



*The American Legion Auxiliary  
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### *Important Updates*

**Value of a Volunteer Hour updated** – Please note that the value of a volunteer hour was just changed by the Independent Sector after our Plan of Action forms were printed and mailed. The forms on the Department Website have the correct value of \$27.20. Please pass this information on to your unit members when filling out their committee forms.

**Updated 2021 Unit Goals** – Some units received new goals in the mail in late August. Any unit that sent in 2020 membership dues after the Department Close of Books – June 16, 2020 received a new goal. National based our Department Goal on their Close of Books – August 3, 2020. Please do not hold onto membership dues.....

**VAVS Representatives and Deputies Update** –  
St. Albans Community Living Center – add Nicole Ross as a Deputy

**District Change** – Karen Chan is now the 1<sup>st</sup> District Vice President - kchan1291ala@gmail.com

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

Thank you to all who remained in your office for the second year as we continue to celebrate our 100 Year Anniversary! Boy are we special!! Who can officially say that they celebrated a birthday for 2 years!! Woohoo!! But seriously, thank you and I hope that you are able to expand on all the good things that you didn't get to do last year and improve upon the ones you will be doing again!!

I'm not sure if you all know, but I've been posting a monthly video around the first week of the month on the **American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York President** Facebook page. Since I'm not able to go out to speak with everyone and because of this COVID, I thought that we can still try to stay connected by doing a little 5-10 minute video providing updates from National as well as from the Department! I hope that you are able to listen in! I hear that some members are actually bringing their laptops to their Unit meetings to have their members listen in! How cool!! Now, for those of you who don't have access to a computer or don't have a Facebook account, I have transcribed each of the videos and have sent them to the Department Secretary. So if you would like the transcript, please contact the Department office and one will be sent to you!!

Unfortunately the District Visitations were cancelled for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> District in September and 9<sup>th</sup> in November due to COVID. Hopefully I'll be seeing some of our members at the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> District Visitations with Commander Mike and Detachment Commander Dennis. I miss my traveling buddies and miss seeing and connecting with all our members!

The current estimated National value of each volunteer hour has been updated to \$27.20/hour. Unfortunately the rates were not out in time for the printing of the 2020-2021 Plan of Action Updates. Therefore, please be sure to update your report forms for Unit & County when sending in your reports for this November!!

Well, we have a little contest going on!! #GivingTuesday is December 1<sup>st</sup> this year, and the National ALA Foundation will be accepting donations beginning immediately through December 1<sup>st</sup> and the Department with the most donors will be crowned the #Giving Tuesday Department of the Year!!! Did you know that the Department of NY has benefited from nearly \$27,000 in grants supporting veteran projects, local Veterans Creative Arts Festival programs, ALA EGS and ALA branding! Since the Department of NY has 3 of our own ALA members on the Board of the ALA Foundation (Cathleen MacInnes, Terri Wallace and Carrie Davenport), I really hope that we can make them proud by winning this event!!! National will be counting the **number** of donors and not the dollar amount, so this is our chance to let the Department of NY shine!! Even if you donate just \$1 to the Foundation, it counts as a donor! Winners will be announced on National's social media after December 1st! Donations will only be counted by using the Foundation link at <https://donate.legion-aux.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/QDSQ9AAB#c> or a check payable to ALA National Headquarters, marked for #GivingTuesday will be counted in this contest! LET'S DO THIS NEW YORK!! For information on the National ALA Foundation, go to: <https://www.alaforveterans.org/About/ALA-Foundation/>

Some other breaking news regarding our January Mid-Winter Conference . . . we have been working with The Legion and as of this writing, groups of more than 50 are still not permitted to assemble. We don't know what the numbers will be in late January but we are going to start working on Plan B -- a Mini Mid-Winter Conference. More work has to be done, but we are thinking of doing a live stream for our Conference from Albany! We are currently checking all our options and will send out more information as it becomes available.

AND in the same breath . . . you are probably wondering about our Department Convention! Well . . . in working with The Legion, they tell me that due to the permanent closure of several hotels in White Plains, they will not be hosting the 2021 Department Convention. The Legion is looking at possibly holding their 2021 Department Convention at the Desmond in Albany and because our Constitution & Bylaws indicate that we must hold our Convention at the same time and in a place as close as possible to the site of The American Legion Department Convention, we will be looking at that option as well. So stay tuned as we continue to work together on our options with our Department of NY American Legion family.

Thank you to everyone for hanging in there with me for another year! We will get through this!!

And until we do, please continue to work together as the American Legion Family that we are!

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

I hope this newsletter finds everyone safe and healthy. Our State and Country have been through a lot these past six months, and I know many of us are not thinking about membership.

But remember membership is what keeps our organization going.

- National is mailing out renewal notices this week, so it is good time to reach out and to stay in touch with the members who can not come to meetings because of fear of the Pandemic.
- The Department of New York will continue to waive their portion of dues for the first year for any female veteran you sign up. National is no longer waiving their dues.
- Make sure new members receive a Welcome Package. Get to know your new members, try to keep them involved in volunteer activities that might best suit their skills and interests.

At our last Executive Meeting, President Linda said that if every Unit has 50% membership paid by Midwinter, she will shave her head. Let's do it!



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 let's continue to celebrate this very special 100th year.

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

Hello fellow Auxiliary Members. I do hope you enjoyed the warmth of this summer and accept the challenge to establish a new normal in our Covid State of social distancing.

Serving a second year on this committee has given me a challenge to explore more deeply the workings of our VA hospitals and Homes and the impact on our Veterans. I spoke with all the VA Voluntary Service coordinators across the state by telephone to introduce myself and question them on their thoughts about how our organization can contribute to the wellbeing of the Veterans in their facilities. What an education I received! The resounding theme was that these men and women all miss the presence of our Auxiliaries in their VA's. They are very grateful for all we do for our Veterans. There are programs in the works whereby volunteers can contact Veterans by phone and do something like a "Buddy check". I will issue a bulletin as soon as these programs are available to implement.

I have been advised by our National leaders that **Gift Shops** are a Department only program and that any changes to it will come from the Department. Since I don't believe that volunteers will be allowed in to conduct our traditional gift shops, I see two options: 1). Do a gift card only Gift Shop, put gift cards into holiday cards and give to the VA to distribute (some Gift Shops are already done that way) or 2). Reschedule an actual Gift Shop when the VA's will allow volunteers to again have in person access to our hospitalized veterans, hopefully this will occur in the Spring. I am scheduling a conference call to discuss our options and finalize a plan.

I would like to request all County Chairman instruct Unit chairman to report the names along with the hours that each member volunteers in Service to our Veterans. These members are eligible to earn recognition for their unselfish dedication to our Veterans. I want to give out as many of these pins and bars as possible. Please include the volunteer's name, membership number and total hours/number Veterans served. **Example:** Nancy Babís 126 xxx xxx 10 hours (shopping, meal prep, playing cards) 2 Veterans served

Please note the **new reporting forms**. I tried to clarify what to report. If you have any questions as you complete your November reports, please email or call me.

An idea for letting Veterans know they are still part of the ALA mission - Arrange for a car parade - invite Legion, SAL, Riders and of course Auxiliary members to decorate their cars and drive past the VA where staff have positioned our Veterans to be looking out at the parade. Include signs with BIG letters so they can be read from a distance. Include Fire and Police too!

Thanks!

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

The purpose of the American Legion Auxiliary Children and Youth program is protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth in our community. While emphasis is on military children, this program encompasses all children activities and programs. So be sure to include them in your report.

Due to the COVID pandemic, we as adults are feeling stressed and overwhelmed. Life as we knew it has changed. Now imagine how children feel. School canceled, home online education, no longer able to play with friends, or even see some family members, for the past several months. Now schools are making plans to reopen, but it will be very different and most likely very scary. They need our programs and support, now more than ever.

Students will need normal supplies donated, such as crayons, pencils, paper and backpacks. This year schools will also need additional cleaning supplies and masks.

We must continue to develop and support programs that address anti-bullying and suicide prevention, especially in 12 to 16 year age group.

Youth Hero and Good deed awards for youths who do brave physical acts or good deeds in their community. Requirements and fillable applications are on the department website. To date the Department of New York has presented 1 Youth Hero and 21 Good Deed awards. Great Job.

We can also continue to provide monetary report to The Child Welfare Foundation. Do a bottle drive or other fundraiser. Send donations to the ALA Department of NY office with notation in memo for CWF. Thanks to our members, Department of NY received Heritage Patron award from National AL for our 2019-2020 CWF donations.

Review National website [www.alaforveterans.com](http://www.alaforveterans.com), under Children and Youth members only section, for additional ideas, including a printable Halloween coloring book, or I'm a Hero 2 sticker.

While doing some Amazon shopping I found two books to help military children whose parents are deployed or have come home injured. The first one "Daddy's (or Mommy's) Boots by Sandra Miller Linhart, this story helps understand were the boots take them. The second book, "Brave for my family" by Davidson Whetstone – discusses a family's journey after the father was injured while serving.

In conclusion, I just want to remind everyone how important it is to report all activities from units to county to department.

*100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ALA.....Colleen McDaniel's, Chairperson*

YES, We are continuing our celebration until our 2021 convention! That means that we get to celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for another year. Let's try to come up with ways to highlight our amazing support of our veterans, military, and communities. Promote all the amazing things you are doing and don't forget to mention our Century of Service not Self.

I am also asking for every county to please remember to send in your reports for November, March, and April. I would love to have 100% reporting for our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

*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, some remotely and some in-person, 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 2020-21 is the same as last year, "**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, 2021. Students may not re-submit an essay from last year.

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. 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! If you can get your packets created electronically as a .pdf file, it will be easier for you to get the packet to schools and teachers, and easier for them to get students and parents.

Congratulations to the Department of New York for receiving two Eastern Division Americanism Essay Awards in Class IV and V! Way to go!

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

How different these past several months have been for all of us, I trust everyone continues to stay healthy as we move forward with the 2020/2021 administrative year. I had a great phone conversation with Tim Collmer yesterday and I am very excited about this upcoming year as the American Legion Family College liaison for the American Legion Auxiliary. Tim is 100% invested in turning the State of New York's Legion College into an American Legion Family College that we all can be proud of. Tim - College Dean, Bruce Ruthven – SAL liaison and I will continue to work closely together to evolve The Family College experience to be inclusive for everyone.

With Covid 19 upon us we are not 100% sure how the college is going to look like but know it will happen. The 2021 session is currently scheduled for June 4-6, 2021 at SUNY Morrisville but that still needs to be confirmed with a meeting with the staff at SUNY Morrisville.

I will be keeping everyone updated as more information unfolds. Be safe and stay healthy

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

This has been a very bad time for the American Legion Auxiliary and The Emergency Fund with the Covid-19 restrictions still in place and many Legions still closed it is hard to do any type of fund raising. I hope everybody is well and getting back to normal or as normal as possible.

Please consider a donation to the Emergency fund this year, as a lot of members are falling on hard times or suffering the severe weather, fires, floods, etc.

God bless America, The American Legion Family and all our service men and women.

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

As Unit Chaplain, you play a very critical and important role within your Unit. You are, of course, responsible for opening Unit meetings with an Invocation and ending the meeting with a Benediction. You are the spiritual leader of the Unit and it is imperative that you set a shining example for all your members guiding them spiritually and emotionally throughout the year.

Whenever you have a deceased member, a death notice needs to be filled out immediately and sent to me with all of the information filled out. This notice can be found in your 2020-2021 Supplement. It is also 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. 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:** Remember to share a prayer or devotional thought with me for Department President Linda's Prayer Book. What a special opportunity to note the occasion of our 100th Anniversary celebration or with a special prayer that reflects these difficult times we are all facing together.

May God richly bless each of you as we continue to stay strong and weather this global pandemic. God is good and I pray for the safety of each of you and your family members.

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

GOD BLESS!

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

As we continue our daily lives working through COVID-19 we will continue practicing social distance. Fulfilling the ALA mission to service our military families, veterans, seniors, and communities. Although, we will need to find other ways to communicate, wellness checks, errands, maybe make baskets and masks, dog walking etc. and most of all show Kindness Restore someone's faith in Humanity. I look forward to receiving your 1st report in November 2020.

REMEMBER make sure to return your reports to County follow the instruction on the report sheet also district and county on the reports Stay Safe.

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

As we start our new Auxiliary year, it is time to review our governing documents. Some of our units and counties have not updated our Constitution and By-Laws for over twenty years. Certainly, at least our eligibility, meeting days and times, and dues have changed in that long. You need to find those forms and refresh them. To do this, simply go to the Department website and download the simple form that applies to you. Then fill in the blanks. You don't need to rewrite the whole thing. Rewriting only leads to conflict with our state and national documents. The Constitution part should

require very little. The By-Laws will depend on your unit. You must have the first two By-Laws as listed on the form, but the rest depend on your own unit/county. Some units vote on everything; some units spell out many of the usual activities and donations such as memorials for members who pass, money for attendance at conventions, etc., and yearly contributions to the Post or community. If you are writing your own part, be specific and be clear. Make sure that you are not just repeating what is included elsewhere, or, worse yet, contradicting a previous statement.

Our governing documents need to be current and precise to avoid frustration and confusion when an issue comes up. You might consider adding the possibility of electronic meetings to your documents as we have had some issues this year with the pandemic stopping in person meetings. If your documents are thorough and up to date it will solve many of the questions that do not need to become contentious for us.

Feel free to contact me with questions at [nyalaconstitution@gmail.com](mailto:nyalaconstitution@gmail.com).

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

In these uncertain times, I hope you are making a new strategy to participate in the Auxiliary's Education Program. Please contact your local high schools to find out the COVID-19 procedures of getting scholarship applications to high school seniors. The American Legion Auxiliary offers scholarships to help high school seniors with planned pursuits like those achieve their dreams by attending college. Please check the 2020-2021 Plan of Action Supplement for the scholarships that are out there. The Supplement can be located online at [www.deptny.org](http://www.deptny.org) in the Program or Plan of Action sections of the Department website. Do not forget about the non-traditional student scholarship for members of the American Legion Auxiliary, American Legion, or the Sons of the American Legion.

Besides the Department website, please review the national website. Remember there are many resources and "how-to-sheets" available to members on the national website under Education, <https://www.alaforveterans.org/Resources/Education> Be sure to check out the ALA Education Facebook Group where you can post the different activities your unit and/or county have participated in under the Education Program.

Above all, stay safe!! Please contact me on my cell at (845) 417-3797 with additional questions.

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

We want to thank everyone again so much for all of their hard work, help, and support with our successful 2020 ALA EGS virtual session!

We are so excited about yet another great year for the Empire Girls State program. We are already working hard preparing for the 2021 ALA EGS session. We are hopeful that we will be able to hold our program in person at SUNY Brockport this year, but there are many unknowns still at this present date. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we adhere to mandates and ever evolving changes.

### **Please note a few important details for the program:**

- **Dates: TBD**
- **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, 2021 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 the registration information 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*

**Budgeting** in the time of COVID-19! As you work to create a budget for your Unit/County/District, there will be some new challenges this year:

- ◆ Your General Fund may be a bit “healthier” than in previous years, as 2019-2020 had no expenses for attendance at Department Convention, the American Legion Family Homecoming, or other events planned to take place after March 2020.
- ◆ Your VA&R Fund, collected by distribution of poppies, may not be as robust as usual.
- ◆ Your opportunities to hold the same fund-raising events you’ve traditionally done may be limited.

**Brainstorm** ways to address those challenges – these ideas may get you started:

- ◆ If you have “extra” money in your General Fund, can you transfer some to your VA&R Fund? This will help you to be sure your Unit or County is ready to assist veterans in your community. Their needs may be even greater now than in other years. For example, they may need help with utility bills, health care expenses, or groceries. You might also want to pay the dues for members of your Post.
- ◆ Poppies can be distributed year-round – consider a distribution on Veterans Day or Thanksgiving.
- ◆ Be willing to try new fund-raisers such as drive-through dinners, bake less bake sales, and member solicitations. When you’ve had success with a new effort, please do take a moment to report it – although Finance is a non-reporting committee, we’d love to hear from you about what’s working!!

**Reminders:**

- ◆ Be sure to complete the Unit Audit Data form and send it to the Department Office. Please 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 finances of any subsidiary groups or bank accounts (for example, a VA&R account, a color guard account, or a kitchen/catering account) at every meeting. The keeper of the books for separate accounts, if not the Treasurer, should have them available for inspection at each meeting as well. Financial information belongs to all the Unit/County/District members, not to the individual Treasurers.

Please don’t hesitate to reach out to anyone of us on the Finance Committee should you have questions or need assistance – we are here to help!

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

As many of you know I’m new to this committee. LouCinda did a fabulous job last year. I only hope I can do as well.

Covid-19 has put a big damper on many things since March for all of us. What I need is some help gathering information/pictures and/or newspaper articles, so I can put together a History Book for President Linda for 2020-2021.

So, if any Unit, County, District or member has anything I can include in the book please send it to me. Pictures from last year’s Visitations would also be very helpful. My address is 154 N. William St. - Whitehall, NY 12887 or e-mail to [nyalahistorian@gmail.com](mailto:nyalahistorian@gmail.com). Please date the items, Unit number and location. It will be very much appreciated.

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

As we continue to celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> year, we celebrate the wonderful work our Juniors do. On a sad note, we are still dealing with this pandemic (COVID-19). I hope our Auxiliary members and Juniors are safe and healthy. School classes are resuming whether in person or virtual, we wish all our Juniors a productive school year.

Even though we are still in pandemic mode, there are activities Juniors can participate in. They can hold meetings whether virtually or in person. They also may participate in senior member meetings, all in person meetings should consist of members wearing face masks; observe limited attendance and social distancing rules. District Visitations will also be starting, invite your Juniors to participate and enjoy an evening with Department Officers.

Juniors may assist with Legion functions this fall such as corn mazes, hayrides and haunted houses per the rules set forth by the Governor.

- **Corn Mazes** - permitted consistent with Low Risk Outdoor Arts and Entertainment guidance and the following conditions: Reduced capacity, Face coverings required, Social distance maintained between individuals/parties
- **Hayrides** - permitted consistent with Public Transportation guidance and the following conditions: Mandatory face coverings, Social distance required between individuals/parties, Frequently touched surfaces, such as handrails, cleaned and sanitized between rides
- **Haunted Houses** - permitted consistent with Low Risk Indoor Arts and Entertainment guidance and the following conditions: Reduced capacity, Face coverings required, Social distance maintained between individuals/parties

Other opportunities for Junior members are as follows:

Juniors can raise money for the National Presidents' Scholarship Fund and earn a Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship patch! Raise \$5.00 for each year old (A 17 year old would need to raise at least \$85.00 (\$17 x \$5.00=\$85.00). Patch forms are available at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

Also available online for download are **A Certificate of Enrollment** for any newly enrolled Junior. The certificate may be downloaded from [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

If you have a Junior who's turning 18 years old, you may download a graduation certificate as well at the same ALA site.

Are you helping your Junior and young SAL work on their patches? You may need to adjust some of the activities due to social distancing. Be creative! Be flexible! What matters most is that they learn about the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Junior members who earn a patch this year will also receive a special ALA Centennial patch!

Remember Red (Remember Everyone Deployed) Fridays, Juniors are encouraged to wear red on Fridays until our servicemen and servicewomen return home.

Looking for information to share? Visit our Facebook page American Legion Auxiliary Juniors.

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

I can't believe it is Fall. With these trying times, no better time than to be a leader with the American Legion Auxiliary. National has many courses online for you to do from your own home. <https://www.alaforveterans.org/ala-academy/> classes available are ALA 101, ALA Communication Methods, Establishing ALAL Culture of Good Will, ALA Branding, ALA Juniors, ALA Fundraising, how to deal with conflict, these can be done at your own pace. They also have signups for virtual training currently being done on groups. So please utilize the National Website there is a lot of informative information on there website. I learn something new, each time I log on.

Mid-Winter 2021 is in the planning stage, still working out the statistics of doing a virtual Mid-Winter or in Albany. With the trying times, we are waiting for notifications which you all know changes daily. Either way, we will have a Mid-Winter and another Mid-Winter to celebrate the amazing 100 year anniversary with a lot of information and training to share.

If the County and or Unit Leadership chairs can please contact me if you did not receive an email from me yet at [nyalaleadership@gmail.com](mailto:nyalaleadership@gmail.com) I would greatly appreciate it. Just a hello so I add you to my emailing list.

Remember every member of the Department of New York is a leader. Share your knowledge and experience and never forget the purpose we joined this amazing organization.



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

As we start another year in our American Legion Auxiliary, we are still learning to deal with what's going on around us, we are still social distancing, wear masks when we go places learning how to do the things differently.

September is here and November is not far off. We are getting ready for the Presidential Election on November 3, 2020. Residents can either vote by mail or go to your local town halls and vote early or go to your polls and vote on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The American Legion is still committed to the Legislative Resolutions that were brought to the State and to Washington DC in March. Now more than ever, we need to worry about our veterans that suffer from PTSD and the veterans that are home bound due to the COVID. I am sure that there are veterans that did not think they had any form of PTSD until they were told by the government that we all had to stay home. If you are by yourself and you are told you must stay home and cannot visit family or friends, it can be extremely hard. Please reach out to everyone and just ask how they are doing. Our senators and congressmen are working hard to make sure everyone stays safe and healthy during this election period.

The American Legion Family can do their part. Offer to help those that want to vote. We can still do our part as Patriots. Do not forget to vote on November 3, 2020.

*National Executive Committee person.....Deborah Morris*

Wow, fall is here, where has the time gone? I hope everyone is in good health and continues to practice the State COVID-19 guidelines.

First, National President Nicole created and the NEC ratified two special committees. The National Code of Ethical Conduct Review Committee and The Inclusion & Diversity Committee. The National HQs wants to reach out to our members to find qualified individuals willing to serve on these committees. We want everyone to have an opportunity to apply. We need members that can carve out time and are willing to do the "heavy lifting" so proposals can be presented at the 2021 National Convention. ALA leadership experience is **NOT** required, more information to follow on the national website and to Departments.

A Resolution was recommended to the National Executive Committee by ALA Constitution & Bylaws Committee, National Chr. Trish Ward.

**Resolved**, that November 14, 2020 be recognized as "ALA National Read Your Unit/District/County/Department/National Constitution & Bylaws Day" and, therefore be it further

**Resolved**, that this shall be effective for the 2020-2021 Administrative Year.

Also National Children & Youth Chr. Lisa Williamson reported that the program focus has been The Good Deed and Youth Hero Awards with the goal to present 100 awards. Lisa reported that thus far the ALA presented 322 in the first 13 months of our 24 month administrative year. As COVID-19 has changed much of what we do, they have created a new fillable "Youth Hero/ Good Deed" nomination forms and available online on the National website. The process is streamline, allowing digital signatures and email capability. Lisa says the form and the efforts of the members, ensure we reach the goal in obtaining the 100 Awards by our National Convention in August 2021.

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

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

I hope everyone is coping with the pandemic and policies in place. Virtual meetings are now a fact. Madam President, Linda, has held our Executive Meetings virtually and they have been productive as well as successful.

Parliamentary procedures are still necessary in order to ensure your agenda is covered. Should your meeting get bogged down with one issue with only a few continuing to speak, attendees become frustrated and lose interest. Limit time in the beginning and number of times a person can speak; then everyone gets to voice their concerns.

P.S. While we have not been, I know that Units have been busy. Please make sure you send your information to our Department Chairman. Hopefully soon, we will be able to meet in person in the near future. I know I miss my American Legion Family! Stay safe!

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

Congratulations to our Department of NY Unit Member of the Year 2020, Melanie Haines of Warren E. Eaton Unit 189, Chenango County, 6<sup>th</sup> District!

The purpose of the Past Presidents Parley committee, as defined by National, is to utilize the experience and knowledge of past Auxiliary leaders for training and encouragement for future Auxiliary leaders. Those who have served as Unit, County, Department, or National President(s) have an opportunity to continue in active service to the Auxiliary, helping to ensure strong future leadership for the organization. Newly elected Presidents are included in this definition.

I am looking forward to your November 10<sup>th</sup> reports. Let's make this year another successful year!

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

As we start a new year, 2020-2021, we have new challenges. COVID-19 has made a great impact on all of us, for sure! We continue to do our best to support our Veterans and active military. Unfortunately, most posts throughout the state have canceled the Memorial Day parades. This was always a BIG day for passing out our Poppy's. Many have found other ways to get the Poppy story out and have received donations for the Poppies.

May, being National Poppy month, many Units have received Proclamations from their local officials with certificates and newspaper articles. This is a great way to promote National Poppy Day.

Please remember to continue to promote the Poppy program as well as all the American Legion Programs. All Units and Counties are encouraged to track your volunteer hours and report those hours!

We are happy to report that the Department of New York State has received three National Poppy Poster awards!  
Class V Eastern Division in Grades 10 & 11 Katie Ammann  
Class VI Eastern Division in Grade 12 Gillian Young  
Best Poster by all Eastern Division Submissions Gillian Young  
Congratulations to all the winners!

We did not receive any submissions for Little Miss Poppy. Let us try to promote the Poppy contest more for this upcoming year!

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

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

Our lives have changed dramatically this year and will continue changing in the weeks and months ahead. One thing hasn't changed – our commitment to support and promote the 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, and preventing 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 Plan of Action and 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-President and Department 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 ([nyalawfa@gmail.com](mailto:nyalawfa@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. Contact the Department Office for a supply of newly-printed brochures. 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 WFA 2020-2021 Unit and County reporting forms are available on the Department website ([deptny.org](http://deptny.org)). Note that the value of a volunteer hour is now \$27.20. Keep track of your hours supporting the WFA program and report your hours from May through October on the November 1<sup>st</sup> report form.

In these difficult days, we have all learned what it feels like to be vulnerable so now is the time to reach out by coming together to meet the needs of our Veterans, Active Duty Military and their families.

### *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.
- **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!!!**



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





Get Your Governing Documents • Get Your Mask • Get Involved

# November 14, 2020



## ALA NATIONAL READ YOUR CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS DAY

### Why Create a Day to Highlight Reading Governing Documents?

- Greater understanding of governing documents is needed across all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary
- It's time to encourage activism and energy around reading the organization's governing documents
- The COVID pandemic has illuminated the need for members to become more knowledgeable about their governing documents

### Join Us!

On November 14, 2020, get a copy of the ALA's governing documents (unit, district, county, department, national) and commit to reading them! Send us your photos!

### \$50.00 Gift Card Challenge

Two \$50.00 gift cards will be given at 2021 ALA National Convention to the department whose submitted photographs are **Most Creative and Best location utilizing an American recognizable landmark**

### Photo submission requirements

- Members in photo must be branded with the ALA emblem and reading the booklet.
- The bright blue ALA National Constitution and Bylaws booklet must be visible in the picture.
- Winners of the gift card must use the money to support the mission of the ALA.
- Teams must be at the actual landmark to qualify.
- No photoshopping allowed!
- Photos can be taken at any time throughout the year.
- Deadline for photo submission: June 1, 2021



**Send Photos To Trish Ward**

email: [tbw\\_ksaux@yahoo.com](mailto:tbw_ksaux@yahoo.com)

# ALA Service Not Self Volunteering Toolkit

*Service Not Self* is a core value of the American Legion Auxiliary; it motivates our members into action. Last year, the impact of ALA members' mission service exceeded \$1.5 billion - the value of our 15.5 million hours of volunteer service plus all the money raised and spent supporting our veterans and outreach programs. The ALA matters, indeed!

The new *American Legion Auxiliary Service Not Self Volunteering Toolkit* provides members with ideas for more volunteer opportunities to support veterans, military, and their families. Below is a sampling of service ideas to get you started. See more in the Volunteering Toolkit at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)!

## **Volunteer at an ALA Girls State Event**

Help young women develop leadership skills! ALA Girls State programs instill patriotism and help shape America's future leaders. Contact your ALA department to learn how you can become involved in your state's ALA Girls State program.

## **Help out at American Legion Baseball Games**

Passionate about baseball? Maybe you enjoy volunteering outdoors? The American Legion Baseball program has plenty of volunteer opportunities, from coaching to concessions. With over 5,000 teams, there may be one near you. Contact your local Legion post to volunteer.

## **Nominate a Child in Your Community for the ALA Youth Hero and Good Deed Award**

Do you know of youth in your community who have donated their time to a worthy veteran, military family, or servicemember event? Nominate them for the ALA's Good Deed Award. How about a Junior member who has demonstrated a physical act of valor? Nominate them for the Youth Hero Award.

## **Donate Blood**

Donating blood to those in need is a great way to serve your community. It also supports our nation's security! Learn more about American Red Cross blood donation programs and find a blood drive near you.

## **How to Train for a FEMA - Community Emergency Response Team**

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) prepare and respond to disasters in countless communities across the country. Contribute to our nation's security by being prepared for disasters.

## **Recognize Blue Star Families**

It's an American tradition to display a Blue Star Banner in the window of a home when a loved one is proudly serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is a reminder that military servicemembers are a part of every community. You can honor military servicemembers in your community by presenting a Blue Star Banner to their family members. Purchase banners through the American Legion Emblem Sales website.

## **Make a Buddy Basket**

A large number of homeless veterans have difficulty finding transitional or permanent housing. Help those who are making a fresh start by providing them with a Buddy Basket - a housewarming gift for formerly homeless veterans who have recently found housing. Baskets usually contain such things as cleaning supplies, linens, towels, dishes, and cutlery.

## **Provide Service to Veterans**

Many of our aging or disabled veterans and their caregivers would appreciate some help around the house since many are not able to take care of housekeeping tasks themselves. Volunteer to do light home repairs, yard work, wash a car, or cook a meal.

## **Attend a Patriotic Event**

Attending a patriotic event is a great way to show your love of country. Of course, many event organizers would welcome volunteer help in planning the event, setting up, working concessions, or taking down the event. Monitor the community news, especially around holiday time, to see if an event is happening near you. Determine if they need volunteers; if not, you could always just show up with your family to support your community.

## **Volunteer as a Poll Worker on Election Day**

Voting is an important civic duty that every citizen should perform. In addition to voting, you can help others to do so by volunteering as a poll worker on election days or offering to drive people to the polls. Find out more by contacting the board of elections in your community or by visiting the federal Election Assistance Commission.

## **Volunteer for a Voter Registration Drive**

Voting is a vital civic right for all Americans. It increases the civic health of local communities and the country as a whole. It also is one of the best ways to make your voice heard. Work with your American Legion Auxiliary unit or American Legion post to organize a local voter registration drive. For tips on successful voter registration drives, visit the League of Women Voters or National Voter Registration Day websites.



### **Organize an ALA Star Spangled Kids Activity**

Educating our children about American history is extremely important to our country's civic health. Star Spangled Kids is the American Legion Auxiliary initiative to educate our youth about United States history, Americanism, and the U.S. Constitution. If you want to share with young people why you love America, learn more about this great civics-for-kids initiative!

### **Participate in a Walk, Run and Roll**

A Walk, Run and Roll is a great way for the ALA to raise community awareness of the Legion Family and raise funds to support your community's military and veteran populations. It's also a terrific opportunity to keep relationships with businesses and organizations in your community. Contact your ALA unit to see if a Walk, Run and Roll event is happening in your community. If not, offer to plan one.

### **Invite Veterans to Local Schools**

We all have a veteran in our lives. Many ALA members also have school-age children or grandchildren, which affords access to their schools. Ask the veteran(s) you're connected with to share their story with students. Who better to talk to our youth about freedom and civic responsibility?

### **Welcome Military Families to Your Hometown**

Do you have military families moving into your community? Consider welcoming them to your hometown. Welcome to Our Hometown events are an opportunity for ALA members to do just that. Members will not only make incoming military families feel at home, but they will also provide helpful advice on the services available in their area.

### **Assist in a Job Fair for Veterans or Military Spouses**

Some veterans and military spouses face unique challenges in obtaining a job or advancing a career. You can help them overcome those challenges by volunteering at a job fair for veterans or military spouses in your area.

### **Improve the Home of a Veteran**

Improving the home of a veteran, servicemember, or a community facility used by the military and veteran population is a great way to bring direct change to one person, family, or community.

### **Organize a Local Veterans Creative Arts Festival**

Creative arts activities and events are an important opportunity for veterans and their families to heal and also to enjoy. The Arts Deployed: Veterans Creative Arts Action Guide provides in-depth instructions on how to get a creative arts activity up and running in your community.

### **Arrange Professional Development Services for Veterans**

Veterans and military spouses face many challenges in seeking and maintaining employment. Many veterans find the stark differences between military and civilian life daunting. By working with professionals to provide resume reviews, mock interviews, tips for workplace etiquette, and other professional development services, you can help veterans harness their potential to be invaluable members to the workforce and develop meaningful professional careers.

### **Set up a Benefits Briefing for Student Veterans**

Attainment of a high quality education is often a predictor of an individual's employment, standard of living, and quality of life. Many veterans may not know of educational and other veterans benefits available to them. As a debt of gratitude, Americans owe it to our servicemembers, veterans, and their families to help them receive a quality education.

### **Volunteer with the VA**

Veteran patients at U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers depend on volunteers for their recovery. ALA members have served as VA Voluntary Service volunteers for decades; you can do your part as a member too! Take a look to see how you can get started as a VAVS volunteer.

### **Participate in a Citizenship and Naturalization Ceremony**

These ceremonies are a great way to show your patriotism and showcase the Auxiliary by taking part in welcoming the newest American citizens and residents to our country and your state. These events can be a great family activity! You can help out in many ways such as handing out U.S. flags and volunteering to run concessions.

### **Teach Flag Etiquette Lessons**

The American flag is the symbol of our nation and deserves our care and respect. Have you thought about teaching members of your local community flag etiquette? It is important for people of all ages to know about the history of the flag and the proper way to care for it. Teaching flag etiquette can be a great service project for the whole family.

### **Organize a "Give 10" School Supply Drive**

Military children often can use extra school supplies. Running a school supply drive is a great family service project opportunity. The American Legion Auxiliary's Give 10 program allows families to work together to collect supplies such as binders, pencils, paper, rulers, calculators, and backpacks.

### **Distribute Poppies**

Since World War I, the poppy has been a symbol of remembrance to those who sacrificed their lives in war. Around National Poppy Day, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day, American Legion Auxiliary members distribute millions of poppies, handmade by veterans as part of their therapeutic rehabilitation, in exchange for donations that go directly to help disabled and hospitalized veterans. Distributing poppies is a great way for the whole family to serve veterans.

### **Organize a Canned Food Drive or Clothing Drive for Veterans**

Some veterans and their families could really benefit from extra help with food or clothing. A great way you can help is to organize a canned food drive or used clothing drive. Why not get the whole family involved? Your kids can collect donations from school friends or Legion friends while adults can ask for donations from the local grocery store, places of worship, or neighbors. It is generally easy to start right away and can be a great service project for the whole family. Be sure you have a receiving veteran family or organization in need for your collection and that they can accept what you plan to collect.

### **Visit Veterans at a Local Senior Center or VA Home**

Sometimes all you need to do to help a veteran is be there - a friendly face willing to listen. Many veterans deeply appreciate the opportunity to have some company or play cards and games. Consider taking your children to your local veteran's home or senior center - a great learning opportunity for children to spend some quality time with veterans who will appreciate the kindness.

## **Share Your Service**

Inspire others to serve! As ALA members, we need to make sure we are telling our story at every level of the organization to highlight who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Be it with our members, The American Legion Family, our community partners, or even Congress, reporting is another way of sharing our service.

### **Share Your Service on Social Media**

Social media is the perfect way to get the word out. Yet sometimes social media can be a challenge. Should you use Facebook or Twitter? How should you word your message? Take a look at the American Legion Auxiliary Public Relations Toolkit for help with social media.

### **Impact Reporting**

By taking a few minutes to report your service, you help the American Legion Auxiliary tell the public and Congress how we are fulfilling our mission through *Service Not Self*. Tools and instructions on impact reporting are available in the Members Only section at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/members](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/members).