

Dear ALA Leaders,

First, I want to welcome our new members of the National Executive Committee and welcome back those continuing to serve. It was great to spend some time with you in Louisville. As I shared with our new NEC members, you'll receive this report from me each month to help keep you informed about the work happening at National Headquarters and across the Auxiliary. Please feel free to share this report with others in the ALA unless information is specifically identified as confidential or not for further distribution.

August was a busy month across the Auxiliary, culminating with more than 1,400 members gathering in Louisville for National Convention. Convention gives us an opportunity each year to celebrate the work of our members, recognize accomplishments throughout the organization, conduct the business of the Auxiliary, and spend time together as an American Legion Family.

I want to thank Past National President Pam, the NEC, our national leaders, and members throughout the Auxiliary for their leadership and commitment during the 2025–2026 administrative year. It was especially meaningful for me personally, as this was my first National Convention as Executive Director and marked the conclusion of my first administrative year with the ALA.

I also hope you had an opportunity in Louisville to see some of the tremendous work happening behind the scenes at National Headquarters. Convention requires months of planning and coordination while the day-to-day work of the organization continues, and I was proud of the way our team supported our members, departments, and national leadership throughout Convention.

As Convention concluded, we welcomed National President Coral and our 2026–2027 national leadership team. While our volunteer leadership changes each year, the work of the Auxiliary continues, and National Headquarters remains focused on supporting our leaders, members, departments, and mission.

We certainly haven't slowed down since Louisville. ALAMIS is back online, 2027 membership renewal efforts are underway, Mission Training registration is open, and this weekend we will welcome ALA Girls State leaders from across the country to National Headquarters for the first time.

Convention also brought two significant developments that will help shape the Auxiliary's future. Delegates adopted our new strategic plan, built around Mission, Members, and Means, as well as [new membership eligibility language for the ALA](#), expanding eligibility to additional family members. We're already beginning the work of putting the new strategic priorities into action while updating our membership and marketing materials to reflect the eligibility changes.

Below are August's highlights and updates across the divisions.

Highlights

- National Convention brings more than 1,400 members together: More than 1,400 registered ALA members joined us in Louisville for National Convention, where we celebrated the

accomplishments of the 2025–2026 administrative year, conducted the business of the organization, and welcomed our 2026–2027 national leadership.

- New eligibility language expands ALA membership: Delegates at The American Legion National Convention adopted new membership eligibility language for the ALA, expanding eligibility to additional family members. National Headquarters is updating membership and marketing materials to reflect the changes and help welcome newly eligible members into the Auxiliary.
- New strategic plan adopted: Delegates at National Convention adopted the ALA's new strategic plan, establishing priorities that will guide our work in the years ahead. Built around Mission, Members, and Means, the plan provides a framework for strengthening our impact, supporting and growing membership, and ensuring the people and resources necessary to meet the mission.
- Convention fundraising exceeds expectations: The Wall of Heroes raised more than \$31,000 for the ALA Foundation Mission Endowment Fund, exceeding its \$20,000 on-site goal. An additional \$5,725 was raised for the Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund through the "Chance to Win a PUFL Membership" fundraiser at States Dinner.
- ALA Girls State leaders coming to National Headquarters: For the first time, the ALA Girls State Leadership Conference will be held at National Headquarters Sept. 18–20, bringing leaders from across the country together to collaborate, share ideas, and strengthen ALA Girls State programs.

Programs

ALA Girls State Leadership Conference

For the first time, the ALA Girls State Leadership Conference will be held at National Headquarters Sept. 18–20.

ALA Girls State leaders from across the country will gather for a weekend of learning, collaboration, and connection. The conference provides an opportunity for program leaders to share ideas and successful practices, build relationships, and continue strengthening ALA Girls State programs nationwide.

We're excited to welcome everyone to National Headquarters!

Program Activity

- 20 Good Deed Awards and 14 Youth Hero Awards distributed
- 104 Junior Patch Program patches awarded
- 8 ALA Girls State patches awarded
- 3 Spirit of Youth patches awarded totaling \$180 in donations
- 33 Poppy Poster winners recognized
- 10 VAVS certificates processed
- 155 hour bars awarded representing 92,350 hours of service

Membership

ALAMIS is back up and running following the recent system upgrade. Membership staff continues working through issues, concerns, and adjustments as they are identified to improve system functionality and provide a better experience for users.

The first 2027 mailed renewal notices entered the mailstream Sept. 15 as membership efforts began for the new membership year.

Additional Metrics

- Phone renewals: 825 processed
- Paid Up For Life: 28 applications processed
- ALAMIS: 271 users set up; 5 Department Full User training sessions conducted

Events & Education

National Convention

National Convention concluded with more than 1,400 registered ALA members joining us in Louisville.

For members who were unable to attend — or anyone who wants to revisit Convention — general session videos, blog coverage, Pre-Convention Committee recordings, and the ALA National Book of Reports are now available on the national website.

Mission Training & National Junior Meetings

Registration is now open for the 2026–2027 Mission Training and National Junior Meeting cycle.

Upcoming locations include:

- Nov. 14 – Omaha, Neb.*
- Jan. 30 – Albany, N.Y.*
- Jan. 30 – Springfield, Ill.
- Feb. 6 – Atlanta, Ga.
- Feb. 6 – Las Vegas, Nev.*

*Events will be held in conjunction with The American Legion National Information Conference and SAL Regional Meeting.

September Webinars

- Preparing for the AED — Sept. 23 at 4 p.m. ET
- Wreaths Across America: “Remember, Honor, Teach” — How ALA Units Can Get Involved — Sept. 29 at 1 p.m. ET

Registration and additional information are available through ALA Academy.

National Appointments

The National Appointment application window will open earlier this year. Applications for members interested in serving on a national committee will be available on the national website beginning Nov. 1 and will close Dec. 1.

Members are encouraged to consider national service and to identify others whose professional experience, skills, and passion for the Auxiliary could make them strong candidates for national committee appointments.

Communications & Marketing

August was an especially busy month for the communications team, with National Convention coverage spanning social media, video, photography, blogs, and other member communications.

Auxiliary Magazine

The communications team went directly from National Convention into final production of the November issue of *Auxiliary magazine*, which goes to press in September.

We're always looking ahead to future ALA content. Members with news tips or story ideas are encouraged to contact PR@ALAforVeterans.org.

ALA Blog

Twenty blog posts were published by the end of August, including extensive National Convention coverage.

Social Media

ALANHQ Facebook

Engagement increased significantly during the reporting period:

- 427,300 views, up 149.7%
- 14,800 content interactions, up 232%
- 36,685 total followers
- 314 new followers, up 94.2%
- 13,100 page visits, up 138.5%
- 22,800 video and reel views

Convention content was among the strongest performers, including opening session photos, behind-the-scenes Convention setup, National President Pam Ray's Convention content, Merit Medallion recognition, and daily Convention highlights.

National President Facebook

- 280,700 views
- 15,000 content interactions
- 10,509 followers
- 197 new followers

Content surrounding National Convention and the transition from National President Pam Ray to National President Coral May Grout generated particularly strong engagement.

ALANHQ Instagram

- 27,000 views
- 75 new followers
- 888 interactions
- 307 profile visits

Collaborative posts with The American Legion surrounding Convention community service and the Legacy Run were among the strongest-performing content.

ALA eNews

- 284,622 emails sent
- 109,434 opens (39% open rate)
- 1,951 clicks
- 339,086 subscribers as of Aug. 20

The open rate increased 2.9% compared with the previous 10 campaigns, and the subscriber base continued to grow.

Top-clicked content included the National Convention agenda, 2026–2027 national officer candidates, and 2025-2026 National President Pam Ray's Spirit of Youth video.

Development

National Convention provided several opportunities to support the ALA Foundation and Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund while engaging donors, members, and partners.

The Wall of Heroes raised more than \$31,000 for the ALA Foundation Mission Endowment Fund, exceeding its \$20,000 on-site fundraising goal.

An additional \$5,725 was raised for the Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund through the "Chance to Win a PUFL Membership" fundraiser at States Dinner.

The development team also coordinated Convention sponsorships, donor engagement, the donor reception, member benefit partner participation, and the Veteran Projects Fund breakout session.

Finance

The Finance team spent much of the summer developing the proposed FY27 budget. National Headquarters hosted the Finance Committee's budget meeting at the end of July, and follow-up work continued throughout August to incorporate committee input and make final adjustments. The result was a balanced and fiscally responsible budget presented to the NEC for consideration at National Convention.

The iMIS upgrade also created significant challenges for Finance, particularly in ensuring the accuracy of accounting entries transferred between iMIS and Financial Edge. Staff worked through recurring system issues and coordinated near-daily fixes during the upgrade. The system is now functioning well, with additional adjustments continuing as opportunities for improvement are identified.

Work also continues toward integrating Concur with Financial Edge. The project requires additional foundational work before testing can begin, but once implemented, the integration will allow expense reports to flow directly from Concur into Financial Edge for reimbursement, reducing manual entry and improving efficiency.

Closing Note

National Convention is always a good reminder of just how much happens across this organization in a year.

We had an opportunity in Louisville to celebrate the work of Past National President Pam, the NEC, our national leaders, departments, units, and members throughout the 2025–2026 administrative year. I'm

grateful for the leadership, partnership, and support I received during my first year with the Auxiliary, and I'm proud of what we accomplished together.

Convention also reminds us that the work doesn't stop when the gavel comes down. Our leadership may change, but our mission does not. National Headquarters staff is already hard at work keeping the mission moving forward under President Coral's leadership.

On September 15th, I celebrated one year of working with the ALA. I remain grateful for the trust you have placed in me and our staff. I've learned a lot during this first year, probably more than I could fit into one of these already-lengthy reports, and I continue to appreciate the willingness of our members and leaders to share their experiences, ideas, and feedback.

Thank you for your continued leadership and partnership. I'm excited about the work in front of us and look forward to another year of serving veterans, military and their families, and communities together.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with questions, comments, or feedback.

Ben Hendricks

Executive Director

American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters

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