

American Legion Auxiliary

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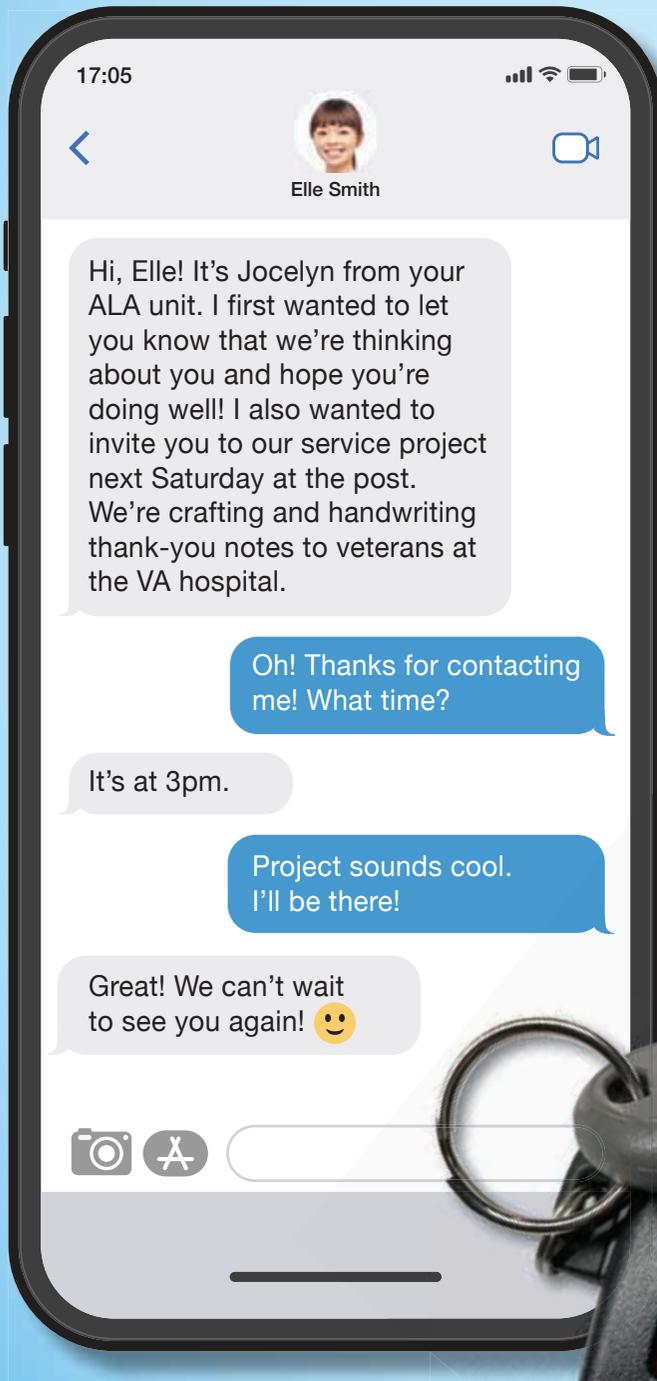
May 2022 \$3.75



Range of emotions
**Caregivers Reflect
on Needed Respite
and Support Networks**



Most ALA members don't renew after their second and third years of joining



How do you keep unit members engaged? Are you in regular communication with them? When was the last time you checked in with someone who's been inactive for a while?

Member retention is critical. Consider gathering active members in your unit to devise a plan on re-engaging people you haven't heard from in months ... or even years. You'll help the ALA and our mission of serving veterans, military, and their families.



Auxiliary

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ON THE COVER: American Legion Auxiliary member Toni Kettner of Michigan, along with her husband, Jason, and Jason's service dog, Hera. In 2016, Toni and Jason married. The following year, she left her nursing job to take care of her husband full-time. Kettner and other ALA members are profiled in the second of our three-part series on the unsung heroes: caregivers (photo: Sarah Rice). **ABOVE:** "Wearing the poppy reminds our own hearts and the heart of the world ... that other generations might have a richer heritage of happiness." — Kathleen C. Morgan, Southern Division Poppy Chairman (1931-1932). National Poppy Day® falls on May 27 this year.



As I travel from unit to unit, members continue to share with me their caregiver stories, the heartache and healing that comes with the role of caring for others.

After discussing this very important and personal topic, there are always members who come up to me and say they didn't realize it before, but they are caregivers too! I hope this subject continues to bring ALA members a sense of togetherness — knowing you are not alone, and the ALA will continue to support you in your caregiving efforts.

Remember: You can recognize caregivers in your unit, district, or department with a caregiver certificate of appreciation. The recognition can take place at a unit meeting, special event, or even in the caregiver's own home. It's a simple gesture, but it can mean so much to have just that little bit of recognition. Download the certificate today at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

In addition to showing our caregivers love and appreciation, what members are doing to take care of our veterans is incredible.

One example is the DTOM

Ranch in South Dakota, which provides equine therapy for veterans, among other services. I experienced a tiny bit of the therapy they use to help our veterans, and I was completely floored!

The mission of DTOM Ranch is to provide a safe place for healing and recovery for military

Remember: You can recognize caregivers in your unit, district, or department with a caregiver certificate of appreciation.

servicemembers, veterans, and their families while encouraging, engaging, and positively impacting their lives through hope, self-conviction, and family activities, all while helping them learn to live again with purpose.

I also had the privilege of visiting Eagles Healing Nest in Minnesota. There are incredible things happening here! The nonprofit is committed to meeting the needs of veterans, servicemembers, and their families who suffer from the invisible wounds of war. According to the nonprofit's website, many of our military are struggling and

need programs with a caring hand to assist them. Eagle's Healing Nest will help foster purpose and direction. Our servicemembers' families — who also serve our country — deserve the resources, support, and best treatment available.

Seeing new and different ways to serve our veterans, military, and their families brings about a sense of pride in our organization and those we partner with. I'm proud of our ALA members from Minnesota, South Dakota, and across the country who have thought of ways to think outside the box and work with other organizations in their communities. Together, we can make a difference!

As we continue this administrative year into summer, take some time to reflect on how you can best help caregivers and veterans. One thing that always helps me — having a positive attitude! It is easy sometimes to get caught up in the negativity, but I really want all members to focus on the positives of who we are, what we do, and why we matter. That supportive spirit can go a long way in serving our veterans, military, and their families and helping us continue to achieve our mission.

Along with our caregivers and veterans, as we observe Memorial Day in late May, I'd like to ask you all to keep those U.S. military members who died serving our country in your thoughts and prayers, as well as their surviving family members. Their ultimate sacrifice gave us the freedoms we have. Let's not forget why we are part of the American Legion Auxiliary!

Kathy Daudistel

Kathy Daudistel
National President

QUESTIONS ABOUT NATIONAL POPPY DAY® BRANDING?

In the 1920s, the poppy became the official flower of The American Legion Family to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during World War I. In the decades that followed, poppies have been worn, displayed, and distributed for fundraising efforts by veterans service and support organizations like the American Legion Auxiliary around the world. Check out page 42 in this issue of *Auxiliary* to learn more about branding for National Poppy Day®.



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PROGRAMS: We hosted the National Chairmen's Meeting in spring and heard from several speakers on what to expect for the 2022-2023 ALA administrative year.

We are planners, and in a world of uncertainty and sometimes tumult, we think it's an admirable quality to prefer being ahead of the game. We're organized folks here at National Headquarters, and that's why unexpected news is hard for us to swallow.

You've more than likely heard about the global supply chain problems disrupting the economy.



Well, the American Legion Auxiliary is not immune. Paper shortages have affected *Auxiliary* magazine — the February issue was delayed hitting mailboxes by about a week to two weeks.

As of press time, we've not received adverse production news about the May issue, but we do want to throw it out there: It could be a little late reaching you, and for that, we are sorry. There is a bright spot in all of this, and it's in the form of an email. Are you subscribed to *ALA eNews*? Each

issue of the quarterly *Auxiliary* is announced in this timely piece of ALA media. All members with an email address on file receive this publication.



It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of ALANHQ staff member Michael Butt, who was director of the Communications Division. Mike, who had been with us for 12 years, had a keen passion for the ALA's mission and sharing the story of members' ongoing commitment to *Service Not Self*. He was a patriotic citizen who made sure the American flag was respected at all times. Internally, upon beginning employment at National Headquarters, Mike zeroed in on reshaping *Auxiliary* magazine and bringing its focus back to members. Having overseen the Development Division during part of his tenure at National Headquarters, Mike was a strong proponent of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation and was a longtime major donor. He passed away in January, just after the February issue of *Auxiliary* had gone to press. He will be missed.

American Legion Auxiliary

A Community of Volunteers
Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families
May 2022



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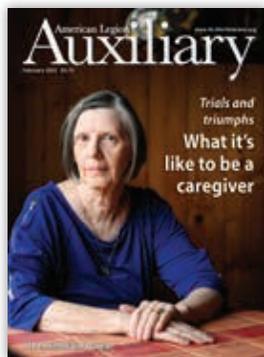
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The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families. Our members also support the mission of The American Legion in improving the quality of life for our nation's veterans. Proud sponsor of ALA Girls Nation, National Poppy Day® and recognized for advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the nearly 600,000 ALA members across the country volunteer millions of hours annually and raise millions of dollars in service to veterans, military, and their families. Founded in 1919, the ALA is one of the oldest patriotic membership organizations in the U.S.A. To learn more and to volunteer, join, and donate, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.





Editor's note: Caregivers feature resonates with readers

Our three-part caregivers series, which launched with the February issue, was a popular topic for letters from readers. Many of you wrote to say you related well to the challenges, struggles, and appreciation our caregivers are presented with on a daily basis. One reader said she could write a book about her experience, while another thanked us for giving caregivers “a voice and platform to move forward and forge ahead.” Lots of you recalled the times when you were a caregiver for your loved one before they passed away.

Read more about our unsung heroes — check out the second part of our caregivers series on page 26 in this issue of Auxiliary, and be sure to follow the ALA blog at www.ALAforVeterans.org/blog for additional caregiver stories.

Thank you for spotlighting Sea Cadets

I enjoyed reading your fantastic article about Sea Cadet Trinity Piper from Ohio in your February issue. Her excitement and passion for adventure really come through when she said, “... it's a great experience. I ... enjoy the friendships you make, the experiences you get and the adrenaline rush ...” Every one of my visits with our cadets has been

energizing, and meeting great young men and women like Cadet Piper gives me a bit of an adrenaline rush too.

In many states, our Sea Cadet units drill at American Legion facilities. This is critical to our success.

We really appreciate your support to Sea Cadets, and of course, veterans (I'm one!). It's a team effort to raise the next generation who will one day become members of your organization.

— Rear Adm. Andrew Lennon, U.S. Navy (ret), Executive Director, U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps

Stretching great dollars for veterans

Through a grant received from the Parshall Community Foundation in 2021, American Legion Auxiliary Unit 121 has been able to send small gifts and greetings monthly to older veterans and assisted living and nursing home residents who once lived around Parshall. This idea came from the hardship COVID created when no visitors were allowed.

The challenge now is to think of something relatively flat, being postage conscious, so we can reach out to approximately 38-40 individuals monthly and stretch the grant money. We frequently discuss adding names, changing addresses, and dropping individuals if they are not here anymore. We meet monthly as a group, address signed envelopes with a surprise inside, and discuss “what” for the next month.

“Parshall Auxiliary Cares” has been a fun project and has many rewards. The residents and families of residents are so appreciative: “You have no idea how good it is to be remembered by people back home.” Some residents themselves

have written notes. There have also been some thank-yous with donations. Something so small — just a greeting — means so much, connecting with elderly veterans and others.

— Joyce Waldo, North Dakota



More information about Lt. Clark Poling

I enjoyed reading the It's All Good to Honor article titled, *The four chaplains: saving others with a selfless act*. Lt. Clark Poling grew up in Deering, N.H. I've included the link to information on a local summit named after him: deeringnaturalhistory.com/2017/08/21/clark-summit.

When I was a teen, there was also an eternal light atop Clark Summit, which I think vandals destroyed.

— Sharon Powers, New Hampshire

Beyond the Four Chaplains story

Sure appreciated the article about the four chaplains who sacrificed their lives to help others during the shipwreck.

I am 80 years old and never knew of the incident until a retired Lutheran pastor attended our church and told of the shipwreck where three-fourths of the troops died.

It helps to be reminded of the destruction wars create.

— Mary Ellen Kiely, Texas

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM you

Email: ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or send letters to: ALA National Headquarters 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268

Story and Photo Submissions: Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/Magazine for more details.



NATIONAL JUNIOR MEETINGS RETURN TO IN-PERSON FORMAT

What a great feeling it was for our Junior members to be back in person for the national Junior meetings this administrative year! After not being able to meet physically last year, it was a welcoming sight to see our youngest members gather for fun, activities, and fellowship.

Nationwide, ALA Junior members build their leadership skills as they carry out our mission of helping veterans, military, and their families when they attend a national Junior

meeting. In 2022, there were five meetings — one in each ALA division — Las Vegas (Western), Orlando (Southern), Indianapolis (Central), Baltimore (Eastern), and Omaha (Northwestern).

National Junior meetings take place at the same time as each ALA Mission Training event and are designed to be interactive and fun. Additionally, the meetings are a way to connect with our younger ALA members and help them engage

in the mission. The combination of a service project, guest speakers, and engaging activities give the girls the tools they need to learn about the Auxiliary as Junior members, and will lead to active, adult memberships.

The girls take away friendships and an overall appreciation of the Auxiliary and who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

Stay tuned to ALA national media for dates of future national Junior meetings and ALA Mission Training events.



FAMILY CREATES SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF JUNIOR MEMBER

“We just continue to honor her,” said Virginia Moylan of her late daughter, Alivia. “She was an exceptional young girl.”

Alivia passed away in 2020 at the age of 12 following a tragic all-terrain vehicle accident. Since then,

her family has focused on honoring her memory through the Alivia Paige Moylan Memorial Scholarship Fund.

She was very active in her local American Legion Auxiliary New York Unit 1113.

“She placed flags every year with her father at gravesites, she helped with the chicken barbecues every

year, and she would donate her time for whatever she could,” Virginia recalled. “She was very involved — always doing something.”

Alivia participated in extracurricular activities and was an honors student at school.

“She loved everybody and made everybody laugh,” she said. “If she knew someone was having a bad day, she made them smile.”

One thing that brought Alivia great joy was animals — it didn’t matter what kind. She was thinking of becoming a veterinarian or a marine biologist someday.

“She was always wanting to give back to the community, and I think someone like that should be honored,” Virginia said.

Earlier this year, the Auxiliary held a raffle to benefit the Alivia Paige Moylan Memorial Scholarship Fund. Auxiliary member and local artist Judy Dimbleby

JUNIORS EARN PATCHES WHILE ATTENDING NATIONAL MEETINGS

Some of our younger ALA Juniors were able to receive a patch or two as part of the ALA Junior Activities Patch Program at this year's national Junior meetings.

Many of these activities were already being conducted at the national meetings, as well as unit meetings, giving Juniors an opportunity to earn their patches at the same time.

National Junior Activities Committee Western Division Chair Marge Christianson helped spearhead the idea at this year's meetings.

"Even the most patriotic kids have so many competing interests and opportunities for using their time," she said. "I thought it would be beneficial to introduce Juniors to this wonderful program while we had them focused on the ALA mission with the hope that once started, they would share with their parents and continue. Many of the

painted a watercolor still life bouquet of poppies and donated it for the raffle, which raised over \$2,000 toward the fund.

The scholarship will begin in 2025, the year Alivia would have graduated from high school. It will go to an honors student from the Whitesboro Central School District who plans to major in veterinary health or healthcare.

Donations to the scholarship fund can be mailed to the Moylan residence at 20 Mohawk St., Whitesboro, NY 13492. For further questions, please email Virginia at vdmoylan02@gmail.com.

"I feel lucky that everyone loved her so much and they care for us so much," she said. "This helps to honor her so she will never be forgotten. She was amazing. She really was."

patch activities are ones they are already doing — they just needed an introduction to the program process."

One way to earn a patch at a Junior meeting or a regular ALA unit meeting is through leadership opportunities. This can include learning how to make a motion, learning proper protocol for speaking or making a motion at an ALA meeting, learning common terms in parliamentary procedure, and participating in a meeting that follows parliamentary procedure.

Poppy is another simple one that can be done at unit meetings — read the poppy story, as a group, recall facts just learned, and make poppies.

Junior members, as well as school-aged Sons of The American Legion members, may earn patches for activities in ALA programs. Participating in the Patch Program is a great way to be involved in learning about the Auxiliary and The American Legion Family, volunteering in the community, and



serving our country's veterans.

There are three levels to the program: red (kindergarten through third grade); gold (fourth to eighth grade); and blue (ninth to 12th grade). Currently, 34 ALA Junior patches are available. Americanism, Leadership, and Poppy are the most popular patches. New this year is the caregiver patch for the blue level.

To learn more about patches, log in to the MyAuxiliary member portal at www.ALAforVeterans.org and select Junior Member Activities.

CAREGIVER BAGS PROVIDE FUN, LEARNING FOR JUNIORS

For this year's service project at the national Junior meetings, the girls made caregiver bags. The idea was inspired by an ALA National Headquarters staff member spending hours waiting at various appointments at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facility with her father. She realized some items would be helpful to always have with her as a caregiver.

Juniors spent time during meetings decorating the bags with



creative artwork and messages of hope.

"The artwork of these kids amazes me," said Kristin Hinshaw, senior program coordinator at ALA National Headquarters.

The Juniors made an assembly line to stuff bags with the various items for caregivers, including notepads, pens, phone chargers, and spray hand sanitizer.

The bags were donated to VA-related facilities for veteran caregivers.

The project is not only a mission-related activity for those attending a national Junior meeting, but it's great for Juniors to take on at the unit level. Ask for similar items to be donated, decorate the bags, add the items, and take to your local VA facility or similar location where caregivers could use the items. Be creative, think outside the box, add/change the items, and have fun!

“Use your scars for good because you never know who needs to hear your testimony. It can have a tremendous ripple effect around the world...”

LINDSAY GUTIERREZ



American Legion Auxiliary member Lindsay Gutierrez, a U.S. Air Force veteran, is originally from Oklahoma,

and now lives in Georgia with her active-duty Air Force husband, Anthony, and many fur babies. She works as a congressional caseworker for federal veteran-related issues.

From her experiences both professionally and personally, Gutierrez created The SCAR Initiative. The mission is to highlight the various wounds we’ve all endured — through storytelling and how these stories illuminate the courage and empowerment of participants.

We are proud to have you as an ALA member! What does your membership mean to you?

Community, pride, and love for the men and women who have served to provide us the freedoms we often take for granted. Being an ALA member means being a servant-leader and offering care to veterans and their families through various programs and resources, so anyone needing a help up, not a handout, can turn to the ALA for that support.

What inspired you to create The SCAR Initiative?

The SCAR Initiative (TSI) was created one day as I was staring at one of my own physical scars located on my right elbow. I love to road cycle, and over the summer I was out riding my bike when I took

a nasty spill on the road. While I wasn’t seriously hurt, my ego was most impacted due to personal humiliation of an adult crashing their bike for no apparent reason. I ended up with a scraped elbow and shoulder and a nice imprint of my bike chain on my right leg.

Fast forward to a few months later: I have a tremendous keloid scar that now carries a fun story. This got me thinking of the many people I’ve encountered who have physical scars. We think to ourselves, *I wonder how that happened?* I’m a very inquisitive person, so it led me to wondering even more if people would be interested in telling how their physical scars occurred. I immediately took this thought a step further and thought, *How many people would tell of their invisible, internal scars?*

Mental health in America is a major discussion point and something we all have struggled with. As a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, I recognized early on in my military career how much veterans suffer in silence because being vulnerable is viewed as a sign of weakness. Personally, I’ve lost too many battle buddies to suicide, and it hurts to know if only we could have shared our story, would it have changed the outcome?

My goal with TSI is to help be a small catalyst in turning this systemic stereotype around, where vulnerability with our physical and invisible scars is seen as incredible strength and courage.

Sometimes, members of the military don’t always find it easy to talk about their experiences. Do you have any tips for ALA members

on how they can be supportive of those we serve to share their stories?

Meet people where they are in life. Simply put, don’t force people to share something they aren’t ready to, and be there to support them wherever they are in their journey. When people are ready to share, they will.

Just being there for someone can be enough, and letting them know you’re there for them can be a tremendous start in fostering trust between ALA members and their community. What we want to avoid saying are the phrases,

“I’m here if you want to talk” and the all-too-common-but-with-good-intention, “I understand how you feel/ what you’re going through.”



Lindsay with her active-duty Air Force husband, Anthony

Do you have any final advice you want to share?

Use your scars for good because you never know who needs to hear your testimony. It can have a tremendous ripple effect around the world, and now, more than ever, does humanity need to have people who want to make a difference to those around them.



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SHARE YOUR MEMBERSHIP STORY!

Tell us about yourself and how you support the American Legion Auxiliary as a unit member who also loves the ALA’s mission of serving veterans, military, and their families. Contact us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or (317) 569-4500.



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“Let every American wear a memorial poppy this month and let everyone pause, if only for a moment on Memorial Day, to honor those who have given their lives that we may be free.”

— Gen Ryan, ALA National President (1966-1967)



There's something about The American Legion Family presence during honor and remembrance ceremonies and events. The images of blue caps and blue stars somehow seem to connect us on another level to the servicemembers who sacrificed so much, even if we didn't know these heroes personally. On Memorial Day and Veterans Day especially, we show our care, concern, and support with a salute or hand over heart. May we always have a special place for the fallen — and those still serving — deep in our memories forever.

Above: Hank Lucas, American Legion Post 72 chaplain, leads a procession to the war memorials on the Southington Green during the Veterans Day Ceremony at American Legion Post 72, Nov. 11, 2021, in Southington, Conn. (Aaron Flaum/Record-Journal via Associated Press).



ALA ACADEMY LIVE

Since the poppy is on your mind this month...

- Log in to the ALA Academy to watch a recording on using poppy funds, where you'll learn all of the details of this specialized area and connecting to our mission.

Log in with your member ID today at www.ALAforVeterans.org.



IT'S ALL GOOD ALA MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

What is the most valuable thing you've learned from being part of the ALA?



"As in all things, knowledge is power. The more you immerse yourself in the programs of the ALA, the greater your ability to honor and support our veterans and their families. I truly believe in our motto of *Service Not Self*."

— Marylou Melton, Indiana



"True leadership is built from sincere service and humble understanding that collaboration and community will get us farther and have greater impact than any initiative, project, or program we attempt alone."

— Claire Moore, Virginia



"How many things we can do for veterans, children, and our communities. Most importantly, that as much as I give, I receive much more back by doing so."

— Julia Moore, Illinois



"Leadership. I've learned how to organize and reach out to my unit members and veterans in the community."

— Melissa Cannell, Missouri



"All members have special talents that should be utilized, recognized, and praised. We are all here for one reason."

— Joanne Valletta, New York



"Knowing that we all come from diverse backgrounds and have a variety of talents that can assist in the betterment of our organization, and above all can help our veterans, their families, and our communities."

— Cherril Threte, Indiana



"Our veterans are the most valuable asset we have. They need us to stand behind them, support them, and help take care of their families."

— Carol K. Kottom, Minnesota

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at [@ALAforVeterans](https://www.instagram.com/ALAforVeterans). You could be featured in an upcoming issue of *Auxiliary*.

MEMORIAL HONORS THE MILITARY SERVICE OF NATIVE AMERICANS

In 2013, Congress passed legislation for the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) to create a National Native American Veterans Memorial to give “all Americans the opportunity to learn of the proud and courageous tradition of service of Native Americans in the Armed Forces of the United States.” The memorial opened Nov. 11, 2020, in Washington, D.C., on the grounds of NMAI.

The memorial is described by the museum as “a welcoming space for gathering, reflection, healing, and remembrance, a place to honor the sacrifices and service of generations of Native veterans.” The memorial titled *Warriors’ Circle of Honor* was designed by Harvey Pratt, a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma. Pratt, a retired forensic artist, is a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran, and a Southern Cheyenne Peace Chief. The museum conducted an international competition to select the design for the memorial and was chosen through a juried, two-stage process.

A place to reflect and heal

Per the museum’s website, the memorial’s focal point is a large, vertical stainless-steel circle, sitting atop a low, carved stone drum form, at the center of a circular gathering space. Water flows continuously outward from the center of the drum, and a fire may be lit at the base of the steel circle on ceremonial occasions.

A circular seating area may be entered at the four cardinal directions from a surrounding walkway called the Path of Harmony, respecting different cultural practices regarding the appropriate direction from which to enter the central space. There are four vertical spears or lances where



(Photo: Alan Karchmer/NMAI)

visitors may leave prayer ties, a traditional sacred bundle of tobacco used as an offering of gratitude. The seals of the five branches of the armed forces are on a nearby wall.

Symbolism of the design

The museum describes the meaning of the memorial as timeless and inclusive, honoring all Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian veterans, as well as the families who support them. The circular design suggests a sacred circle, the cycles of time and life, and the movement of the stars and planets.

According to the museum, the circle is relevant to many Native American cultures in the shape of a drum and of circles for dance, storytelling, and prayer. The memorial incorporates the elements of fire, representing strength, courage, endurance, and comfort; water, signifying purification and prayer; earth, which provides people

with all they need; and the wind that will carry the prayers and memories of visitors skyward.

The water pulsing across the surface of the drum is echoed by concentric rings in the stone of the walkways, suggesting the beat of a drum calling people to gather within the circle.

First landmark in D.C. to focus on contribution of American Indians

This is the first national landmark in Washington, D.C. to focus on the contributions of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians who served in the military. In a June 2018 press release on the memorial’s selection, NMAI wrote that Native Americans serve at a higher rate per capita than any other population group, and that few outside the military and American Indian Nations know that Native people have served in the U.S. armed forces since the American Revolution and continue to serve today.



See the Museum in Person

NMAI will host a dedication ceremony to honor Native veterans and their families on Veterans Day 2022.

Visiting the Memorial: The outside memorial is open every day, 24 hours a day, and can be visited for free.

Location: 4th St SW, Washington, DC

Online: americanindian.si.edu



DID YOU HEAR THE AMAZING THINGS OUR MEMBERS ARE DOING?

Do you have an inspirational Auxiliary or American Legion Family story to share with the world? The story may be your own or one about a fellow member or a member of your family involved in our programs or military service.

We're always looking for stories and photos about you for our magazine, blog, newsletters, and social media platforms. We want you to help us show the world what we do and why we matter.

Members of all ages and from all organizations of The American Legion Family are welcome to submit content for possible inclusion in ALA media. We invite you to share your success stories and tell us how you as a member, your local unit or department, Legion Family, or any of your fellow members or family members are making a difference in the lives of veterans, military, and their families. Your story could be shared in the national quarterly *Auxiliary* magazine, shared on the national website at www.ALAforVeterans.org,

or across our many social media platforms @ALAforVeterans.

Why share your success stories?

Members often mention how our programs and being involved in our organization have changed their lives. As an organization and as a community of volunteers, we love hearing the inspiring stories behind every program, every member, and every mission moment. By sharing your success stories, you can provide inspiration and motivations to all members who are part of our mission. Sending us your inspiring stories and photos of members working our mission or enjoying one of our many mission outreach programs helps us to connect with current members, future members, donors, and advocates.

Writing tips: What kind of information should I include in my story?

The more information, the better! Don't worry about your writing skills or being a wordsmith — just tell us your story as best you can, and we can take it from there

or contact you for more information, if needed. Be sure to include pertinent details like the Five W's — who (was involved), what (happened), where (event or activity was held), when (date), and why (was the event, etc., held). Remember: The more information and details you include, the better we're able to showcase it in ALA media, so tell us everything!

Strike a pose: There's nothing to it

Photos should reflect the ALA mission and values. Please consider photos with smiling, positive people actively engaged in serving veterans, military, and their families. Examples are volunteers handing out items to veterans at a stand down, or members of The American Legion Family fully branded and serving current servicemembers' families at an event.

How to submit your story

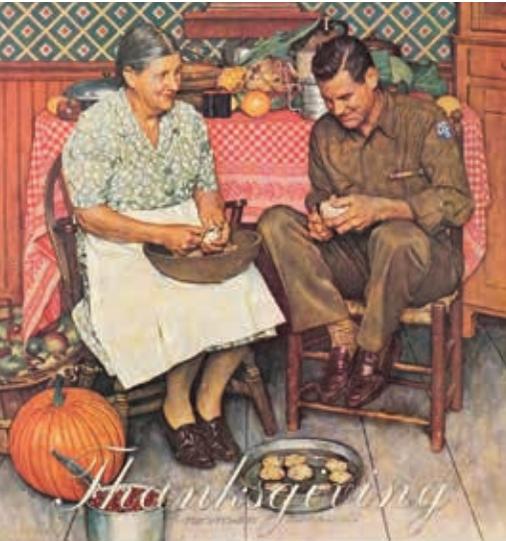
To submit your story online, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/magazine/submissions. Please be sure to read the suggestions and requirements for images and content, and then submit your content using the online form.

The people with the red pens (our editors)

Please note that if used in ALA media, all submitted items are subject to our editing process. Besides typos — they happen to the best of us — we're checking for clarity, style, and format. By submitting material, you acknowledge that you are legally entitled to distribute the work and allow it to be redistributed. We may use such materials with or without your name and for any lawful purpose, including, for example, such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and web-related content.

Do you have their permission?

In providing photos, you represent that you own all copyrights and have been given the authority by each individual depicted in the photograph to provide photos to ALA National Headquarters.



TREASURE: This Norman Rockwell painting, part of The American Legion Post 193 Family in Winchendon, Mass., sold at auction last year for \$3.6 million (photo/ Norman Rockwell Museum).

YOU MIGHT HAVE A VALUABLE ITEM IN YOUR POST HOME

Collecting, protecting, and financing: What you need to know

It's a familiar sight at the community American Legion Family post home — trinkets large and small hanging on walls, positioned in glass curio cabinets, and sometimes, stuffed in a closet ... untouched for years.

When you're older than a century like The American Legion and ALA, you're bound to have archives and sentimental items placed in every nook and cranny around the house.

But what about all that *stuff*? What if something in your collection is more than just a ticket from a dance event hosted by the hall in the 1950s? What if that silver dish you thought was a pretty memento was actually an item of value?

Last year, a painting belonging to The American Legion Post 193 Family in Winchendon, Mass., became more than just a

meaningfully appealing art piece hanging on the wall.

"Our American Legion post was building a brand new building in 1959," said Coral May Grout, member of Unit 193. "Dad was on the committee and was asked to obtain donations from local Winchendon notables. He visited Rev. Wilfred Tisdell, pastor of the Catholic Church, at his lovely home. Father Tisdell invited Dad to go upstairs to the art gallery where about 25 original paintings were housed. Rev. Tisdell asked him if he had selected a painting, and Dad responded, 'Yes.' So, the two of them went upstairs and Dad pointed out his choice."

The painting was a Norman Rockwell original titled, *Home for Thanksgiving*, a 35-by-33 inch oil on canvas and the Nov. 24, 1945, cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Commissioned for the magazine, the painting tells the tale of the first Thanksgiving after the Allies' victory. In November 2021, it was sold at auction for \$3.6 million.

Assess your archives

When was the last time a member of your post home went through everything and thoroughly studied each item? Has it been years? Or has it ever been done? Include a blast in your next newsletter asking for help from the trusted history buffs. You might be surprised at how much people really want to be involved.

Dig through boxes, trunks, and cabinets ... and then some. Even the most organized places can contain objects that lost their way at one point or another. Suit up with dust masks and head to the attic — you might come across a box that was once considered junk from members of yore and stored out of the way.

Be sure to log every item that's part of your post home history, even the small things. Just because it's

tiny, doesn't mean it has no value or significance. If you have details about the item, log that too.

Store safely, then learn value

In the case of Post 193's Rockwell painting, Grout said that in 1982, a man attending a party at the post offered to purchase the painting for \$500. The commander at the time stopped and thought, *If this guy wants to pay \$500, how much is it really worth?* The post then contacted the Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Mass., to give a ballpark figure on its value. Museum staff were shocked that the painting was never stolen or damaged all those years.

The easiest way you can protect items in your post home: Look for harmful factors like sunlight, uncontrolled temperature, and cigarette smoke — all of these can severely impair the value of your historical property. The next step is to get it appraised. These trained experts will carefully examine your materials and offer a value amount, as well as ways to properly insure them.

Archiving takes time

Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither will assessing your archives. It takes time to sift through records, and you don't have to make decisions right away about what to do with valuable items.

"It was thanks to my dad that this even happened," Grout said. "With the pandemic, much revenue didn't come in from weddings, post funeral events, art shows, and other events. Without money, things couldn't get done. I visited my dad's grave at the Massachusetts State Veterans Cemetery prior to the sale of the painting, and I asked Dad if he wanted me to continue to 'fight' the sale or agree to it. Dad came to me in the middle of the next night and said three words: 'Let it go.' Then he disappeared. So, I let it go."



Did your American Legion post home discover a now-valuable item, or even something of significance to your local community? Tell us about it! Contact ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.

**START PLANNING NOW:
VETERANS DAY IDEAS
FOR YOUR UNIT**

Honoring and supporting the sacrifice of those who serve is the foundation of the American Legion Auxiliary's mission. Although Auxiliary members are dedicated to helping our nation's heroes every day, Veterans Day — Nov. 11 — is the one day set aside annually to specifically show gratitude for all of our veterans and servicemembers.

It's impossible to compensate veterans for their great personal sacrifice, but we can honor them on Veterans Day by demonstrating our deep appreciation for all they've done. Traditionally, Veterans Day is observed with local parades, dinners, and celebrations, but there are countless other ways to show your appreciation to veterans on this special holiday, and now is the time to start planning for them.

Beyond in-person events and volunteer activities, try giving back to veterans through kind words and artistic projects. These small acts of kindness come from the heart and will be treasured by our past servicemembers forever. Honor military veterans and educate our youth about the importance of Veterans Day this Nov. 11 with these craft ideas:

Handmade patriotic bookmark

Looking for a creative craft



to do with your Auxiliary unit for Veterans Day? These handmade bookmarks can be completed by younger members, older members, and everyone in between. This is a great project to express gratitude in a meaningful way. Thank a veteran for their service by drawing a thoughtful picture or writing a heartfelt message on the bookmark. Give these handmade gifts to veterans at your local U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs medical centers to show your appreciation.

Materials needed:

- Posterboard/cardstock
- Clear laminate paper
- Red and blue markers, crayons, glitter, and/or stickers
- Cord/thick string
- Alphabet beads and other decorative patriotic beads

Directions:

1. Cut a bookmark shape from the posterboard.
2. Write a special message and decorate the bookmark however you want.
3. Laminate paper. Trim.
4. Punch a hole at the top of the bookmark. Thread your cord or string through.
5. Spell out your message with the beads.
6. String the beads in order.

Personal thank-you cards for veterans

Often the most memorable and encouraging gifts our veterans will receive, personal thank-you cards/letters with special messages for the veterans in your life will let them know how grateful you are for their sacrifices.

Card suggestions:

- The message you write should speak from the heart.
- It can look any way you want it to. Make it simple, or be creative — the possibilities are endless.
- Ask your Auxiliary unit and Junior members to make cards and slip them into local veterans' mailboxes, or give them to Legionnaires at your post home.

Make Veterans Day cards during an ALA meeting, and contact your local VA facility to schedule a time to deliver them.

AUXILIARY SUDOKU

Insert the missing numbers one to nine exactly once in every row, column, and 3x3 square. The three Sudoku games below are in order of beginner, newspaper style, and hard. Answers are found on page 49.

1	5		2	8				
8			6	9	7	1	4	
4			8	7	1		2	
		2	3	4	6	9	1	
		1	9					6
9	8	1	5					
			6		5	1		8
	1			3	8			
6		9	2				3	7

		7	5	4		9	2	
5		6			3			4
							8	3
8			3	2		4		
4		3	7	8	5			
		1	4			8		7
	9		6					
		8			7			1
	2		8	3			7	

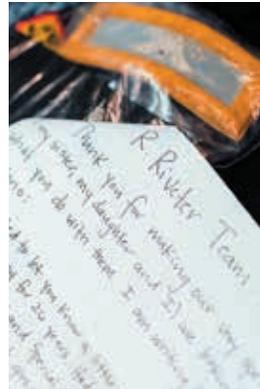
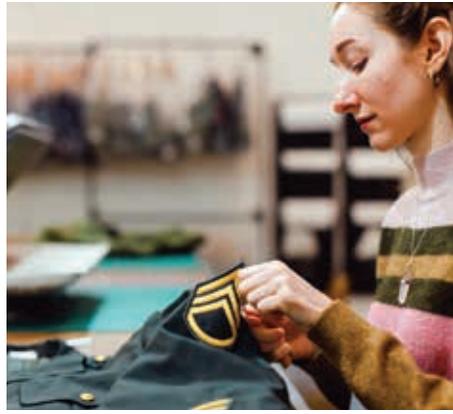
							9	5
	2			9	8		7	
		4	6		1			8
1			2	4				
							9	6
7					6	2		
				2	5		3	
8					9	7		4
				6				

HANDBAG COMPANY GIVES BACK TO ALA FOR MISSION SUPPORT

As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, we are committed to honoring the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families. Cameron Cruse and Lisa Bradley, co-founders of R.Riveter, created a company that echoes this commitment. Co-recipients of the 2017 American Legion Auxiliary Woman of the Year Award, and both military spouses, Cruse and Bradley experienced firsthand the struggles of finding employment while supporting their military spouses and families through constant relocation. Out of that struggle, R.Riveter was born with a mission to help military spouses and their families find employment that was both stable and mobile. The company makes one-of-a-kind handbags, each with a unique story stemming not only from the process of crafting each item, but also from the materials used.

"R.Riveter doesn't hire military spouses to make handbags. We make handbags to hire military spouses and create a greater sense of mission," reads a description from the company's website at rriveter.com.

What started as two women working out of an attic has quickly grown to a network of military spouses across the country. After a 2014 Kickstarter campaign and the subsequent 2015 opening of a brick-and-mortar store in North Carolina, Cruse and Bradley were able to further grow R.Riveter with an appearance on the reality TV show *Shark Tank* for budding entrepreneurs, plus an investment by Mark Cuban in 2016. Since *Shark Tank*, R.Riveter has opened a new warehouse and launched Post



to Pillar, a marketplace of home decor and accessories handmade by military spouses.

Today, R.Riveter employs 29 local Riveters and 48 remote Riveters. That title, and the company's name, pay tribute to the iconic image of "Rosie the Riveter." Each Riveter has a special ID number stamped on the R.Riveter product at whatever stage in the journey the handbag is in. Every handmade bag can have as many as five Riveters working on it throughout the process, including working on leather, canvas, or within the store. When all of the pieces come together to culminate in a bag, the final product carries the Riveters' stories with it, wherever it goes.

Stories such as these have been on display through a recent partnership between the ALA and R.Riveter. In January and March, R.Riveter hosted auctions through

Instagram, auctioning off two one-of-a-kind handbags from their Heirloom collection and donating 100% of proceeds to the ALA. The Heirloom collection is a program that transforms a loved one's military uniform, blanket, duffel bag, or other materials into a personalized handbag with memories.

The auctions, which raised \$1,910 for the ALA, featured a handbag crafted from a 1955 USAF Greatcoat and a Marine Corps dress jacket. Today, their reinvention as stylish accessories will remind everyone of the stories being told, the stories never known, and the duty to keep honoring their tales.

The auctions earlier this year are part of a few to be held throughout 2022, each of which will see 100% of proceeds designated to serve veterans, military, and their families.

If you would like to find your own unique way of giving back, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org/donate.



The ALA and R.Riveter have partnered to provide ALA members with a unique 20% discount that can be accessed at www.rriveter.com/pages/welcome-ALA-members. To participate in a future auction and to stay up to date with both R.Riveter and the ALA, follow @rriveterbags and @ALAforVeterans on Instagram.



COMBINING FORCES (from left): Florida ALA Department President Wanda Brandt, members Sue Ruda, Mabel Graham, and Hilde Schmidt from Unit 107, and Dianne Cooper from Unit 57, got together to hand out blessing bags to homeless women veterans at a local stand down event.

HELPING TO HEAL HOMELESS VETERANS

Auxiliary members continue their efforts of honoring the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of veterans in all aspects of life. Participating in a veterans stand down event is truly a life-changing experience — people from all walks of life come together to provide help for veterans in need. Sue Ruda, Florida American Legion Auxiliary Unit 107 member, served the Auxiliary's mission by volunteering at a stand down in a neighboring town.

"We raise money for veterans, and we do other activities, but this was the first time I was able to actually be with the homeless veterans and see where these mission-focused projects end up, and it was so nice," said Ruda.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, on any given night, over 131,000 homeless veterans are on the

street. The philosophy of a stand down is to give homeless veterans a hand up, not a handout. Stand downs are organized by self-appointed community coalitions that take on the task of holding the event. Any group can decide to hold a stand down.

"It was such an awesome experience to just talk to the veterans, we had the chance to come together as a Legion Family and as a community," Ruda said about volunteering at her first stand down.

A traditional stand down

lasts three days, providing shelter, clothing, health screenings, VA benefits counseling, job counseling, and referral services, and they may provide services such as haircuts, vision and dental care, and legal services.

"The stand down was a great way to let these veterans know the community does care about them and that there are services out there to help them," said Ruda. "We are here for them, no matter what."

Before attending her first stand down event for homeless veterans in Lake City, Ruda and other members of Florida Unit 107 had been donating hygiene bags to local schools for girls who are transitioning into women. They had leftover supplies and decided to make bags for homeless women veterans in the community. The blessing bags included feminine hygiene products, toothbrushes, toothpaste, personal wipes, deodorant, hair products, and other refreshing items.

"We were also able to run into other vendors and other organizations that work with the same element of homeless veterans, and we passed on some of our bags to them — which was nice too because they are even more hands-on

COMFORTING THOSE EXPERIENCING INFANT LOSS

American Legion Auxiliary members continue to serve the mission, with *Service Not Self* in mind, and oftentimes end up enhancing the lives beyond our veterans and servicemembers. Brenda Francis, a member of Unit 26 in Maryland, and Shirl Edwards, a member of Unit 202 in Maryland, donated their old wedding gowns to an infant loss support group, Sweet Grace Ministries, which repurposes wedding dresses into "Angel Gowns" for families who experience the heartbreak of an infant loss.

"I love knowing that my wedding dress will provide a small measure of comfort to a grieving family," said Francis. "It's really a very special program — to just have people out there reaching out to you and

guiding you, and telling you 'We are here, and we care, and here are some things of comfort for you.'"

Sweet Grace Ministries provides resources to families enduring any infant loss. The organization helps and supports grieving mothers and families with comfort bags, photography, support groups, remembrance events, thoughtful baskets, and so much more. As part of their support services, the organization makes handmade burial/baptism outfits for families enduring stillbirth or neonatal death.

"Very often when you go through a sudden death, your brain kind of shuts down and you really



SUPPORT FOR THE HEARTBROKEN (from left): Wanda Farmer, Brenda Francis of Auxiliary Unit 26, and Shirl Edwards of Unit 202 in Maryland donate wedding gowns to be repurposed into "Angel Gowns" for grieving families.

don't know what it is that you need to do," said Francis. "So having someone provide a special handmade gown for your child to wear is something you may not think about in the moment, but you're going to think about it later — and be so grateful for that, and so grateful for the memories that this program also provides by taking the photographs."

with homeless veterans,” said Ruda.

The event was held at a local post home, and all veteran-focused organizations were welcomed to help support the cause. Ruda and fellow Auxiliary members, along with Legionnaires and Sons, joined forces to help veterans in need, as a Family.

“I didn’t realize while I was volunteering that I would get so much out of being over there at that stand down for just one day,” said Ruda. “I was humbled that I was able to do that. It was such a blessing.”

Eligible for Auxiliary membership through her late husband, Vietnam Marine Corps veteran Frank Ruda, she continues serving the Auxiliary’s mission with him in mind. While she was at the stand down event, Ruda was flooded with precious memories of him.

“I keep his memory alive by doing events like this,” said Ruda. “I talked more about my husband at the event than I had in a long, long time. It was nice to be able to be with everybody and talk about how he was a Marine and in Vietnam — the stand down brought out a lot of good memories for me.”

Edwards, Francis, and Francis’ mother and Auxiliary supporter, Wanda Farmer, donated four wedding gowns to Sweet Grace Ministries. After going to the organization and learning more about the great work volunteers do for heartbroken families across the country, Francis plans to share the idea with other Auxiliary members.

“It was just really, really special — I know it affected all three of us who went that day,” said Francis. “It was like, ‘Wow ... this is such a big deal’ and it’s important for the parents to know there are people out there who care and want to help.”

For more information about Sweet Grace Ministries, visit sweetgraceministries.com, and for info on how to donate a gown, email sweetgracegowns@gmail.com.

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1. Yu J. et al (2016) Topical oxygen therapy results in complete wound healing in diabetic foot ulcers. *Wound Repair and Regeneration*. 24 1066-1072
2. Lee A. (2021) Continuous topical oxygen therapy – Improving healing in the diabetic foot. Poster presentation DFCong

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WHAT NOT TO DO IN YOUR C&B

Not sure if you need to update your Constitution & Bylaws? Here are some examples of wording you may not want to have in your constitution, bylaws, and standing rules:

1. “Organization of women” or “the world’s largest women’s patriotic service organization.” As of 2019, the membership eligibility changed to “spouses.”

2. Membership eligibility that still lists “wives.” It might be easier to just align with the national wording: “Eligibility for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary is determined by The American Legion. The eligibility requirements from The American Legion governing

documents shall be provided as a footnote to this Constitution for information purposes and shall be updated as appropriate.” See page 6 of the ALA National Constitution on the MyAuxiliary portal of the national website at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

3. National Executive Committee *woman*. See No. 1. Try “member” instead.

4. “Her” or “she” or “hostess” — there’s no easy fix here, so you have to go through it

line by line and make it inclusive and gender neutral. We know. It’s a lot of work. We’re not asking you to do anything we didn’t do ourselves, though!

5. Rules on withdrawal of membership: “A unit member may withdraw providing her current dues are fully paid.” Nope. Get out your red pen and mark out the whole sentence. If a person does not pay dues, that’s their way of saying they no longer want to be a member. They do have to be current on their dues in order to *transfer* from one unit to another.

6. A rule requiring units to file their C&B with the department. Nope. Units are independent affiliates (see the national Standing Rule XI). Yes, departments can ask *nice*ly with sugar on top, but should think twice if it’s in their bylaws —

are you ready to assume risk for the unit, department?

7. A rule requiring lapsed members to pay “back dues” before reinstating into membership. Sorry, no! Also, you can’t discipline a member for not paying dues. If they no longer want to pay dues and belong to the organization, that is the decision of the member. If a member wants to keep “continuous years of membership,” the member *may* opt to pay all the back dues owed, but it’s not a requirement for reinstatement.

8. A department rule telling a unit how to discipline its members. That’s the unit’s job.

9. Empowering an officer with “executive powers.” That’s not really a thing. Spell out the duties of the office clearly. Check Robert’s Rules if you aren’t sure.

10. Having a rule that your unit will pay for **any member** to go to National Convention. True story. If it says it in your bylaws, you must do it.

11. A rule on who can run for national office. Those rules are determined by the National Convention body, not the unit or the department.

12. A rule that states a unit must follow a procedure “as stated in the Unit Guide.” What happens if that part of the Unit Guide no longer exists? Better to just state the rules in your document instead of referring to an outside document.

13. “Recommend.” A recommendation is not a rule.

14. “Chaplin.” Charlie Chaplin is not a member of the Auxiliary (wink!). But there is a “chaplain.”



Watch ALA National Convention Live*

Join us Monday, Aug. 29, for the opening of our general session.

www.ALAforVeterans.org/Convention

*Additional live sessions on Aug. 30 and 31.
Recordings available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

2022 ALA MEMBER SURVEY IS COMPLETE

Thank you to everyone who participated in the ALA member survey. We appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to share your opinions and feedback. More than 14,400 ALA members engaged in the survey. Your responses will help shape the future of the American Legion Auxiliary.

ALA National Headquarters staff, along with volunteer leadership, will use the results to find overall trends with membership. For example, are we meeting the needs of our members? If not, how can we better meet those needs?

Your answers help us tailor programs and training offered,

improve member benefits, re-examine recruiting plans, design a marketing strategy, develop diversity, equity, and inclusion training and awareness programs, and much more.

As we begin to examine the responses and work on the next steps, we can share some of the data collected with you now.

Let's begin with the net promoter score (NPS). We have a score of 43.4. So, what on Earth does that mean? NPS is a metric used in customer experience programs to measure the loyalty of customers ... in our case, members. The score is measured with one question. The

NPS is an indicator that will allow us to monitor if we are making improvements.

You may be wondering if 43.4 a good score. The creators of NPS, Bain & Company, suggest:

- Above 0 is good
- Above 20 is favorable
- Above 50 is excellent
- Above 80 is world class

The great news is that we are favorable and heading toward excellent. We still have a lot of work to do, and the responses to the survey will help lead us in the right direction.

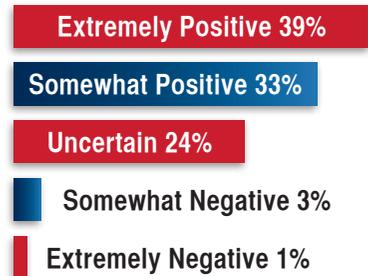
Below is a glance at a few questions with their responses.



How would you rate your overall experience with the American Legion Auxiliary?



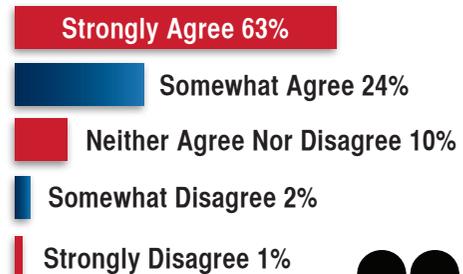
How would you finish the following sentence: I believe the future outlook of the ALA is...



Here are the top five ALA departments with the highest number of respondents (sorry, no official prizes ... just bragging rights!):

1. Florida
2. California
3. New York
4. Michigan
5. Pennsylvania

At the national level, does the ALA promote quality and relevant programs?



Be on the lookout for more data to be shared in the near future. We hope you'll appreciate the feedback as much as we do.

Didn't participate in the member-wide survey but still want to give us feedback? Drop us a line at survey@ALAforVeterans.org.



UPDATE ON PROPOSED REVISED CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT AND NEW POLICY

At the 2021 Mid-Year NEC Meeting, the National Executive Committee (NEC) ratified a special committee appointed by then-National President Nicole Clapp and charged it with 1) revising the Code of Ethical Conduct (“Code”) to clarify who the Code applied to; and 2) defining a process for dealing with allegations of misconduct. The Code of Ethical Conduct Special Review Committee, currently chaired by attorney Jacqui Hood of Vermont, is composed of ALA members; among them: attorneys and professionals in the fields of law, human resources, policy formation, investigations, and ethics.

The special committee has met almost weekly since then, consulted with Professional Registered Parliamentarian® Chris Dickey, and produced a revised Code. In addition, the committee proposes a new Ethical Conduct Review Policy which details the conduct expected and the process for addressing a misconduct allegation against national leadership.

In order for the NEC to adopt the proposed Code and Policy, the first step is for the 2022 National Convention delegates to vote on updating the ALA’s articles of

incorporation and then adopt amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws to align. The second step is for the 2022-2023 NEC to vote on adopting the revised Code and the new Policy. The following are some questions and answers about the Code and Policy that delegates and the 2022-2023 NEC may find helpful to prepare for the upcoming votes; the documents will be made available on the national website at www.ALAforVeterans.org as well.



Question: Why do we have to revise the Code of Ethical Conduct?

Answer: Some of our excellent leaders created a code of ethics years ago. But as the NEC tried to develop a process for dealing with complaints, it discovered that some clarifications needed to be made — primarily, to whom did the code apply? Currently, under Indiana Law and our governing documents, the Code of Ethical Conduct applies only to the national officers and those appointed to national committees, not the NEC. Because the NEC is elected by the departments, the authority to discipline or remove an NEC member lies with the department. The committee’s recommendation

is the Code should apply to national officers, members of the NEC regardless of voting rights, and those appointed to national committees. Collectively, we call this the national leadership. It is a best practice that national boards hold their board members accountable for ethical conduct.

For example, if a member of the NEC was convicted of embezzling funds at the unit level, unless the unit revoked the NEC’s membership or the Department Executive Committee removed the member from the NEC, the NEC had no way to hold that member accountable. Why, you ask? Because of ALA Bylaws Article IV, Section 2, which states that the conduct of the NEC shall be referred to the *Department Executive Committees*. If the National Convention votes to adopt the recommendations from the special committee, the Code of Ethical Conduct will apply to the entire NEC.



Question: Could this Code be used by units and departments to enforce conduct?

Answer: No. This Code **would not be enforceable** at the unit or department level. We expect our members to conduct themselves in

a manner worthy of the sacrifice of our military, veterans, and their families, but **each unit and department has the responsibility to develop and adopt its own code of ethics or code of conduct.**

The national code could definitely be used as an example, BUT it has to be *adapted* to the unit or department's structure and *voted on* by the unit or department.



Question: Who would be responsible for investigating allegations of ethical conduct violations?

Answer: The special committee proposes establishing an independent standing committee composed of professionals from the ALA membership at large with demonstrated experience in risk assessment, conducting investigations, and who are independent from the NEC. This committee would consist of a chair and six members, each serving staggered three-year terms, no member serving more than two consecutive terms. This would help ensure independence from the national president who appoints them. The committee would investigate allegations and make recommendations.



Question: What exactly would be considered misconduct under the revised Code?

Answer: As an organization that values law and order and takes accountability to its donors and the public seriously, behavior that is 1) detrimental to the organization; 2) violates the bylaws, rules, or policies of the national organization; 3) violates laws or regulations of the State of Indiana, the state in which the ALA is incorporated; or 4) violates federal laws or regulations will not be tolerated. The American Legion Auxiliary national organization

must be transparent and fundamentally fair in its standards of conduct, how alleged violations will be investigated, and the possible outcomes for violations.



Question: Aren't national committee members already accountable to the national president who appoints them?

Answer: As the appointing authority, the national president has the authority to replace national committee members who are not fulfilling the responsibilities of their position or who need to step down for personal reasons. Questions of misconduct, however, are reserved for determination by the NEC per ALA National Standing Rule V, No. 6. That rule has been around for a long time — what is new is a defined process for handling allegations.



Question: Does this Code mean that the national organization can terminate the membership of national leaders in the ALA?

Answer: No, the national organization cannot terminate any individual's membership. The responsibility for determining membership is reserved for the units alone, according to ALA Standing Rule X, No. 4. The NEC may make a recommendation to the unit, but it is up to the unit to vote to implement any recommendation.



Question: So, what would be the consequences for violating the Code?

Answer: There would be many options for addressing violations of the Code of Ethical Conduct. The goal is to attempt restoration of the member to serve as a productive member of the board. Sometimes, this can be accomplished with coaching,

counseling, or making amends. The most serious violations may involve a recommendation from the NEC to the member's unit that the member be expelled from membership.



Question: Who can file a complaint?

Answer: The ALA encourages prompt reporting of concerns by anyone made in good faith, with honest intentions, not maliciously or for personal gain, and if the information is true and complete to the best of the complainant's knowledge.



Question: How will someone make a complaint and be protected from retaliation?

Answer: The ALA strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone making a good faith report of suspected wrongdoing as detailed in the ALA National Whistleblower Protection Policy. An online form will be created on the national website that will go directly to the chair of the independent standing committee.



Question: What if the allegation is against a member of the independent standing committee or the national president?

Answer: Depending on the nature of the allegation, an independent attorney or auditor may be engaged to prevent a conflict of interest.

Addressing ethics complaints is difficult, and no one enjoys it. Putting all of these governance changes into place before they are needed is absolutely essential. It's too late afterward. Are your governing documents ready to deal with an ethics issue?

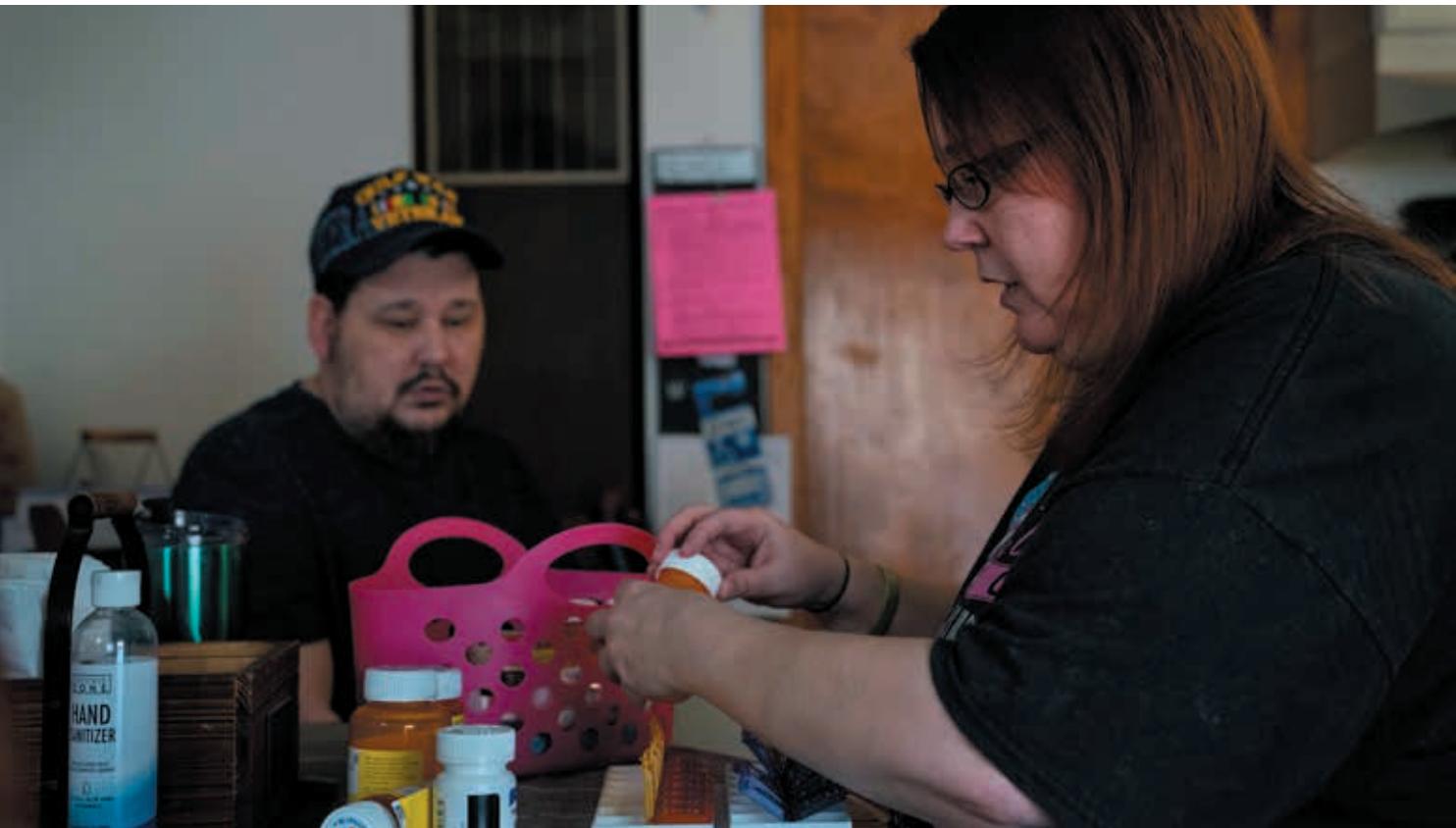
Watch www.ALAforVeterans.org for more information before National Convention. Questions? Email ConstitutionBylaws@ALAforVeterans.org.

CAREGIVERS: PART TWO OF A THREE-PART SERIES

In our “Caring for Those Who Take Care of Others” Auxiliary magazine series, we’ll profile ALA members who are caregivers, each with different backgrounds and the challenges they face.

‘I would choose this life over and wouldn’t think twice’

ALA members share their stories of struggles, success with caregiving



“When I found out [caregivers] was what the national president was doing as her focus for this year, I cried my eyes out,” said ALA member Toni Kettner.

“This hits home. Someone was going to be behind us.”

The subject is very personal for many who have experienced caregiving, are going through it now, or have seen others navigate through it. Since February’s Part 1 release of the *Auxiliary* magazine caregiver series, several members have contacted ALA National Headquarters with their caregiver stories ... or that a-ha moment when they realized they too are caregivers.

TONI KETTNER
Department of Michigan,
Unit 315
45 years old
Caregiver for her husband, Jason

Toni Kettner came across a quote one day that stuck with her, and she tries to live by it: “God found some of the strongest women and made them veterans’ wives.”

In 2006, Jason Kettner became really sick from service-connected disabilities. Much of what he has falls under Gulf War Syndrome. He also has fibromyalgia and was recently diagnosed with early stages of dementia. Kettner and Jason weren’t married at the time, but good friends who stayed in touch over the years. As a veteran, he even spent three and a half years homeless. The two reconnected in 2012.

“That’s when he told me he needed me,” she said. “He was so sick.”

She left Michigan and moved to Arizona to help care for him. She lived there for a year before they decided to go back to Michigan to seek better care.

In 2016, she and Jason married. The following year, she left her nursing job to take care of her husband full-time.

“I knew I would be home and wouldn’t get to see a lot of people,” she said. “That’s the rough thing about it — you don’t have all the social interactions if you are working full-time.”

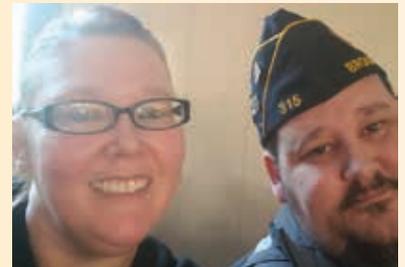
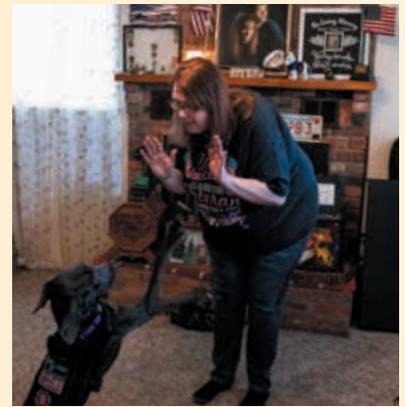
That leaves a lot of time when it’s the two of them.

In 2018, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs awarded Jason 100% disability. But Kettner said she still catches grief from people who say he doesn’t look that sick.

“He has more bad days than good,” she said, emotion heavy in her voice. “I have to help him get to the bathroom, get him up and down off the toilet. I definitely have to be there when he is showering. A lot of it has to do with his fibromyalgia. His shoulders are pretty bad, he has stomach issues, he has some damage to his lower back. Again, all service-connected disabilities.”

To get around the house, Kettner is often by Jason’s side, or he uses a cane or walker. Jason also now has a service dog, Hera, to help him with his mobility and seizures.

“She has been a gift to have her here with us,” Kettner said. “When he has nightmares, Hera knows how to turn



ALWAYS CARING (opposite page): Toni Kettner organizes prescriptions for her husband, Jason; (this page, clockwise from left): in 2018, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs awarded Jason 100% disability; Toni with Jason’s service dog, Hera, who helps Jason with his mobility and seizures; Toni and Jason have been married since 2016.

the lights on for him and wake him up.”

Like many caregivers, Kettner lives with the emotional and mental aspects of this life daily.

“The loneliness — the feeling that all your friends have abandoned you,” she said with heavy sadness. “Not so much military wives, but civilian friends.”

Along with loneliness, Kettner said she regularly experiences a range of other emotions.

“I have a lot of anger, and sometimes I lose my patience,” she said. “I have guilt. If I go to my [ALA] district meeting, I’m gone for four hours, and I feel guilty that I am there and he’s not. Or if I go to The American Legion post, I feel guilty texting him to see if he’s OK. I feel guilty when I go out without him, like I’m doing something wrong.”

Because of the constant care required, burnout hits Kettner, like it often does with other people in her shoes.

“I don’t want to do anything — I just want to lay in bed all day and not move,” she said. “I couldn’t care less what happens during the day and then I’m resentful and angry and just want to run away.”

To combat these feelings, Kettner understands the importance of respite.

“If I could tell any caregiver — make one to two hours every day for yourself and not feel guilty,” she said. “Self-care is most important, even if it’s just the grocery store to walk around. Just to know you are getting out and seeing other people.”

During that time to herself, she likes to catch up on TV shows, complete any work she needs to do as a service officer for The American Legion, or attend the twice-monthly Friday night dinners at her local post home.

“The American Legion Family has helped with caregiving,” she said. “It is wonderful to belong to the Legion Family. I haven’t found any other organization that has given me as much care and understanding.”

In addition to the Family, Kettner is also part of a caregivers program at the VA hospital in Ann Arbor. The program helps her if she needs to talk to a therapist, social worker, or psychologist.

“It gives me the therapy I need, the mental health part,” she said. “I was diagnosed with secondary PTSD because of Jason and his nightmares and how paranoid he gets.”

Although the discussion is often on the one being cared for, Kettner offered her thoughts on what others can do to help the caregiver.

“I always thought it would be nice if someone would say, ‘Would you like to go out for a cup of coffee and talk, or do you guys want a meal dropped off for you?’” Kettner said. “Something small like that — they don’t realize it’s something big.”

Reflecting on her caregiver role, Kettner doesn’t regret the direction her life has taken — she embraces it.

“I took that vow to death — sickness and in health — everything,” she said. “I would do it over again. I would choose this life over and wouldn’t think twice.”

GEORGETTE WENTON
Department of Pennsylvania, Unit 927
43 years old
Caregiver for her husband, Jason

It’s one thing to be a caregiver for someone. It’s an entirely other thing to be a caregiver and go through major health issues yourself. This is ALA member Georgette Wenton’s reality.

“It’s very hard to have the tables turned on me and be a care recipient,” she said, emotion pouring out of her. “It made my ability to handle a schedule a little more important — balancing his appointments and needs and my not wanting to spend all the days I feel good in doctor’s appointments all day.”

Wenton was diagnosed with Stage 2 ovarian cancer while also continuing to care for her husband, Jason. She had surgery Oct. 18, 2021. A month later, she had her first round of chemotherapy.

“I couldn’t even carry hampers to do laundry,” she recalled.

Wenton has been a caregiver for Jason for several years.

He served during Desert Storm with the U.S. Army combat engineers. Jason developed a rash related to his job duties while deployed, and it was misdiagnosed as a heat rash when it was gout. Unfortunately, he was allergic to every gout medicine, and the only way to keep it under control was through prednisone, which also led to a myriad of issues.

Wenton met Jason in 2010, and they officially began dating in winter 2013. At that point, he had PTSD and major depressive disorder, both service connected. Life was still pretty normal — they could travel and do other activities together.

Then, in November 2016, both of his feet broke in the same place within a week of each other.

“That’s when my caregiver duties really ramped up,” she recalled.

The VA sent the couple to a specialized foot doctor, but Jason’s feet were in such poor condition that not much could be done.



IN IT TOGETHER (clockwise from top left): Veteran Jason Wenton uses an adaptive chair at Patriots Cove in Pennsylvania, a place for veterans and first responders to go for outdoor activities. While Jason is with other veterans, his wife and caregiver, Georgette, gets to spend time with other caregivers; Georgette and Jason’s wedding day; the couple with some friends; Jason on a deployment.

He had a 50% chance of surgery working. In February 2019, Jason had a bilateral amputation done up to his mid-calf. That's when Wenton left her job to become his full-time caregiver.

"One of the hardest things was getting the house adapted," she said. "We had a hospital bed in the living room. A nonprofit helped us build a bedroom he could maneuver in. The bathroom wasn't big enough for him to maneuver by himself."

Having the bed and bathroom adapted to help Jason was life-changing.

Then, in May 2020, Jason got an infection in his left stump, the portion of the leg remaining after his amputation. The couple went to the hospital and Jason had surgery.

"The day before he was set to come home, I spent it in tears," she said. "With COVID, I wasn't allowed to be up there — I was in the dark."

That experience and more taught Wenton ways to work through hardships that can come with caregiving. One is being aware of her own feelings — and one of those feelings was misplaced guilt.

"Guilt should only be reserved for when I have physically done something wrong for someone else," she said. "I shouldn't say, 'I feel guilty' when I go out with friends."

Along with that comes grief.

"Even though I still have him, I can grieve the life we had before," Wenton said. "Our relationship will never be

May is Month of the Military Caregiver

Each May, we take a little extra time to recognize our military caregivers. Although not a federal holiday, observing May as the Month of the Military Caregiver raises awareness of both our military and those who care for them.

Support the military caregivers in your life — give them much needed respite, go on a grocery run, drive their veteran to medical appointments, meal prep, bring over a meal, etc. There are numerous ways you can help caregivers!

the same."

Wenton reached a point when she needed to find others who were also caregivers — a group of people who would understand what she was going through. She had no idea if there even was a support system for caregivers, but she knew she needed to look into it. She signed up for the general caregiver support program through the VA.

"It was life-changing to meet others," she said. "I have made lifelong friendships."

Once she became more involved with other caregivers, Wenton began volunteering with Patriots Cove Caregiver Community. She previously attended a daylong event where she met the owners of Patriots Cove, who bought property for veterans and first responders to have a place for outdoor activities.

"It's really great for him to go up there and have that comradery," Wenton said about Jason.

While the veterans are having their time together, a cottage is on site for the caregivers to gather or just have some downtime to themselves.

Wenton has since expanded her involvement with caregiving as part of the Elizabeth Dole Caregiver Fellow Class of 2021. Her role is to be there as a support system and knowledge base for other caregivers experiencing issues.

"I was excited when I found out [I was going to be a fellow]," she said. "I look at what I do, and there are definitely caregivers who have it worse than I do. My story isn't anything super-special, but every story matters."

For those who will become caregivers in the near or distant future, Wenton offers simple, yet effective advice.

"Don't be too hard on yourself," she urged. "You will make mistakes, and you will learn from them."

JOYCE LIVINGSTON

Department of Arizona, Unit 1

82 years old

Was caregiver for her husband, Robert

Joyce Livingston is no stranger to caregiving and what it takes. She cared for her husband, Robert, when he battled various ailments between 1975 and 2020. His medical issues ranged from diabetes to torn rotator cuff surgery to heart attacks to cancer.

Caregiver Resources

- **Department of Defense caregiver resource directory:** <https://warriorcare.dodlive.mil/Caregiver-Resources>.
- **Elizabeth Dole Foundation: Provides caregiving support, peer networking, and training for caregivers of military servicemembers and veterans:** www.elizabethdolefoundation.org.
- **Caregivers Advocate Program: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides tools for military caregivers:** www.caregiver.va.gov.
- **Military and Veteran Caregiver Network: offers an online support network and other services for military caregivers:** www.milvetcaregovernetwork.org.

Be sure to check out the August 2022 Auxiliary magazine for more caregiver resources.



LOVE ALWAYS: Joyce Livingston and her late husband, Robert, were married in 1959. She cared for him over the years as he suffered various ailments until his passing in 2020. No matter the trials and tribulations she faced, Joyce stood by his side as his caregiver for decades, continuing to love him to the fullest. Although it wasn't easy, she doesn't regret her role as a caregiver.

"No one knows what a caregiver goes through until they become one themselves," Livingston said. "You have to want to do it. You have to be there and put your heart into it. If you're not willing to do everything you need to do, you won't survive."

Livingston and Robert were married for 61 years, and for much of that time, she took care of him. Ailment after ailment, they continued praying that he would get better and sought medical help for each diagnosis.

She was still working as Robert's health was declining, so she ended up retiring earlier than planned in 2010 so she could be his full-time caregiver.

Livingston never really took respite for herself while caring for her husband — she took a nap here and there, but not much time to herself beyond that.

"It's not wrong if someone needs to get away; I understand that," she said. "How long you are with someone — I think that has a lot to do with it."

She made sure they both got out of the house on a regular basis.

"I always took him with me — he liked going for a drive," she said. "He hadn't driven for years. He would fall asleep, and we would drive around for a while."

One thing about caregiving, Livingston said, is you often have no idea what you are going to do from one day to the next.

"Sometimes, he would want breakfast and then throw up," she recalled. "He would forget to take his false teeth out, and I would have to get them out of the bucket and clean them off. If you love someone, you will do anything for them. If you are squeamish on blood or throwing up or helping someone in the bathroom, it can be a hard job."

Sure, the emotional and mental aspects of caregiving can be overwhelming. But sometimes, it's even harder because you love the person *that* much.

"I can't tell you how many times I did something for him and then went in the bathroom and cried," she said,

her voice wavering. "I never wanted him to see me cry."

Livingston said she could not have survived Robert's death without the American Legion Auxiliary and her church. Being involved in different positions, such as chair for the VA hospital gift shop, helped keep her occupied.

"I had Auxiliary people call me constantly to make sure I was OK and if I needed anything," she said. "I could have called a number of people."

Having spent years as a caregiver, Livingston offers words of wisdom for those who may be in her shoes one day.

"Take it one day at a time," she said. "With me, I put all my faith in God. I don't know if everyone does that. Also, call someone who has been a caregiver and learn different things you may have to do."

Robert passed away in 2020.

"I did everything for him, and I am very proud to have been able to do that," she said through tears. "No one will ever know how much I miss him. ★

By Sara Fowler, Staff Writer

Give a Gift to Support Others

ALA National President Kathy Daudistel made it her mission to celebrate the heroes behind the curtain — veteran caregivers. You can help care for those who care for others with a gift to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation's Mission Endowment Fund today. Donate online at www.ALAFoundation.org/donate, or by mailing a check to the ALA Foundation, 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268 and write "Mission Endowment Fund" in the subject line.



Auxiliary Honor Guards and Color Guards: What They Do

The sounds of synchronized steps, a bugler playing *Taps* — in sorrow, and in celebration, presentations from honor guards and color guards stir up deep emotions. Both symbolize our freedoms and the sacrifices from the men and women who defend our country. Though similar, there are slight differences between an honor guard and a color guard.

The main purpose of an honor guard is to present honors at military funerals. Included in their duties: removing the flag from

the casket and folding it 13 times into a crisp triangle for loved ones to cherish in remembrance. Honor guards may also present the colors (flags) at ceremonial occasions. Color guards are often seen at the beginning of sporting events, carrying the colors to represent the service of our Armed Forces. While these are both often conducted by veterans, some American Legion Auxiliary and other American Legion Family members proudly answer the call of duty.

California ALA color guard honored to present in local and national events

In 1985, Legionnaire John Coleman established the Jackie Robinson Unit 252 Color Guard in Los Angeles. The all-Auxiliary unit started by participating in parades. Now, they present the colors often for a variety of events, including competitions, national American Legion Family events, and for the pre-game ceremonies at professional sporting events. The unit has received several awards, including

The American Legion Color Guard Competition, California 2019 State Champion for Color Guard, multiple first-place awards from the Los Angeles Martin Luther King Jr. Parade since 1985, and the AFRAM GLOBAL community service award.

One of the most high-profile honors the guard has received was presenting colors during pregame ceremonies for 2022 Super Bowl Champions Los Angeles Rams. They presented twice during the 2021-2022 season in SOFI stadium, and had previously presented in the Los Angeles Coliseum.

“It was amazing to present colors at the Rams game. We were treated as VIPs,” said Anita Biggs, captain of the Jackie Robinson Unit 252 Color Guard. “What almost brought us to tears was when we walked back to the green room after presenting, and many of the fans stopped, applauded, and said, ‘Great job’. It was so heartwarming.”

In addition to Rams games, the unit has presented colors at the Los Angeles Dodgers’ Jackie Robinson Day, Los Angeles Clippers, and at an MMA event. The unit presents colors 10 to 12 times a year. On Veterans Day, they usually juggle at least four events. The group has set a major goal for themselves — they want to march in the U.S. President’s Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C.

The color guard consists of 10 members, eight of which are in active rotation. Two of the members — Bertha Edmondson and Donna Grayson — have been involved since the unit’s inception in 1985. Currently they have one active-duty Army captain in their color guard. Biggs said they are always recruiting.

Biggs has participated for more than 20 years. She joined because of her dad, and now he helps with the color guard.

“My father was an award-winning company commander in the U.S. Navy. He loved The American Legion and was a past commander of Jackie Robinson Post 252. Although I admired the unit color guard, I

did not have any desire to join until my father talked me into it,” Biggs said. “When I attained the position of captain, I enlisted my father to serve as our drill instructor. We learned many new maneuvers under his leadership and began to win more awards and were noticed more often.”

Kids can take part in color guards too

A unit in Illinois is teaching future generations how to represent the colors and appreciate and understand the sacrifices and freedoms they represent.

The Shooting Stars Drill Team from Unit 14 in Flora is for kids in elementary through high school. Ruthie McGilvry Welty started the team in 2011 to teach children how to post and respect the flag and honor veterans. The kids also participate in the POW/MIA

ceremony and can fold the flag and recite the meaning of the 13 folds. Welty teaches the kids how to post and retrieve the flag, along with flag etiquette and meanings.

Welty said the team has events throughout the year, and they get many requests for Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

“We’re very busy. I have to turn down some people because we’re usually busy for four days a week around those holidays,” Welty said. “Kids love marching in the Veterans Day and Memorial Day parades.”

The Shooting Stars have also performed at The American Legion National Color Guard contest. The team won first place in the open class division in 2016, 2018, and 2019.

With boys allowed on the drill team, a second-grade boy joined.

“He’s so proud of himself when he posts the flag, and he does a perfect job,” Welty said. She doesn’t want to



HONORING OUR MILITARY (previous page): the Shooting Stars Drill Team of Flora, Ill., performs a POW/MIA Ceremony; (from top) the Post/Unit 230 Stockton, Mo., Color Guard marches in a local parade; members of Los Angeles’ Jackie Robinson Unit 252 Color Guard present colors before a Los Angeles Rams game.

turn anyone away because she knows the benefits for kids. Not only do they learn patriotism and respect, but it gives them confidence.

ALA members and military funerals

ALA members from Unit 253 in Festus, Mo., answered the call of duty to assist their Legion post to provide funeral honors at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis in 2017. The ALA members were part of the shooting team.

“Uniforms were made ready, feelings were running high, and we felt the need to contribute and that was the best decision,” said Diane McCart, honor guard member. “The ALA members have participated in 573 funerals.”

Unfortunately, the ALA members are no longer participating in funerals at the national cemetery. “In September 2021, the Missouri National Guard Funeral Honors Program instituted stricter guidelines, limiting the participation of the funeral honors shooting team to veterans only,” McCart said. “This action came as a shock to us all and affected every organization that participated in the program.” The unit continues to participate in various patriotic events at local schools and in their community.

Color guards and The American Legion Family

The American Legion Post 230 Color Guard in Stockton, Mo., includes both Legionnaires and Auxiliary members. ALA members joined the guard in 2017 because extra people were needed at the time but decided to continue as part of the team. In 2018, the guard — including the Auxiliary members — participated in and won the National Color Guard Competition at the National Convention in Minneapolis.

“It involved a lot of practice but was a very wonderful experience,” said Carole Maugh, ALA Unit 230 member. “This has been a fun part of our Auxiliary activities.”

Currently, five Auxiliary

members participate — two on a regular basis, two as fill-ins, and a college student who participates when she is home from school.

“We all participated on drill teams in our younger years. Our college student Elizabeth Christie was a member of the Stockton JROTC color guard before she left for college,” said Maugh. “Our ages range from 21 to 74.” Each member has a personal connection to the color guard. Christie is connected through her grandfather. The other members all have husbands who participate.

The post also has an honor guard, but the Auxiliary members participate only during color guard events and carry the service flags.

More color and honor guards are needed

Color guard and honor guards are needed across the country to keep the tradition going strong into the future. For units wanting to start a color/honor guard, Biggs recommends asking someone with a military background to help organize drills, maneuvers, march, posting, and presenting colors. Unit 252 orders uniforms and equipment from American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales, as well as a parade accessory supplier.

American Legion color guard contests

The American Legion hosts a color guard competition at the beginning of every National Convention.

The next contest will be held Friday, Aug. 26, 2022, during the 103rd American Legion National Convention in Milwaukee.

There are four classes of competition:

- Advancing/Retiring Colors
- Military
- Military-Open
- Open

Applications are available at www.Legion.org and are due July 22. ★

By Jennifer Donovan, Staff Writer



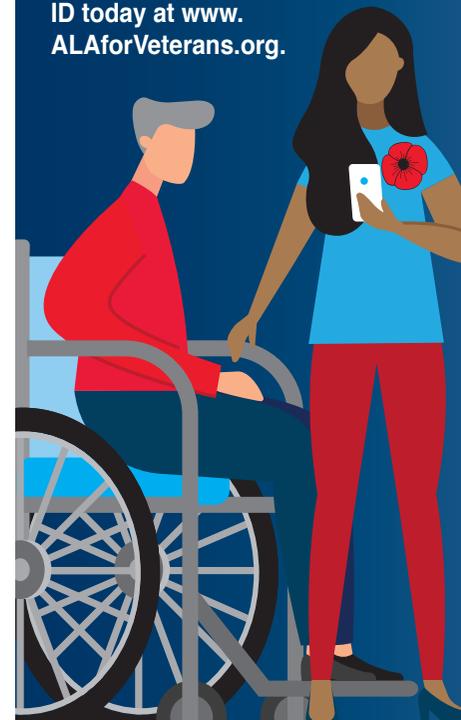
ALA ACADEMY LIVE

Miss out on an ALA Academy Live course?

Catch the recently added recordings in the ALA Academy:

- **Using Social Media to Your Unit's Advantage (Part 1)**
- **Mastering Military Shipping with Shipthriftly**
- **VAVS Department Orientation**
- **Mission Delivery through Caregiver Support**

Log in with your member ID today at www.ALAforVeterans.org.



ALA members play key role in MENTORING JUNIORS

We know our younger members are the future of the American Legion Auxiliary — mentoring them is key to that future.

The ALA has adult members who understand the importance of this and have made mentoring our Junior members a priority.

For those who are also mentors or who may become one someday, following are two mentorship success stories that illustrate the importance of the ALA's youngest members and why they matter now and will continue to matter in years to come.

Gabriele Barnett

Department of Georgia, Unit 192

Barnett has been involved with Junior members for about 10 years. She was previously a child advocate, and through that experience, realized we need to involve children and give them a purpose and teach them.

Through her experiences, Barnett has seen firsthand the importance of mentoring Juniors. At her post home, she talks to parents and grandparents about their children and grandchildren being part of the Junior Activities program, where they can mentor

“I don’t think people understand what the Junior Auxiliary is — it’s not just leadership for our organization, but leadership in their lives going forward.”

Juniors in being good citizens and educate them about patriotism.

“It’s important to mentor them so when we are gone, they are our future and our ALA will still exist,” she said. “We teach them the importance of our veterans and

what it means to be an American.”

Barnett’s unit currently has about 14 Junior members.

Over the years, she has had several positive mentor experiences with Juniors. One, in particular, stands out.

“We had one very shy Junior,” she recalled. “She was afraid to get in front of people and talk. Through the years [of being mentored], she became the honorary Junior department president.”

As a mentor, Barnett said she feels like she serves an important role — continuing to challenge Juniors, letting them know they can overcome their fears, and helping them feel more comfortable in different situations.

To help Juniors develop essential skills, Barnett said mentors can give them more responsibilities. For example, if a Junior likes to write, they can shadow the unit secretary. To gain confidence in public speaking, reading the minutes from a previous meeting can help with that. Older Junior members are often computer savvy, so they can use their skills to create a social media page, a newsletter, or set up a virtual meeting.

Having knowledge in the area of mentoring, Barnett said there are a few key aspects of being a good mentor.

“They have to know the ALA programs, they have to be willing to work at different levels with different age groups, and have to believe in our programs,” she said.

For those adult members who may want to become Junior mentors themselves, Barnett offers advice.

“I would say if you believe in the program, if you like working with children, there is so much potential out there,” she said. “Go out and reach out to them. A lot of people don’t know about our Junior program, and let them know we are here and encourage members to bring children and grandchildren.”

Robin Dorf

Department of Minnesota, Unit 260

An ALA member since she was 10 years old, Dorf began mentoring Juniors once she graduated into senior membership. Even in her district today, once Juniors turn 18, they often help mentor the younger members.

“It’s fun to watch our Juniors mentoring each other,” she said.



MENTORING JUNIORS (clockwise from top): a 2021 Easter Egg hunt for Juniors and Sons of The American Legion; Junior mentor Gabriele Barnett wearing a fireman’s hat when the unit took Juniors and Sons to a firehouse on Fort Gordon; a Legion Family Christmas event involved Auxiliary, Legion, Sons, and Riders.

Dorf's mother, a former Junior Activities chair, and her mentors, got Dorf interested in working with Juniors when she was growing up. Through the years, she was mentored by many senior ALA members in her district and department.

Over time, she began to understand the importance of mentoring ALA Junior members and why it matters for the longevity of the organization.

"They are our future if we can keep our Juniors going," Dorf said. "When they are done with high school and go to college, keep up your membership and come to things when you can, and they come back with us and become leaders. We need leaders to show them how it's done and how to treat people."

Dorf has many mentor stories from her years of experience, but one stands out to her the most — her niece, Emily Suess, honorary national Junior division vice president for the Northwestern Division.

She is in National Honor Society and is already taking college courses while still in high school.

"She always comes back to me and says it's because of the Auxiliary and the leadership roles that she feels she has gotten further in her education," Dorf said. "She always

puts the ALA down first and they look at those leadership skills."

This year, Suess is the vice president of her school's National Honor Society, where she has utilized the public speaking skills she gained from the ALA.

"I don't think people understand what the Junior Auxiliary is — it's not just leadership for our organization, but leadership in their lives going forward," Dorf said.

Being a Junior mentor, and helping them develop those skills, serves an important role in our Auxiliary.

"I think mentoring has been passed down to me," Dorf said. "I take that as a responsibility. I had mentors, and if I hadn't had them, I wouldn't be where I am now. I was blessed by having a lot of people help me, and I grew as a leader."



MAKING A DIFFERENCE (clockwise from top left): Junior mentor Robin Dorf (far right) with her family; the youngest ALA Juniors at a Junior conference; and Juniors at a department Junior conference.

Having experience with helping our younger members, Dorf said key components of a good mentor include listening, following through, making time for them, meeting them at their level, engaging with them, and remembering they aren't just kids, but little adults.

"I think it's a very important program, and I don't think people understand how important it is," Dorf said. "We forget that Juniors are us. It's not *just* a program — they are members." ★

By Sara Fowler, Staff Writer

What are some characteristics that make a good JUNIOR MEMBER MENTOR?

- Include Junior members in your unit meetings. They may hold appointed chairmanships and become valuable members to your local units. Include them on committees, and they may have ideas you may never have considered.

- Lead by example. Don't use the old adage, "Do as I say, not as I do." If we expect Juniors to learn and do things the right way, we need to do them the right way. If we expect them to treat others with kindness, we must do the same.

- Ask your Juniors to help you compile the data for your end-of-year reports. They may have information to add, and they can learn about all the hours and dollars spent on mission programs each year.

- Ask your Junior for ideas, listen to them, and include your Junior in the planning and implementation.

Let her explain how her ideas help one of the Auxiliary programs. Be sure not to criticize things before they happen.

- Challenge your Junior group to plan an activity that incorporates as many ALA programs as possible (i.e., on Veterans Day (Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation), visit a care center (Community Service), sing the National Anthem (Americanism), and distribute poppies (poppy). Together, say a prayer for troops and their families (National Security and Children & Youth). Take photos, post on social media, and send to media outlets (Public Relations). Be sure to include how to become a member (Membership). Present the ideas to the program chair at a meeting.

List of ideas compiled by the 2021-2022 national Junior Activities Committee.



COMING IN AUGUST: Several items will be voted on at the ALA's National Convention in Milwaukee. Watch the happenings live during our general sessions beginning Aug. 29. See www.ALAforVeterans.org for details.

A LOOK AT CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION VOTE

Several items will be up for vote at the ALA National Convention in August. On the table in Milwaukee:

Governance/Management Separation Housekeeping

With the national treasurer and national secretary no longer employees of the national organization, some cleanup of wording is necessary to clarify they are voting members of the National Executive Committee and delegates-at-large to National Convention (Const. Art V, Sec.2; Const. Article VI, Sec. 4).

Risk & Compliance Committee

Acting on the recommendations of our external auditing firm, the Risk & Compliance Committee is considering proposing amendments that, if passed, would allow a nonmember to serve in a non-voting capacity on the Risk & Compliance Committee. Not only is this a best business practice, but it would align the ALA with other nonprofit organizations.

Suspension, Cancellation, and Revocation of Charters

Having learned lessons from a unit appealing the revocation of its charter, amendments will be proposed to more clearly articulate the definitions of the words "suspension, cancellation, and revocation," as well as the

responsibilities and process for both units and departments to follow to ensure fundamental fairness (Bylaws Article XI).

Code of Ethical Conduct

The Code of Ethical Conduct Special Review Committee's attorneys and professionals in the fields of law, human resources, and ethics led by chairman and attorney Jacqui Hood of Vermont have been meeting weekly since April 2021. The committee was charged by the NEC with recommending changes to the Code of Ethical Conduct that may include clarifications, as well as substantive changes AND recommending a process to enforce the Code of Ethical Conduct. The NEC is grateful to these committee members who have volunteered so much of their time and professional skills to help the organization navigate a complicated legal subject.

Although the Code of Ethical Conduct applies only to national leadership, the convention body needs to vote to make some governing document changes before the NEC can vote to adopt a revised Code of Ethical Conduct. The special committee worked in consultation with the ALA's Professional Registered Parliamentarian® Chris Dickey to craft proposed language for the following votes:

1. First, vote to update the ALA's articles of incorporation. It is a best practice for nonprofit boards to be accountable for the conduct of their board members. As an organization incorporated in the state of Indiana, Indiana requires that a provision to address this issue be included in an organization's articles of incorporation, as well as in the bylaws. Delegates will vote on adopting the amended articles which then will be filed with the state of Indiana.

2. Second, vote to amend the national constitution and bylaws to be consistent with the articles. The ALA's constitution and bylaws do not currently allow the NEC to be accountable for the conduct of its board members. Delegates will vote on proposed amendments that define who the code applies to, what is considered misconduct, and possible consequences.

See pages 24-25 in this issue of *Auxiliary* about the Code of Ethical Conduct Special Committee recommendations for more information.

These are just a few of the items of business to be conducted at the 2022 National Convention. More information will be made available on the national website to keep delegates informed. Questions? Email ConstitutionBylaws@ALAforVeterans.org.

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS: YOUR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS ARE YOUR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS!

The national Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules are the governing documents for the American Legion Auxiliary. As ALA members, we are all part of this organization. However, units and departments are individual entities requiring their own set of governing documents specific to your unit or department and how it functions.

Per the American Legion Auxiliary national governing documents, the purpose of the national Constitution & Bylaws Committee is to encourage properly written governing documents at all levels of the organization. So, what does that mean to your unit and department?

If you send a question asking us to “rule” on a unit or department issue, you can expect our first

question to be, “What do your governing documents say?” We will assist you in finding that answer within your documents. We will not answer the question or issue for you; that is not in the scope of the committee.

If your answer cannot be found in your governing documents, we will encourage you to work with your department Constitution & Bylaws chairman to amend your governing documents. Your department chairman is an excellent resource to assist you with many questions and how to properly amend your governing documents.

Do you have a parliamentary question? Start with your department parliamentarian. They should be knowledgeable of Robert’s Rules of Order and your state

nonprofit laws. The ALA’s national parliamentarian, Peggy Thomas, also is an excellent resource.

Your national Constitution & Bylaws Committee is here to assist you when and where we can. We want to be sure your governing documents are as specific as possible. The way for a unit or department to function well is with a strong constitution, bylaws, and standing rules.

Make sure your documents are up to date and not in conflict with ALA National Headquarters on things such as eligibility, and that they are specific to the needs of your unit or department.



Pam Ray is a 64-year member of the ALA. She belongs to Urbana Unit 71 in Illinois.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES: RECOGNIZING ALA JUNIOR CAREGIVERS

 www.Facebook.com/ALAJuniors



The American Legion Auxiliary offers two ways to recognize Junior members who are currently looking to learn more about being a caregiver or are currently caregivers.

The caregiver patch is brand new to the ALA Junior Patch Program this administrative year and is for Level 3 — grades nine to 12. Some

of the possible activities include writing a short essay on how you can support a caregiver and learn about putting together a “Caregivers Survival Kit” or a first-aid kit. When requirements for the patch are completed, Junior members have a good grasp of what it takes to be a caregiver. The Caregiver Patch for ALA Juniors and Sons of The American Legion members was created to support 2021-2022 National President Kathy Daudistel’s focus on caregivers.

At the national Junior meeting in Indianapolis earlier this year, seven students received Youth Caregiver Certificates of Appreciation. At all of the national ALA Junior meetings this year, Junior members were surveyed to learn if they understood the topic. The discussion began with a quote from Rosalyn Carter: “There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are

currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.”

The conversation continued with the definition of a caregiver. Answers from the Juniors ranged from spending time with a grandparent on a regular basis, caring for a parent with a broken arm, and being attentive to a sibling with special needs.

Do you know a Junior member who has taken a caregiver role deserving of recognition? Commend them by downloading the Youth Caregiver Certificate of Appreciation under the Children & Youth Committee page at www.ALAforVeterans.org and presenting the award.



Deb Albers is a 49-year Auxiliary member of Davenport Unit 335 in Nebraska.

ALA GIRLS NATION: FORESEEING A BRIGHT FUTURE

 www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAGirlsState

While the American Legion Auxiliary celebrated its 100th birthday a couple of years ago, one of the ALA's most prestigious programs — ALA Girls Nation — will commemorate its 75th session this summer. The ALA Girls Nation Committee is busy preparing for what promises to be another outstanding program. In addition to senate sessions and political party activities, the senators will visit and lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, tour the various national monuments, attend the U.S. Army's Twilight Tattoo, and hopefully be able to meet with their state senators. It'll be a week packed with amazing activities.

The ALA Girls State programs are coming off of some difficult years. In March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, many of the ALA Girls State programs chose to cancel their sessions rather than taking a health risk for their citizens and staff. There were a few departments that quickly converted to virtual ALA Girls State programs, and kudos to them for



their quick program turnaround.

The programs that converted discovered they could offer a quality program, even though everyone wasn't gathered in one location. In 2021, several ALA Girls State programs monitored the experience of those who offered the virtual sessions in 2020 to learn about the obstacles encountered and then proceeded with a virtual program in their department. In some areas, like the Department of Ohio, the 2021 ALA Buckeye Girls State was held in person. Some departments still chose not to offer a 2021 session, but interested young women were allowed to attend a virtual session offered by a different department. Through it all, ALA Girls Nation ended up with 96

senators attending from 48 different departments.

The ALA Girls Nation Committee and representatives from over 45 ALA Girls State programs recently participated in two webinar sessions about Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion. The presenters — Karla Washington, Sandra Rice, and Kaylene Khosla — answered questions and offered suggestions that were beneficial in all aspects of the ALA Girls State program. Best wishes to all departments for a very successful ALA Girls State session in 2022.



Nancy E. Magginnis is a 63-year member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 86 in Kendallville, Ind.

RISK & COMPLIANCE: UNDERSTANDING CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE ALA

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary are often entrusted with information that is confidential, and, at times, can be exposed to information which may be considered privileged and proprietary in nature. To be compliant with privacy legislation and protect the organization, every effort should be taken to maintain confidentiality and limit disclosure of any information which may be harmful to its governance and management.

It is hoped that all members assuming leadership/governance roles fully understand and accept their fiduciary responsibility and duty of loyalty to the American Legion Auxiliary. To help to avoid breaches of trust, units and/or departments should

consider adopting a confidentiality policy. Confidentiality is the preservation of privileged information, and the purpose of this policy should ensure that everyone understands the organization's requirements in relation to the disclosure of personal data and confidential information.

All levels of our organization should strive to observe strict adherence toward transparency and disclosure, recognizing that confidential information, if disclosed, may be not only detrimental to our organization, but also in its business dealings, its relationship with benefactors, and to individuals. For that reason, it is important that charitable organizations like the ALA continuously earn the public's

trust through their commitment to ethical principles, transparency, and accountability.

Any member who might benefit directly, or indirectly, should be required to immediately, and fully, disclose all potential or actual conflicts of interest with any legal, ethical, and/or fiduciary obligations before assuming responsibility of their position. They should always respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and donations and never disclose information that may directly or inadvertently become known to them.



Jeri Greenwell is a 55-year member of the Auxiliary. She is a PUFL member of Mundt-Allen Unit 81 in Bethel, Maine.



Candidate: National President
VICKIE KOUTZ
 Department of Indiana:
 Boonville Unit 200

Eligibility: Through husband, Jim, who served in the U.S. Army, with service in-country Vietnam.

Offices Held: Served several unit-, district-, and department-level positions. National: served as chair of the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Poppy, Legislative, ALA Girls Nation, Membership, Constitution & Bylaws, Education, National Security, Children & Youth, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation committees, and served as vice chair of Leadership, Community Service, and Junior Activities committees; member of Future Focus Committee, Strategic Planning Committee Ex-Officio member, and American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board of Directors designated director. Served as national vice president and National Executive Committee member.



Candidate: National Vice President
LISA WILLIAMSON
 Department of Alaska:
 C. Russell Huber
 Unit 57

Eligibility: Through father, Ray Allington, as well as adoptive father, Keith LaChance. Also adds military service of son, Kyle, who serves in the Alaska Air Guard.

Offices Held: Served/serving several unit-level positions and multiple department-level offices and chairmanships. National: chair of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Children & Youth, Education, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Legislative, Constitution & Bylaws, Public Relations, Community Service, and Junior Activities committees; 100th Anniversary Committee member, ALA Centennial Strategic Plan Strategy co-captain, and National Executive Committee member.

American Legion Auxiliary members elect five national division vice presidents, one from each ALA division.



Candidate: Central Division National Vice President
ANN REHBEIN
 Department of Iowa:
 Ames Unit 37

Eligibility: Through father, John Grutsch, brother Mike Grutsch, husband David Rehbein, and daughter Jennifer Monserud.



Candidate: Eastern Division National Vice President
VERONICA GURNEY
 Department of Maine:
 Decker-Simmons
 Unit 51 in Oakland

Eligibility: Through father, Paul Rokosny, U.S. Navy, Korea (deceased), and son Matthew Predmore, U.S. Marine Corps, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Candidate: Northwestern Division National Vice President
MARLENE BOYER
 Department of North Dakota: John Raymond O'Hara Unit 25 Carrington

Eligibility: Through three brothers who all served in Vietnam, and son, Capt. Garret Luke Boyer, currently serving in U.S. Army at Fort Stewart in Georgia.

As of press time, candidate information had not been submitted to ALA National Headquarters for the offices of Southern Division national vice president, and Western Division national vice president.

The national historian completes a historical record of the administrative year and maintains and updates the historical records of the American Legion Auxiliary.



Candidate: National Historian
LAURA "SUSIE" CLYDE
 Department of South Dakota: Piedmont Valley Unit 311

Eligibility: Through father, U.S. Army veteran Richard L. Shepard, World War II and Korea.

American Legion Auxiliary chaplains express our founding principle of service to God and country and celebrate diversity among people and faiths. They also provide spiritual and emotional guidance, sending dignity and respect to the occasion.



Candidate: National Chaplain
KAREN PEEL
 Department of Ohio:
 Unit 449

Eligibility: Through father, U.S. Navy veteran Earl O'Dell, WWII and Korea.

Watch the Installation of National Officers Live

Join us at National Convention on Wednesday, Aug. 31, for the installation of 2022-2023 national officers. Go to ALAforVeterans.org/convention.



When are ALA National Officers Elected?

These national officer positions serve one-year terms and are elected at National Convention each year. These officers will serve until adjournment of the following National Convention. In addition to these candidates, any member in good standing may be nominated for any of these national offices from the floor at National Convention. ALA national division vice presidents are elected in their respective division caucus during National Convention.

Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org to read more about the candidates for 2022-2023 office. Information presented on this page was provided by the candidates.

HIGHLIGHTING THE ALA COMMITMENT AMONG NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS STAFF



Like you, ALA National Headquarters staff are dedicated to the Auxiliary's longstanding mission of

serving veterans, military, and their families. Demonstrating *Service Not Self*, we help Auxiliary members at all levels of the organization, and in many different ways. In this issue of *Auxiliary*, we highlight ALA member and compliance officer Sara Riegel.

How long have you worked at American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters?

It will be 11 years in May 2022.

What is your job title at NHQ?

Currently I'm the compliance officer. I started as a compliance accountant, grants manager, project director, national treasurer, and director of the Finance Division.

Tell us about your duties as compliance officer.

I'm responsible for the implementation and oversight of tasks ranging from routine to varying degrees of complexity of business operations and applying required and established procedures and practices to support the national organization. As the compliance officer, I work in conjunction with the executive director and division directors to

administer functions of operations which include, but are not limited to, the functions of accounting, payroll, development, programs, grant, and risk management. I also work with the ALA departments, intermediate bodies, and unit organizations with education, assistance, and guidance of the federal tax-exempt requirements and compliance and assist with the management of Group Exemption Ruling granted to the national organization.

What does a normal workday look like for you?

I always have a plan, and, well, it is never happening. My typical workday, on average, involves communicating or responding to emails that range from payroll, compliance issues and assistance, state charity registrations, donation solicitation disclosures, working with the Risk & Compliance chairman and the committee, reviewing policies, monitoring procedures/internal controls, reviewing federal and state publications, and updating content as needed. My workday is never the same, nor is it ever systematic in nature.

What influenced you to apply for a job at NHQ?

I was looking for a nonprofit organization that focused on service.

How does the ALA's mission resonate with you?

My parents, Bob and Lucy Riegel, raised us to give of our time, talent,

and resources (skills or financial support). I learned early on in life that helping someone else willingly, freely, and humbly is important.

How do you help Auxiliary members at all levels of the organization?

Through education, assistance, and guidance with issues of compliance, seeking reinstatement, and best business practices.

Tell us about your ALA membership.

I've been a member since 2014. I'm eligible through my maternal grandfather, Russell Raymond Byer, The American Legion Homer Pierson Post 207, Willshire, Ohio. He served in the U.S. Army, World War I and WWII. I joined the Auxiliary in honor of my grandfather. I knew he had served, but I just knew him as "Grandpa."

What does it mean to be an ALA member to you?

It means I am part of something that makes a difference and has passion and true grit in the service of our members to the community of our veterans, military, and their families.

How has the ALA shaped your life personally and professionally?

Personally, all of the members I have met and talked to over the years — hearing their stories, listening to the hours and dedication they have given — humbles me. Professionally, I continue to learn and grow.



Auxiliary Publications Update:

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) guidebook was updated earlier this year. The revised guidebook contains policies and procedures of the American Legion Auxiliary that govern volunteer service rendered by our members. For more information, visit ALAforVeterans.org/Member/Guides/Volunteer-Guide.

Our *America, The Beautiful* coloring books can be downloaded from the MyAuxiliary member portal at www.ALAforVeterans.org. Printed versions for purchase are coming soon from American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales.

Provided by Carol T. Robinson, National Chaplain 2021-2022 | www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAchaplains

MAY

Memorial Day...

There are some days when it feels particularly good to be an American throughout the year. For Auxiliary



members, one of those days is Memorial Day. Everything is in bloom; the first vacationers are on their way, it's the first official cookout of the year, and May 30 is when it'll become acceptable to

eat watermelon straight from the rind and corn on the cob. Memorial Day weekend is when pools open and moms start nagging their kids about wearing enough sunscreen and not tracking water into the house. Finally, we are on the brink of popsicles, hamburgers, and cakes with strawberries and blueberries in the shape of an American flag.

But, for some, the questions are more dire. The memories are still raw. When life is good, we wrap ourselves up in it and often forget the meaning of days like Memorial Day. Like so many other holidays, the importance of Memorial Day is often lost amid celebration and relief days off work and school. So, what exactly are we celebrating? Today is the day we remember the fallen. We remember those who gave their lives fighting for a better tomorrow that they would never see.

So, this year, when your kids are excited about getting a day off of school, perhaps remind them why we celebrate Memorial Day and the incredible sacrifice involved in protecting our country with dignity and honor. This sacrifice allows us to feel good about being an American every day.

JUNE

“Please listen for my bell, and I’ll listen for yours.” — Author unknown

Just up the road from my home is a field with two horses in it. From a distance, each horse looks like any other horse. But if you stop your car or are walking by, you will notice something quite amazing: looking into the eyes of one horse will disclose that he is blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down but has made a good home for him.

This alone is amazing. If you stand nearby and listen, you will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will see that it comes from the

smaller horse in the field. Attached to the horse’s halter is a small bell. It lets the blind friend know where the other horse is, so he can follow.

As you stand and watch these two friends, you’ll see that the horse with the bell is always checking on the blind horse and that the blind horse will listen for the bell and then slowly walk to where the other horse is, trusting that he will not be led astray. When the horse with the bell returns to the shelter of the barn each evening, it stops occasionally and looks back, making sure the blind friend isn’t too far behind to hear the bell.

Like the owners of these two horses, God does not throw us away just because we are imperfect or because we have problems or challenges. He watches over us and even brings others into our lives to help us when we are in need. Sometimes we are the blind horse being guided by the little ringing bell of those whom God places in our lives. Other times, we are the guide horse, helping others to find their way.

Good friends are like that — you may not always see them, but you know they are always there.

Please listen for my bell, and I’ll listen for yours.

And remember ... live simply ... love generously ... care deeply ... speak kindly.

JULY

God, creator of all mankind,

On this 4th of July, we remember the courage and determination of our founding fathers and remember the brave patriotic men and women who gave so much for us. We thank them that we are a free nation, a free people, and free to worship in our own faith. Through them, we carry forward the ideals of justice, freedom, and democracy.

We pray for our elected officials and sound government and just laws. Make us ever proud to be Americans. How easy it is for us to complain, even to protest? It is good for us to exercise our freedoms as citizens. But let us not forget to pray for our government and our leaders that You will direct them in their decision-making.

We ask that You rekindle the flame of compassion within us so that we might show genuine care for everyone. Teach us to be sensitive to the needs of others. Grant that as Americans and American Legion Family members, we may continue to help our veterans and those in need.

Be with us and guide us, we pray.

Amen.

This Reflection is excerpted from the ALA Chaplain’s Manual.



Carol T. Robinson is a 35-year PUFL member. She belongs to Unit 776 in Riverside, Ohio.

ESSENTIAL BRANDING TIPS FOR NATIONAL POPPY DAY®



American Legion Auxiliary members can help our organization by incorporating small branding changes that add up to make big differences. One mission-related branding event members can and should always focus on is the Friday before Memorial Day — National Poppy Day.

In addition to the traditional label on our poppy, here are a few suggested areas where the ALA brand also should be seen:

- Money buckets: Label whatever you use (can, jar, basket, etc.) for distribution days with a donation can label. Download an ALA-branded poppy donation can label at www.ALAforVeterans.org and search “donation can label.” This is a visual way to help the public understand that their poppy donation helps the Auxiliary assist veterans, military, and their families. You can also check with your local businesses to see if they would be willing to place your donation can at their location as a collection site.

- Signage (banners, posters, tablecloths, and more): Be well-branded with a variety of signage so people know who we are, what we do, and why we matter. For those hosting a contactless drive-thru poppy distribution, units and departments can download banners at www.ALAforVeterans.org. Two sizes are available: 8 feet by 2 feet, and 8 feet by 3 feet. Additionally, poppy posters are available to use at your poppy booth, inside your post home, or wherever you may be distributing poppies. Sizes are

11 inch by 17 inch, and 18 inch by 24 inch. One poster is branded for National Poppy Day, and one includes the *In Flanders Fields* poem.

- Apparel: Don't forget about yourself as a walking billboard! Make sure you are branded as well, whether it's through a poppy shirt, hat, scarf, pin, or other item. Poppy items can be purchased through American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales at www.Emblem.Legion.org. Bonus idea: even when you

aren't distributing poppies, don your poppy apparel while grocery shopping, walking, or anywhere in a public space — you might get asked about it and you might even get a donation for your unit too!

- Anything handed out to the public: Besides the poppy you distribute in exchange for a donation, all other items, such as informational giveaways, should be branded so people will learn about and remember the meaning of the poppy long after they've made their donations.

Mission in Action Grant Can Help with Branding

A great way to assist your unit, district/county, or department spread the news about National Poppy Day and the meaning behind the flower is to apply for a Mission in Action grant from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. This grant can help members be more recognizable in their communities for everything they do for our veterans, military, and their families.

GUIDELINES:

- The applicant must be an American Legion Auxiliary entity: unit, district/county, or department.
- The proposal must address a specific ALA branding need that will help members with mission delivery and be recognizable in the community. The project must support the ALA mission, or an ALA program identified in the national action plan.
- One grant per grantee in a 12-month period will be awarded.

For more information on the grant or to apply, visit www.ALAFoundation.org/mission-in-action-grants.



The American Legion Auxiliary's History with the Poppy

The poppy has a long, rich history within The American Legion Family, further solidified by the creation of National Poppy Day®. Here are a few important milestones related to the flower:

1915

The poem *In Flanders Fields* is published. Written by Canadian Col. John McCrae in World War I, the poem references poppies blooming on the battlefields turned burial grounds.

1918

Georgia resident Moina Michael popularizes the idea of wearing a red poppy in memory of the lives lost in WWI.

1920

The poppy becomes the official flower of the American Legion Auxiliary to memorialize soldiers who fought and died during the war.

1924

The distribution of poppies becomes a national program of The American Legion and major mission-related activity for ALA members.

2017

The American Legion Family calls on U.S. Congress to designate the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day.

2018

The name National Poppy Day is successfully trademarked for American Legion Auxiliary members to use publicly.



WASHINGTON, D.C. 1947: ALA Girls Nation senators from across the country gather around the piano.

75 YEARS LATER: ALA GIRLS STATE/NATION ALUMNA RECALLS GREAT MEMORIES

This July, ALA Girls Nation will celebrate its 75th session!

Over the years, ALA Girls Nation has become known as a premiere youth program. But imagine going to the first ALA Girls State in your area *and* the first ALA Girls Nation. Talk about not knowing what to expect!

new experience for all of us. I think for those of us from the rural areas, it was an eye-opening opportunity to mix with and be exposed to the girls from the metro area. There was a world of difference in those days between rural and metro.

Were you interested in government before attending?

I never had a desire to run for public office. I always wanted to be involved with what's going on with local government. We were anxious to learn how they did things in other schools and other towns, and certainly developed tremendous interest in government, how it functions, and elections.

Did attending this event give you advantages in life?

Many. It broadened my horizons so greatly. It did a great deal to develop my feelings of patriotism. Those things are still very much with me.

What do you think was the most exciting thing about the program?

I think it was making friends and developing a feel for government. We all came from different communities, so it was interesting getting acquainted with the other girls. It's still true today: Most of them will make friendships for life.

What advice would you give girls today considering attending ALA Girls State?

You're being offered an opportunity to be with outstanding girls from all over the state. Some are interested in technology, some in music, some in drama, some in journalism. You will be exposed and work with these girls of all various backgrounds, and they will enrich your life by sharing ideas. You will develop friendships that will last for your lifetime. The knowledge you develop will enhance your feelings toward government and develop solid ideas that will enhance your life forever.



Kathryn LeBrasseur was part of that first ALA Girls Nation and attended the first ALA Minnesota Girls State in 1947. She had

the honor of being elected the first Minnesota Girls State governor.

The experience is one LeBrasseur hasn't forgotten — an experience that had a role in shaping her future as she graduated from the University of Minnesota and had an accomplished teaching career for 27 years, followed by a career as director of Douglas County Senior Citizens. LeBrasseur is involved in her community and her Auxiliary Unit 87 in Alexandria, Minn.

Tell us about your experience at ALA Girls State.

The week was tremendous, a



ALA Girls Nation At A Glance:

- ALA Girls Nation first session: 1947
- Location: Washington, D.C.
- Close to 7,400 young women
- have attended in the last 75 years.
- Two girls from every state are selected as senators.



FURTHERING HER EDUCATION: Lesa Dingman, pictured here with members of her Michigan American Legion Auxiliary unit, is a recipient of the ALA Non-Traditional Student Scholarship.

SINGLE MOTHER DEFIES ODDS AND PURSUES A COLLEGE EDUCATION

Lesla Dingman, 31, a single mom and American Legion Auxiliary Non-Traditional Student Scholarship recipient, has been very active in The American Legion Family since she was young, eventually leading to her becoming an adult member of the ALA. Veterans, military, and their families have always meant a lot to Dingman. Even into adulthood, she cannot sit around knowing these brave men and women are in need.

"I feel like they are not really

well looked out for in our country like they should be. I feel like by volunteering in the Legion [Family], I can help get them there, which is fulfilling," Dingman said.

In comparison, her path as a student has not been as linear. Dingman first went to technical school, acquired her medical assistant degree, and began working as a medical scribe. Eventually, she realized this was not the career path for her. At that point, she

was a single mom working full time. However, she did not let it deter her. Dingman is now pursuing her true passion as a dual-enrolled student at Montcalm Community College and Michigan State University as she studies agriculture operations, despite the uncertainties that come with being a non-traditional student.

"You're too old, or it's not worth it, or you don't have the time, too stressful, forgotten too much since high school, it would be too hard. Those are the thoughts in your head."

Dingman did not succumb to these thoughts and is still going strong as a student, even as she works full time and is a mother — and all with the support of her son.

"My son is always pushing me to go further. I feel like to be where I want to be in life and to be financially stable, getting an education is the route I have to take to get there."

While Dingman has her son for the ever-important emotional support, the ALA stepped in to offer financial support and a show of confidence through the Non-Traditional Student Scholarship.

"This scholarship was that confidence booster that let me know there are other people out there who are like, 'You can do that. You don't have to be a certain age. You don't have to be a certain person. You don't have to be right out of high school,'" she said.

Dingman is a wonderful example that your educational goals are never out of reach, no matter where in life you find yourself. It might be difficult — it may seem impossible — but with hard work and support from those closest to you and ALA scholarships, even the impossible can happen.

Help show non-traditional students like Lesa Dingman that no matter when they start, they can reach their academic goals. Donate to ALA scholarships at www.ALAforVeterans.org/scholarships and make sure all students, of all ages, from all walks of life have the chance to better themselves through a quality education.

National scholarships offered by the American Legion Auxiliary:

Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship

Fifteen \$5,000 scholarships are awarded annually (three per geographic division), to direct descendants of veterans who served in the Armed Forces during eligibility dates for membership in The American Legion.

Spirit of Youth Scholarship

Five \$5,000 scholarships (one per geographic division) are awarded each year to ALA Junior members.

Non-Traditional Student Scholarship

Five \$2,000 scholarships are awarded (one per geographic division) to a member of the Legion Family returning to school after a break in studies.

Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship

Ten \$2,500 scholarships (two per geographic division) are awarded to current college students who retained their ALA Junior membership into adulthood.

Learn more and start your application for an ALA scholarship at www.ALAforVeterans.org/Scholarships.

An American Legion Auxiliary member since 1932, Arizona Unit 62 member Lorita Holmes has seen quite a few changes in the American Legion Auxiliary and the world over the past several decades. But one thing hasn't changed — her dedication to the mission, not only of the Auxiliary, but of The American Legion Family. With 90-plus years of ALA membership, Lorita embodies what it means to be part of an organization focused on Service Not Self.



A LEGION FAMILY (at left): Lorita Holmes with her parents Dolores and George “Bud” Gilliland. Holmes has been an ALA member for over 90 years.

You became an ALA Junior member at 1 year old. Did your parents share with you later the importance of signing you up as a member at a young age?

My dad, George “Bud” Gilliland, was a World War I veteran, and my parents were both longtime members of The American Legion. My mom, Dolores Gilliland, wanted to instill in me the importance of patriotism and honor, so right from the start, she enrolled me as a member of an organization dedicated to those principles. I grew up in the Legion and Auxiliary, along with my younger brother.

To put my years of membership into perspective, that same year I became a member, 1932, was when Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic, and Hattie Caraway was the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate, representing Arkansas.

The story of the Four Chaplains hits close to home for you. Tell us why.

On Feb. 2, 1943, the U.S.A.T.

Dorchester, crowded to capacity with servicemembers, was torpedoed by a German submarine with devastating impact. Through the pandemonium, according to those present, four Army chaplains, from differing religions, brought hope in despair and light in darkness. As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains — arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers. Of the 902 men aboard, 672 died, leaving only 230 survivors.

My dad was department chaplain in 1954, and Mother and I used to sing together a lot. We assisted Dad by doing duets as part of the Four Chaplains programs he did to raise awareness for an organization dedicated to imparting the principles of selfless service to humanity without regard to race, creed, ethnicity, or religious beliefs.

Your father played a part in adding words to the Pledge of Allegiance. Can you tell us about that?

In the early 1950s, The American Legion sponsored the Back to God program as a crusade to bring the American people back to God, making America a great moral and spiritual force in the world. My dad had a big part in promoting the addition of “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance. Inspired by Sen. Ferguson of Michigan, he actually drafted the resolution for it. With the support of The American Legion, service clubs, civic organizations, and lawmakers, the resolution was signed into law on June 14, 1954, by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. It's really quite monumental to think that people across the nation now take a moment to add two such important words to the pledge — thanks, in part, to my dad.

Tell us about one of your early memories of the Legion and Auxiliary working together, a Family trait that is still part of many posts/units today.

Somewhere along the line, my husband, Wally, joined the Legion post, and we both got involved. We worked our way up to commander and president at the same time, so in 1965, we had Glendale post's first joint installation of the post and Auxiliary. The highlight of the evening was that my dad and mother were our installing officers. We worked at getting the post and unit doing more things together and promoting harmony and new membership.



Who inspires you? Do you know someone with an interesting background or spectacular life story? Contact us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or (317) 569-4500.



100 MILES OF HOPE: ALA National President Kathy Daudistel, American Legion National Commander Paul Dillard, and Sons of The American Legion Commander Michael Fox join the 2022 challenge (photo: John West/The American Legion).

JOIN THE AMERICAN LEGION'S 100 MILES FOR HOPE CHALLENGE

American Legion Auxiliary National President Kathy Daudistel is supporting The American Legion 100 Miles for Hope challenge, now in its third year.

The challenge promotes fitness and wellness among American Legion Family members while supporting the Veterans & Children Foundation (V&CF). The foundation raises money to provide education and training resources for accredited American Legion service

officers who help veterans and their family members receive the benefits they are due for their service.

Additionally, the V&CF pays for grants that go to military families facing financial complications through no fault of their own.

Participants are encouraged to walk, run, ride, swim, or cover 100 miles any way they choose between now and Sept. 5. The \$30 registration fee and donations go to support the V&CF.

Learn more at www.legion.org/100miles, or sign up today at www.emblem.legion.org.



ONLINE EXHIBIT OF AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Visit a museum without leaving your home. The Emil A. Blackmore Museum, housed inside The American Legion National Headquarters, is hosting an online exhibit — National Headquarters through The American Legion's first century.

The exhibit includes newly digitized historic photos and audio recordings from the last century.

The exhibit explores the buildings National Headquarters staff have occupied over the past century, including the former location of American Legion Auxiliary NHQ at 777 N. Meridian St. That building is now home to the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs. Visit online at legionmuseum.omeka.net.

VIRTUAL WASHINGTON CONFERENCE AND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

The 2022 Washington Conference was held virtually again this year in March, and National Commander Paul E. Dillard testified before a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs. Topics included in his testimony were the Russian invasion of Ukraine, toxic exposure

from burn pits, and the Buddy Check program.

The American Legion Legislative Agenda for 2022:

- VA health care modernization
- Suicide prevention and peer support
- Address toxic exposure and burn pits
- Improve health care for women veterans

- Concurrent Receipt
 - Guard and reserve GI Bill parity
 - GI Bill for honorable service
 - Citizenship for honorable service
 - Address the forever wars and restore congressional war powers
 - Pay the Coast Guard
 - Protect the American flag
- Read more about the legislative priorities at www.Legion.org



Online Newsletters

The American Legion has debuted a new newsletter for American Legion Family members and supporters. Subscribers can start each week with the *Monday Briefing*.

This newsletter contains:

- Relevant news
- Video links
- Information
- And more!

To subscribe to this digital publication or other American Legion newsletters, go to www.Legion.org/newsletters.

TONY KANAAN DRIVING THE AMERICAN LEGION INDYCAR

For a second year, The American Legion will be represented at the Indianapolis 500 IndyCar race. Tony Kanaan will drive The American Legion sponsored car for Chip Ganassi Racing.

Kanaan is one of the most popular drivers. He won the race in 2013 and this year marks his 21st Indy 500.

Kanaan also drove The American Legion sponsored car in 2021, finishing in 10th place.

The Indianapolis 500 is Sunday, May 29. You can watch for Kanaan in the No. 48 car during the broadcast on NBC. The race is scheduled to begin at 12:45 p.m. ET with coverage beginning at 11 a.m. ET.

The American Legion has a multi-year sponsorship agreement with Chip Ganassi Racing for the No. 48 Honda in the NTT IndyCar Series.



(Photo: Ben Mikesell/The American Legion)



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TIPS ON BEING A SUCCESSFUL, WELCOMING UNIT

Ineligible-for-membership volunteers, donors can contribute to Auxiliary mission too



Imagine walking into your first American Legion Auxiliary unit meeting as an eager community resident, ready to find out how you can help veterans, military, and their families. ALA members

begin to file in, but no one says “hello” to the new face in the room.

At the start of the meeting, you are asked to introduce yourself, and a member immediately asks if you are eligible to join the ALA. You know you’re not, but you are excited to contribute to the unit as a volunteer and help financially. But none of that matters because the unit members lose interest after they learn you aren’t eligible. No one talks to you, and they carry on with business.

After the meeting, you still haven’t given up hope, and try to get on a phone/email list for upcoming events, reiterating your desire to volunteer and contribute dollars. But still, no

response from current members.

Sadly, this scene has played out at many units across the country, and the ALA has lost out on several promising volunteers, simply because the focus has been on eligibility. Is your unit guilty of doing this when someone new comes through the door? Do you want to be part of the solution and not the problem when it comes to losing potential volunteers and donors?

Here are a few ideas on how you can respond positively to benefit everyone interested in your ALA unit:

“I want to volunteer, but I’m not eligible for membership.”

Some of you are cringing when you read that last part about eligibility and are still concerned about that. Does the ALA need eligible members to join units? Absolutely. Should we ignore ineligible people? No — greet them with the same enthusiasm that you would if they were a member.

How members can respond: “We understand you are ineligible for ALA membership, but we are excited you want to volunteer with our unit! There are many ways you can volunteer to help our veterans, military, and their families. Is there

a particular program you are interested in or an upcoming event? We would love to have you help out as much as you are able!”

“I’d like to donate to your unit, but I’m not eligible for membership.”

For some who want to make a difference with the ALA but aren’t eligible and don’t have time to volunteer because of busy schedules, contributing financially is their way of helping. Whether they have \$20 to donate to your unit’s next event or want to donate a set amount every month, it is good to have donors. They will help the mission continue by backing projects and events with much needed dollars.

How members can respond: “We appreciate you giving your financial resources to the unit. It will help further our mission and make a difference in the lives of our veterans, military, and their families. Is there a particular program or event you would like this money to go toward?”

Members, volunteers, and donors matter

ALA members will continue to be vital for this organization now and in the future. We need eligible members to join and continue our 100-plus years of serving our mission. But we also need to understand that there are community members throughout the country who have seen and heard what we do and want to be part of it — they just aren’t eligible for the membership part — but they want to actively contribute their time and treasure. Don’t discount this group of people!

They can and do make a difference in a variety of ways for our veterans, military, and their families. There are volunteers and donors who spend more time and more money contributing to our cause than inactive members. They matter and it’s important to make them feel welcome and part of our organization. Together, members, volunteers, and donors can have a positive influence on those we serve.

Does your post or unit host events that are open to the public? Try these tips for asking for donations:

- ✓ Keep your donation table visible at events.
- ✓ Give it a theme! Tell people how their donations will be used.
- ✓ Get creative! Along with poppies, make things such as bracelets to ask for donations.
- ✓ Develop a donation form and have a tamper-proof donation box. Make sure people know you’ll take a check. If you have the technical specs for it, accept credit card donations via Square or other online payment apps from a smartphone or tablet.
- ✓ Visitors are more inclined to donate right after a great experience. Stage a unit member near the exit.
- ✓ Did you obtain the donor’s phone number or address? Be sure to thank them and promote your next event.



Do you have more ideas on ways to welcome volunteers and donors? Email us at ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.

Visit our social media at www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media



GET SOCIAL WITH US ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND TWITTER!

Q: Why should I follow @ALAforVeterans on *multiple* social media platforms?

A: Each platform offers a unique way for us to deliver content, some of it unique to each social media outlet. For example, on Instagram we partnered with R.Riveter for one-of-a-kind handbag auctions that were held exclusively on Instagram with 100% of the proceeds benefiting American Legion Auxiliary. Don't miss out: Follow and engage with us @ALAforVeterans on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

WHAT'S COMING UP ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



In between issues of *Auxiliary* magazine, you can follow the latest news from American Legion

Auxiliary National Headquarters digitally. Follow the ALA blog, social media, *ALA eNews*, and website.

Here's a look at what's coming soon:

NATIONAL POPPY DAY:

Friday before Memorial Day (May 27 this year)

- In May, we'll post content related to National Poppy Day. Please feel free to share our posts on your own social media sites to promote your local National Poppy Day activities. Be sure to take photos and share what you are doing by tagging ALA National Headquarters @ALAforVeterans and using hashtag #NationalPoppyDay.

MEMORIAL DAY (MAY 30):

- We will honor those servicemembers who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

75TH ANNUAL ALA GIRLS NATION (JULY 23-30):

- Follow @ALAGirlsNation as 100 "senators" gather in our nation's capital to debate bills and pass legislation in a mock government, visit national monuments, lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery, and much more.

WHAT ALA MEMBERS ARE READING ONLINE



Are you reading the ALA blog posts? These brief, online articles are captivating stories about members in the ALA,

The American Legion Family, those we serve, and much more! Here's a look at popular blogs you can read right now!

- Planning for National Poppy Day®
- Ideas on how to recognize caregivers in your unit

Check out these blog posts and more at www.ALAforVeterans.org/blog.

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AUX MG 0522

Auxiliary Sudoku answers from page 18:

1	7	5	4	2	3	8	6	9
8	2	3	5	6	9	7	1	4
4	9	6	8	7	1	3	2	5
7	5	2	3	4	6	9	8	1
3	4	1	9	8	7	2	5	6
9	6	8	1	5	2	4	7	3
2	3	7	6	9	5	1	4	8
5	1	4	7	3	8	6	9	2
6	8	9	2	1	4	5	3	7

3	1	7	5	4	8	9	2	6
5	8	6	2	9	3	7	1	4
9	4	2	1	7	6	5	8	3
8	7	9	3	2	1	4	6	5
4	6	3	7	8	5	1	9	2
2	5	1	4	6	9	8	3	7
7	9	4	6	1	2	3	5	8
6	3	8	9	5	7	2	4	1
1	2	5	8	3	4	6	7	9

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5	2	1	3	9	8	4	7	6
9	7	4	6	5	1	3	2	8
1	9	6	2	7	4	5	8	3
2	4	8	5	1	3	9	6	7
7	3	5	9	8	6	2	4	1
4	1	7	8	2	5	6	3	9
8	6	2	1	3	9	7	5	4
3	5	9	4	6	7	8	1	2

“The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up.”

— Mark Twain, American writer



The American Legion Auxiliary was founded on the principle of caring for others. We've been doing this in many ways, shapes, and formats over the past century. Take military care package activities, for example. For ALA members, care packages are part of our own personal mission to make sure troops are happy during their time away from home. We send them boxes filled with comfort items to make being “over there” a little more joyful. Does your ALA unit offer a military care package program? Tell us about your feel-good stories, tips, and fun! Contact ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org.

Above: In this photo, published in the Auxiliary's March 1948 National News magazine, blankets for forest fire victims are being delivered by members of Tighe-Beaudoin-Farley Post and Unit in York County, Maine. The blankets were part of a shipment sent to the Maine Department of the Auxiliary from the ALA's Rhode Island Department to aid victims of the worst forest fire in the history of Maine.

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