



*A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families*

**From National President Pam Ray**

Hello to all American Legion Auxiliary members! My travels have taken me from coast to coast and north to south. I have never been prouder to be an ALA member. Your passion for our mission and our veterans is apparent throughout my travels. This issue of "From the President's Desk" will be very important for all of you. I am sure the chairs will be sharing what they are looking for in your reports. I hope you have all gone to the website at [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org) and found your program. There, you will find key statements, reporting questions, and, of course, the all-important "Get Involved" tab, which shares ideas for working your program. Please be sure you all report and share original photos. Don't forget, American Legion Family Day was the last Saturday in April. The certificate, signed by all three national leadership, is waiting to be sent to you! We want to send out so many of them! Please be sure to share these events with us! I am sure the national chairs will be excited to hear what YOUR unit has been doing! Please stay Mission Driven and Family Focused!

Pam Ray

2025-2026 National President

## **Auxiliary Emergency Fund**

The AEF Committee members and departments have been working hard all year long, raising funds benefiting the Auxiliary Emergency Fund program and creating an awareness of the funds available for our members. Auxiliary members have thought of creative and fun ways to raise donations involving American Legion Family members, the public, and their communities.

Now is the time to tell everyone about all your hard work. Each Department AEF Committee Chair is required to submit a narrative report via email to their Division AEF Committee Chair, in addition to copying the national AEF Committee Chair ([boxermom513@aol.com](mailto:boxermom513@aol.com)) due no later than May 14, 2026.

When submitting your reports, be sure to include photos (high-resolution format) that display your AEF Committee's activities. For more information on AEF reporting and deadlines, click on [this link](#).

Michele DeGennaro, National Chair

AEF Committee

## Americanism

In many areas of the country, spring is finally beginning to make an appearance. Spring also means we are heading into such an exciting time for our Americanism program!

In May, we have the opportunity to honor those serving our country by participating in events that honor Military Spouses on the Friday before Mother's Day. Military spouses are silent heroes who are essential to the nation's strength, and they serve our country just like their loved ones. Armed Forces Day is observed on May 3, and is the proper day to honor all the men and women currently serving, as well as those who have served and sacrificed to defend our freedom. Of course, we end the month of May with solemn and meaningful observances and ceremonies in honor of those who made the ultimate sacrifice serving our country.

Remember to mark your spring calendars for a very important day in our Americanism program — June 1 is the deadline to submit your entries for the Most Outstanding Unit Americanism Program and the Best Department Americanism Program! All entries must be submitted via the National Awards Form found on our [national website](#).

Summer will also be a busy time for our Americanism program. June 14 is Flag Day, and a great opportunity to again be out in our communities to participate in Unserviceable Flag Ceremonies, along with our Legion Family. This is a great way to teach respect for our flag and how we properly retire those unserviceable flags.

How are your plans coming along for America's great birthday celebration on July 4? *The* biggest event of the year, or pretty much of any year, will be America's semi-quincentennial, our 250<sup>th</sup> birthday! The American Legion Family will be right there showing the immense pride we have in our country. Please feel free to share your ideas by creating a post in our Americanism Facebook group page.

Whenever you participate in any Americanism event, please remember to take lots of pictures and share them with your national Americanism Committee. You never know if one of your pictures will end up on the big screen at ALA National Convention.

Diana Sirovina, National Chair

Americanism Committee

## **Children & Youth**

April is Children & Youth Month, as well as Month of the Military Child, which recognizes that military kids also serve our country. What do I mean by that? These kids are asked to hold down the fort (homefront) whenever one or both of their parents are deployed.

What did our members do to recognize these kids? Below are a few examples:

- Recognized military kids on April 15, Purple Up! Day.
- Hosted a Legion Family dinner and invite military families as well as non-military families to come together, make it fun, plan games, and provide prizes.
- Recognized those military children and families with KDH2 (Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2) buttons and stickers. These recognition buttons can be made ahead of time by visiting the Children & Youth page of the Members Only section at [www.ALAveterans.org](http://www.ALAveterans.org) for instructions.

No matter what you decide to do, publicize your events.

Encourage your members every year to plan a celebration for children during April.

Melanie Taylor, National Chair

Children & Youth Committee

## **Community Service**

April is American Legion Family Day month — many units, posts, and squadrons combined to host a Legion Family Day event at their location.

If a unit in your department hosted a Legion Family Day event, please have them send the particulars of their event with plenty of pictures to the National Community Service Division Chair for your division.

Auxiliary members continue to step up in their communities in meaningful and inspiring ways, making a lasting difference. Through their dedication and compassion, they are helping to strengthen our neighborhoods — whether it's lending a hand to those in need or simply showing up with a spirit of service.

Across our communities, members are continuing to support those facing food insecurity, assisting the homeless, and organizing events that honor our first responders. They are also actively involved with local shelters and community centers, providing resources and encouragement to those who need it most.

These acts of kindness and service remind us that even the smallest gesture can have a powerful impact.

Thank you all for your continued work with the Community Service Committee.

John Tester, National Chair

Community Service Committee

## **Constitution & Bylaws**

The Constitution & Bylaws Committee highlights the importance of regularly reviewing and updating governance documents, encouraging members to stay engaged and proactive in maintaining them. These documents serve as the foundation for governance, ensuring proper processes and providing clear structures to follow. The Constitution & Bylaws Committee empowers members of the American Legion Auxiliary by stressing the vital role these documents play at every level. Governing documents build a strong base for effective governance, guiding our actions and decisions.

Members can view the approved amendments from the mid-year NEC packet [here](#) by clicking the link [Download 2026 Adopted amendments to the National Standing Rules](#). The post enables departments to review their governing documents and the amendments, helping them identify necessary updates and stay compliant with current policies

Sallie Rossman, National Chair

Constitution & Bylaws Committee

## Education

Thank you for sharing information about the four national scholarships, which resulted in 1,086 applications received for judging. These scholarships help many students with their financial needs in college.

As this school year ends, make plans to recognize teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-8. It is never too early to start planning activities for the next school year. Give 10 to Education celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> year in action – an excellent opportunity to show support for your school by collecting classroom supplies. Be creative in organizing activities for National Education Week, Nov. 16-20.

Department chairs love to hear how units are promoting the education program so they can highlight these activities and photos in their year-end reports. This is one way your unit might make the big screen at the National Convention. Units can submit an entry directly for the Most Outstanding Unit Education program by June 1, 2026.

Keep in mind that the deadline for department chair year-end reports is May 15. And this year, department chairs may use their report as an award entry for Best Department Education program, provided it is submitted by May 15. Otherwise, it counts as their year-end report, and they can submit their entry for Best Department Education program by June 1, 2026.

National awards form link is [here](#).

Please share your stories and posts about the great things you are doing on the ALA Education Program Facebook Group.

For more ideas, visit the [Education Program website](#) on the national website through the MyAuxiliary portal.

Barbara Washburn, National Chair

Education Committee

## **ALA Girls Nation**

Starting in January, we have held monthly Zoom training sessions for the ALA Girls Nation staff. Each month, we focus on a specific area of the program. Staff are also required to complete courses on the ALA Academy. There are three more sessions before ALA Girls Nation week. Currently, the staff is at full force.

Our second Engage & Exchange was held on Tuesday, Feb. 17th. The format was restructured. Instead of choosing only one breakout session for the evening, attendees could participate in two consecutive sessions. Several leaders gave positive feedback about not having to choose just one session.

On Wednesday, Feb. 25, the Science of the Samsung Scholarship was featured as a webinar. It was well attended, and several questions were submitted and answered. A big shout-out to Barb Washburn for a wonderful job explaining some of the details of the scholarship process. Barb is our Education Committee Chair and works in conjunction with The American Legion on the scholarship process. This should help all the scholarship evaluators at their ALA Girls State sessions when selecting their department winner. We had a few Legionnaires attend.

As our 2026 ALA Girls State sessions begin, be on the lookout for young ladies to represent your department at ALA Girls Nation. Knowledge of current events, knowing the difference between domestic and foreign issues, having a global awareness, being cooperative and pleasant are all great qualities for an ALA Girls Nation senator to have. Good luck!

Jane Thurston, National Chair

ALA Girls Nation Committee

## **Junior Activities**

We all agree that Juniors are our future — they are also our past and present. We urge everyone to help keep our Junior program growing and thriving. Thank you.

We held our final three national Junior meetings in Las Vegas and Indianapolis on Jan. 31, and Atlanta on Feb. 7. We had an increase in attendance with the inclusion of Sons of The American Legion youth ages 8-17. The camaraderie was evident and friendships were made. The content was creative, fun, and informative with videos from National President Pam Ray, Sen. Tammy Duckworth, and 15 things to know about a military servicemember. The service project was filling Hats for Heroes with hygiene products during a relay race, and the filled hats were donated to veterans.

We held our quarter 3 Zoom meeting with all department leaders on March 4. We learned that Juniors are thriving and are very involved in their community and unit activities. We received positive feedback from department leadership regarding the national Junior meetings. The committee is promoting how to earn the Spirit of Youth patch, along with fundraising requirements and ways to earn all the other Junior patches through required service. We discussed different ways to display patches: vests, jackets, sashes, and even a shadow box. The year-end reporting and award submissions have a new twist for the department award, and we are promoting submitting department reports for award consideration by May 15. We are requesting pictures of Juniors in action while volunteering and participating in all programs of the Auxiliary.

Anita Biggs, National Chair

Junior Activities Committee

## Leadership

When it comes to leadership, there are many resources available to help our members learn, grow, and lead with confidence. Start by following the Leadership Committee for ideas, inspiration, and learning opportunities on our [Leadership Facebook page](#).

Department leadership chairs are also sharing creative projects and programs to help strengthen leadership at every level. Here are just a few of the initiatives being presented throughout the departments:

1. West Virginia ALA member Rebecca Farley presents a 12-video series titled *Lead With Purpose*. You can view all 12 videos at [this link](#).
2. The Department of California has a podcast titled *Auxiliary Horizons*. Join us as we explore leadership, learning, and the heart of service in the American Legion Auxiliary. Tune in, share with your friends, and let's keep growing together — Watch on [YouTube](#).
3. If you missed the leadership webinar: *Leadership in Unity*, you can still view it and many other leadership webinars at the [American Legion Auxiliary Academy website](#).

Please feel free to share these tools and links with your unit members.

Questions? Contact us at [leadership@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:leadership@ALAforVeterans.org).

### Save the Date

- May 15 – End-of-Year reports due to your division leadership chair.
- June 1 - 5 p.m. EST – Deadline for all national award submissions. The online form will close at 5 p.m. EST.

Donna Dillard, National Chair

Leadership Committee

## **Legislative**

Keeping track and following the ins and outs of legislation can be confusing and many times cumbersome. Just a few clicks is all you need to remember to stay abreast of priorities of The American Legion. Let's advocate and speak up by visiting The American Legion's Grassroots Action Center page and use your voice through action.

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home>

Deadlines for award submissions is upon us — the most outstanding unit and outstanding department awards for working the Legislative program is a click away. Exciting news: this year department chairs may use their awards form as their program report, provided it is submitted by May 15. Forms received by this date will count for both reporting and awards consideration, if indicated on the awards form. Please note that the awards submission deadline remains June 1. Any department submissions received after May 15 will be considered for awards only and will not fulfill reporting requirements.

**National Awards Form Link:** [www.ALForVeterans.org/National-Awards-Form](http://www.ALForVeterans.org/National-Awards-Form)

Engage with us on the ALA Legislative Facebook Group — show us photos of you visiting your local and state legislation.

April Sinclair, National Chair

Legislative Committee

## **Membership**

Each and every week, members across the nation continue to show growth in numbers as they work our mission of *Service Not Self*. What's coming up:

- May 15 — department reports due to the divisional membership chair
- June 6 — ALL awards submissions should be at National Headquarters
- June 12 — 95% Membership Goal Award
- July 4 — 100% Department Membership Award and America's 250th birthday!

Continue the amazing work you are all doing. Your national membership team is rooting for each of you!

Tracy Kinnick, National Chair

Membership Committee

## National Security

Award information:

- Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit National Security Program
- Share everything you did to support the National Security mission this year.
- Provide details/examples about the activity. Be sure to include specific information such as who is pictured and the members/volunteers who assisted in the activity or activities.
- Pictures should be in jpeg and separate from the narrative.
- How did you promote the American Legion Auxiliary's Salute to Servicemember Award or the Warrior Wednesday submission?
- Please fill out the information as completely and accurately as possible. Award certificates will be completed using the information given, so please be sure to complete the electronic form in its entirety.

National Awards Form Link: [www.ALforVeterans.org/national-awards-form](http://www.ALforVeterans.org/national-awards-form)

- The Salute to Servicemembers Award. Any member can nominate an enlisted servicemember (E1-E9).
- Nomination process: To nominate someone, complete the Formstack and write a narrative (up to 1,000 words) explaining why the individual deserves recognition. Be sure to highlight their military honors and community impact. An endorsement letter from their command group and a current photo in uniform (preferably an official DOD photo) are also required. The deadline for nominations is June 1. You can find the nomination form [here](#).
- Join us for the CERT webinar on May 19.
- Community Emergency Readiness Training
- You will learn more about how you can make a difference in your community when there is a disaster.

Keep our servicemembers in your hearts and prayers. Wear RED on FRIDAYS: R-remember, E-everyone, D-deployed.

Norma Tramm, National Chair

National Security Committee

## **Poppy**

Sign up today for the National Poppy Day Virtual 5K!

Run, walk, bike, roller-skate, swim! It's up to you how you want to complete the 5K (3.1 miles).

Make your suggested \$25 donation to your local unit or state department Poppy Fund, and let's go! Registration closes April 30. *Race medals are no longer available.*

The 5K does not need to be completed all at once, but should be completed between May 1 - 22. Be sure to wear your poppy gear and take pictures! Let everyone who sees you know what the poppy means.

**[Register here.](#)**

And then what?

Post on Facebook at **[American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program.](#)**

Email high-resolution, actual-size pictures to [Poppy@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:Poppy@ALAforVeterans.org).

Once you email pictures, you will receive a Certificate of Completion to fill out and print.

Karen Toll, National Chair

Poppy Committee

## **Public Relations**

Every day, ALA members live *Service Not Self*. From welcoming new volunteers and supporting veterans to mentoring future leaders and hosting meaningful events, your dedication moves the ALA mission forward. Effective public relations ensures that impact is seen, understood, and valued. Check out the ALA PR Facebook group for tips on how to spread the word.

As you share your stories, remember the three Cs of effective PR:

- Be concise. Say what matters, then review your message and strike what is unnecessary.
- Be consistent. Ensure facts, dates, and messaging align across all platforms.
- Be continual. Share your message regularly — repetition builds recognition, trust, and impact.

Together, clear and intentional storytelling honors service, one department, one unit, and one member at a time.

The next National Public Relations Committee Meeting will be on May 19, 7:30 p.m. EST.

Brister Thomas, National Chair

Public Relations Committee

## Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Greetings from the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee!

By this time, year-end reports are in the works, but we must all remain mindful that despite that, our mission of service to veterans and their families continues year-round; there is no “off-season.” Keep up your good work and start your record-keeping for next year’s reports as you volunteer at VA facilities and state veterans’ homes, participate in “Buddy Check” calls, assist homeless veterans, support caregivers of veterans, contribute to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF) or other therapeutic programs designed for rehabilitation, and bring awareness to the Be the One mission. Consider donating Poppy Funds to Honor Flight, volunteering to be a companion/guardian, writing cards and letters for “Mail Call,” or helping raise awareness of the Military and Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN) and donate to help fund the resources it provides.

Continue to promote engagement with the VA&R Committee in the manner that is best suited for your unit and encourage members to participate in whatever way is feasible for them. There are endless opportunities to honor veterans for their service. It’s not about abstract ideas and acronyms; it’s about real things and real people.

Thank you, everyone, for all you do!

Dr. Lisa Chaplin, National Chair

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee

