



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

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*2023 April 2023*

*Department President's Message.....Nancy J. Babis*

Whew! 62 counties visited across this great state. So many heartwarming experiences, monuments, memorials, cemeteries, historical sites and so much more. Many thanks to all the visitation committees for your attention to the needs of the traveling party. Your hospitality was very much appreciated. Our American Legion Family working together is amazing.

Homecoming – May 19 & 20 at Vernon Downs. Come join us for a family-wide celebration! The reservation form is on the Department website. Deadline May 1, 2023.

Looking forward to the American Legion Purple Heart Honor flight in June. 30 Purple Heart Veterans will join the Department Leadership team and the Honor Flight team on an overnight excursion to Washington DC. Also, for the American Legion College in June and Empire Girls State in July.

Please check out the convention information and make your reservations! Be part of the first ever Westchester County Department convention. Chairman Mary Ann Calbo has been working diligently to provide the Auxiliary members with a great experience.

Thank you to all who have donated to my President's Project – Honor Flight. I was so thankful to be told at April Exec. Meeting that we have raised enough money to date to send 38 Veterans on a mission with Honor Flights across the state! Keep those donations coming. Don't forget to participate in the walk-a-thon with the SAL's, the Auxiliary will benefit from some of those funds too.

*Department Convention.....MaryAnn Calbo, Convention Chairperson*

Thank you, President Nancy, for this great opportunity to Chair the 2023 Convention, ( Convention dates are July 20-22). This is the first year in over one hundred years that our convention will be held in one Hotel, the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown. The theme for this year is " the American Legion Family." You will hear from our program chairmen, all of the incredible work accomplished in support of our Veterans, communities and children and Youth. This is the fruit of all of your hard work throughout the year. Thank you for all that you do.

Now let's get excited! We are holding our State Dinner honoring our President Nancy Babis on Thursday night, July 20<sup>th</sup> with an accomplished DJ who will get everyone up singing and dancing. The big Event on Friday, July 21<sup>st</sup> will be held at the Westchester County Center. We will be

entertained by Tony Orlando, Jay and the Americans and the lead singer from the Buckingham's. All attendees at the convention will be receiving free tickets. For those attending a dinner buffet which will precede the show, their tickets will be bumped up to premium seating at the show. For all others, pricing and ticket sales will be announced shortly. Tell all of your family and friends.

Looking forward to seeing you!

**HOTEL LINK:**

<https://www.2023alconvention.org/hotel-reservation-information>

*Membership.....Karen St. Hilaire, Chairperson*

I would like to Thank the District Presidents, District Vice Presidents, County Membership Chairs and especially the Unit Membership Chairs for the excellent job and teamwork you did to assist the Department of New York in reaching 91.81% goal of members paid. We are getting closer to reaching our one hundred percent goal, for President Nancy. Let's reach out to those last few members who have not paid. They may just need a gentle reminder, or they may also need some extra help. Also continue to recruit, set up membership table with information and applications at all your Post and community events. Poppy distribution days are coming up, what a great way to educate the community about what the Poppy means to our Veterans and recruit new members.

On the National level Eastern Division (which includes the Department of New York) slid from second to third place by a few tenths of a percent. Hopefully, we can climb back up and take over first place.

Milestone # 4 was for units that reached 100% by March 11- there were seventy-six units entered into the drawing. The following five units were drawn and will receive a check for \$50.00: #317 Skaneateles Falls, #1285 Bayville, # 1688 Laurens, #521 Montgomery, and #66 Camden. Congratulations to the following Counties Seneca 106.42%, Livingston 101.51%, Schuyler 100.66%, and Fulton 100.41% paid membership.

At Mid-Winter we held a presentation on ALAMIS (American Legion Auxiliary Information System) an online tool to assist Units with submitting renewals and new applications and to have the ability to update your unit members data, like name or address changes and so forth. We also presented to the District and County membership chair as a read only. We had the understanding that they would ALAMIS be allowed to view units in their county or district ALAMIS only.

It was brought to the attention of the Department officers that the District and County users have Departmental View, meaning they have access to all members of the Department of New York, including personal information. The Department office reached out to the National office, whose response was yes anyone with District or County ALAMIS could access the entire Department of New York. It was discussed by members at the April Department of New York Executive meeting, as there was a concern about maintaining members privacy, therefore a motion was made and passed: That the Department of New York **will no longer allow District or County ALAMIS access**. Those that currently have District or County access will not be renewed and no new applications will be accepted. This **DOES NOT AFFECT UNIT ALAMIS FULL**, since the member who has this access can only view his/her unit members. To obtain ALAMIS Unit Access Read, Write or Full you must fill out the form and send it with check to the Department Office. All forms can be found on the Department Website under the Membership Committee.

- National pulled rosters and 2024 membership cards. This means that any changes, new members, rejoins and transfers made after April 1<sup>st</sup> will not be reflected on the Unit's 2024 membership cards and rosters. This does NOT mean we will stop accepting 2023 dues. We process renewals/new members ALL year; please do not hold onto it until the Fall. If

a member's dues was not paid for 2023, 2022 they are now considered expired for 2024 rosters and will not appear on the 2024 roster and will not have a printed membership card. When paying their dues, you will have to give them a handwritten card for 2024.

- The 2024 Unit Data form for renewal notices were mailed to Unit Presidents in early March. It is available as a fillable PDF to download off of our website under the membership tab. Make sure you are using the 2024 form only. Please complete the entire form and do not leave anything blank. This form is due back to the Department Office no later than May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Please remember that the new rates will take effect with the 2024 dues that will be available to pay July 2023. If your current rate is not sufficient, please make sure your unit notifies all members that there will be dues increase proposed for the unit, when the meeting will be held, etc. Please make sure you follow your unit Constitution & Bylaws regarding notice to all members.
- The 2024 per capita for Department and National for senior members is \$28; the junior per capita is staying the same at \$6.25. If you do not submit your form by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 and your current rate is below the amounts above, the Unit will not receive a portion of the per capita for 2024. Once the rates are locked and they need to be changed, National will charge a processing fee.
- At this time, the current year (2023) dues have to be paid first before back dues. This now includes 2022 dues.
- Please do not send DD214's/active-duty documentation into the office with applications. Once the Post Adjutant/Officer signs the application and the membership chair (ALA) verifies all supporting documents, returns the supporting documents to the member. The office only needs the completed – signed application with the dues and transmittal. Remember – if the veteran is living, he/she must be a current paid member in the American Legion. Remember to check which era the veteran served and the relationship of the veteran to the ALA applicant. Please circle the appropriate relationship to the veteran.
- Applications need to be complete and legible otherwise they will be returned to the unit membership chair. New members' address needs to be complete. No abbreviations on city/town. All membership applications must be presented to the unit membership chairman with the proper documentation prior to being submitted to the office for processing.
- Membership chairs – if your unit members move, change any contact information, phone numbers, emails, etc., please send the change to the Department office or if you have unit write or unit full, please make the appropriate changes so the information is updated in a timely manner. This also pertains to unit President, Membership Chair and Unit Treasurer.

### *VA&R / Service to Veterans.....Kimberly Quick. Chairperson*

I was looking at the Walk-A-Thon Facebook page group called Walk-A-Thon NYS. Wow! A lot of walks are being planned around New York. I also see the *BOOTS* being downloaded for use. Please post photos of your walks on our Department Facebook and the Walk-A-Thon Facebook pages. Fun pics can be taken of everyone and any fancy footwear or people with their Boot they paid a donation for. I cannot wait to see all the fun we had.

I was honored to represent NY at the Washington, DC Conference at the end of February. We discussed the PACT Act and the Camp Lejeune Water Contamination Lawsuit. We had a presentation from the law firm Bergmann & Moore, LLC who has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The American Legion to help Legionnaires understand the Camp

Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA). A full page of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) printed in the Legion magazine should also be coming to the Auxiliary magazine. We hope to inform the widows / widowers / children of veterans who have passed away; they may also be eligible for claims.

Also, we discussed those bad actors who send all the spam emails, spam ads online, spam text messages, and even checks in the mail trying to take advantage of our veterans and their families during a time of need. Unfortunately, there are criminals out there who will take advantage of anyone so BEWARE. Do not cash any checks from anyone in the mail that you did not hire on your behalf – this is also a trick.

**DO** read any fine print.

**DO** speak with an accredited Service Officer or reputable law firm.

**DO** look into hiring reputable law firms to represent you in your claims for these funds.

Remember that none of us know all there is about these subjects, so don't be afraid to ask for help.

We will be needing volunteers for the Medical Centers again soon. The VAVS Representatives and Deputies are reporting that some of the VAMC opportunities are coming back. You can check your VAMC COVID-19 health protection levels at [www.va.gov/find-locations](http://www.va.gov/find-locations). If you are interested, please get in touch with the Rep or Dep from your area or me at [nyalavaandr@gmail.com](mailto:nyalavaandr@gmail.com).

Have a safe, happy, and healthy summer. See you soon. God Bless the USA

### *Children and Youth..... Maureen Morgan, Chairperson*

I hope everyone had a very Happy Easter and Passover. We are in a New Year with many great opportunities for the Units in the Department of New York to shine. There are coloring books, Youth Hero Award, Good Deed Awards, and the best is the Kids Are Hero's 2 Award. There are stickers to give to our youth and great opportunities for the youth to participate in the Legion and Auxiliary Programs. All this information can be found at [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org). Don't forget that April is Purple Up month for our Military Kids. On Saturday, April 15, 2023, we are asking everyone to wear Purple for our Military Children. Show our support to these young youths that need to know we are there for them. Have an open house for them on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April with games and food. Bring them into our American Legion Family so they know that members out there that care. Send pictures with your reports so that I can brag to the Eastern Division about New York. Don't forget to get those Youth and Good Deed Awards into the Department Secretary so that she can get them too National.

It is close to the end of our reports, please make sure that you get your reports in on time so that the chairperson can process and get the reports into Department and National on time.

### *President's Project.....Kimberly Quick*

President Nancy is up to 38 veterans in her plane. Please continue to help President Nancy fill her plane for Honor Flight. We collect right up to the convention. Please send your donations for Honor Flight to the Department office using the Treasurer form on the Department website on the Department President's Project line.

Have you experienced an Honor Flight? Did you have a fundraiser for Honor Flight? The President's Project Committee is not a reporting committee, but I would love to know how you support Honor Flight programs. Please email me at [nyalapresidentsproject@gmail.com](mailto:nyalapresidentsproject@gmail.com).

Thank you for all your support and hard work.

*Americanism.....Lucille Mozzillo, Chairperson*

Thank you to counties that submitted reports for this past April 10th reporting period. Many units have reported that they support their local Boys and Girl Scout Troops with financial assistance and by including them in various activities that the post and unit hold, including Flag Disposal Ceremonies. Many units also support their Posts with their various fundraising endeavors and other American Legion Programs. Flag Etiquette programs are also held at local schools and in the community and handheld flags and coloring pages are distributed.

Our judges enjoyed reading your unit submissions for the Americanism Essay contest. I received a total of 15 essays. Unfortunately, due to a number of different reasons I was only able to forward 3 essays to the National Eastern Division level. I encourage unit chairman to please be mindful of submission deadlines, required signatures and word count limits for each class before submitting essays to the department level. The Americanism Essay winners will be announced at the Department Convention.

Your submissions for Department and National Awards for Americanism are due to me by May 1st. Please refer to the Plan of Action for awards available to units and counties. There are four Department Awards and two National Awards

I will be submitting a year-end report to National in May. I am still looking for high-definition photos that I can submit along with my report. I would love to be able to share photos to go along with my written evidence of the wonderful work the members of the Department of New York are doing in our communities to promote Americanism.

*American Legion Family College.....Debby Herrmann, ALA Chair*

Plans for the 2023 session at SUNY Morrisville the weekend of June 2<sup>nd</sup> through June 4<sup>th</sup> is in process. The American Legion Family College is where everyone attending will get an opportunity to get an overview of each of the different organizations and the programs in the American Legion Family.

I am pleased to announce that we have received over 100 applications for this year's session. That hasn't been done in several years even pre-COVID. Tim has gotten the applications from the Legion Dept Office, and we will begin putting the 10 groups together with a mix of Legionnaires, registered are **60**, Auxiliary registered **27** (but I'm going to count another 6 for **33** as they registered as dual members), and SAL members registered **14**, with some of them also being Legion Riders. We have all **10** Districts which is a first, and **32** Counties represented this year.

I would like to welcome back President Nancy Babis and PDP Debbie Morris as instructors for the 2023 session.

The American Legion Family College List of Courses for 2023

- Membership
- Service Officers responsibilities
- Leadership
- Legislative and Resolutions
- Overview of the American Legion Auxiliary and what makes us different from the Legion.
- SAL

- Legion Riders
- My Legion and ALAMIS
- Marketing and Public Relations with information regarding the new Logo
- Constitution and By-Laws
- Duties of Officers
- Americanism
- Children and Youth
- Adjutant and Secretary Duties
- Protocol and Mentoring

*Auxiliary Emergency Fund.....Evelyn Gerlett Chairperson*

Here are the Fiscal Year 2023 statistics (10/1/22 to 4/14/23) for AEF grants awarded to ALA members in the state of New York from National Headquarters:

Total AEF grants awarded: 6

Total AEF Dollars Awarded: \$8,932.17

AEF Disaster Grants: 2 - Total AEF Disaster Dollars Awarded: \$3,500.00

AEF Temporary Assistance Grants: 4 - Total AEF Total Assistance Dollars Awarded: \$5,432.17

*ALA Foundation.....Cathe MacInnes, President*

What “big ticket” items does your veteran community need? Furnishings for a veterans transitional housing facility? Does the VAMC or the New York State Veterans Home in your area need new recreation equipment, such as bingo blower machines and flashboards? Or large equipment for art therapy, such as a chromatic Tone Chime set or a hand bell set? Or new patio furniture? These items often are not covered by the facility’s budget, so they turn to the volunteer community. The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation (ALAF) Veteran Projects Fund can help!! Your Unit, County, or District can apply for a grant, which will typically cover up to 80% of the cost. For example, the cost of furnishing a bedroom for a veterans transitional housing facility is approximately \$500 – your Unit would need to raise only \$100! Apply for a grant. It’s a 3-page application, which can be completed online. Your 20% can come from poppy funds, as all these items contribute to the rehabilitation of veterans. Need more information before you apply? Check out the ALAF website at: <https://alafoundation.org/grants/> Still unsure? Feel free to reach out to Carrie Davenport, Terri Wallace, or me – we all serve on the ALAF Board and would be happy to answer your questions!

*Chaplain.....Linda Connell, Chairperson*

This is my last newsletter as Department Chaplain. I would like to thank all the chaplains for their emails, calls & notes of communication. Your kindness and words of encouragement this year were so appreciated.

Please continue to send me the Death Notices from your units as soon as you receive the information, so a condolence card can be sent as quickly as possible. Also, I am working on the book for convention and would like all the names of deceased members to be included for the memorial service.

Prayers are still being collected, to be added to President Nancy’s Prayer Book - there are only a few weeks to get them to me. You are welcome to include prayers from Auxiliary events or any prayers that are special to any of your members. Don’t forget to include your name and county. Thank you!

In your prayers, please continue to remember those who are less fortunate, have illness or other troubles. Please especially keep our veterans, active military, and their families in your thoughts & prayers. **And always -- BE KIND TO EACH OTHER...!!**

*Community Service.....Shirley Ellis, Chairperson*

I would like to thank everyone who has reported for community service. Please keep track of what you all do for our Veterans and families. As well as our community. Please have safe Holiday as well as your summer

*Constitution and Bylaws/Resolutions.....Sally Johnston, Chairperson*

**IMPORTANT SUBMISSION CHANGE**

As of Department Executive meeting held April 1-2, 2023, there has been much discussion as to how Units need to forward their Constitution & Bylaws / Standing Rules to this chairman.

In an effort to further simplify submission of "Standing Rules ONLY" the department has enhanced the form to include a space for the Unit name, number, and contact information. There is also a line that states "Unit approved date." Additionally, there are 2 signature lines, one for the President and one for the Secretary.

At the very bottom of the page, there will be a space for me as the chairman to sign and date if submission is being forwarded to the department office as "reviewed." Otherwise, I will be contacting the person whose information is noted on the "Transmittal Sheet."

**Very important** – when filling out Standing Rules 1 (Sr. dues) and 2 (Jr. dues) you have the choice to state "**per capita**" which means the dollar amount per member that is forwarded to the department, "**plus the number of dollars**" the Unit wishes to keep in their treasury. For example: 2024 Sr. dues, "per capita" is \$28.00. If the Unit wanted to collect \$30.00 / member, then the Standing Rules #1 would read, "**per capita plus \$2.00**". By stating the words "per capita" plus "x" number of dollars, the Standing Rules would not have to be changed every time there is dues increase at the national and/or department level. However, if the Unit chooses to insert the actual dollar amount (ex. \$30.00), then the Unit would be required to change their Standing Rules accordingly to be in compliance.

June 1<sup>st</sup> is the last day I will be accepting any submissions for Constitution & Bylaws(C&B) / Standing Rules. Should I receive submissions that need to be returned for corrections, hopefully this will give both parties time enough to clean up any loose ends.

I have a backlog of submissions that I have sent emails with no return responses. I utilized the contact information provided on the Transmittal Sheet. If I don't get responses, then I will be returning them to the sender which is very costly on everyone's part.

**To recap:** If you are changing your Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules, you will need to submit the entire packet to me. Transmittal sheet, 2 copies of the "new submission" along with Standing Rules. Remember, to "sign and include the Unit approval date" on the first page of the C&B. If you are changing your Standing Rules, please begin with #3, if the Unit is submitting other changes than dues.

If you are submitting Standing Rules Only, follow the procedure as mentioned above. As a gentle reminder, I try to answer all emails within a reasonable length of time. Also, you may contact me by phone, text, or leave a message. However, I do go to the department office every 2-3 weeks to copy and mail submissions.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation as we are coming to the close of this administrative year. I know this year we have faced many challenges, but we are all learning together to get the job done to the best of our ability.

*Education.....AnneBaglio, Chairperson*

How many Units out there in Dept. of NY did anything for the schools or children in the schools this year (2022-2023)? Did any Units buy school supplies, ex. pens, pencils, rulers, books, backpacks? promote scholarships? Give out scholarships last year (May or June 2022)? Collect box tops? I have heard from some Units. We really need these reports. Please either send them to your County Education Chairman who will forward to me or include me on the email also via w/ report form. I know everyone works hard at volunteering and it should be reported. Also, if there is a Unit or member that did something outstanding for Education we have awards, also I would love this information for the Year-end report to National with pictures if you have them. Please look in the POC book for the awards under Education or give me a call 716-432-1354, or email nyaleducation@gmail.com and we can discuss what you need.

*ALA Empire Girls State.....Kris Dziduch, Chairperson  
.....Members Terri D. Wallace and Claire Herrman*

We are very excited about this 82nd Session of ALA Empire Girls State. We have worked hard to implement changes based on the feedback from citizens and staff of last year's session. We have adjusted the schedule, providing guidance on when work (such as bill writing, campaigning and speech writing and Learning Logs) is to be completed, added informational sessions expanding on the topics we have historically included such as the American Legion Auxiliary, Americanism, public policy, the political process, and women in leadership. We are busy recruiting guest speakers and welcome your referrals. We have changed the format of the Thursday evening Fun Night to an informal gathering with focus on a service project and social networking to encourage continued involvement in the ALA after Girls State. Changes made to registration materials and the agreements that citizens sign during registration were designed to fully inform citizens about the program and clearly outline the expectations of their participation. No citizen should arrive without a clear expectation of what the program is, and what will be expected of them. Please encourage your candidates to not only read what they are signing but explore the program information on our website prior to arrival.

In addition, our citizen manual has undergone a complete revision this year. We have also reformatted the Learning Log which is a component of the program. It is designed to help them process the experiences they have while at ALA EGS. It is a powerful practice to honestly and thoughtfully reflect on learning and experiences, and the Learning Log will be a great reminder of not just the program, but of their own personal growth throughout the week. It will also help them to frame their thinking in positive and proactive ways as the week unfolds. The Learning Log entries are designed to assist them when preparing reports to their sponsoring units and counties, as well as the optional college credit opportunity.

We are currently still looking for 2 nurses or EMTs but are otherwise fully staffed. We have instituted a pre-session training schedule using zoom. Staff meet once a month from March to June via zoom to conduct training sessions leading up to our Friday evening and all-day Saturday in-person staff training. This includes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training. Our DEI trainer will also be in person as a guest speaker for citizens on Monday of session.

Claire is busy processing applications and following up with unit and county ALA Girls State Chairmen and families regarding missing information. Please get transmittal forms and materials to Claire as soon as possible if you have not already done so. Extra T-shirt order forms and payment are to be sent to Kris by June 1st. Over the next few weeks Kris and Terri will be



contacting counties on the waitlist regarding the availability of spots as the roster begins to populate.

Now is a good time for your Unit and County to consider supporting the ALA EGS program as a Booster or with a Booster Ad or by purchasing an item from our Amazon Wish List (search wish list: **ALA EGS '23 Wish List**). All these funds help offset the expenses of the program.

We will be conducting Virtual Orientations in May and June. All information will be emailed directly to citizens, alternates, and parents. Unit and county chairmen are welcome to attend as well.

As a reminder, citizens arrive on Sunday, July 2nd and depart on Saturday, July 8th. Please ensure that any citizens departing by bus have contact information for the bus chaperone and know their pickup time. The State of the State ceremony will be held on July 7th at 8:00pm at the SERC Field house on the Brockport campus. We would like to invite you to attend.

We would like to thank President Nancy for her abundant support, recruiting, and guidance during this time of preparation.

*Finance Committee/Audit.....Violet Brosart, Chairperson  
..... Members Mary Anne Casadei and Patricia Hennessy*

As this is the final newsletter for this administrative year, let me take a moment to remind units to do a quick financial “checkup” for your unit. Have you paid out all your budgeted items to your county, district, or department? Have your Audit Committee fill out the “Unit Audit Data Form” in the Plan of Action or on the Department website and mail it back to the Department Office once completed.

Have your unit fundraising efforts been as successful as you planned? If not, now is the time to start thinking about change.

Finally, has your unit addressed the dues increase for the 2024 membership year. Please remember that Senior dues per capita are \$28.00 and Junior dues per capita are \$6.25 to Department. If your unit raised the dues, please make sure that it was voted on by the unit membership and that you fill out your “Blue form” and mail that back to the Department office no later than May 1, 2023. Failure to do so may result in the incorrect dues on renewal notices. If the unit has to change the dues amount after May 1, 2023, National charges a fee for that.

Start preparing the budgets for 2023-2024 administrative year and welcome change so that we can continue to keep this great organization growing strong and continue our mission, of “Service Not Self” for our Veterans, their families, children and youth and our communities.

*Historian.....Bonnie St. Hilaire, Chairperson*

Thank you to President Nancy for letting me be Department Historian this year.

I hope everyone enjoyed Easter with their families. Preserving our history is a wonderful thing.

In the future members will be able to look back on our years as a family. So please let's all participate in our history and this important committee. Don't forget to apply for Department awards. I do recommend that every District in the Department of New York share what we do, so that everyone will have a good idea on different projects. Also don't forget to count your volunteers. This is very important when it comes to serving our veterans and why we are members of this great organization. I would like to ask for all units to please send me photos of this year for the history book. Please send to Bonnie St. Hilaire at P.O. Box 217 Moira NY 12957

## *Junior Activities..... Dianne Mosher, Chairperson*

Well, here we are already in April—the year has flown by. Our Juniors have been doing great things across our state and have accomplished so much! I have received quite a few year-end reports but am still waiting on some, which I hope to receive soon.

In review of a few of the reports I have received thus far, Nassau County Juniors from the 10<sup>th</sup> District reported almost 1000 hours, with a grand total of over \$42,000 in the value of hours, goods, and materials—INCREDIBLE work!! They held St. Patrick’s Day celebrations, celebrated Veteran’s birthdays, packed bags of clothing, blankets, and treats for veterans living in transitional housing, made stuffed teddy bears that were sent to children in Ukraine, worked at blood drives, and many more activities that served not only our veterans but our community. Allegany County, 8<sup>th</sup> District, reported 225 hours, and a total of \$7191-AWESOME job! Saratoga County, 4<sup>th</sup> District, reported 22 hours and over \$650 as a grand total—GREAT work!

I love reading about all of the wonderful activities our Juniors are participating in and the service they are providing to our veterans, military, and their families! I have also received reports on the Patch Program—thank you to those Juniors who have worked hard to earn your Patches.

Did you know ALA Juniors can have their own access to the MyAuxiliary Member Portal? All they need to do is access a browser and have their member number to set up their username at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). This would enable them to access ALA Academy courses, download the Junior Patch Program and ALA coloring books and so much more!

The American Legion Auxiliary encourages young women to lead the way in continuing its legacy of serving veterans, the military, and their families. Please remember, you are a mentor, and Juniors are our future as they hopefully continue their ALA membership into adulthood! Thank you to all of the family members and mentors who have encouraged and assisted our Juniors with their projects! Thank you to all of the Juniors who have participated in our junior programs this year! You rock! I’m looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible at the Convention! Thank you for a great year!

## *Leadership.....Carrie Davenport, Chairperson*

Can you believe that it is awards season? All awards are due May 1st to the Department Leadership Chairman! They should be postmarked or emailed by 5pm. Don’t forget that the Unit Member of the Year award entry now falls under leadership instead of the Past President’s Parley. In addition to this award, there are other awards that members should consider applying for. See additional details below and consider applying quickly!

### **Department Awards:**

**THE MARION CAPASSO AWARD:** To the Unit Leadership Chairman, who submits a written report of the most outstanding accomplishments through leadership in her Unit during the year. The narrative must include the number of senior and junior members attending each program.

Here we are in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of this program year already, my how time flies!

Many of the County Reports sent for the April reporting period indicate that many of us are staying “pre-Covid” busy! The number of Units involved in supporting our Active-Duty and their families is amazing and heart-warming; And encouraging to see the types of events that others could participate in at their Unit and County levels. Sadly, many reports have not yet been received!

Keep up the good work by supporting our active-duty and their families which is reported under National Security! Don't forget to forward pictures of your activities.

**THE PRICILLA IMBURGIA AWARD:** To the Senior member that participates at the County level, shows leadership, encourages membership, promotes goodwill among members, and demonstrates a commitment to "Service Not Self." Members should not have served in an elected office beyond the County level. County/Unit to submit a nomination of members to include a 1,000 words or less written nomination of the qualifying reasons supporting the nomination.

**JUNIOR AWARD:** To the junior member who exemplifies the best leadership role model at the Unit or County level.

**National Awards:** *Please remember to use the National report and cover found in the Department plan of action.*

**UNIT AWARD:** Most Outstanding Unit Leadership Program

**MEMBER AWARD:** Unit Member of the Year

Springtime is always great to recognize the leaders within your unit and county. Consider finding fun and inexpensive ways to do this. One way might be creating "Paper Plate awards." These awards are done using a paper plate and a marker to write a fun award. Some silly paper plate awards might include:

- Humorous Hero Award-member who brings joy, fun and laughter.
- Saint Award- member who goes above and beyond for others.
- Ruthless Recruiter Award- member who has recruited the most new members.
- Fashion Forward Award- member who rocks the red, white, and blue like no one else.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the Department Convention in July!

*Legislative.....Karen Chan, Chairperson*

**Boost Troops Housing costs** – Lawmakers Rep. Marilyn Strickland and Sen. Raphael Warnock want the Pentagon to pay 100 percent for all of the Basic Allowance for Housing for servicemembers instead of only 95 percent. Service members are increasingly being priced out of options to live near their bases, putting strain on our military families. When troops have to pay 5 percent, in most cases it means paying \$200 or more per month. A survey of servicemembers released recently by Blue Star Families, a support and research group. Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III has expressed sympathy and will review the issue to do everything they can to relieve the stress off the families and our troops.

**Repeal of the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq – S.316**

On March 29, the Senate passed by Yea-Nay vote 66 – 30 to formally end the Gulf and Iraq wars. Senates Todd Young, R-Ind and Tim Kaine, D-VA both expressed in their remarks that the reason for the repeal is because the enemy who we declared war against in '91 and '02 is no more and for Congress to uphold "our most fundamental responsibility as federal legislatures to oversee the authorization of force, the conduct of military operations and ultimately oversee the circumstance under which we bring the men and women" into combat. The bill now heads to the House for a vote.

**The American Legion Legislative Agenda for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session:**

Support our Afghan Allies = Grant the Afghan allies' permanent legal status and improve the special immigrant Visa process.

Military Quality of Life = Pass legislation to increase access to childcare for military families, food security and funding for renovating military housing.

Pay the Coast Guard = Pass legislation to guarantee Coast Guard personnel their pay without delay.

Protect the American Flag = Urge Congress to approve an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the U.S. flag.

Mental Health & Suicide Prevention = Suicide rate is nearly double that of their civilian counterparts with more than 6,000 veterans taking their lives annually. Urging Congress to enhance access to alternative therapies, fund VA's suicide prevention outreach budget and invest in mental health research.

VA Healthcare Modernization = Modernizing electronic health records and a transparent online scheduling system are essential to ensure veterans receive the care they deserve.

PACT Act: Implementation & Oversight = Passage of the PACT ACT ensured millions of toxic exposed veterans to have access to healthcare and compensation. Congress needs to provide necessary oversight and funding to ensure the resources to properly implement this legislation.

Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors = oppose legislation that elevates the standing of unaccredited claims companies or legitimizes predatory practices that target veterans.

Concurrent Receipt = End unfair policy deduction of VA compensation from their DoD retirement pay.

Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity = Urge Congress to recognize the service of National Guard and Reserve servicemembers as eligible for the GI Bill.

GI Bill for Honorable Service = Amend U.S. Code to allow access to VA educational assistance to veterans with general under honorable conditions discharges.

Please contact your Senators and Representatives to support these bills. Sign up for alerts to urge our officials to take action.

Sign up for alert website = [votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/activities](http://votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/activities)

*National Executive Committee person.....Marie Mock*

As we approach the end of our auxiliary year, it is important to end on a positive note. As such, let us all work on being kind to each other and talking through our disagreements instead of becoming entrenched in oppositional stances. Most of the problems that reach me as NEC should be settled at a lower level if people would just read their governing documents and talk to each other in a civilized manner. If your documents are well written and up to date, they should answer many of the issues that tear us apart. If you have not updated your documents this year, please do that as our Department and National dues have gone up so that most units will need to raise their dues, and dues are Standing Rules #1 and #2 in nearly all of our approved documents. While you are at it, it's a good time to review all of the provisions such as meeting times and dates. Good documents solve problems. Keep me in mind if you think that I would be able to help with any issues that your group is facing. Happy end of the year.

*National Security.....Suzanne Williams, Chairperson*

Here we are in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of this program year already, my how time flies!

Many of the County Reports sent for the April reporting period indicate that many of us are staying “pre-Covid” busy! The number of Units involved in supporting our Active-Duty and their families is amazing and heart-warming; And encouraging to see the types of events that others could participate in at their Unit and County levels. Sadly, many reports have not yet been received!

**Active-Duty:**

**Adopt-a-Platoon Program** is active with 3 Counties that have Units who regularly send care packages to deployed troops; and another 3 Units are actively sending care packages specifically to female soldiers.

Only 7 Counties reported clipping **coupons**; some send the coupons to a “hub, others send coupons directly to Posts in the United States and overseas.

4 Counties reported attending **Welcome Home** activities for troops returning from deployment. And another 4 Counties reported making and distributing “Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program”.

**First Responders and Emergency Preparedness:**

Several Counties reported that Units are involved in recognizing their local **First Responders** and are involved with and attending **Blood Drives** in their Community, but unfortunately the number of volunteers and hours was not reported.

More details to come!

Keep up the good work by supporting our active-duty and their families! Don’t forget to forward pictures of your activities.

I’m looking forward to seeing everyone at the Department Convention in July!

*Parliamentarian.....Marie Mock*

Spring has sprung, and we are looking forward to the warm weather activities that we enjoy as Auxiliary members. As parliamentarians, we hope that we have guided our units, counties, and districts to successful meetings, and they are now able to move forward with minimal guidance from us. With permission from your President, presenting brief programs demonstrating proper parliamentary procedure can be a good idea. Remember to keep them short, informative, and interesting. You can find information on the National website, by a Google search, or by referring to Roberts Rules. A quick game often catches members’ attention better than a lecture. Use your imagination.

This is also the time when we must be careful to pay attention to proper procedure. By this time of year, we may have slid into lazy habits that are detrimental to the success of our meetings. We should continue to use proper forms such as standing to address the group and framing our motions properly instead of just throwing ideas out without formal structure. It is easy to slide into habits that, as they grow worse over time, undermine our effectiveness. As parliamentarians, you are the gatekeepers to success. Take your job seriously.

Best wishes for a successful end to the year, and I hope to see you in July for the Convention.

*Poppy.....Sherry Wilson, Chairperson*

This is our busy time for the Poppy Program!

Have you judged your Poppy Poster entries? Remember they need to follow all of the rules that are written in the Plan of Action and also on the National website. These entries need to be received by me by May 1<sup>st</sup>. No exceptions! They will then be judged and the winners for each category sent on to National. All other entries will be displayed at the convention and picked up at that time.

Your centerpieces, wreaths, etc., should be judged at your county and district levels and the winners brought to convention for judging there.

Do you have someone for Little Miss Poppy? I haven't heard from anyone yet. We have a lot of junior members that could be entered to represent our great Department of New York!

Please remember that National Poppy Day is May 26. National has a website called the Poppy Tool Kit for ideas on how to celebrate the Poppy. The link is <https://member.legion-aux/member/committees/poppy/poppy-days>

If you have trouble with the link:

- Sign into the member portal at ALAforVeterans.org
  - Click on "Member Resources."
  - Scroll down to "Department/Units."
  - Click on the last item in this section: Poppy Days Toolkit
- Have a wonderful Memorial Day and display those poppies proudly!

*Public Relations.....Joelle Cartier, Chairperson*

Units have been very busy getting the word out about our great organization. This last reporting period I received reports of 13 County/Unit Newsletters, 3 flyers, 10 Post newsletters, 4 E-bulletins, 30 plus newspaper clippings, 109 articles written with one being for President Nancy's Project for Honor flight. 105 print ads, 101 pictures reported, 25 letters written, 35 Facebook pages, 21 websites and 7 interviews. There was also 1 hour and 30 minutes of radio time, 1 hour and 10 minutes of TV time and 981 hours of social media time. Volunteer hours reported were 397 totaling in value of \$11,890.15.

*Warrior Family Assistance..... Charlene Mayville, Chairperson*

We have finished our last reporting period for this year! Although fewer counties reported this time (32 of 62 = 51.6% vs. 67.7% in November), we had much more activity! Several Units held fundraisers for the Warrior Family Assistance Program bringing in over \$3300 to use for their local veterans! Units were also more active in publicizing the program, distributing information to the community, Post Homes, and veterans' groups. Total hours reported were 452 (\$13,537.40), donations \$1500, monetary donations directly to needy veterans \$1740, and value of goods/services donated to applicants \$3735. Great job!

Unfortunately (or not), we have had no more grant applications. From the reporting, it is apparent that units are providing for needy veterans from their own funds and providing such things as holiday gifts, paying electric bills, and basically doing a WFA program within their local area. This is excellent work in providing for our veterans!

As a reminder, there are still a few weeks to be eligible for the Linda Moseman Award for the largest single donation to the Warriors Family Assistance Program by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Look forward to seeing everyone at the Department Convention. WFA information will be available to start out the next year for incoming officers and members.

*-----Message from the Department Office-----*

- **Convention Call** will be emailed to the last known Unit and County President in May and will also be sent in the mail via USPS. If you receive it in error, please pass it along to the unit and/or county president and please share it with your members.
- **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. 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. If you receive a copy of the newsletter via email, please share it with the members in your unit or county. 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. Going forward the treasurer will not reissue checks that were not deposited in a timely manner.
- 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.
- **All donations should be sent to the department office and not the committee chair.**
- When submitting a donation form please indicate what unit or county it is.

**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.**

**1580 Columbia Turnpike, Bldg. #1, Suite 3**

**Castleton-On-Hudson, NY 12033**

American Legion Auxiliary

**103 Years of Service Not Self**



The logo for the American Legion Auxiliary. It features a stylized American flag with three horizontal stripes above the word "AMERICAN" in blue. Below that, the word "LEGION" is written in a large, bold, blue font. A horizontal line separates "LEGION" from the word "AUXILIARY", which is written in a bold, red font.