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District 5 November Newsletter

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QUICK REFERENCE

November
1 – Daylight Savings Time Ends
10 – Auxiliary Birthday
11 – Veteran's Day
26 – Thanksgiving

December
07 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
19 - Nat'l Wreaths Across America Day
25 - Christmas Day
28 - Pledge of Allegiance Day

Timm's Treasurer Tidbits

*District Dues are **$20 per year.** They are used for District Meeting Host Unit expenses, Poem and Essay awards, Gifts for the District President, District Postage costs, and any other District expenses encountered. The District Dues are NOT part of your Department obligations.
*District Dues **Payable to: District 5 American Legion Auxiliary.** *Mail to Marsha Timm, District 5 ALA Treasurer, 21645-485th Ave, Elkton SD 57026.
*Please write District Dues and your unit's **City and Unit number on the memo** line.
*Our Dues year runs from Department Convention to Department Convention. It would be best if all units pay by/at the Spring District Meeting. *Units that have paid for 2026-2027: Astoria, Big Stone City, Britton, Castlewood, Clark, Elkton, Langford, Milbank, Revillo, Rosholt, Sisseton, Strandburg, Veblen, Volga, Waubay, Webster and White.

Some Thanksgiving Trivia:

About how many feathers does a mature turkey have?
About 3500. I want to know who counted them all!!
What is the world's record for the heaviest turkey on record?
85 pounds dressed weight



Who made you eligible? Was it your son or daughter? How about your Mom/Dad, Grandpa/Grandma or maybe a spouse? Take a minute and think about their service – go ahead; I'll wait… Now, this probably isn't going to go where you think or where I'd like it to go but it needs to go there. Buckle up – this is a long one. Believe it or not, we have descension among our ranks involving some questionable conduct towards our employees. I think it's fair to say that over the last few years, we've seen our fair share of drama in the Department. I joined to honor my husband's service and to work towards fulfilling our mission and making our organization better. I hope I've done that. What I didn't join for, is to hear people bickering or, whether they admit it or not, being "in it" for "me". Just stop! November is Veteran's Month. What a dis-service it is to those we admire most when those few, impede accomplishing our mission as a whole. This is the month to maybe look a little deeper and ask that question, "Is what I'm doing for the good of the body?" One sign that maybe you're not, is if you have more people saying maybe you should re-think your position than are telling you you're right. And just because those few squeal louder doesn't make them more right. We have to work together. District 5 Units – you are awesome and I will, for my time remaining, continue to work for you and keep you informed when I know things – you deserve that. You are always welcome to ask questions. Through it all, here's what I want your take-away to be; Keep working the programs because ultimately, doing what you do on the local level is what gives us the awesome reputation that we have as an organization. What happens on the Department level doesn't determine that. That's on you; and I'm proud of D5!

Mailings - the Department would like to save some money by emailing packets and information to one person/Unit, preferably the President. Your Unit President would then share via email or printed copy at a meeting. There was a questionnaire in the last newsletter – please fill it out and return to HQ. This will help determine how to move forward with money saving efforts.

Please remember that when referring to the Auxiliary, we are **UNITS**, not Posts. I've seen the terms used interchangeably and they're really not.

You've maybe seen on Facebook, or maybe not, that **our membership eligibility has changed**. I was asked to include some more information on the changes so there is an info sheet with this newsletter. It all relates to being gender neutral in our verbiage, so mom went to parent, grandmother to grandparent, sister to sibling, and so on. Nothing else has changed. **But the other part of this is that your constitution and by-laws will have to be updated. So – HQ should be receiving updated governing docs from EVERY Unit.** The new verbiage can be found in the info sheet with this newsletter.

Worth another mention, if you haven't seen it, the Give 10 to Education has changed to **Give 20 to Education** for this year, the 20th Anniversary of the program. So instead of 10 boxes of klenex, give 20. AND REPORT IT!

New things are being added or updated to the **department website** all the time. Please go take a look and spend some time clicking on things – you never know what you'll find. Look under the district presidents – all of our newsletters will be posted. This is a good thing for me – this way if I neglect to mention something, you might catch it on there.

This next bit is not exactly related to Auxiliary stuff but I feel the need to ask. **We all know how important our youth programs are.** And I'm thinking that as spouses, parents, grandparents, etc. we have a lot of pull with our loved ones. And while you've seen me ask to recruit young people to attend things like girls state, boys state, youth trooper, I'm now asking for something a little different. Do you know of anyone that would be interested in becoming a staff member for boys state? We are looking to bring some younger-ish Legionnaires or SAL members on board for longer term positions. They would be trained in any particular position, there are a couple of meetings a year, and then the week spent in Aberdeen. It's tough when everyone has jobs but if you have any ideas, send them our way!

Rose has asked us to include the following message: We would like to have at least one nomination per unit. This is any fireman, police, 911 operator, EMT and/or representatives from your local hospitals (details below). Thank you for all you do. Rose

Service Before Self: Heroes Among Us

Every uniform has a story. Every act of service has an impact. Help us recognize the heroes among us.

Help us Spotlight those who serve in your hometown. The American Legion Auxiliary National Security Program wants to recognize the extraordinary people who serve our nation and our communities. We invite you to nominate a service member, military spouse, or first responder whose service, sacrifice, leadership, or commitment deserves to be celebrated. These include law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and other public-safety professionals.

Our Hero Spotlight will share these stories through American Legion Auxiliary social media, helping our members and followers see the people behind the service and recognize the many ways individuals make a difference every day.

Please share only information and photographs that you have permission to provide. Do not include classified, sensitive, operational, or personally identifying information that should not be made public. To submit your hero go to: https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/hero_spotlight

Every community has a person they could nominate. Let South Dakota flood Formstack with our Hometown Heroes. This nomination would fall under National Security for reporting purposes.

You can find the D5 VA Facility information in the October Newsletter, but here are the **Christmas Party dates**:

Human Services at Yankton – Dec 16th, 5-7 pm
Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home Hot Springs – Dec 13th, 1-3 pm
Hot Springs VA Medical Center - Dec 12th, 1-3 pm
Ft. Meade VA Medical Center - Dec14th, 2-4 pm
Sioux Falls VA Medical Center - Dec 15th, 2-4 pm

Thank you to those Units that have sent in your officers! Those that have not include: Aurora, Bradley, Bryant, Carpenter, Castlewood, Clear Lake, Gary, Pierpont, Waubay, and Willow Lake. I have talked to a few of you and know that the president is the same but one of the other officers has changed. Please send me a note that I could pass on to HQ with your update - and don't forget to update your meeting times. At least one good email contact from your Unit would be helpful too! There are always forwards from chairmen and extra attachments in an email vs the snail mail version.

Membership – The big push right now is to be 50% by November 11th – Veteran's Day. We have 15 Units that are there – nice job! Most of the rest of our Units have a ways to go but I'm also going to guess that there some memberships that haven't been sent in yet. Ladies – I know it's a daunting task but I also know that it is easier to get it out of the way early in the year versus waiting until next spring. Go get 'em - you've got this!

Take a look at the progress report – I've added in your %'s. Also worth noting, convention proceedings cost $15 but this is an optional expense. If you don't have need for a hard copy of reports and what goes on at convention, don't feel like you need to pay for one.

With this Newsletter, you will find:
*Membership eligibility changes
*Progress report
*District meeting minutes

If you have any questions or have an event coming up, please let me know! I'd be happy to check it out or even put it in the next newsletter.



10.22.26			MEMBERSHIP--2027				MANDATORY OBLIGATIONS				OPTIONA	REHABILITATION				CHILDREN AND YOUTH			PROGRAMS									
District	Unit #	Unit NAME	MEMBERSHIP CREDIT	MEMBERSHIP GOAL	Current Membership	Percent	National Convention	Quarters $0.25 per Member	Bond $6 per Unit	Department Convention	Convention Proceedings Book $15.00	Veterans Care	Christmas Party	Christmas Gift Shop	Creative Arts	Donations	Scholarships	Child Welfare Foundation	Auxiliary Emergency Fund	Juniors	Past Presidents Parley	National Presidents Project	Spirit of Youth Scholarship	Department Presidents Project	Legion Band	VAR Christmas Gift Shop Postage	Total
5	0009	Milbank	$ 47.00	116	9	7.76%																					$ -
5	0017	Watertown	$ 20.00	70	42	60.00%	$ 15.00	$ 50.00	$ 6.00	$ 40.00		$ 115.00	$ 30.00	$ 200.00	$ 30.00	$ 100.00	$ 50.00	$ 30.00	$ 40.00					$ 25.00			$ 731.00
5	0037	Bryant	$ (25.00)	47	20	42.55%																					$ -
5	0040	Webster	$ 10.00	102	69	67.65%	$ 13.00	$ 26.00	$ 6.00	$ 25.00		$ 35.00	$ 25.00	$ 25.00	$ 20.00	$ 25.00	$ 20.00	$ 20.00						$ 25.00			$ 265.00
5	0048	Rosholt	$ 1.00	44	0	0.00%																					$ -
5	0049	Clear Lake	$ (5.00)	40	22	55.00%																					$ -
5	0050	Sisseton	$ 12.00	134	81	60.45%																					$ -
5	0060	Clark	$ 15.00	46	35	76.09%								$ 300.00													$ 300.00
5	0064	Wilmot	$ 4.00	36	2	5.56%																					$ -
5	0074	Brookings	$ -	53	2	64.15%																					$ -
5	0076	Veblen		43	24	55.81%							$ 100.00	$ 50.00													$ 150.00
5	0080	Britton	$ 6.00	71	52	73.24%						$ 250.00															$ 250.00
5	0088	White	$ (4.00)	93	17	18.28%																					$ -
5	0099	Pierpont		24	0	0.00%																					$ -
5	0103	Astoria	$ -	14	2	14.29%																					$ -
5	0104	Revillo		9	9	100.00%							$ 200.00														$ 200.00
5	0108	Bradley		12	0	0.00%																					$ -
5	0109	Gary	$ 14.00	61	15	24.59%																					$ -
5	0113	Willow Lake	$ 5.00	43	4	9.30%																					$ -
5	0114	Volga	$ -	33	26	78.79%	$ 9.00	$ 8.50	$ 6.00	$ 15.00		$ 50.00	$ 75.00	$ 300.00	$ 10.00	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 52.84	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 53.66		$ 700.00
5	0129	Waubay		62	40	64.52%																					$ -
5	0141	Langford	$ 3.00	9	6	66.67%	$ 7.00	$ 2.75	$ 6.00	$ 10.00		$ 20.00	$ 10.00	$ 150.00	$ 20.00	$ 5.00	$ 5.00		$ 100.00			$ 1.00	$ 5.00				$ 341.75
5	0153	Carpenter	$ 4.00	6	2	33.33%																					$ -
5	0171	Strandburg		18	0	0.00%	$ 8.00	$ 4.25	$ 6.00	$ 10.00		$ 100.00	$ 10.00	$ 150.00		$ 10.00	$ 10.00				$ 5.00	$ 5.00	$ 5.00	$ 100.00			$ 423.25
5	0180	New Effington	$ 12.00	39	5	12.82%																					$ -
5	0184	Estelline	$ 19.00	28	6	21.43%																					$ -
5	0198	Elkton	$ 8.00	48	16	33.33%																					$ -
5	0209	Raymond	$ 20.00	48	44	91.67%	$ 10.00	$ 12.00	$ 6.00	$ 15.00	$ 15.00	$ 250.00	$ 100.00	$ 300.00	$ 75.00	$ 30.00	$ 30.00	$ 30.00	$ 50.00	$ 25.00	$ 30.00	$ 100.00		$ 100.00			$ 1,178.00
5	0229	Big Stone City	$ -	105	79	75.24%	$ 13.00	$ 25.50	$ 6.00	$ 25.00		$ 400.00	$ 100.00	$ 500.00	$ 100.00				$ 20.00	$ 20.00		$ 20.00		$ 20.00			$ 1,249.50
5	0230	Aurora	$ 2.00	10	3	30.00%																					$ -
5	0250	Castlewood	$ 47.00	90	49	54.44%	$ 13.00	$ 24.00	$ 6.00	$ 25.00		$ 25.00	$ 100.00	$ 100.00					$ 50.00		$ 10.00						$ 353.00
5	0267	Grenville	$ 4.00	15	3	20.00%								$ 300.00													$ 300.00
				1569	**684**	**45.63%**																					**$ 6,441.50**

7.24.26 White sent in 2 SR dues, stating to "use credit", credit was only $56.00, will owe dept $4.oo difference
8.6.26 Grenville also donated $150 to poppy fund
9.14.26 BigStone City used $5 credit towards membership
9.21.26 Bryant-submitted Jocelyn H as a junior-should be a senior, difference of $25, emailed Ronda 9.21.26
10.1.26 Milbank-$5 credit-online pymnts
Watertown $5 credit online pymnts
Clear Lake $5 credit online pymnts
Britton $1 credit online pymnt
10.7.26 Castlewood given $40 credit for overpayment on dues, form dated 10.2.26, email to Peggy
10.7.26 Langford submitted Mail legionette at $5 for 1 subscription, using an old form. The cost is $7 for mailed. Difference owed to dept of $2. Subtracted from credit and emailed Mona
10.19.26 Webster had 3 members that should be SRs pd as JRs, pc to Harriet, ok to use $75 credit towards difference.
10.20.26 Watertown given $5 credit for overpayment of memberships, Juniors are $5, not $10

District V—Fall Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2026 Watertown, SD

District V President MaryJo Boner was introduced by Traci Meyer, Watertown Unit President. MaryJo welcomed everyone to the South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary District V Fall Meeting.

The District V Fall Meeting was called to order. With colors in place, District President MaryJo Boner led the hand salute. The meeting was opened with an invocation by District V First Vice President Marsha Timm. The White Table was on display and thirty seconds of silence in recognition of our POW/MIA's was observed. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison. The first stanza of the National Anthem was sung by all. Everyone joined in the Preamble. The welcome was given by Traci Meyer, Watertown Unit President and the response was offered by Carol Luebke of the Rosholt Unit.

District V President MaryJo Boner introduced the Department of South Dakota 2026-2027 Leadership team members present including: President Patrice Sorensen, First Vice President Rose Kraft, NEC MaryJo Stier, Chaplain Teresa Huntimer and Secretary Amy Howard. Program Chairmen present included: Finance-Nancy Andres, Girls State Co-Chair-Laurel Stringer, Leadership-Rose Kraft, Membership-Kathleen Geiman, Past President Parley-Anna Mae Warnier, Public Relations-Kayla Kennedy, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation-Teresa Huntimer.

There were three past District V Presidents in attendance: Sue Christensen, Rose Kraft, and Janet Hurlburt. Past Department Secretaries Laurel Stringer, Regina Whipple, and Kayla Kennedy were recognized. Legion Commander Bill Peters' wife Sue Peters was introduced. We were honored to have the history, experience, and mentorship of seven Past Department Presidents in attendance—Sue Christensen, Regina Whipple, Janet Hurlburt, Elvira Moen, Teresa Huntimer, MaryJo Stier, and Anna Mae Warnier.

MaryJo also introduced the other members of the District V team: First Vice/Secretary and Treasurer Marsha Timm and Second Vice/Chaplain Diane Cummins. Diane was not present as she was attending a Welcome Home and Deactivation in Mitchell for a nephew.

District 1st Vice/Secretary Marsha Timm called the roll. Units were asked to respond with the number of members present. There were 15 people representing 11 District V units in attendance. Minutes of the spring 2026 ALA District V Meeting were included in earlier District mailing and distributed at the registration desk. President Boner asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes as distributed; Raymond made a motion to approve the minutes, and Big Stone City seconded that motion. The minutes were approved as distributed.

District Treasurer Marsha Timm reported that District V has a balance of $324.67 as of this date. Timm thanked the twenty-eight units that paid their 2025-2026 District Dues. They included: Astoria, Big Stone City, Britton, Brookings, Bryant, Castlewood, Clark, Clear Lake, Elkton, Estelline, Grenville, Langford, Milbank, New Effington, Pierpont, Raymond, Revillo, Rosholt, Sisseton, Strandburg, Veblen, Volga, Watertown, Waubay, Webster, White, Willow Lake, and Wilmot. She noted that six units have already paid their 2026-2027 District Dues including: Astoria, Big Stone City, Elkton, Milbank, Veblen, and White. The Treasurer's Report will be placed on file.

District V Business included: Trying to speed up the meeting, Mary Jo printed a sheet of "Normal items of District Business—Fall Meeting 2026". This included: Girls State Teas, Poppy Posters, Proceedings Books, HQ Mailings, Newsletters, Elections, and LIT. She encouraged everyone to read this sheet and contact her about any questions.

Other District V Business items included:
Membership Sheet: Mary Jo noted the shaded units have paid the District Dues for 2027; the dark box in the corner shows the number of units and the membership numbers in each District. She also stated that the goal/actual/percents are the 2026 numbers. We had ten units achieve 100% of their 2026 Goal. They were: Grenville, Estelline, Volga, Waubay, White, Aurora, Britton, Revillo, Veblen, and Wilmot. She emphasized that it is the small units that are "getting it done". Our District carries the state. We don't have a VA in our District, some units don't have a school in their community, and death claims many of our members BUT OUR District is still doing what our members can do and it matters!! Mary Jo loves her units. Please keep doing what you are able to; but perhaps report more, that's all she'll ask!!
Legion Family State Fair Booth: Four of the 8 donations came from our district. Willow Lake provided candy, Britton and Raymond units sent money, and 2 individuals donated money as well. Outside our District, the Alexandria Unit and 3 other individuals donated money, and another member donated items. Mary Jo collected $700, spent $600, leaving $100 as seed money for next year because some donations came in too late to order things. We handed out 2274 items, had 11 excellent workers covering shifts from 9 am-8pm Wed-Sun. (We ran out of things Sun noonish). If there were times that Auxiliary wasn't covering a shift; the wheel was put away so the Legion didn't have to figure that out. Kids and adults spun a wheel, answered a patriotic question or listened to a patriotic fact and got a prize. Many groups stayed if it wasn't busy and asked if they could just answer questions. That was fun!! There were many stories and Mary Jo shared a memorable one with us. **THANKS** for organizing that project!!!

Department Officer and Chairman Remarks:
As her message to the District, Department of South Dakota ALA President Patrice Sorensen shared a PowerPoint. She gifted each attending member with her pin. It is in the shape of South Dakota and features a magnifying glass focused on a helmet, gun, boots, and a poppy. Her **FOCUS** is **F**amily **O**rganization for **C**ommunity **U**nity and **S**ervice. Patrice has implemented the new South Dakota FOCUS Award for units. Units must complete a list of tasks and be entered for a chance to win $100. Patrice is stressing meeting attendance, programs, reporting, obligations and membership. She also mentioned the Amazon Smile Program which can benefit both the Department and the Unit. The Auxiliary was chosen to decorate a Christmas tree at the State Capitol. With the 250th year celebration, this year's tree will have ornaments featuring the many different uniforms of all branches of the military service thru the years. Are you aware that there are several National Unit Awards available that are never applied for? Remember to read your Headquarters mailings and your District newsletters and visit the ALA Academy for more information!! Patrice's entire PowerPoint will soon be available on the South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary website.

Department Secretary Amy Howard shared that the Department Executive Committee (DEC) Is working to improve efficiency and deliver information to our members both quickly and cost-effectively. They have a two-sided survey "USPS or E-mail" for each unit to complete and return to Department ALA Headquarters (southdakotaala@gmail.com). The website is being updated; many forms will be fillable with on-line submission possible. The September *Legionette* should be emailed soon—there was a mix-up on the subscription dates. Please

call Amy about any death notices for members. Reminder to all units-- your ALAMIS subscription access fees are due by January.

District President MaryJo went around the room asking if any of the chairpersons would like to share information about their program areas. This is some of what each had to share:
National Executive Committeewoman (NEC) MaryJo Stier shared the new ALA "Mission and Vision" statements approved at the Sept 3, 2026, NEC meeting. She talked about the newly released membership eligibility rulings. Mission, Members, and Means have been the topics of their monthly Zoom meetings. The 2025-2026 National President Pam Ray's Presidents' Project was an All-Female Veterans Honor Flight. This took place mid-April 2026. The ladies of Illinois (Pam's Home Department) honored her by raising funds to pay half the cost for the wrap of a charter bus. That same bus was also used for ALA Girls Nation. The new National ALA President will be in South Dakota March 30-Apr 1. She will be touring in Districts 6 & 8.
Co-Chair of SD ALA Girls State Laurel Stringer spoke of the increasing costs for this program. She asked units to donate any amount possible towards the Formal Banquet. One table costs $250. There are usually 34 tables with 8 girls at each table. She also explained that USD absorbs the costs of the housing. The school gave $2000 towards the printing of the daily Sacajawea Scroll that each girl receives. They also sponsor a RORY Award in honor of long time Chairperson Cheryl Hovorka. The college staff are a wonderful group to work with!
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chair Teresa Huntimer asked all to report their hours of Service to Veterans. Pins and bars are presented for 50/100/500 hours. Teresa reminded us that she is also the Department Chaplain. She gave many of the members a beautiful cross key chain. If anyone knows of prayer concerns of the Legion Family, please contact Teresa. She will try to send appropriate cards but will not post personal information unless permission has been granted for her to include such.
Membership Chair Kathleen Geiman does not have our 2027 Membership Goals as yet. She did share that the "Beacon" mentioned in the Americanism Contests, reminded her of light-houses. Each district in South Dakota will have a specific lighthouse representing them. District 5 has been assigned the Blue Hill Bay Lighthouse of Maine. Watch to see how our beacon lights up as the year goes on!! Kathleen also reminded us that she works full-time, so isn't available until after 5 pm for calls or emails. Please respect her request.
Public Relation Chairperson Kayla Kennedy reminded us that communication is always important-- "Who are we? What stories are worth sharing?" It can be easy to get our stories out there!! The National website has several templates available as press releases and short articles. Always use care with social media, i.e. Face book, Tiptop, etc. Ask permission to use names and faces. Consider making an information sharing page for your unit. The Department has a Facebook page of what's happening; but information must be approved by either Kayla or Amy before it can appear on the Department's page. Branding is important—patches, shirts, jackets, pins, etc are great; but if wearing any of those you should not be drinking nor making political statements. You are representing the entire organization!!

On behalf of District 5, District President Boner thanked Department President Patrice for leading us through this year. Boner presented Patrice with a $25 check for her President's Projects. Boner thanked the Watertown ladies for hosting and also thanked Traci Meyer for helping organize this Fall Meeting. She gave a personal check to President Patrice's projects in Traci's name. The Watertown Unit was also given a $50 check from the District Treasury for hosting.

Past Department Elvira Moen of the Watertown Unit was at the Registration table. Her Registration Report was twenty-eight members had signed in. This is usually different from the Roll Call because many officers and chairpersons are from other district. Door prizes were won by Regina Whipple, Jean Tiegen, and Laurel Stringer.

Just three reminders and one announcement:

(1) Everyone is invited to a Meet and Greet in honor of Quynn Nelson of Volga, the Girls State Governor. This will be held Sunday, September 20 at 2 PM in the Raymond Community Center. Also, our two Girls Nation Delegates, Lilly and Emily from Castlewood, will be there to share about their experiences. We are very proud of these three outstanding young women from our District!

(2) District V will be holding elections at the Spring 2027 Meeting for all District Officers: President, First Vice President and Second Vice President.

(3) If any unit would like one or more of the District Officers to visit their unit or attend a Unit function, please ask. Both Marsha and Diane help do visits and have been instrumental in getting all of the units in the District either visited or called in the last year. Thank you, Marsha and Diane. We make a great team!!

Following adjournment, we will have the Coin March for the President's Project. Also, we would first like a picture the seven Past Department Presidents at this meeting. Then, we will take a photo of everyone in attendance.

Since there were no other announcements and the agenda has been completed, we will have the closing prayer by District President MaryJo Boner.

With a hand salute, the 2026 District V Fall meeting of the South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marsha Timm
District V First Vice President

Membership Eligibility Change Verbiage:

I have been asked to include more information on the membership eligibility changes.

At the 2026 American Legion National Convention, delegates adopted new membership eligibility language for the American Legion Auxiliary — expanding eligibility and allowing more family members to join the ALA. The Legion has authority over the ALA's membership eligibility; the language change allows more people into our organization — strengthening our ability to better serve our veterans, military, and their families.
At the 2026 American Legion National Convention in Louisville, Ky., Resolution 19 was approved by more than a two-thirds majority. The resolution expanded the ALA's eligibility criteria. For example, it changed "grandmother" and "mother" to "grandparents" and "parents," "sisters" to "siblings," "daughters" to "children," and "granddaughters" to "grandchildren." The change also allows persons such as Gold Star Families who did not directly serve in the armed forces an avenue to join the American Legion Auxiliary and honor their relatives within the original two degrees of consanguinity, as the IRS references under 501(c)(19) tax-exempt status for auxiliaries.
Here is the OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:

Section 2. Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to:

(1) grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of consanguinity of members of The American Legion; and

(2) grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of consanguinity of all servicemembers who served in either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, and any time after December 7, 1941, who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge;

(3) grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of consanguinity of all servicemembers who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941, who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during either eligibility period and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and

(4) to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.

The revisions to the ALA's eligibility mentioned above allow individuals the potential to be members of both the Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. The Legion's national judge advocate has confirmed that this dual membership does not constitute a conflict of interest with The American Legion.

<u>Some Frequently addressed concerns from National :</u>

Does this mean men can join the American Legion Auxiliary now?
The ALA ceased being an all-female patriotic service organization in 2019 when The American Legion voted at its 2019 National Convention to change "wife" to "spouse," opening the doors for male spouses to join the ALA.

I am very disappointed in the gender-neutral language you guys went to.
The new eligibility criteria does not address gender in any capacity. The objective of the new wording was to expand the relationship types eligible to join the ALA and honor our military and veterans.

Why aren't great-grandchildren eligible for membership?
The IRS defines a 501(c)(19) veterans service organization auxiliary degrees of relationship. Currently, the IRS limits the relationship to within two degrees, which is why we are unable to expand our relationships further.
Why is membership limited to two degrees of consanguinity (relationship)?
The IRS regulation concerning auxiliaries to veteran organizations states in part: "**At least 75 percent of its members are veterans, spouses of veterans, or related to a veteran within two degrees of consanguinity"** *this is where there is a bit of discrepancy and we can sneak in a few "greats". The somewhat tolerable but also somewhat unpopular opinion is, is that if they don't have any intensions of being an officer, nobody is going to check and if they want to help, we let them. Not everyone is ok with this. This would be for your Unit to discuss.*

Are step-relatives eligible to join the ALA?
No., IRS regulations for 501(c)(19) organizations **do not include stepchildren** in their definition of an auxiliary organization.

Is there a way where the veteran does not need to be a member of The American Legion in order for their relative to join the ALA?
Female veterans CAN join the ALA without being a member of The American Legion. If someone is eligible under a deceased veteran, they are also eligible to join the ALA without a Legion connection.

Does this mean trans women are now able to be Auxiliary members?
The ALA welcomes any and all persons who meet the established membership eligibility requirements to apply for membership. Gender identity, including transgender status, is not a factor in determining eligibility. All heartbeats fitting the eligibility criteria are welcome to apply for membership in the ALA.

Are ALA members eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion?
Only the eligibility criteria of the American Legion Auxiliary has been changed by The American Legion. Eligibility criteria for the Sons of The American Legion remains the same. Eligibility information for membership in the Sons of The American Legion can be found here: https://www.legion.org/about/american-legion-family/sons-of-the-american-legion