



*The American Legion Auxiliary
Department of New York, Inc.*

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2022 February 2022

Department President's Message.....Mary E. Farley

We only have 30 more days to go, Happy Spring! It has been a long, long winter. I would like to thank everyone for my birthday wishes, you made my day.

As you know by now, our visitations to the 3rd, 7th, and 8th Districts as well as our Mid-Winter Conference were cancelled because of the rising cases of Covid. But we did have a virtual Mid-Winter that was wonderful thanks to our Leadership Chairman, Marrick McDonald. It was a two-day event filled with lots of valuable information, and if you missed all the sessions, we recorded them. They are on our website, so check them out.

At Mid-Winter we also had a guest speaker, Joe Worley, from America's VetDogs. Joe was so inspirational, and after seeing his presentation my hope is that you can understand why my project is so important to me. I want to thank those who continue to raise money for my project. While I wish I could visit with you all, please know I am thankful for your support of America's VetDogs.

I am looking forward to attending the American Legion Oratorical Contest in early March. I will report back to you next time.

Keep up all the magnificent work you are doing for our Veterans. Hope to see you all soon.

God Bless you, God Bless the American Legion Family, and God Bless America.

Membership.....Nancy J. Babis, Chairperson

National update: New York is in 5th place in the Eastern Division with 82.95% We are 2% out of first place! I asked about the ALAMIS pilot program and the plan to roll out to all units. Kelley from the National office said that they will be offering it for the 2022-2023 membership year to all units. Avoid the rush, sign up for ALAMIS now! Forms available on the Department website.

Department update: The numbers are in, and they are looking good! BOW WOW to the 1st District for leading the current standings 87.46%. Outstanding!! With less than 1% percent behind, it's the 5th District in 2nd place with 86.98%! Fantastic job! Rounding out our top three is District 10 with 85.29%. Amazing job! A BIG Dog bone to the 7th District in 4th place with 83.22% and the 3rd District rounding out the top 5 with 80%! Congratulations to ALL!

We are 6,219 away from our goal. It's a close race but if we continue to work together, we will succeed together!

To ALL our Districts and our Amazing Auxiliary Members thank you for ALL you do!

District	Percent
1 st	87.46
5 th	86.98
10 th	85.29
7 th	83.22
3 rd	82.80
4 th	81.63
6 th	81.27
8th	80.08
9th	78.29
2nd	78.25

Awards: Congratulations to Parish Unit 601 from Oswego County in the 5th District on winning the Clifford the Big Red dog award for the unit with the highest percentage of membership into Department 10 days prior to Mid-winter conference.

Congratulations to Monroe County for winning President Mary’s Birthday party award – 91.86%

Upcoming awards: Milestone # 4 Unit with 100 % by March 11, 2022. 5 lucky winners of \$50 each. Also, County with 100% by March 11th. The top 5 counties closest to 100% are: Cortland (6th District), Monroe (7th district), Sullivan (3rd district), Seneca (7th district) and Lewis (5th district). Who can dig deep and find those members to rejoin, renew, or new recruits!

Stay warm, healthy, and happy!

VA&R / Service to Veterans.....Karen St. Hilaire, Chairperson

Spring is around the corner. With warmer weather we can plan outdoor activities for veterans in long-term care facilities. With COVID restrictions being lifted in some areas, I am hopeful that very soon auxiliary members will be allowed to go into VA facilities and carry on our programs. Thank you to all our VA Gift Shop chairs, for developing alternative ways to carry on the program even though you were not allowed in the facility. There are still a few outstanding Gift Shop reports, as well as VAVS Reps AJR but I will be sending out email reminders to those affected. For those who were not able to view the Mid-Winter presentations, here are a few important highlights.

National President Kathy Daudistel’s focus is “Care for the Caregivers.” This includes caregivers for veterans as well as non-veterans. Veteran caregiver should report under VA&R. Non-veteran caregivers should report under Community service, caregiver members under eighteen would report under Juniors. Auxiliary members may only report hours if you are not compensated for such care. If member lives with the person they are caring for, you may report five hours a week. If you do not live with person, they are caring for you may report five hours a week. When completing Unit or County reports please remember to separate data for Veterans Affairs (VA&R) from Service to Veterans. VA&R hours data are donations or volunteer hours held at VAMC or facility that houses veterans. Service to Veterans are any donations or programs held outside of the VA facility. Also, please include how many veterans were served by such programs. If you don’t have an exact count an estimate will do.

At the request of National VA&R Committee: If your unit or county has held any VA&R programs, including VA Gift shop, please email me one or two photos. Use highest resolution with Unit or County Name and brief description of the activity. Email: nyalaVAandR@gmail.com.

The annual Sons of The American Legion & American Legion Auxiliary Walk-A-Thon NYS will be held April 23, 2022, Donations obtained for this event will be divided equally for Department of NY Commander & President’s projects. Their projects are VA Hospital Homeless Veterans and Americas Vet Dogs, respectively. For information to organize a walk in your area visit NY Sons of American Legion website www.sonsdny.org, search Walk-a-thon or the NY American Legion Auxiliary website www.deptny.org and click on the events tab to the Walk-a-thon.

Presidents Project

As you know Department President Mary Farley's project is America's VetDogs. During Mid-Winter Virtual Conference, it was a privilege to have guest speaker Joe "Doc" Worley and his current guide dog Galaxie from America's VetDogs join us. His story of how he became injured while serving in Iraq 2004 as U.S. Navy Corpsman field medic. He stated the physical things his first dog Benjamin did, as Joe learned to walk again, took pressure off him as well as his wife and children. To hear his whole story, go to our department website, deptny.org under midwinter conference. To learn more about America's VetDogs go to their website VetDogs.org. Department President Mary and our injured veterans need our support for this project. Maybe your unit or county could do a fundraiser.

Fifth District President Patricia Murphy is collecting dimes in soda bottles. A sixteen-ounce soda bottle filled with dimes equals \$100 and a two-quart bottle of dimes holds \$500. Mail donations to ALA Department of NY office, with notation "Department Presidents Project." Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Children and Youth.....Kimberly A. Quick, Chairperson

Thank you everyone for making sure the kids in your community are being recognized for their Good Deeds. We are at 8 entries this year! Keep them coming in. I would also like to remind you that April is The American Legion's Children and Youth Month. Information can be found in the brochures at

<https://www.legion.org/publications/160931/april-children-youth-month> .

Also, National Military Brats Day is April 30th. See this link for more information. <https://militarybenefits.info/military-brats-day/> I am looking forward to all the March and May reports!

Americanism.....Maureen Morgan, Chairperson

It's hard to believe we are in February already. Lincoln's Birthday was February 12th and Washington's Birthday is February 22nd, both are celebrated on Monday, February 21st. Please make sure to Fly your flag. Before we know it the end of the school year will be here.

Do we have any Star-Spangled Kids Essays submitted? The theme this year is "How can we support families who provide care to their veterans?" Please check your dates for all the Americanism awards in the Plan of Action and make sure your students don't miss out. Contact your schools for the Americanism essay contest entries which were due back to the units by February 15, 2022, and send them to this Department Chairperson by March 15, 2022, as I must forward them to the National Chairperson by early April.

Below are some helpful Flag Code Guidelines:

- The Flag Code suggests that when a flag has served its useful purpose, "it should be destroyed, preferably by burning." Many American Legion posts conduct disposal of unserviceable flag ceremonies on June 14, Flag Day. Such ceremonies are particularly dignified and solemn occasions for the retirement of unserviceable flags.
- Anyone can order the flag to be displayed at half-staff. The flag is flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon on Memorial Day and by order of the president or a state governor. On occasion, heads of several departments and agencies of the U.S. government may direct the flag to be half-staff if deemed proper to do so.
- There are currently no penalties for the physical desecration of the flag. The Flag Code is simply a guideline for proper flag etiquette. The law does not provide penalties for violation of any of its provisions. The American Legion and other members of the Citizens Flag Alliance continue to work toward securing a constitutional amendment to protect the flag from physical desecration.
- The Flag Code states that the flag should not touch anything beneath it, including the ground. This is stated to indicate that care should be exercised in the handling of the flag, to protect it from becoming soiled or damaged. You are not required to destroy the flag when this happens. As long as the flag

remains suitable for display, even if washing or dry-cleaning is required you may continue to display the flag as a symbol of our great country.

- It is a very fitting tribute to the memory of a deceased veteran of his or her service to a grateful nation if the casket flag is draped over the casket or have it folded and properly displayed.
- The decision to wash or dry-clean a flag depends on the type of material it is made of. There are no provisions in the Flag Code to prohibit this.
- The Flag Code states that it is custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary flag staffs in the open. However, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated so that it is recognizable by the casual observer.
- Unless an article of clothing is made from an actual United States flag, there is No breach of flag etiquette. There is nothing wrong with wearing or using items that look like the American flag.

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

The 2022 session is scheduled for June 3-5, 2022, at SUNY Morrisville. Both Tim Collmer and I are anxiously awaiting your application for this year’s session. We currently only have 25 applications with only a few from the Auxiliary. At the moment the plan is to continue moving forward so please get your application in. As a reminder the price for tuition is **\$250.00** The updated student applications are available on the Legion Department Website just use the link on our own website @ **deptny.org**

Please consider joining us this year. Only as a united team can we ensure that this great organization will be around for another 100 plus years. Learning as well as teaching each other about ourselves will only make us stronger. And remember there is that National Membership Award for the best American Legion Family program/project that supports each of the organizations in maintaining and recruiting members. “Together We Serve” is this year’s slogan. I think the Family College is perfect for this award. Wouldn’t it assume to bring this award home to New York State?

Auxiliary Emergency Fund.....Ida Knapp, Chairperson

The past month the eastern part of the state has been hit with a Nor’easter and other storms that brought freezing rain, sleet, and snow. Reach out to your unit members about the help that the AEF can give them. The AEF is there to assist our members during challenging times be it natural or personnel. Members helping Members is what we are all about. Please share all that you do for the AEF on our Facebook page American Legion Auxiliary Emergency Fund, such as your fund raisers and events.

Winter’s not done yet, so please make sure that you have a plan in motion in case of a disaster to get the information to your members with phone numbers and help with filling out the request forms which can be done on the National website. <https://www.aladorveterans.org> / AEF. If you donate \$50.00 you can get a pin but right now, they are temporarily unavailable as they are being redesigned <https://www.legion-Aux.org/AEF-Application> . Also check us out on Facebook AEF, American Legion Auxiliary Emergency Fund. I am also here to help you and assist you in any way nyalaemergencyfund@gmail.com, Phone # 607-760-5944

Chaplain.....Joanna vonSeyedwitz, Chairperson

February is the month we remember the Four Chaplains of the Dorchester. It would be wonderful if every Unit could contribute five dollars to The Chapel of Four Chaplains. Located in the Navy Yard in Philadelphia, its mission is “to tell the story of the Four Chaplains to promote Interfaith Cooperation and Selfless Service in individuals and organizations.” Sounds a lot like what we do! Their mission is achieved by advocating for and honoring people whose deeds symbolize the legacy of the Four Chaplains on the Dorchester. They depend on donations from organizations such as ours. Please send your contributions to the Department Office.

I am asking for prayers to be sent to me for President Mary’s Prayer Book. I have received only one! This can be mailed or emailed. So, close your eyes and speak to your God. Then let me know what you said! Or copy your favorite prayer, google a prayer, or check out prayers in the library. Just send them!

When sending a Death Notice please note: a charter member is one who is listed on your Unit Charter. A Life Member has been honored by their Unit by having their dues paid for them yearly. This is NOT the same as a PUFL, which is a member paying off their dues ahead for a lifetime. I am praying for all of you to stay safe and care for one another.

Community Service.....Barbara Neddo, Chairperson

Community Service has been difficult for all of us. We have limited access because of Covid. In December I was asked to visit a Special Education class at my local school. The students in that class were doing Christmas cards for veterans. We worked on the cards for an hour. All the students enjoyed this project. They especially enjoyed the snack I brought to them. I then took the cards to my Legion Post in a basket for any veteran to take. Other cards were taken to a nursing home for veterans there. I also helped my Unit 83 with a Christmas party for children of the community. All were welcome and given a winter hat, mittens, a blanket, and a toy of their choice.

Please continue to do your Community Service work and report it too. Some reports I have received are amazing, even during this difficult time.

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

The groundhog says we have six more weeks of winter so this might be a good time to look over our governing documents. Since we are probably going to have a national dues increase soon, it would be wise to consider a dues increase for your unit. That would give you some time to talk about it with your people and prepare them, so it isn't such a shock. No one likes to talk about dues increases, but they are reality, and our dues amounts are Standing Rules number one and two. If you raise your unit dues, you need to resubmit your Standing Rules.

This might also be a good time to consider how well your quorum numbers are working. Do you often have regular meetings at which nothing can be done because you are below your quorum? You may need to lower your quorum number. On the reverse, for those who find that a small number of people seem to be making all the decisions for the unit, you may want to raise your quorum number to make sure that you have a full meeting when important matters are discussed.

We have resources available on the Department (deptny.org) and National (alaforveterans.org or legion-aux.org) websites. There are templates and suggestions that are very helpful. Our Plans of Action – four-year plan and yearly supplement – contain a wealth of information that you should take advantage of.

Our greatest problems can be lessened with a good set of governing documents, and inertia is the greatest deterrent to fixing them. Let's consider revising what needs to be fixed while we are avoiding chopping the ice off our driveways. Be safe and be well.

Education.....Anne Baglio, Chairperson

Hello everyone when you go to your Unit/County meetings can you please share this information. In November 2021, the last report I had 138 Units report out of 472 Units in New York. Only 36 Units reported for collecting school supplies. The only way New York will win this Challenge is if people know about it.... The New York "Empire" State vs North Carolina "Tar Heel" State Education Challenge. It is a two-part challenge:

1. Every Unit in both states will be asked to collect school supplies and give to their local school(s). Part of the "Give 10 (or more) to Education". We have until April 15, 2022. The highest percentage of Units that gave per state will be the winner of this challenge. I'm asking every unit that collects to please send me pictures. Either send them via Facebook to Anne Francis Baglio or nyalaeducation@gmail.com. The only way I will know that your Unit has done their part is it will have to be reported in the March 1, 2022, report to County then onto me at Department level. For the Challenge I need to know the Unit #, how much spent and hours put into this project.

2. The highest percentage of National American Legion Auxiliary scholarship entries submitted per State by February 15, 2022, will win this challenge. All units need to report how many National scholarships they receive back from students.

Don't forget to report everything else under Education and send in for Unit and/or County Education Awards. You all work very hard and deserve to be recognized for it. If you do FACEBOOK and go onto American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of New York 8th District and also American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of NY that is where I am posting pictures regarding the challenge. If you have any questions, please let me know.

*ALA Empire Girls State..... Wendy Privitera, Chairperson
.....Members Kris Dziejuch and Terri D. Wallace*

Thank you to everyone for their patience and understanding as we rebuilt our website. We are happy to say it is up and running. If you haven't visited it yet, we encourage you to go to www.empiregirlsstate.org . Click on the ALA Resource tab enter the password, Girls State to find additional resources for unit and County use.

There seems to be some confusion regarding our session this year, **We WILL be in person this year NOT VIRTUAL. We apologize for a misprint in the POA**

We are still looking for Staff members to attend this year's session If you, or someone you know would like to volunteer, applications are available on the website. Don't miss out on the opportunity to be part of a week you will never forget!!!

Special Notes about the 2022 Empire Girls State Program!

- Dates: **IN PERSON** session will be **July 3 to July 7, 2022, at SUNY Brockport** (Sunday- Saturday)
- County Chairmen... following forms should be sent to the ALA EGS Registrar, Terri
 - Medical Certification
 - Consent for Treatment
 - Release for Medical Information
 - Immunization Records
 - A copy of the front and back of the insurance card
 - A copy of the Parent Waiver, Media Consent, and Citizens Pledge from DocuSign
 - Transmittal form and tuition payment
 - **ADDITIONAL FORMS**
 - Travel Card are to be kept by the citizen until arrival at EGS
 - Additional T-Shirt forms are to be mailed by citizen to EGS Chairmen
- **Samsung Scholarship:** Encourage your citizens to apply! This is a great opportunity and we do not want anyone to miss out!
- Please consider supporting the ALA EGS program by purchasing an **Ad and/or Booster!**
- Information about Orientations will be sent to citizens and County Chairmen once the dates are set

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of us!

Thank you for your continued support and for all that you do at a Unit, County, and District Level! EACH OF YOU is why this program can be a success each and every year! We LOVE Girls State!

*Finance Committee/Audit..... Sally Johnston, Chairperson
..... Violet Brosart and Linda Moseman Members*

It's hard to believe that we are more than halfway through this administrative year. We have faced many challenges with the Pandemic, one of which has forced us to utilize "virtual meetings." Though it's been a learning experience for some, we have been able to keep our members informed and continue to offer member support from the Office Staff.

Our “Virtual” Mid-winter Conference was a great success but did not go without cost from the original venue, the Marriott. We were able to meet the cost of “cancellation fees” through a reserve account.

As it’s been stated in previous Newsletter Articles, that our department has “1 “fundraiser per year, the Calendars. Of the 1000 Calendars printed for sale, I am happy to report that we have received payment for 949 of them. Let’s see if we can’t get those last 51 calendars sold. There are still 10 months left with several chances to win. The additional proceeds would help to rebuild the reserve, should we be faced with any future cancellation fee’s that may occur during the remainder of this administrative year due to the Pandemic.

Audit Data Forms – remember in our Plan of Action, the Unit Audit Form was included with a due date of December 31, 2021, to be returned to the Department Office? As of this writing, only 113 Units have fulfilled that obligation. If your Unit is one that has not filled out the Audit Data Form and returned to the department office, please do so at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions regarding the form, please contact the Department Office. The Office Staff is more than willing to help in any way they can.

Lastly, for those of you who attended the “Virtual Mid-Winter Conference” learned that the National Organization is proposing a “dues increase” at National Convention this year. If passed, how does that affect what the Units are now charging their members? If, the purposed dues increase is passed at the National level, most likely the department will have to propose a Dues Increase at department convention, to be effective 2024.

For those Units that have in their Standing Rules that they pay members’ dues, according to specific criteria, (ex. 75 years of age and a member for a minimum of 15 years), you may want to revisit your Standing Rules to ensure your Unit can fulfill those obligations. If Units are no longer able to pay members’ dues, there may be at a risk of losing those members. Now is the time to be thinking of how to prevent the loss of those members. Maybe you need to be thinking about a specific fundraiser for dues, etc.

As you can imagine, this is not an easy subject to discuss during these most difficult times. We are all reminded of why we joined this elite organization. Hopefully, we will want to continue to honor those loved ones from whom we received our edibility (exception of those who have joined under their own right). We have lost many members due to death and some simply lost interest. Let’s see what we can do to make sure that not only do we maintain our membership, but help it grow.

Remember that currently, the departments portion of Senior dues is \$12.00 for Seniors and \$6.25 for Juniors. Therefore, all member’s dues are important and needed for the continued financial health and operation of our department office.

We will hear more about this topic from our Department of New York, National Executive Committee (NEC) Woman, Patricia Hennessey as it develops. She has attended all of the National meetings thus far on the topic and has kept our department informed.

Historian.....Yvonne Brunner, Chairperson

I hope everyone’s holidays were filled with joyous moments. As we now turn our attention to the new year let us continue preserving our memories with an ‘Auxiliary History Book’ for your Unit or County. Senior Historians in addition to creating your book, encourage your junior members to make a Junior History Book.

When speaking with members about writing a ‘History Book,’ the response is often that they just do not know how to start. And yes, it is true our Plan of Action gives us a format, but what is said most often is our Historians need guidance on what to write. Most importantly your History Book should reflect what your unit has accomplished as a whole, be inclusive of all activities. Do not go it alone, partner with another Committee Chair who has activities within the unit or community. It may make your task easier if you draft your book on a monthly basis. At a meeting you can ask members what they did on various committees. Include news clippings or other photographs to make a visual impact on what you are writing. Ask members to contribute an article on an event they attended or feature a milestone event of a member (years in the auxiliary). Write with purpose; include dates, people, and activities as in this example: “On Saturday January 15, 2022, our Unit 0006, members met for our annual School of Instruction. The members who attended are (insert names). They learned about the

ALA programs, reporting and how to work them in our Unit.” Above all, make your story relatable by including details that enhance your message, not show off your vocabulary.

March is Women’s History Month; it is an excellent opportunity to interview a member.

Remember, it is never too early or late to start a History Book. Please visit the Plan of Action to see what awards are available. **Submission for Department awards are due no later than May 1st.**

Our ALA history goes beyond the history books and photographs, they are memories we carry in our hearts every day. *“Let’s Make History Together, Celebrating Our Members.”*

Junior Activities..... Jennifer Farley, Chairperson

While we were not able to have an in person meeting this year, we did have a great Department of New York Juniors meeting during our Mid-Winter Conference!

At our meeting we discussed many opportunities and ideas that Juniors could bring back to their units and counties. I encourage you all to look into the Junior Patch Program. At Midwinter, we discussed the program and ways to collect patches. This would be a great opportunity to get Juniors involved!

I am so proud to present the Honorary Department Junior Officers that were elected:

- President- McKenna Donlon- 7th District
- Vice President – Cristina Caputi- 10th District
- Secretary – Kaylynn Hancock- 7th District
- Treasurer – MacKenzie McDaniels -7th District
- Historian – Kalynn Stern – 8th District

Our Juniors are the future of our organization! Let’s work to encourage and educate them!

I am looking forward to a fun year working together with our Junior members!

Leadership..... Marrick McDonald, Chairperson

The Virtual Mid-Winter Conference in January was a success. The best part about the Conference is that it was recorded; you can see all 24 presentations from Friday and the whole group activities from Saturday on the Department website.

I would like to thank all who presented, facilitated, and worked behind the scenes to make this conference such a success.

During Mid-Winter Conference, I failed to recognize Dawn Grant, from Warren County, for having completed courses of the ALA Academy. Congratulations, Dawn.

The Auxiliary Member of the Year Award has been added to the duties of the Leadership Chairman. Auxiliary Member of the Year nominees cannot have held an elected office outside of their unit. Applications need to be forwarded to me by May 1st. They can either be postmarked or emailed.

Today, as I drove into town, I saw the veteran banner that was hung on the telephone pole; the banner was of Mr. Stanley Auternith, the husband of Mrs. Marion Auternith, one of our Past Department Presidents. Marion began in the organization as a member of Adirondack Unit 1118, where she served as Unit President and Herkimer County President. She helped to start West Canada Valley Unit 1542 (my unit). As a member of West Canada Valley, she served as Fifth District President, Department President, and Eastern Division Vice President. She understood that leaders need to edify leaders. As leadership guru Ken Blanchard said, “Leadership is not about you; it’s about investing in the growth of others.” As a result of Marion’s work, the past

five District Presidents who have represented the Fifth District from Herkimer County have come from either one of those two units. That's a powerful legacy of leadership that she created.

What is or what will be your legacy of leadership?

Legislative..... Karen Chan, Chairperson

Protecting Moms who served Act of 2021 – (S.796) A victory for this bill. This bill authored by U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and U.S. Representative Lauren Underwood (D-IL-14) – was signed into law on November 30, 2021. The legislation, which passed both chambers by overwhelming margins, will help to address the maternal mortality crisis among women veterans by helping improve care at VA facilities and shed light on the scope of this crisis, particularly among women of color. This bill will help examine ways to improve care coordination, identify gaps in coverage, and eliminate racial disparities. Now that our bill has been signed into law, the U.S. can help ensure that the brave women who have served in our military receive the maternal care they have earned.

Troops to Teachers program – A victory for this bill. On December 27th, 2021, President Biden signed the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act into law after months of negotiations on Capitol Hill. Section 551 officially reauthorizes the Troops to Teachers program and eliminates the Department of Defense's ability to unilaterally terminate the program in the future.

Demand the GI Bill Parity Act of 2021 for Reserve and National Guard – (H.R. 1836) This bill has passed the House of Representative in early January 2022. It is currently in Senate.

The past year has brought unprecedented challenges to our National Guard and Reserve service members, and they have met every challenge head-on. Despite this, they are often denied eligibility for GI Bill benefits because their activations are not considered "Active Duty" by the VA.

Our troops that get stretched to the limit serving alongside their active-duty counterparts deserve the same GI Bill eligibility, and it is past time for Congress to provide it to them. The Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act would start to address this benefits disparity by expanding eligibility for the post-9/11 GI Bill to count every day that a servicemember is paid and in uniform toward benefit eligibility.

Unwavering Support for our Coast Guard Act (USCG) Act – (S.1845) Pay the Coast Guard. This bill was introduced in Senate on May 26, 2021. U.S. Coast Guard personnel carry out missions vital to our national security, but they are the only military branch working without pay during government shutdowns, due to their status under the Department of Homeland Security. The repeated and common threat of government shutdowns brings severe and unnecessary hardship on these men, women, and their families. The Unwavering Support for our Coast Guard Act, which would guarantee that Coast Guard personnel are paid without delay, even in the case of a government shutdown

Revising and Expediting Actions for the Crisis Hotline for Veterans Act or the REACH for Veterans Act – (H.R. 5073) This bill was introduced in House on August 23, 2021. This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to update training and procedures for call responders of the Veterans Crisis Line. Specifically, the VA must enter into an agreement with an outside organization to review the training for crisis line call responders. The VA must update the training if any deficiencies are identified after the review.

Please contact your Senators and Representatives to support these bills.

National Executive Committeeperson.....Patricia Hennessy

I have been advising you of a dues increase since the Phoenix Convention in August 2021. Information recently received from National regarding this proposed dues increase has been sent to all Unit Presidents so they may inform our members; and to advise Units that they may need to adjust their annual dues to accommodate these increases.

A virtual National Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2022, where National will ask the NEC Committee to send this amendment to the 2022 Convention floor for a vote. I will provide future details after the virtual meeting.

National Security.....Mary Ann Calbo, Chairperson

“I believe with all my heart that our first priority must be world peace, and that the use of force is always and only a last resort, when everything else has failed, and then only with regard to our national security.” - Ronald Reagan

The November reporting was so inspiring. The myriad of accomplishments in the face of adversity by units throughout New York State is awe-inspiring. I want to thank every unit and member who has been so diligent in supporting our active duty and National Guard/Reserves and their families. Their dedicated support of the re-integration programs with job fairs, supplying foods and toiletries, business clothing donations, welcome home ceremonies, etc. INCREDIBLE! Thank you for all you do.

NATIONAL AWARDS:

Unit award: Most outstanding Unit National Security Program (per division).

Salute to Servicemembers Award” (Form has been revised to reflect changes)

This prestigious award will be reported for the first time under the National Security Program. The award, which was established in 2003, has evolved from honoring Women Veterans to honoring active-duty women to honoring ALL enlisted personnel serving our great country, (both men and women). Every Auxiliary Unit can submit one entry for each branch of Service, the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast guard, Space force and the National Guard/Reserve. One enlisted service member recipient from each Branch of service, as well as the National Guard/Reserve will be recognized and invited as guests to speak at the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention 2022 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Deadline date for submittals is May 1st. (Submit the Revised nomination form).

DEPARTMENT AWARD:

Susan Britton Award, (department award) is for the most outstanding overall report of National Security issues reported by the unit and county National Security Chairman.

Parliamentarian..... Mary Lou Platt

*Courtesy & Justice to every member
Act on only one thing at a time
The right of the minority to be heard.
The rule of the majority to be recognized.*

It is time for Units and Counties to consider officers for the next administration. As Parliamentarian, you have an obligation to review rules, regulations & procedures and to advise your President not to allow a “Custom Rule” when it comes to nominations & elections. A Custom Rule typically is the same as saying “We’ve always done it that way.”

Surprisingly, it is the purpose of the nomination committee & how to conduct nominations that some of the membership seem to have difficulty understanding. Nominations are not elections..... they don’t elect..... voting by the membership elects. The purpose of a nominating committee is to present the name of a potential candidate to run for a particular office. This doesn’t mean they are the only candidate to consider. Additional members can also be nominated from the floor to run for the same office. Any member in good standing can run for any office, it doesn’t matter how long he or she has been a member. A member whose dues are current is considered a member in good standing. A member of the nominating committee can be nominated and does not have to resign from the committee.

The president is not a member of the nominating committee.

To conduct nominations, the chair calls on the nominating committee for their report. The nominating committee submits their list of names for the slate of officers. The chair then calls for further nominations from the floor. It is possible to take nominations for all offices at the same time before elections, but it is less confusing if you take nominations for one office at a time & conduct elections for that office, then repeat that procedure for each office. No such rule exists that the chair must repeat 3 times "Are there any further nominations", but the practice to do so isn't completely unreasonable because by repeating 3 times it establishes a good way to make sure that no further nominations are forthcoming.

When there is only one candidate, the secretary does not cast one vote for that candidate. Holding an election where the secretary is the only one voting & is instructed how to vote breaks parliamentary principles. The chair can declare that candidate elected by acclamation or just saying "Mrs. A was nominated for president, there being no further nominations, Mrs. A is declared president." When there is more than one candidate for an office, the vote is then brought before the membership.

We look forward to another great Administration on all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Past Presidents' Parley.....Linda Tome, Chairperson

UNIT MEMBER OF THE YEAR: I've had several questions regarding Unit Member of the Year and how we will honor those nominees this year! As of this administration, Unit Member of the Year is now reported under the Leadership committee and all nominations should be mailed directly to the Department Leadership Chairman, Marrick McDonald by May 1st (do not send to Linda Newsome at National). Marrick, along with a committee she chooses, will select the Unit Member of the Year for the Department of NY.

As you may recall, in the past, Unit Member of the Year nominations were introduced and celebrated at the Past Presidents' Parley breakfast during Department Convention in July. After further discussion with President Mary, she has requested that those Unit Member of the Year nominees continue to be invited to the Past Presidents' Parley breakfast to be introduced and celebrated. The Unit Member of the Year for the Department of NY will be introduced at Convention during platform remarks.

Therefore, be sure to let your nominees know that they should plan to attend the Past Presidents' Parley breakfast at Department Convention in July and if they are the chosen as the Department's Unit Member of the Year, they will be invited to attend the National Convention held this year in Milwaukee, Wisconsin the end of August/beginning of September.

SCHOLARSHIP: Don't forget to get the word out about the Past Presidents' Parley Scholarship in Medical Field. There will be one scholarship of \$1000 awarded to an eligible candidate planning to further his/her higher education in the Medical Field. Applications need to be submitted to the sponsoring unit no later than March 1st and they need to submit to the Department Education Chairman, Anne Baglio.

DEPARTMENT AWARD: The Betty Jane Light Award will be awarded to the Unit chairman who initiates and completes the most outstanding program for assisting & caring of women veterans. Be sure to get that entry into me by May 1st! Let's be sure to recognize your Unit Chairman for the work that they've done!

Poppy.....Patricia Murphy, Chairperson

It has been my pleasure to attend two virtual National Poppy meetings led by National Chairman Sallie Rossman, attended by Division Chairman's including our own Marie Mock along with the Department chairman's. We share activities, planning for upcoming events and follow up of monthly Poppy Newsletter. These meetings provide resources to promote the Poppy Program. Check out American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program on Facebook for all kinds of ideas.

Do you know what the parts of the poppy stand for the red of the petals represents the blood of those who gave their lives, the black button in the middle is for the mourning of those who never welcomed their loved one's home, and the green leaf shows the hope that the grass and crops growing after the war brings.

Please note that Poppy entries **must** be to me no later than **May 1, 2022** for judging. Judging will **not** be conducted at Department convention. Poppy entries are then forwarded to Division chairman for judging. I plan to display photos of Department of New York winners at Department Convention.

Public Relations..... Colleen McDaniels, Chairperson

As a member of the American Legion Auxiliary every time you talk about our mission, every time you wear branded ALA clothing, and every time you participate in an event, you are sharing our message. YOU are spreading the word about who we are, and YOU are part of the ALA PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM!

Here are a few ways you can make your impact stronger!

- Be Prepared
- People will ask you questions- know about your event and our mission.
- People will ask to join- so always carry a membership application. I keep one in my phone case!
- People will be impressed!

As members we love our ALA Emblem, and we must preserve the integrity of how it is used. Make sure you have applied for and received permission to use the ALA Emblem on all your branded clothing. Applications are available on the National Website, and it only takes about 5 minutes to complete.

Warrior Family Assistance..... Patricia Hennessy, Chairperson

I am *delighted with* the response we have had in requesting WFA brochures since our virtual Mid-Winter. As members of this organization, we are the first responders to assist a Veteran, a Reservist/National Guard who meets the program guidelines. This program can assist in helping to pay car repairs, food, utilities, etc.

Brochures need added contact information for your area for easy reference. These individuals are already stressed - having the right name and number to contact lessens their stress of how to get our help.

Message from the Department Office

- **Attention all Unit Presidents and Membership Chairmen** – the 2023 Unit Data form was recently mailed out to all unit Presidents to be filled out and returned to the Department Office no later than May 1, 2022 (blue form). Please remember to review your unit dues and if necessary, vote to increase it prior to sending the form in. National is proposing a dues increase at the 2022 National Convention. **This is a mandatory form.**
- **Unit Membership Chairmen** – Please make sure you are sending in the dues in a timely manner. National will be pulling rosters on April 1, 2022, for the 2023 dues year, therefore, if a members 2022 dues is not paid prior to April 1, 2022, their continuous years will automatically be changed in the computer. Please, please, please make sure you get all your membership dues for 2022 in prior to that date. Remember to reach out to those members who have not renewed their membership and remind them of the importance of renewing their membership.
- **Membership updates** – As a reminder, membership totals are updated each week by the Department Office on Wednesday. If you need up-to-date membership totals, you can email the office or call the Department office for up-to-date numbers for your unit and/or county meeting.
- **Please do not send DD214's into the office with applications. Once the Post Adjutant/Officer signs the application**, return the supporting documents to the member. The office only needs the completed – signed application with the dues and transmittal.

- **Applications** need to be complete and legible. New members address needs to be complete. No abbreviations on city/town.
- **Membership chairmen** – if your unit members move, change any contact information, phone numbers, emails, etc., please send the change to the Department office so the information is updated in a timely manner. This also pertains to unit President, Membership Chair and Unit Treasurer
- **Newsletters** – E-mail copies of the Newsletter are available to any member wanting a free copy. Please e-mail anyone of us at the office with a valid email and we will get you on the list. The Newsletter is emailed to all Unit/County Presidents, Unit/County Membership Chairmen and Unit/County Treasurers if we have your email address. If you do not have email and someone in the unit/county would like to receive it on your behalf, please let us know so we can add them to the list. Also, County Committee Chairmen receive the newsletter via email. If you do not have anyone in the unit and/or county with an email to receive the email newsletter for you, please contact the Department Secretary for a copy.
- Mailed copies of the Newsletters are available at the cost of \$15.00 per year.
- All Department issued checks must be deposited within 90 days
- All checks sent to the office should be made out as follows: American Legion Auxiliary, Department of New York and indicate in the memo line what it is for. Also, please remember to sign the check.
- When submitting a donation form please indicate what unit or county it is from.

The Department office is here to help you and we are only a phone call or email away.

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of New York, Inc.

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American Legion Auxiliary

101 Years of Service Not Self

