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**DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE -
MAUREEN F. MORGAN**

Spring has sprung and so has the Auxiliary with new ideas on how to get members involved and participate in events. It was so exciting traveling to 62 Counties and learning so much from members just by looking at all the great things that many Auxiliary members have done both senior and junior members. Listening to members talk about what they have accomplished and wanting to show off what they did. Bringing that excitement into their reporting in our DEC when the Department Chairs gave their reports was the best part of our meeting. Keep up the good work Department of New York!

There are some housekeeping dos and don'ts we do need to go over though. It has been brought to my attention that members have been attending Legion meetings and speaking at these meetings, please be aware that Auxiliary members should not be attending Legion meetings. The only time you attend a Legion meeting and speak at a Legion meeting is if you are invited to the meeting and are asked to speak. The same goes for the Legionnaires. The only time they come to an auxiliary meeting is if they are invited to the meeting and are asked to speak. This is at the Unit, County, District, Department and National level. The only time you have an American Legion Family meeting is when all three groups want to get together to discuss doing a group fundraiser or work together to do something together. Please keep this in mind when having your meetings, this way you don't have problems in the future. We are there to support the Veterans.

In, March 8th District had a zoom meeting with their Juniors and the Junior County Chairs, it was very well received. So, 4th District President Cathy Yerdon Junior Activity Chair, Cherie Stern 8th District Junior Activity Chair and I will be hosting another zoom meeting on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 7:00 pm. There will be a flyer with the zoom link shortly going out it will also be posted on Facebook and sent to all the District Presidents. Juniors will be able to work on the Americanism Patch. If we have success with this maybe we can do it monthly and help our Juniors get some of their patches and maybe encourage them to go to more meetings too. Who knows maybe this will catch on and we'll get recognition at National Convention this year.

I'll close with this quote:

“It happens to everyone as they grow up. You find out who you are and what you want, and you realize that the people you've known forever don't see things the way you do. And so, you keep the memories but find yourself moving on.”



**MEMBERSHIP
LORA ROWE**

Thank you for jumping aboard Captain Maureen's ship!

As of April 15, New York's percentage is 93.23! Currently, New York is 8th in the Nation, and 2nd in the Eastern Division! You are all working hard on membership and the numbers and percentages have shown that throughout the year.

New York now has a total of 463 units as it welcomes a new Unit - Samuel H. Dow Unit #1017 in Westchester County in the 9th District! Welcome Unit #1017!!!!

I want to remind everyone that we still have Milestones #5 to strive for: Units reaching 100 percent by April 28 will be placed in a hat for a drawing of five winners who will receive \$25. And the Counties reaching 100 percent by April 28 will be placed in a hat for a drawing of one winner receiving \$25.

There are also three Department awards still ahead to work towards:

- The Deck Hands Award, which \$150 will be awarded to the District Membership Chairman with the greatest number of new members by May 15, 2026.
- The Captain Award, which \$100 will be awarded to the County with the highest percentage of membership goal by June 1, 2026.
- And, the Quartermaster Award, which \$150 will be awarded to the District with the highest numerical gain over goal by the close of books June 2026.

Get out your rosters and see who has not yet renewed and personally reach out to them. You will be surprised how that personal touch will bring in those renewals.

I am looking forward to receiving your May reports and reading about all you have done promoting membership and celebrating your milestone achievements.

Remember, at Fall Conference, I explained that all members are the Pebbles. Each member tosses a pebble to start the ripple effect for the betterment of all our ALA Programs, and every ripple spreads the ALA Mission.

I thank each of you for all the ripples you have created for our wonderful organization this year!

VA&R / SERVICE TO VETERANS YVONNE BRUNNER

Welcome to Spring! As the weather gets warmer, our thoughts naturally turn to outdoor activities and opportunities to engage in meaningful community service for our veterans.

- Annual SAL & ALA Walk-A-Thon 2026 - Units are encouraged to promote and fundraise by organizing a community breakfast or dinner. Members may also consider starting a letter-writing campaign to seek support from friends, family, or local businesses. During the event, be sure to position volunteers along the walk path to distribute water and ensure participant safety and comfort.
- Stand Downs - Stand Downs offer an excellent opportunity to provide essential items to veterans in need, including clothing, haircuts, and food. Please remember to prepare individual bags containing hygiene items specifically for female veterans to ensure all are supported.
- Food Pantry Support - Local veteran food pantries continually need donations, especially dairy products, meats and cereals. Your contributions can make a meaningful difference in the lives of veterans and their families.
- Honor Flights - are held throughout the year, presenting a wonderful opportunity to organize fundraisers that support both veterans and their caregivers. Your efforts help honor their service and provide them with memorable experiences.
- Memorial Day Observance - Memorial Day is a national day of remembrance to honor those who sacrificed their lives in service. You can participate by placing flags on the graves of fallen heroes. The U.S. flag should be flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon, then raised to full staff until sunset. Please also observe the National Moment of Remembrance at 3:00 p.m. local time and consider wearing a red poppy over your heart to commemorate the sacrifices made.
- Reporting - May marks the next reporting period. Reports should detail the services provided to veterans, the military, their families, and the broader community. This is an opportunity to highlight the positive impact made and how veterans are honored and remembered through your efforts.
- Department's Project - continue to support President Maureen's initiatives: the Empire Girls State program and the Military Women's Memorial. Units or individuals are welcome to donate to one or both programs. Please indicate your preferred distribution in the memo section of your check.
- Awards - Please refer to the Plan of Action for details on each available award. This is your time to shine and let both the Department and National organization know about all the accomplishments you and your unit have achieved.

Your dedication and commitment to the mission is what makes this organization, The American Legion Auxiliary great. Remember, it takes just one voice to start a change.

SAL-ALA WALK-A-THON

Stay tuned for more updates on the Walk-A-Thon! Thank you for your support!

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH
JULIANNE BARTON**

APRIL IS CHILDREN & YOUTH MONTH!!!!

I hope everyone has found new and interesting ways of celebrating our future. Purple is the color of the season. On April 15th, I am sure all of the members were decked out in purple for PURPLE UP Day. Hopefully, you took lots of pictures. Please include them in your May report. **REMEMBER THE MAY REPORT!!!**

The donations have been very generous to the Child Well-Being Foundation. I know many Units and Counties have not sent in their collections yet and I urge you to do so in a timely fashion. It makes it difficult to give an accurate account of what has been donated. The contributions go directly to the Foundation and will make a huge difference in the lives of all the children who benefit from this awesome program.

April is also the Month of the Military Child. If there is a Military Base or Reserve Center nearby, take the opportunity to do something special for those children. Include them in a special party or make it a birthday party for America. Introduce them to the Military Child table ceremony. Make them feel special. I appreciate all the work that was done with the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award program. It can be a bit confusing and seem overwhelming. But several members worked their way through the process and I hope many more do in the future. Remember to send a copy of the entries to C & Y Chair.

I would like to thank all the Chairmen for their hard work and wonderful reports that I have received. It is always so heartwarming and invigorating to read about what the members are doing with the Children and Youth activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Children & Youth Chairman this year. It has been uplifting and truly enjoyable experience. Children are our future. WE need to do our best to provide a sound, strong, and memorable foundation. WE are their examples. And Remember while kids are all wrapped up in technology and themselves, They have to come up for air sometime. Hopefully, that's when they see us!!! I look forward to a successful rest of this year and better ones to come!!!!

**AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY COLLEGE
DEBBY HERRMANN**

We can't wait to hear about the awesome details of the 2026 American Legion Family College!
Stay tuned for more details!

**AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND
KAREN DRUCKER**

Stay tuned for more updated from the AEF!

**AMERICANISM
LOUANNA GILBERT**

March is just one of the three reporting months for New York's 10 Districts that meet in Albany for the spring DEC meetings. Each Committee Chair reports on events, and happenings from Units, Counties and Districts this is called the narrative part of the report. Between November 1st and March 1st the number of miles driven was 3788, veterans served 4687, total hours volunteered 3123 ³/₄. Equivalent in dollars adds up to \$25,151.34 which includes goods and materials.

But I still believe we can do better. So much more that can be reported that isn't. I received 16 reports from counties that had no activity. If you do not have a chairperson for every committee, that's okay. But that doesn't mean you are not active in your unit or county.

Do you recite the Pledge of Allegiance at meetings?

Do members attend community events wearing auxiliary attire? Ask these two questions at your next meeting. The one just before the next reporting month (May) and make note of it. Just these little things can add up to bigger things. Someone takes the time to mark the box and no activity. Take a couple of extra minutes to write in a narrative. Ideas to think about, these are some of what counties reported. Field of Flags, donating flags to the community, boy and girl scout events, hosting a dinner on voting day are just a few. Think out of the box, I'm always looking for different ways to promote Americanism.

The Americanism Essay Contest, I had 18 entries received by April 1st. I wish there could've been more. But, out of those I sent 8 on to the Eastern Division Americanism Chair Carrie to be judged. From there the ones selected will be sent on to the National Americanism Chair to be reviewed. All were very interesting and the committee had a difficult time deciding on who to send to the next step. Congratulations to all that took the time to enter the contest.

**ALA FOUNDATION
CATHLEEN MACINNES & TERRI WALLACE**

The ALA Foundation oversees the American Legion Auxiliary Mission Endowment Fund, a fund developed to ensure the future of this amazing organization. One of the most meaningful aspects of the Mission Endowment Fund is its long-term impact. The principal of the fund is never spent. Instead, donations are invested, and only the earnings are used each year to support vital programs. Most recently, the earnings from the Mission Endowment Fund have supported ALA Girls Nation and the Spirit of Youth Scholarships, programs which directly benefit young people from New York State. Your gift becomes a permanent source of strength, ensuring that these opportunities continue not just today, but far into the future.

Every contribution—large or small—helps ensure that American Legion Auxiliary programs remain strong, sustainable, and ready to meet the needs of veterans, military, and their families.

Thank you to all the Units, Counties, Districts, and members in the Department of New York who support the ALA Foundation by contributing to the Mission Endowment Fund!

**CHAPLAIN
MARIE SANTACROCE**

Thank you to everyone who sent your County Report to me. I did receive 5 after my report was submitted and will include all of your information in my final report in May.

Remember that your 3rd County Committee Reports are due to me, and all Department Chairmen, no later than May 10th.

“Life is like a carousel...going round and round, up and down.”

We never know what we will be facing, we are sometimes caught off guard by the prospect of another challenge, at other times we are gifted with tremendous joy.....

Remember to share them all for a burden shared will lighten the weight placed upon you and joy shared shall multiply the happiness your heart deserves.”

For those that asked me to keep a loved one in my prayers, they are and will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers.

To all of our members who have experienced the loss of a cherished family member or friend, the love, thoughts and prayers of our entire ALA community is with you.

Thank you President Maureen for entrusting me with this wonderful committee and allowing me to serve our incredible members.

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS PATRICIA HENNESSY N

Karen St. Hilaire has recently been appointed to complete the administrative year as chair for Department of NY Constitution and By-Laws. Past Department President Patricia Hennessy is moving out of NY State to be closer to her son. She will continue her membership in New York State ALA , and we wish her well. For units who have sent in updated Bylaws for review, please be patient as I read through many updated governing documents that were mailed or emailed.

At the Department of NY Executive committee meeting in March, it was decided that the Department will no longer provide a signature of approval of the Unit or County Constitution and Bylaws. rather we will only review the documents to make sure they do not violate any National rules.

At National ALA Convention held in Tampa presented a By-Law change stating that ALL new membership applications must be presented at the unit meeting for acceptance and require two-thirds majority vote of members in attendance to pass. However, National can not mandate how each States/Unit rules for membership acceptance are written. Not all Units want to vote members in. Therefore, EVERY UNIT in New York State needs to decide (by majority vote) at your unit meeting how you process new membership. BY ADDING one of the three amendments below:

To Unit Constitution and Bylaws: Article II , Powers. Section I (Choose 1)

* This Unit will present all applications for membership at the next regularly scheduled unit meeting. Once the applicant meets requirements establish by the American Legion for membership. A two-thirds majority is required.

OR*

This Units membership chairman shall have full power to accept new members who meet the eligibility criteria as established by the American Legion for membership.

OR*

This Units shall appoint a committee consisting of ___?___ (pick a number example 3 or 5) who, with majority vote of said committee shall have full power to accept new members ,who meet the eligibility criteria as established by the American Legion for membership.

You may accept whichever method your unit chooses. YOU DO NOT have to send it to me (or the Department office) for approval

COMMUNITY SERVICE
ARDELLA TURNER

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES

Please reminded that the spirit of community service can be evident throughout the American Legion Auxiliary as united we can demonstrate how acts of kindness, both big and small, can uplift entire communities.

Members have participated by giving veterans, their families, and their communities in many ways, i.e.,

- Volunteering at the Post
- Served breakfast to veterans and their families
- Grocery shopping for elderly members of their communities
- Donated food and volunteered at food pantries
- Served Veteran's Day Luncheon to Legionnaires, their families, the community and the Boy Scouts
- Gave out gift cards and handmade quilts

ZOOM MEETING

On Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 7:30p.m. they will be conducting a 3rd quarter Zoom Meeting where important updates will be shared. The Zoom Meeting sign in information is as follows: Meeting ID: 829 2053 8016; Passcode: 155414

CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT

Remember that Community Service is a continuous year-round commitment. You are all encouraged to continue planning inspirational and impactful events that is making a difference in our communities.

EDUCATION
PATRICIA GALLEY

At this time I would like to thank everyone that promoted or helped with the scholarship program this year. That includes the units and counties that do their own local scholarships. Education is Everything- Education is your power, Education is your way in Life for whatever you want to do. It's a choice you have to make.

If you are not willing to learn, No one can help you. If you are determined to learn, No one can stop you.

This month, April 15th is PURPLE UP DAY for our Military Children. Have your schools, sponsor a party for the military children and wear or supply purple items for that day. Or present a military child table at the schools, post or unit meeting so everyone can get involved and show them support , understanding and encouragement that we are there to help them.

Also I would like to remind you that Teachers Appreciation week is coming soon too. May 4-8th 2026. The teachers work just as hard as the students. They have to adjust or update our children with the changes in the education system. Besides a big Thank You, maybe something simple like chocolate, coffee,cookies, gift cards or supplies for their room!! It will brighten their day!

I also want to remind everyone at this time they can apply for The Department of New York Education Awards . It includes A Unit Award: A certificate will be presented to a unit Education Chairman to report the most outstanding overall Education Program. 10-75 members 76-150 members 151 + members. Entries must be into the Department Chairperson no later than May 1st

There is also a National Education Awards.

One for the Unit: Most outstanding Unit Education Program (per division)

And One For the Department:

Best Department Education Program (per division)

All entries Unit or Department must be submitted via electronic form by 5pm on June 1st

FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE
MARIE MOCK, MARYLOU PLATT, JOAN CACCAMO

Spring has sprung, and we are now headed toward the end of our fiscal year. Now is the time to wrap up our current projects and plan for next year. We should be closing down with an audit for information and to protect everyone's interests. We should also be beginning plans for next year. Making decisions in advance makes the beginning of the new year go smoothly. What went well and what needs to be adjusted? Discuss this with your members and be transparent. If you can identify why certain things went wrong, you can fix them for next year. Our people need to know what we are taking in and how we are spending it to benefit our veterans and our communities. Work with your officers, not in opposition to them. We are all on the same team. Keep on being good stewards and guiding the membership to success.

HISTORIAN
SUZANNE WILLIAMS

Guess What? As if you haven't heard this by now... it's reporting time again!

Just to be clear. as there seem to be so many questions each cycle – Unit Reports are due to your County Chairperson by May 1st.

Your County Chairperson then compiles the reports from the Units in their County, creates a Report, and forwards it to the proper Department Chairperson for that particular program.

The name of the Department Chairperson is listed at the bottom of each County Program Report.

The Department Chairperson will be preparing a Report to the DEC that will be held Pre-Department Convention.

If you haven't already done so, you should be wrapping up the activity for your Unit and/or County so that you can present a scrap book of the History for this year to your out-going Unit President for her to keep; or if your Unit has a perpetual History book, make sure that you've added this year's activities so that members and guests can refer to it in the future to see your History! Be sure to include a roster and pictures of your Officers; along with newspaper clippings and pictures from each of your Unit's activities.

I hope that you have enjoyed your year as the Historian Chairperson! This is a very important Program that preserves history for years to come!

ALA EMPIRE GIRLS STATE
STEPH FALLON, MEGAN WALDEN, MOLLY MCLAUGHLIN

We have a few EGS team changes to share, and we'd love to take a moment to update you to where things stand:

Megan has stepped away from the EGS team. We're grateful for her hard work and support of the program, and we're happy to share that she will continue to assist us this year by managing our survival kit and booster ad purchases.

With that transition, Molly has stepped up into the role of 1st Vice Chair and we are thrilled to welcome Sarah Murphy, a longtime EGS volunteer staff member, to the admin team as our 2nd Vice Chair for 2026. A huge thank you to both Molly and Sarah for embracing these adjusted responsibilities and hitting the ground running!

We are very excited about the 2026 session of ALA Empire Girls State. While we have other staff positions filled, we would still like to have one wellness counselor. If you could be free June 28th - July 6th, we would love to have you apply on our website: empiregirlsstate.org. Click on Join Our Team!

Sarah is busy processing applications and following up with unit and county ALA Girls State Chairmen and families regarding missing information. Extra T-shirt order forms and payment are to be sent to Steph by June 1st. Over the next few weeks we will be contacting counties on the alternate waitlist regarding the availability of spots as the roster slots are finalized.

We will be conducting Virtual ALA EGS Orientations in May and June. All information will be emailed directly to citizens, alternates, their parents and chairmen early May. Unit and county chairmen are welcome to attend as well. Dates for the orientations will be: 5/21, 5/31, and 6/13 all at 7p.

As a reminder, citizens arrive on Tuesday, June 30th and depart on Monday, July 6th. The State of the State ceremony will be held on July 5th at 8:00pm at the SERC Field house on the Brockport campus. Everyone is welcome to attend, there are no tickets or reserved seating, just come and join us!

We'd like to thank everyone who supported our fundraising efforts with our Mid-Winter Raffles! To extend more support to the citizens participating this year, consider Booster Ads or purchasing an item from our Amazon Wish List (linked on our website).

Please also promote the survival kit program to parents and family members of sponsored citizens or to your Units and Counties. Survival Kit orders are due to Megan, as previously mentioned, by June 15th. All of the links and information are available on the website under the ALA Resources Tab.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES
CATHY YERDON

I have not received any reports for the April 2026 reporting period, therefore, my report will begin with the March reporting period that I have received. There are quite a few reports that are Promoting Americanism and Assisting with Veterans. Juniors are also attending Sr. meetings and assisting with Senior member projects. There were a few who were participating with the Wreaths Across America. One County had adopted a Platoon and made pocket flags for the deploying soldiers.

Juniors assist at their Post in many functions from craft sessions to helping with the dinners.

I had quite a few reports which stated things were done in the county, but no explanation as to what was being done. I would like reports to be completed in their entirety so that we ALL can see what the Juniors are doing in each County. I know when we go months between reports, it is hard to keep track of it all; therefore, it would be a good idea to have a notebook to keep track of activities. The November reporting will be here before you know it and having a list available will help with the reporting; notes will include what the Juniors are doing, how many juniors are participating, how many hours each Junior participated.

Installations will be here soon and including your Juniors in the ceremonies will give them a firsthand knowledge of the process.

Another item of interest was brought to my attention and I think it is a GREAT idea! Having a Zoom meeting for any Junior or Son 18 years and younger attend. Maybe there is only one or two Junior members in any Unit and they want to be more involved. This would be a way for them to see what other Juniors are doing or to get ideas. It was a great experience to work with the Juniors at Mid-Winter. They are very energetic and seem to have a thirst for knowledge and ready and able to step in wherever they are needed. I look forward to hearing of their next accomplishments and to pass that along to our Senior Members. Please continue to include them in your projects and to encourage them to step up.

LEADERSHIP LUCILLE MOZZILLO

I am sharing with you information passed along to us from the National Leadership Committee. Please don't fHappy Spring everyone! I would like to take this opportunity to remind you about some very important upcoming deadlines. The next reporting deadline is May 10th. Units please be sure to get your reports to your county chairman by May 1st, in order to allow them time combine all of your information into one report.

The Department of New York also offers a few different awards under the Leadership Committee.

The KAREN ST. HILAIRE 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 in attendance at each program.

The PRICILLA IMBURGIA AWARD: To the Senior member that participates at the County level showing leadership; encouraging membership; promoting good will among members and demonstrating a commitment to "Service Not Self." Members are NOT to 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 in support of the nomination.

JUNIOR AWARD:

To the junior member who exemplifies the best leadership role model at the Unit or County level. Please be sure to follow the rules for each award. Entries must be typed, double spaced, not to exceed 1,000 words. Word count in lower left corner of cover sheet unless otherwise noted under award instructions. Entries must be in narrative form and placed in a folder. Pictures, newspaper clippings and other materials and/or documents may be included. All entries must include a cover sheet with the name of the award entry, name of the Unit/County/District, name, and address of the Unit/County/Chairman. Entries must be received by the Department Chairman no later than MAY 1st.

The National Awards includes Unit Member of the Year Award, which recognizes those serving at the unit level who exemplify the values and ideals of the Auxiliary and whose accomplishments significantly impact the program work in their units. The application and cover sheet for this award can be found in the plan of action and on the Department website under the Leadership Program tab. There is also a Unit Award recognizing the most outstanding unit leadership program. All award submissions must include a narrative. You may provide supporting documentation that will give the committee a full picture of the important mission works your unit has accomplished this year. The deadline for these awards are also May 1st, mailed directly to me. If you have any questions at all about any of these awards, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

I look forward to reading all the submissions and nominations.

LEGISLATIVE DENA RESTAINO

Be the One

The Department of New York American Legion Auxiliary, in collaboration with Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, remains steadfast in our mission to enhance mental health care and peer support. Our flagship "Be the One" suicide prevention initiative is at the forefront of these efforts.

- **Training & Crisis Intervention:** Numerous Auxiliary units are hosting specialized training sessions with VA clinics and hospitals. These classes empower members to identify veterans in crisis and provide continuous support until they are safely transitioned to professional care.
- **Administrative Support:** Volunteers are actively assisting VA staff with the critical administrative tasks required to fulfill "Be the One" inquiries and resource requests.

Legislative Advocacy

Our members continue to serve as a powerful voice for veterans in Washington. By utilizing our Call-to-Action Center, members are engaging directly with Congressional representatives to advocate for vital legislation, including the Major Richard Star Act which aims to allow "Chapter 61" retirees--service members medically retired due to combat-related injuries with fewer than 20 years of service to receive both their Department of Defense (DoD) retirement pay and VA disability compensation concurrently without reduction.

Your outreach ensures that the American Legion's priorities remain a focal point for our nation's lawmakers.

USA 250 Challenge

The American Legion Family honors the United States' 250th anniversary by promoting physical and mental health through the USA. This initiative encourages veterans and citizens alike to participate in community service while raising critical funds for the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation to support disabled veterans and families in need. Units across the state are collaborating on service projects and fundraising initiatives. By reporting these accomplishments to the National organization, units are successfully earning their commemorative flags and marking this historic milestone.

Legionnaire of the Week Spotlight

We are honored to announce that the Legionnaire of the Week for April 10, 2026, is our very own Past Department Commander Keith Koster.

The American Legion recognizes Keith for his exceptional grassroots activism. His dedication to contacting Congressional Representatives and Senators has been instrumental in advocating for veteran rights. Keith's tireless efforts provide a vital voice for our veterans in the halls of Congress. Thank you, Keith, for your leadership and your unwavering commitment to our mission.

Action Required: Register for Alerts

Stay informed and make your voice heard. If you have not yet registered for Action Alerts, please do so today at the following link: <https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register>

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NANCY BABIS

Since my last newsletter, the Department of New York has had the honor of hosting visits from National President Pam Ray and Eastern Division Vice President Ree Ross. Both ladies brought their messages to Mid-Winter Attendees and March Executive Committee members. National President Pam will be joining an All-Female Honor Flight this spring! The National Treasurer reported that Veterans on this flight will receive ALA Branded crossbody bags and a safety device. These lucky ladies will be escorted around Washington on an ALA branded bus.

I attended the mid-year NEC Zoom meeting in February. 19 policy reviews were completed by the Finance Committee resulting in 12 revisions which were approved. The Risk and Compliance committee reviewed 9 policies and revised 5. Twenty-six Standing rules amendments were presented.

Ben Hendricks addressed the group and spoke about his SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats) analysis. He mentioned the-

Strength of our organization is the staff and the financial stability of the organization.

Weakness' include lack of use of training materials and too many programs.

Opportunities include modernizing the mission/vision and focus on member engagement.

Threats include antiquated traditions and unwritten rules and declining/aging membership. Lots to think about!

NATIONAL SECURITY PATTY RAMA

When Reporting: Please describe the activities that you're reporting hours for. We can't report all the great things your members are doing if you don't tell us what you did! Just a few sentences are needed.

Do you place the POW/MIA Folding chair cover at Unit, County, District or Department meetings to represent our missing service members? Please report this, just like we report the meeting is opened with the Pledge of Allegiance/National Anthem to Americanism Committee.

As of April 10, 2026 Military Post Offices remain temporarily suspended. The following military ZIP Codes are suspended temporarily for all mailing services until further notice: The list changes often, please check at

<https://www.usps.com/ship/apo-fpo-dpo.htm>

09303 09306 09315 09330 09357 09366 09803 09811 09819 09832 09853 09858 09898 09904 09305 09307 09316
09343 09365 09801 09807 09815 09829 09835 09855 09877 09903

The Salute to Service members Award-There's still time to nominate a servicemember.

This national award honors one enlisted service member (E1-E9) from each military branch, including the National Guard and Reserves, totaling seven awards. Nomination Process: To nominate someone, complete the Formstack and write a narrative (up to 1,000 words) explaining why the individual deserves recognition. Be sure to highlight their military honors and community impact. An endorsement letter from their command group and a current photo in uniform (preferably an official DOD photo) are also required. The deadline for nominations is June 1, 2026. You can find the nomination form at: <https://www.legion-aux.org/salute-to-servicemembers-award-form>

The 2026 National POW/MIA Recognition Day poster is available for ordering at www.dpaa.mil. Just scroll to bottom of page. Posters are free.

PARLIAMENTARIAN
LINDA TOME

It's just about time to start thinking about nominating new officers for the 2026-2027 administrative year! Has your unit/county/district started to think about who is coming up? Since many units are having problems getting members in leadership roles, here's something to think about:

Use a Nominating Committee! This committee is chosen in advance to submit nominations for the various offices for which elections are to be held at the annual meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee should be elected by the members wherever possible, or else by the executive board. A chair should also be identified to lead this committee. The committee should approach a candidate to see if they would be interested. Is there a person who is next in line for a position? Be sure to ask that person if they are still interested, so you can present them to the membership as well.

Not sure who to go to next? You never know who might be interested in taking on a new role in the organization. Look at people who have attended meetings, events, or who have taken an active role in what your unit has been doing. Reach out to this member and explain what the position's responsibilities include. Never add a person's name to the slate of candidates if they don't understand the entire role of the position or don't accept the nomination.

By the way, you can have more than one candidate for a position to present to the membership to vote on. Members of the nominating committee are not barred from becoming nominees for office themselves.

When the nominating committee is called upon for its report, the chairman will rise and present the slate of nominees for the positions. Before the voting takes place the President will always call for further nominations from the floor.

After all nominations from the floor are complete and nominations are closed for each office the voting process may begin!

Good luck!!!

**POPPY
KATHY SOULE**

It's finally starting to feel like Spring and thoughts are turning to . . . POPPIES!

The deadline for this year's poppy orders has now passed.

Poppy Supervisors have been busy holding their own Poppy Making Days and sending poppies out to the various Units and Posts by the hundreds, even thousands!

National Poppy Day is May 22, 2026. Many Units are planning events for the day.

Leading up to National Poppy Day, a Virtual 5k is being held May 1 -May 22, 2026 to raise awareness and support for this significant day of remembrance. You can participate however you are able: walk, run, bike, swimBE CREATIVE and HAVE FUN! And don't forget to wear your poppy and ALA gear! To participate, make an encouraged \$25 donation to your local unit or State Department Poppy Fund.

Registration closes April 30. For more information and to register got to:

https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/2026_national_poppy_day_virtual_5k. Remember to take pictures and report your hours!

Deadlines are quickly approaching for the Poppy Poster Contest and other Artwork. Be sure to follow the rules found in the Plan of Action and on the National webpage.

Don't forget reports are due soon. Can you beat your deadlines? Remember to include pictures and tell us what Units have been doing to share the meaning of the poppy.

Keep your eye on the ... POPPIES !!



**PUBLIC RELATIONS
PATRICIA MURPHY**

The reports to date have been outstanding keep it up, next reports due to department(me) May 10,2026. I look forward to reading all of them. If you would break down numbers for units and counties for article, newsletters and social media posts it would be appreciated.

Please review the Plan of Action for award date submissions. Please submit to be recognized for your dedication and hard work supporting our organization.

Spring is here. The flowers and bees are showing up always remember to be kind. How many posts articles will I see of kindness to others.

WARRIOR FAMILY ASSISTANCE LAURA BOOTH

To date the Warrior Family Assistance Committee approved 20 grants. The committee would like to thank all the units and counties that volunteered their time for this very important committee. As a member of the American Legion Auxiliary that is what we are here for to support and honor the sacrifice of those who served and are still serving.

Did your unit/county make a donation to the Warrior Family assistance yet? If so, thank you, if not, there is still time to send your donation to the Auxiliary Department Office.

Please make sure to send your final report. Units to the County by May 1, 2026 and County to the Department Chair (me) by May 10, 2026.

Warrior Family Assistance Department Awards: Two categories for the largest single donation to the Warrior Family Assistance Program by May 1st, 2026 to the Department office.

Category 1 Units with membership of 10-99 members

Category 2 Units with membership of 100- plus members

Who is eligible for assistance?

1. The Veteran must be a resident of New York State.
2. Veterans who were honorably or medically discharged from active duty.
3. Active-duty personnel in any branch of service.
4. Reservists or National Guard personnel who have been federally deployed.
5. The children of a veteran Honorably or Medically discharged or a currently deployed individual.

TYPES OF GRANTS AVAILABLE

There are three types of grants. The maximum amount given is \$1,500.

1. Maintenance Grant

- To assist with the cost-of-living expenses
- Reconnect utilities/payments that are in arrears
- Prevent eviction or foreclosure

2. Medical Grant

- To assist with medical expenses

3. Opportunity for Employment Grant

- Provides financial assistance for transportation
- Provides assistance for childcare if the custodial parent must find employment

**DEPARTMENT OFFICE
BARBARA, CAITLIN, & TARA**

- The 2026 Department Convention Call will go out prior to May 15, 2026.
- Units must send their Unit delegate sheet with the proper payment made payable to the county. If you do not have any delegates attending department convention you must still send your sheet to the county.
- Counties must send the unit and county delegate sheets to the department office no later than July 1, 2026 with the proper payment. Only one check per county will be accepted.
- Unit Officer forms will be included in the Convention call package. The form is due back to the department office no later than July 1, 2026.
- County Officer forms will be included in the Convention call package. The form is due back to the department office no later than July 1, 2026.
- County Committee lists are due no later than August 1, 2026.
- All forms will be available on the department website as a fillable PDF form.
- The 2027 Unit data – Direct Billing (Blue Form) was sent out in March. It is due back to the Department office – no later than May 1, 2026. If your unit is considering a dues increase, you need to vote on it now before you fill out and return the form. After the May 1, 2026 deadline, National charges \$30.00 to change the dues rates per unit.
- If your unit officers change, please send an email to the department office and let us know who the new officer is.
- Per the National Judge Advocate of The American Legion, Mark Seavey - after the Post Adjutant verifies membership eligibility, all DD214's must be returned to the individual. No copies are to be made or kept by anyone.
- 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, return 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 with a nine-digit membership number. This also pertains to any Active-duty person, they must be a current paid member in The American Legion in order for a family member to join under their eligibility.
- Remember to check off which era the veteran served and the relationship of the veteran to the ALA applicant. Please circle the appropriate relationship.
- PLEASE make sure to get rid of all old applications and use the current applications to avoid mistakes. 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.
- Units with Unit FULL and Unit WRITE ALAMIS access must send the completed membership applications signed by the Post Adjutant or Post officer to the department office once you enter and pay it. Please include the Unit number and new ID# on the application. Keep a copy for the unit file. Failure to adhere to the directions will result in your ALAMIS being terminated immediately.

**DEPARTMENT OFFICE
BARBARA, CAITLIN, & TARA**

- All transfers need to be sent to the department office as well as all data forms for deceased members.
- Membership chairs – 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. If your unit has ALAMIS Full or Write this should be done as soon as the member notifies you of their change. This also pertains to unit President, Membership Chair and Unit Treasurer.
- Mailed copies of the Newsletters are available at the cost of \$15.00 per year.
- All Department checks issued 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 or given at county visitations 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 from.