Please follow the instructions for ordering and adhere to the deadline dates. Also, please share the Poppy story, “In Flanders Field” with your membership.

Some interesting facts that were expressed at National Convention - Facebook is a great way to spread the word about poppies and poppy posters. Please go to the website to the correct information on how and when to use poppy money.

Some reminders on poppy posters: poppies are only RED! Greens and black are fine to use, but RED for poppies. Spelling on posters should be checked by teachers or parents, however, for the young ones, spelling is not so critical, remember, they are children! When submitting Posters for judging, please be sure that ALL the rules are followed, making sure the message is clear. Posters should be bright and bold RED! Short verbiage is best and should be able to be seen from 6 feet away. Some suggestions were to make flyers for schools to encourage students to participate. Also, have posters made at Girls State to get high school students involved!

Public Relations.....Carrie Davenport, Chairperson

The 2019-2020 year is an amazing time to be a member of the American Legion Auxiliary and with that comes great responsibility of its members to continually lift up the organization through public relations. As we celebrate our centennial, we also have an awesome responsibility to use public relations to share with the public about our newly expanded membership.

While there are many opinions regarding this change, we have an obligation to be educated about this change and how to best articulate it to our communities through public relations efforts. Currently 9% of those serving in the US military are women and there are over 1.9 million female US Veterans. As of this August, the spouses (either male or female) are now eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary.

So what are the best ways to promote this newly expanded membership?

Reach out to the female veterans that already belong to your local legion family. Make sure that they are aware of the change and the ways the organization can support their spouse. Invite both the veteran and their spouse to your next meeting or hold a spouse social. One unit shared on social media that they joined 5 new spouses after hosting a spouse social that resembled a happy hour.

Network with other veteran’s service organizations in your community. Let them know about the opportunities for veteran spouses to join the American Legion Auxiliary. Send a letter to these local clubs or organizations explaining the benefits of our amazing organization, details regarding membership and the many ways our organization supports the communities we are a part of.

Write an article for the local newspaper. Newspapers in all communities are working with fewer and fewer staff writers. They rely on article submissions from people within the communities they cover. Visit their website or call the local office to find out how you can submit an article. Write an article that promotes the expanded membership for the American Legion Auxiliary using information from www.deptny.org and www.alaforveterans.org. Provide information about your ALA Unit, Legion Post home, and who they might contact to obtain more information.

Regardless of the method you choose, be sure to get the word out about this change in membership requirements. Choose to see the positives that this change can provide for this organization instead of dwelling on the drawbacks. Be sure to promote the positives of this change, while being aware of what you express to the media and what you share on your own social media regarding this membership change. You never know when your own opinion might be taken as that of the entire organization and how you might have to combat some negative public relations as a result.

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

As we are all aware, there are many Auxiliary programs which assist our veterans, active duty and their families. Warriors Family Assistance is a unique program because of the urgent need of aid for a family in distress. It is in place to help currently deployed military and their families and those veterans honorably discharged within the last ten (10) years. The National Guard and Reservists who have been federally deployed within the last ten (10) years are also eligible for assistance.

There are three types of grants:

- Maintenance: covers living expenses including food, shelter, utilities, clothing, prevent eviction or foreclosure.
- Medical: To alleviate the cost of current medical expenses and assist with payment of medical bills.
- Opportunity for Employment: Financial assistance in finding transportation for work and child care while looking for employment.

Additional details can be found in the 2019-2020 Plan of Action Supplement and Department ALA website.

Grants of up to \$1,200 are awarded upon completion of the application, providing required documentation and an interview by a review panel from within the County. The application and supporting documents are then forwarded to the WFA Department Chairman. The application is then reviewed by a panel of three Department Executive Committee members (WFA Department Chairman, Department 3rd Vice-President and Department 2nd Vice-President).

Your help is needed in order to process the applications in a timely manner. The initial step is for each County President to appoint a review panel or point person in their County that I can contact when a request for immediate assistance is received. Members are encouraged to volunteer to assist the veteran or service member complete the paperwork and interview the applicant. Please email (wfa@gmail.com) the name and contact information of the member who has volunteered in your County. It is important to notify the WFA Chairman or Department Office as soon as possible if you are aware of a veteran or active duty service member in immediate need of assistance so that we can move the process along quickly.

Remember to publicize the WFA in your community distributing brochures to VA Clinics, hospitals, veteran service officers and American Legion Posts. Donations to the WFA program is needed and greatly appreciated. Include a line item in your budget or run a fundraiser with proceeds earmarked WFA. They have sacrificed so much for our freedom, let's give back when asked. Auxiliary members are at their best when our veterans and active duty reach out for help. A successful program relies on Auxiliary members as a vital resource.

The November reporting period will be here before we know it so promote the WFA program and **REPORT.....REPORT.....REPORT.**

"Finding the New York Faces".....Susan Britton, Coordinator

WE ARE GETTING CLOSE!!! Believe it or not, we are only lacking 259 photos of veterans from New York on the Wall of Faces website. Two and a half years ago in March of 2017, we started looking for photos of 1,176 Vietnam veterans who were missing photos. Each of these Vietnam Veterans deserves the recognition of having their photo shown along with their biography on the site. We are **URGENTLY** asking everyone to check the listing of remaining veterans who gave the ultimate sacrifice. The listing can be found on the American Legion Auxiliary's Department website (www.deptny.org)....Click on "Announcements", scroll down the page and look for the "Finding the New York Faces" icon, below the icon will be the link to click on to see the list (by county) of remaining photos to be found.

PLEASE review the listing to see if there is a veteran whose photo you can obtain for posting. The photo can be their military photo, their high school graduation photo or even a casual photo of them. **PLEASE** help us to locate these photos so we finally recognize all from New York who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Message from the Department Office.....Barbara, Caitlin & Nicholas

- **The White unit/county cards and County Committee Lists for the 2019-2020 administrative year** are past due! Please send them in ASAP.
- **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 Presidents, Unit Membership Chairmen and Unit Treasurers if we have your email address. If you do not have email and someone in the unit would like to receive it on your behalf, please let us know so we can add them to the list. Also, all County Presidents, County Membership Chairmen and County Treasurers as well as 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.
- **Membership updates** - As a reminder, membership totals are updated each week by the Department Office. If you need up-to-date membership totals, you can call the Department office for up to date numbers for your unit and/or county meeting.

- The Four-Year Plan of Action or the 2019-2020 Plan of Action Supplement are available for \$20.00 each book by sending your check to the Department Office or you can download it from the Department Website for free.
- Bonding/Day Fund invoices were sent to County Presidents in early September and are due no later than November 1st 2019. Units please make sure you send your unit check to your county treasurer.
- ALAMIS renewals are due no later than December 15th, 2019. New ALAMIS requests are welcome with the completed ALAMIS application sent to the Department Office.
- 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.

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
 Important dates to remember!!!**

**September 11th – Patriot Day, September 18th – Air Force Birthday
 October 13th – Navy Birthday, October 14th Columbus Day, October 31st Halloween
 November 5th – Election Day
 November 10th - American Legion Auxiliary 100th Birthday!!
 November 10th -Marine Corps Birthday, November 11th – Veterans Day, November 28th – Thanksgiving
 December 7th – National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, December 22nd Hanukkah begins at sundown,
 December 24th – Christmas Eve, December 25th Christmas Day, December 31st – New Year’s Eve**

“Shout-out” to ALA member Hazel Thompson - Unit #443 - Chemung County who just celebrated her 102nd birthday on September 5th.

