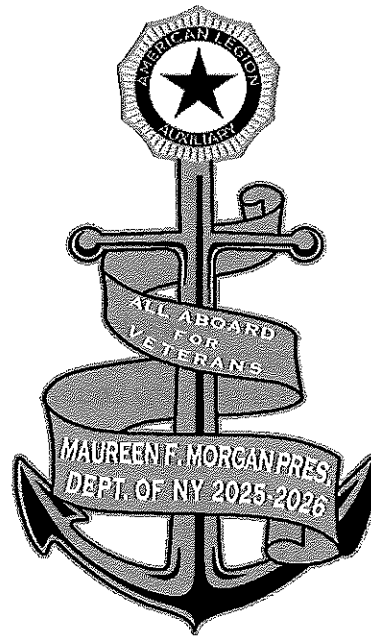


2025-2026
Book of Reports



Maureen F. Morgan
Department President, Department of New York

Department President – Maureen F. Morgan

As the year comes to an end, I reflect on everything we have accomplished. It has been an extraordinary year, beginning with the Department Convention in July and continuing with the National Convention in August. Then coming home and starting the Fall Conferences and Visitations. The Department of New York Visits 62 Counties in the State of New York and in each County the Department Commander, the Department President and Detachment Commander visits on the average 3 to 5 American Legions, Monuments, parks, Statues, Museums or whatever the County has decided is important for the visiting party needs to see. We are given breakfast, lunch, snacks and dinners. It is amazing the hospitality that is given to the Department Officers when they visit the County. As the Department President I was on the road for 32 days in the month of September. Between visitations in September the Districts held their Fall Conferences and the Department Officers and I attended the each of the Fall Conferences.

We had National Commander's Dinner in October and more visitations through November and ended with the marching in the Veteran's Day Parade before getting a break and having our DEC meeting in December. January brought cold weather and welcoming National President Pam Ray to our Midwinter Conference and the continuing of visitations. We are almost done with the visitations; we have visited some amazing sights and heard some amazing stories.

We are done yet; we still have Oratorical to attend the National Commander's Visitation in April and other obligations before we are done. We had our March DEC and welcomed Ree to our weekend of meeting. In May I helped the District Presidents get their end of year reports filed with National. I have also started a monthly zoom meeting with our Juniors and the Junior Activity Chairs from the Districts. Each month we work on the different patches and help the juniors achieve their patches. The seniors' members answer questions that the juniors have so that they can become more knowledgeable. We have worked on the Americanism Patch, and the Poppy Patch, June will be interviewing a Veteran.

On May 16, 2026, I went on an Honor Flight to Washington DC out of Rochester, NY. It was gifted to me by the 7th District President and her Unit. What an outstanding experience this was. Having people welcoming you home coming up to and shaking your hand and saying thank you for your service. Just acknowledging that you serviced it's a feeling that is humbling and heartfelt. It makes you understand why you raised your hand and took that oath.

The year will be over on July 17, 2026, when the next Department President will be installed and I take my place as a Past Department President. This wasn't a dream of mine to become a Department President, it wasn't something that I was working towards when I became an Auxiliary member or even a Legion member. I can say this has been something I will truly treasure as a moment that I'm glad I got to experience.

Membership Lora Rowe, Chairman

New York's theme this year was "All Aboard for Veterans" and that is exactly what New York's membership did! With our Department President being the "Captain", the Department Officers being the "Mates", the District Presidents the "Quartermasters", the District Vice Presidents the "Deck Hands", the County Membership Chairpersons the "Navigators", the Unit Membership Chairpersons the "Lifeboats", the Past Department Presidents the "Anchors", and the Membership the "Pebbles", all got aboard the ship and worked together as a crew (or team). The "Pebbles" tossed lots of pebbles for New York keeping the ripples spreading for the ALA mission.

Ways in which Units recruited, retained, and revitalized their membership were by paying for their members over a certain age, juniors or new members; hosting a free food Friday where members were encouraged to visit the post to pay their dues and then that member was given a free dinner and a drink; and some units had yearly member appreciation dinners. Many recruitment booths were set up at community events and early bird luncheons and dinners were held. Public interest for joining the Auxiliary was generated by handing out "Becoming a Member" flyers at dinners and local events. Several units reported that they sent

out thank you cards to the members for paying their dues. One unit sent monthly emails to members about the unit's activities and events, while another unit sent out birthday cards to all members. One unit served a bi-weekly veteran's lunch which brought their membership together. Having a door prize drawing at the end of the meeting increased one Unit's meeting attendance, while another unit doubled its meeting attendance by including dinner or a dessert. Through membership renewal campaigns, units have rejoined former junior and senior members. Welcome packets were presented to new members which included benefit information, volunteer sheets, list of the Unit's activities, new member pin, and handbook.

For those potential members who lack the DD214, one county provided to their units an information packet containing the steps to follow with instructions to send to The National Archives to help those eligible potential members in obtaining discharge orders when they lacked the DD214 of a deceased veteran.

To encourage renewals and new members, Units had a membership table available at community events and at Unit events such as karaoke night and trivia night. During an Empire Girls state interview, one unit had the girl they were interviewing join along with her mother. Units used public relations to get new members as they highlighted their events, and they added how you could join the ALA. One unit had happy hours and socials and if a member paid their dues, they got a free drink. Units sponsored blood drives and had tables set up promoting membership. One unit had a challenge with the Legion and the SAL, and the winner was given a pizza party by the other two. To encourage early renewals, some Units had drawings in which members whose dues were paid by December 31 had a chance to win the next year's membership. And one unit used the date of October 31, and they had a drawing for gift cards. New York did a wonderful job in mentoring its new members.

Some promotional recruitment ideas included visiting a high school and presenting on the ALA to enhance their junior membership, the placement of ALA bookmarks whenever possible, such as at table settings at breakfasts and dinners at legion family and community events and placing weekly/monthly newsletters at the legion and community events showcasing the Auxiliary. When a new member is signed up, one unit encourages asking if they have other family members who

may be eligible. Other recruitment ideas included wearing ALA apparel to increase visibility, personally reaching out to past members asking if they would like to rejoin, hosting events to get the community in the door, and one unit had a bring a friend or neighbor night. One unit invited the community to attend Paws of War and America's Vet Dog presentations.

Our ten District Vice Presidents had fun all year watching their standings within the Department. For Mid-Winter, New York had a ship regatta where the District Vice Presidents/Membership Chairpersons made a ship that they wore and they were in a race to see what place each respective district was in. All the "Pebbles" in the room were cheering on the "Deck Hands."

Of course, New York faced some hurdles throughout the year. The biggest hurdle that units faced was getting ample volunteers as many said they did not have the time. Other hurdles noted were having a potential member but they were unable to join because their living veteran will not join the legion, personality clash between members, having new members wanting to take over and driving out the older members, encouraging members to be a committee chairman, and one unit stated the lack of a county level limited participation/communication on the district and state level.

New York had several "Happy Birthday America" celebrations! At fall conferences there were pom poms scattered about, and members all joined in singing Happy Birthday. And, at Mid-Winter, the membership had birthday hats and again pom poms were placed on the tables, and all sang Happy Birthday.

To keep all enthused and motivated, weekly e-mails were sent out on the standings and included the weekly message from National.

What a fun and exciting year this has been! New York worked hard to "keep the ship sailing in the right direction" toward its 100 percent goal!

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Yvonne Brunner, Chairman

Another auxiliary year is ending. The Department of New York members supported veteran programs and participated in various events throughout the year, enhancing the lives of our veterans, the military, their families and the community.

One Unit supported a program specifically dedicated to our women veterans who utilize the services of a Women's Health Wellness Center. The Beacon House, each year is included in the holiday giving; one-unit prepared gift bags for women veterans that contained clothing, hats and gloves, toiletries, snacks, puzzle books and cards prepared by the senior and junior members.

Baby showers were held to benefit expectant spouses on military bases and for those stationed overseas. Items collected included diapers, baby formula, bottles, clothing, bibs, crib items, creams, and lotions. Mom received nursing pads, post maternity clothing and Dad was not forgotten, he received special t-shirts.

A unit participated in a one-to one Veteran Adoption Program. Members maintained contact with their adopted veteran through birthday and holiday cards, gift and personalized interactions based on the veteran's interests, helping to promote friendship, support and appreciation for their service.

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall was displayed for five days in July 2025. The New York State Police, one hundred American Legion Riders, and 80 American Legion Family members escorted its arrival. The American Legion Family along with members of the community worked together on landscaping the grounds in anticipation of the upcoming event. The Wall attracted over 4,000 visitors with over 2,000 guestbook signatures. A 60-page commemorative book was created, honoring every fallen hero from their district. Approximately \$16,000 was raised with proceeds benefiting Operation Full Plate; which addresses food insecurity and Her in Hero; which offers support ranging from food, financial assistance to emotional encouragement.

Members focused on VA Medical Centers and Community Based facilities. Letter writing campaigns were started to solicit donations and to bring awareness for the need of volunteers to assist during activities. Members participated in weekly Bingo events with small prizes given to all the veterans. A Christmas in July was held where an outdoor BBQ was held. Veterans received wrapped gifts of sunglasses, summer clothing and personal items. The Gift Shop program gave veterans in facilities the opportunity to select a gift and a card for presentation to someone special. Units organized and hosted basket raffles in support of PTSD at the Bath VA Medical Center.

Unit members sponsored an all-female veteran flight from *Honor Flight Buffalo-Niagara* to Washington DC. Veterans along with their guardians were given a specially designed challenge coin included in the mail call packets that were distributed during the flight. Unit members successfully raised funds to support *Honor Flight-Rochester*, which has participated in over eighty-nine missions. The Honor Flight missions assure that our veterans will never be forgotten with the tagline, "We Leave No Veteran Behind."

"Be The One," was a top priority for members, with members attending the Columbia University training. The initiative focuses on initiative-taking mental health support to reduce the rate of veteran service members suicide. Units utilized social media to promote awareness, hosted "Be The One," training sessions at the Post, while other units displayed banners and handed out literature during events. Buddy checks were scheduled at the Post. Members were given a list of names who they would call on a weekly basis.

Throughout the year our members are participating in collecting school supplies for active-duty service members for children grades preschool through high school, including specialized schools and home-schooled children. Members formed committees to assist veterans with rides to doctor appointments, having home cooked meals, home maintenance and gardening help.

For Veteran's Day, "Thank You For Your Service," gatherings were celebrated with buffets and desserts. During the year, members hosted BBQ's, Fry Day Nights, Pizza Nights, Bingo with members helping

veterans find their numbers and "Night At The Races," to name just a few. For Memorial Day, poppies were distributed along the parade route. Commemorative services were held at cemeteries and town squares.

Units supported homeless veterans initiatives with distribution of coats, undergarments, and weather protection gear.

During the holidays, units hosted parties distributing gifts and cards, had special luncheons, gave gift baskets, clothing and gift cards. Gift packages were sent to platoons overseas recognizing birthdays, special occasions and personal needs. One unit spent 15 hours making "Quilts For Valor." Units adopted families for the holidays, participated in "Wreaths Across America."

At the commencement of the auxiliary year in September, members engaged in coordinated efforts to support and promote annual county programs. Contributions of funds and goods are solicited through a letter writing campaign and through the distribution of informational flyers to each unit and post, the community, as well as visiting local merchants. Donations are earmarked to support a variety of programs throughout the year. One program benefitted by receiving contributions for its PTSD program; "Warrior Ranch Foundation;" uses equine assisted therapy. The purpose of the program is to assist veterans through horse interaction in a safe haven for healing and well-being. The Ranch will educate veterans on the nature of horses by rescuing, retraining and repurposing horses. This gives the veterans a path and purpose. "Hero, Hungry, Help," is another program established to alleviate food insecurity amongst the veteran population.

On behalf of our organization, I extend my deepest appreciation to every member for their continued service. Your efforts are invaluable, and it is through your commitment that we successfully uphold the mission and values of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Children & Youth

Julianne Barton, Chairman

Children and Youth is very active in New York. The festivities begin in late September and October with Fall Festivals and Halloween celebrations. Units have Fall Festivals that include carnival games, face painting, pumpkin carving and apple bobbing!! Every participant of every activity was rewarded with a prize, which boosted participation. Apple bobbing was encouraged before face painting!!!

The Halloween parties and Trunk or Treat events were a big hit this year. Many Units reported holding one or the other. Members of the Legion family were invited via Facebook, email postings and newsletters. School children were invited by flyers being distributed at the schools. The parties and Trunk & Treats offer a safe environment for the children and an opportunity to recruit new Legion Family members. It was reported that a membership table was set up at the Trunk & Treat event to promote membership. The Auxiliary Halloween coloring book was distributed with coloring crayons. These events were all viewed as a great success and a very positive experience for the Members and the people that attended. The Units look forward to next year!

Several Units celebrate Veteran's Day with the local schools. In one school, the joint committee (Unit members & PTG) invites the students to invite a special Veteran to school that day for breakfast and a special assembly. An individual picture is taken of the student and the Veteran and posted on one of the bulletin boards in the school for the month of November. Then the picture is given to the student. The Veteran receives their copy on Veteran's Day. Several other Units have members that visit other schools and explain the meaning of Veteran's Day. Each student gets a pencil and eraser, cupcake, and flag. These interactions are vital to continuing to educate our future generations about the importance of our Veterans.

Christmas brings a plethora of events. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived at Legion homes in sleighs, fire trucks, pick-up trucks, and walked in, jingling bells. Many gifts were distributed to a huge number of wide-eyed children, with smiles from ear to ear. Or in some cases, screaming bloody murder. But whichever it was, the parties were a hit. Aside from the gifts, there was food galore. Stockings filled with candy and candy canes in every flavor. As anticipated and hoped for, a joyous and exhilarating time was had by all.

Celebrating less popular holidays is still encouraged by Unit membership. Packaged valentines are donated to local schools for children that need them. No child left out of the valentine exchange is the theory behind these donations. Members purchase a variety of valentines, suitable for boys or girls, and drop them off for distribution by the staff.

Easter, although early this year, was still hopping. The Easter bunny made an appearance all over the state! Eggs were filled with candy and trinkets and hidden for the popular Easter egg hunts. At the parties, many eggs were colored, games were played and small Spring toys, like bubbles, were distributed. One Unit hosted an Easter parade, encouraging the children to wear their Easter best!!!

Children and Youth month and Military Child month was celebrated throughout the state. Many Units gathered the necessary items for the Military Child ceremony and conducted it at their meetings. Everyone proudly paraded out on April 15th!! One Unit had a proclamation declared in their town. Several Units hosted military families for meals as a special treat to celebrate military children.

Throughout the year, funds are collected for the Child Well-being Fund. A very large pig, playfully named Penelope, makes the rounds with the Chairman during all their travels. Many Districts, Counties and Units have smaller versions of Penelope. She is passed at each meeting to help raise funds. All the members recognize the importance of this program and how important it is to support it. At Midwinter Conference, flyers were distributed to explain the program and show how some of the funds were distributed. Through your generosity, \$3,105 was collected for this most valuable program.

While many Units report the previous activities, many monetary donations are made. The donations are made to such a wide variety of charities it is impossible to list them all. The obvious ones are St Jude's and Shriner's, but many are not so well known. One County donated to Sleep in Heavenly Peace. It is an organization that produces beds for children that need a bed of their own to sleep in. The County donated enough to produce several twin beds. Units also donate to the Children's hospitals across the state. This year the monetary donations totaled \$42,226.

Whether celebrating at Post homes, within local schools, or by making monetary donations, the Auxiliary members of Department of New York are certainly generous not only with their hard-earned funds, but with their time. Members volunteered 8,591 hours that were reported which has a value of \$298,881, touching the lives of 11,976 children across our great state. We realize that how important the Children and Youth of our communities are to the future. This committee gives members the opportunity to help shape the future.

The American Legion Family College Debby Herrmann - ALA Liaison

The 2026 session was held on June 5th thru June 7th at SUNY Morrisville. Staff arrived Thursday June 5th to prepare to welcome some 104 students which started to arrive on Friday morning. Unfortunately, there were cancellations for various reasons leaving us with 94 graduating members.

Here are a few interesting facts, we had all 10 Districts represented, we had 60 Legionnaires (4 being dual members), 25 Auxiliary, and 9 Sons. The District with the most students was the 5th District with one Post Legion Family having 8 in attendance. The recipient of the Shelby Sobolowski Memorial Scholarship was Erika Murdaugh from the 7th District who gave her thoughts at the Sunday joint session. She commented on how incredible the weekend was, how much she learned and couldn't wait to return back to her Post home in Canandaigua. Also joining was as a Legionnaire that had attended the first Legion College in 2004. He commented that his first attendance in 2004 was great and learned a lot, but this year's Family College was outstanding and was so happy he decided to come again.

The 2026 session started at 1:00 instead of the normal time of 2:00. Using the surveys from last year we moved the class on Protocol to Friday afternoon after Orientation for the students. With a short break the

group attended four 20-minute sessions on the American Legion Riders / Adjutant & Secretary Role / Americanism / Children & Youth. The traditional steak dinner was 5:00/6:00 returning back to Charlton Hall to attend two 50-minute classes before calling it a night. Each group were handed a Case Study to work on during the weekend.

Saturday morning started @ 7:00 with breakfast at Seneca Hall. The remaining 8 classes started @ 8:00, each class being 50 minutes long. The classes were as follows Membership, Constitution & By-Laws, Legislative/Resolutions, Marketing/Public Relations, Duties of Officers, Online Membership Tools, SAL Programs, ALA Programs, Service Officers/VA&R and new this year Servant Leadership. As staff we had the opportunity to attend the class Thursday evening it was amazing. Dinner was at 5:00 and for those who wanted to attend there was a reception for some R&R at a local Post.

Sunday we were up bright and early again with breakfast. Joining us was the Legion Family leaders Legion Commander John Miga, the Department President Maureen Morgan and the SAL Commander Joseph Guidice Jr. Photos were taken by Tim Van Paten II again this year which are available on the Legion Website. The morning session started with a Legion mock meeting illustrating how to conduct a meeting, committee reports were the case studies by each of the 10 groups, and I have to say they did a great job. Each year the college staff comes up with the name for each year's students and this year it was Energetic these 94 students were full of energy right from the start and never stopped. Eager to learn as much as they could to so they could go back to the home Post or Units to support the members at large. The staff is fantastic, with 2 new instructors, you couldn't ask for a better team, but we are always looking for new members to join the team, so if you are interested and have attended the college as a student, please consider joining our ranks next year. We are going to have an Instructors training weekend in the Spring of 2027 for potential new instructors so fill out an application which can be found on the Legion website and/or you can contact me as well. Graduation certificates were presented to each student by our Legion Family Leaders. We will continue to make changes as needed to improve but I can say without question this is a truly integrated American Legion Family College. For those who are still on the fence I encourage you to come and join us next year, you won't be disappointed.

I would like to personally thank to PDP Karen St. Hilaire, PDP Nancy Babis, PDP Debbie Morris and Janice Gravely for representing the American Legion Auxiliary as instructors.

Americanism

Luanna Gilbert, Chairman

Our members continue to be involved with our ALA Americanism Program, promoting patriotic education among youth, adults and the community.

But I still believe we can do better. So much more that can be reported that isn't. 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 to your members. 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. Units reported members voting on election days and working at the polling sites. Many Counties report marching in Memorial Day Parades and placing flags at their local cemetery. At Christmas members also lay wreaths.

Units attended the naturalization ceremony and gave out flags. Flags were also taken to schools and given to the students along with teaching about flag etiquette. To celebrate America's birthday a unit donated 250 Flags to the community, yet another unit had a flag flown over the USS Arizona for the United States 250th birthday then presented it to a WWII Veteran on his 102nd birthday.

Joan Branche, Third grade teacher, Suffolk County Unit #419 created a morning program for her student kindergarten to 5th grade. It was called "Spirit Meet". It was organized to be a daily assembly program where students gather for announcements, awards and celebrations. Putting a major focus on the

pledge of Allegiance as well as singing patriotic songs. Every year the children how to properly and respectfully stand, put their hand over their heart and give great thanks to the men and women who have valiantly served to protect our freedoms.

These are just some highlights from my year as Americanism Chair; there are so many more and there could be even more. Out of 62 counties with about ¾ reporting . We are the largest patriotic organization in the United States, these numbers are taken to congress, and we need to stand up and say, "Look what we have accomplished, look what we have done for our Veterans, Military and their families."

The Americanism Essay Contest, 18 entries were received from 6 Units by April 1st. I wish there could've been more. But, out of those 8 were sent on to the Eastern Division Americanism Chair 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.

What does it take to provide these Americanism Activities? 4077 members served 11760 veterans, traveled 13937 miles, volunteered 19831 hours equaling \$389,920. Dollar value of goods and materials was \$34,710.69 for a grand total of \$724,630.69 for the Year.

At the beginning of my year as Americanism Chair, I wanted to accomplish 4 things. 1) Working with the American Legion, Schools and community to show respect for our flag and how to display it. 2) Americanism Essay Contest. 3) Department and National Americanism Awards. I believe that I have somewhat accomplished these Goals.

My recommendation for the next Chairperson is to encourage the Units, Counties and Districts to promote the Americanism essay contest. Open communication with your local schools, teachers, counselors and principals. Instead of making the contest a voluntary option, make it a learning tool and turn it into an assignment as a whole. A lesson in English and Government.

In closing we need to mentor our young, and pass on our knowledge that we have gained, for they will be the ones to carry on when we are no longer here. If this doesn't happen this, we will no longer be the largest Patriotic Organization in the United States.

I Thank President Maureen for the opportunity of being Americanism Chairperson for the 2025-2026 year.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund Karen Drucker, Chairman

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) supports our fellow Auxiliary members during times of need. Established in 1969 with a bequest from the estate of Auxiliary member Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wisconsin; the generous donations of Auxiliary members allow the fund to continue.

This year 31 military families were served, and 163 Auxiliary hours were reported in support of AEF and donations totaling \$7,037 were recorded by the Department of New York Office.

Applying for AEF Grant

AEF grants up to \$3,000 to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have experienced significant financial difficulty due to an act of nature or a personal crisis.

Current ALA members who have maintained annual consecutive membership for the current year, in which application was made, and the previous two years are considered to have met the eligibility requirement. New or rejoining ALA members must have maintained continuous membership for at least 36 consecutive months, based on their initial or rejoin date recorded by ALA National Headquarters.

To view eligibility requirements and to ensure the most current AEF application is submitted, it should be obtained online at www.ALAforVeterans.org/AEF.

All applications for financial assistance are confidential.

Donations

Please remember, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, is able to help Auxiliary members through the generosity of fellow members. Donations are easily made by texting "AEF" to 1-844-940-3450 or visiting: <https://donate.legion-aux.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/QPOMDNR5#c> . When using the website, you may enter the information for your unit and/or department at the bottom of the page. This allows all donations to count towards the year-end AEF awards.

Donations may be funded through memorial contributions, annual contributions, and various AEF fundraisers.

Members were notified of the AEF fund-raising events through attendance at meetings, email, text messages, and word of mouth.

Unit fundraising ideas included:

- Holding a themed event and having a % of net proceeds go to AEF
- Luau, NASCAR Watch Party, Craft Fairs, Cookie and Cake Walks
- Distribute baggies to collect loose change to donate to AEF,
- Raffle blankets or hanging baskets to benefit AEF,
- Place a donation jar at your events with a poster explaining the AEF program, and
- Pass a Jam Jar for when we get into "jams".

Chaplain Marie SantaCroce, Chairman

Every Auxiliary member is a treasure to be revered and respected. We work together in service to our Veterans and our communities.

Sadly, more than 500 Senior members among us were called to their heavenly home this past year.

Over 200 condolence cards were sent to their families left behind.

When we lose a cherished member, we wish to show reverence to their memory and mourn along with their loved ones.

Please notify Department of any loss and send the following TWO forms to us:

1- Membership Data Form-Found in your Membership Packet given to your Membership Chairman at Department Convention. Email to Caitlin in the Department Office at: nyalamemberdata@gmail.com. This Form is important so that deceased member's name can be removed from your membership roll.

2- Unit Death Notice-Found in your "Plan of Action". Please use most current Form.

Email to: nyalachaplain@gmail.com. This Form is used by the Chaplain to extend condolences from our Department to the family of your deceased member.

Please be sure to PRINT all information on both Forms CLEARLY.

May our Hearts always guide us...

Our Patriotism forever move us...

Our Faith sustain our commitment to God, Country, Family and Community.

Community Service

Ardella Turner, Chairman

Throughout the year, the enduring spirit of community service has been profoundly evident across the American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York. In dedicated service to their members and neighbors alike, the Auxiliary has provided vital support to local communities, churches, senior citizen centers, and school-age children. Demonstrating a deep commitment to combating hardship, members actively worked to feed underprivileged individuals and underserved families. Additionally, the Department successfully complied and delivered essential personal care kits to both male and female veterans and community members in need.

The evidence of their hard work for the past year is reflected in the following year end totals:

The Number of ALA Member Volunteers:	7,668
The Total Hours Members Volunteered:	155,832
The Number of Community Volunteers:	1,114
The Value of Donations:	402,171
The Value of Volunteer Hours:	7,591,399

Constitution and Bylaws/Resolutions

Karen St. Hilaire, Chairman

(Patricia Hennessy)

As most of the members know Past department President Patricia Hennessy was originally appointed by Department President Maureen Morgan, to serve as the Department of New York

Constitution and Bylaws Chair. In March Pat moved to a senior living apartment in Nebraska near her son. This report reflects her work prior to moving, as well as my contribution from March to July 2026.

As you know the Constitution and Bylaws are the governing Documents of the American Legion Auxiliary from the Unit Level all the way up to the National level. Units, Counties and Districts should review your documents on a yearly basis and make changes as needed to remain current.

But the job doesn't stop there! You need to share these documents with your members. Each member needs to know the structure of the organization and most importantly they need a copy of your Unit, County or District standing rules. Standing rules can vary depending on your needs and financial status.

Thank you for all the quarterly county reports. Also, many units, counties and even districts sent their updated documents in to be reviewed by the Department Chairman. Did you notice we changed it to reviewed not approved. That was a recommendation from National.

Even the Department of New York updated their documents, as reviewed at the Constitution and Bylaws preconvention meeting. These are also in convention call and will be read during my convention report.

Education

Patricia Galley, Chairman

Education is everything. The purpose of Education is to replace an empty mind with an open one. It's also for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world a better place than you found it.

I would like to thank the Department President of New York for giving me the Education Committee for the year 2025/26. I am not a teacher, but a mentor. I've learned a lot this year from the Eastern Division and from my state of New York. There are 10 Districts and 463 units. The average for reporting under Education was 42 out of 62 counties this year.

For our "Veterans in Community School Programs "Schools were as follows: Schools would give gift bags filled with bread ,candy, and patriotic bookmarks to each veteran who attended. They loved the artwork on the bags; they donated 100 flags and gave them a story about what the flag stood for. The Veterans also showed students how to fold a flag too.(Pictures from St. Lawrence, 4th District) Downsville Students Honor Veterans with Song, Promise and Thanks. (6th District Delaware). (District 6th Otsego also does a traveling display of their 6 local veterans around their community. It travels from the American Legion to the library and to the school. For 25 years a teacher from the 10th District- Unit 419 organizes and coordinates at the school "Spirit Meet Veterans Day Assembly" presenting Veterans & Students with awards. Lastly in the 9th District the Vietnam Veterans with the help of the Rockland County American Legion and Auxiliary has a Ceremony at Suffern Middle School Auditorium called "Memories Left at the Wall." The veterans and Auxiliary read the letters that were left at the wall by family and veterans that served in Vietnam; after the assembly the students go through the museum that is set up in the library and get to talk to the veterans that served during Vietnam. During this assembly you see 6th ,7th, and 8th graders get silent and attentive listening to these stories with tears in their eyes.

We promote Give 10 to Education by asking teachers or schools what they need in their classrooms. We also have a sheet of guidelines about school supplies etc. on it to help too. We do a lot of backpack programs for the schools. Whether they need supplies for schools or snack packs to take home for the weekend.We also promote the Education of Military and their children.

Purple up Day (8th District has pictures for that day). No child should feel unwelcome.

For American Education Week and Teacher Appreciation Week. Here are some ideas from New York.

Pizzas were donated as a back-to-school treat, trunk or treat programs. I myself went to the schools to educate or update all the opportunities the American Legion Families have to offer the kids. Trying to be able to go into the schools and set up tables at their open houses to get the word out there, parent partner programs is a great idea. Feed the mind with reading books and doing experiments to fill their heads with knowledge.

For Teacher Appreciation Week, a big "Thank You", along with a card, gift cards, flowers, chocolates, coffee, or even a handshake would do. But don't forget the maintenance workers or cafeteria staff or the administration too!

Different units or counties made sure our needy students were involved and taken care of. They always made sure the students had clothing for the different seasons, boots, sneakers, etc. One unit bought work boots for a Boces student while his dad was deployed. Thank you. Or they would adopt a student or a family for a year. Kindness goes a long way and so does the saying Pay it Forward.

Our scholarship winners at the Department level will get notified at the Department Convention. The units and counties usually do it at graduation. We had 103 scholarship applications this year, 33 counties were received from the Department of New York. I would also like to say Thank You to my committee for helping me reading all those applications and picking the winners with me. I couldn't have done it without you. We also had a total of 39 applications for the National Department.

Total Numbers for this committee includes: 630 volunteers, total # served 4045, total miles 2123, total hours : 1517x \$34.79= \$52,776.43

Impact Numbers were;

129 Veterans in the Community School presentations facilitated

187 Numbers of unit Scholarships presented/awarded

\$69,970.00 Total amount of unit scholarships

\$10,740.00 Total amount to department scholarships

Department Scholarships

Department District Scholarships

District 1-	None	
District 2-	None	
District 3-	None	
District 4-	Kathryn Smith	Fulton Co.
District 5-	Pietra van der Werff	Oneida Co.
District 6-	Tehya Colao	Delaware Co.
District 7-	Michaela Bugman	Livingston Co.
District 8-	Graham Bradt	Allegany Co.
District 9-	Morgan Bieber	Dutchess Co.
District 10-	Katherine Mazaroski	Nassau Co.
Raymond T. Wellington Jr. Memorial Scholarship-	Myah Ouderkirk	Oneida Co.
Past President Parley Scholarship in Medical Field-	Madison Ford	Cattaraugus Co.
Helen Klimek Student Scholarship-	David Irwin	Nassau Co.

ALA Empire Girls State

Stephanie Fallon - Chairman

Molly McLaughlin -1st Vice Chairman

Sarah Murphy 2nd Vice Chairman/Registrar

The 85th Empire Girls State session took place June 30-July 6, 2026 at SUNY Brockport. 250 citizens from all 10 Districts joined together to create the 51st state.

June 30 – Arrival of citizens under VERY hot conditions. Thank you to all volunteers who helped with registration. County meetings began and Parli Pro workshops featuring ice cream and popsicles followed.

July 1 – Political instructors spoke about bill writing and platforms. Committee meetings with election of chairman and vice chairman, Party caucus- election of Party leaders. POW/MIA ceremony, Dept. President Maureen Morgan presented on "What is the ALA?". Guest speaker presentation by Justice Elizabeth Fortino, ALA EGS alumna and a Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, Fifth Judicial District, serving Oneida County.

July 2 – Committee meetings, County meetings and nominees to run for Girls Nation selected. Band and Chorus rehearsals, Party Caucus, and selection of party nominations for State office. Guest speaker presentation by ALA EGS alumna, Miranda Leo Klingensmith. Presentation by President Maureen on Programs in the ALA.

July 3 – RALLY DAY – County court; County Executives announced their appointments. Americanism Chair Luanna and liaison Holly's Americanism presentation on Poppies. President Maureen, Academic Coordinator Claire, and Chairman Steph present on ALA membership and EGS Alumni Association. Town Hall debate of candidates. State official winners announced.

July 4 – RED, WHITE and BLUE Day! Luanna and Holly's Americanism presentation on Pocket Flags. Legislative Session Day – 22 Bills heard total. All bills were heard, a historic achievement. 15 passed both the Senate and Assembly. Nationalist – Health (Transportation of Medical Materials), Nationalist & Federalist (Joint) - Health (Youth Health Preparedness Act), Federalist - Housing & Community Development (Housing Construction and Assistance), Federalist - Education/Tech. (Next Gen Up), Nationalist- Environmental Conservation (Proposal for Water Treatment and Research Facilities), Federalist -Agriculture (Mink Needs a Drink), Federalist- Environmental Conservation (Is Water Washable), Nationalist - Agriculture (Agricultural Education Bill), Federalist - Education/Tech (Mentoring Through the Future), Federalist - Health (Alcohol Recovery Innovation Act), Nationalist - Criminal Justice (Prisoner Reintegration & Reform Procedure), Nationalist - Housing & Community Development (Funding Infrastructure in Underdeveloped Communities), Federalist - Housing & Community Development (For The

People Grant), Nationalist - Education/Tech. (Fund the Future). Service, Sweets, and Social Networking events. After a presentation by President Maureen on her president's project, counties visited tables where they signed cards for veterans and contributed notes for an ALA EGS time capsule. Performance by EGS band "Please Clap."

July 5 – Gubernatorial appointments announced and Bills signed into law. A Special Legislative session was called by the Governor, and an additional bill was passed: Nationalist - Housing and Community Development (Community Center Revitalization Bill). Luanna and President Maureen presented Blue Star Banners to citizens. Luanna's Americanism presentation with citizen participation for Retirement of Unserviceable Flags. President Maureen presented her pins to all citizens.

STATE of the STATE – Citizens transformed from Girls State uniforms into beautiful suits, dresses and gowns. The governor was presented with an American Flag that was used during 2026 ALA Empire Girls State and gave a State of the State address to citizens and guests. Families showed up in droves to see the meaningful ceremony and congratulate their participants on a job well done.

July 6 – Packing up – Checking out – Home! Now to catch up on some sleep...and lots of paperwork!

Thank you to our volunteer staff, without whom the week would not be possible!

Position	First	Last
Angelou Counselors	Maureen	Morgan
	Luanna	Gilbert
	Kristen	Gibbs
Anthony Counselors	MacKenzie	McDaniels
	Maya	Vidal-Laramée
Chisholm Counselors	Lauren	Marshall
	Mikalya	Miller
Ginsburg Counselors	Stephanie	Kopec
	Sophie	Kephart
Mink Counselors	Norah	Caher
	Abby	Mason
Parks Counselors	Gina	Southcott
	Aurora	Siniscalchi
Picotte Counselors	Natalie	Strough
	Alexi	Frye
Rankin Counselors	Lindsay	Moran
	Layla	Federoff
Ride Counselors	Holly	Ruggiero
	Allison	Hill
Political Instructor	Cathleen	MacInnes
Political Instructor	Xamayla	Rose
Academic Affairs	Claire	Herrman-Moran

ALA EGS Secretary	Kris	Dziduch
Merchandise	Linda	Tome
Media/PR	Cesidia	Carosa
Media/PR	Kaylee	Mathews
Nurse	Lisa	Chaplin
Nurse	Nancy	Babis
Wellness Coordinator	Carrie	Davenport
DEI consultant	Kate	Klaiber

Citizen activity reports will be distributed, but we would like to announce the following positions for everyone to congratulate.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Citizen</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Citizen</u>	<u>County</u>
2026 Governor	Amanat Jain	New York County	Chief Justice Court of Appeals	Ria Shivam	New York County
Lt. Governor	Hannah Vogel	Monroe County	Secretary of State	Briella Dirig	Niagara County
Comptroller	Ananya Bismark	Oneida County	1st Deputy Comptroller	Lily Korb	Westchester County

Girls Nation Senators:

Clover Graves	Westchester County	and	Francesca Ericksen	Saratoga County
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Samsung Award Finalist:

Julia Schlesinger

Orange County

Wendy Privitera Spirit of Girls State Award:

Ava Williamson

Onondaga County

Finance Committee
Marie Mock, Chairman
Mary Lou Platt, Joan Caccamo Members

We have reached the end of our 2025-2026 administrative year, and I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make us successful. Special thanks go to Barbara, Caitlin, Tara, and Audrey for going above and beyond. We are also fortunate to have the Macaluso Group and Bonadio & Company keeping our funds and investments in order. Because of everyone's work and expertise we have been able to work well within our budget in a time of fluctuating markets and financial unrest.

Our funds are profitable, and we are able to turn the leadership over to Mary Lou and her team to guide incoming President Lora to another year of financial solvency. We wish them the best.

Thank you, President Maureen, for allowing me to chair this vital committee. It has been an honor and a privilege.

Historian Suzanne Williams, Chairman

The Historian Program has been promoted by Quarterly Newsletters distributed by the Department Office to all 10 New York District Presidents, all 62 New York County Presidents, and anyone who submitted their email address to receive the Newsletters.

Newsletter articles describing the importance of History on every level, Unit, County, and District were discussed. Information was shared about how to and why to assemble Narrative and Picture Scrap Books with articles and newspaper clippings, and how to present to the Unit President, County President for keeping, or to the Department Committee for Awards. The criteria for judging on the Department level was shared to ensure guidelines were followed.

Over the course of the Program Year beginning with May, 2025 thru May 2026, periodic reports were received from a total of 50 Counties reporting that most Units "retain" Minutes, safe-keep documents, pictures, newspaper clippings, and promote History.

Units reported volunteer hours totaling 19,109 hours; and the dollar amount of donation funds and funds spent total \$402,771.17 Department wide.

Submissions for Department Awards in both Narrative and Picture categories were received from a total of 9 Units and/or Counties.

Your Chairman has created a Department-Wide Historian scrap book to be presented to Madam Department President.

Thank you, Madam Maureen, for putting your faith in me to document your history, and for the pleasure of Chairing the Committee, I have learned much and will carry that knowledge with me into the future!

Junior Activities Catherine Yerdon, Chairman

Junior members have shown perseverance in trying to acquire new members and in promoting veteran programs. There were many functions in which they had volunteered, as needed. Reporting for the 62 counties for New York State, only about 26% had reported active Juniors. The active Juniors are doing an amazing job. The reports have proven this.

I had two (2) Juniors who applied for patches in Americanism, Star Spangled Kids, Physical Fitness, and Poppy. They were very excited to apply for the patches and hopefully next year we can get more patches ordered.

Juniors attended Mid-Winter Conference, and the offices were filled for the 2026-2027 year. The newly elected officers were installed by National President Pam Ray. I was very impressed with the incoming President and her knowledge of the Auxiliary. During their meeting, our project was tied blankets. After the meeting, some Juniors assisted with more of the tied blankets, which would be handed out to VA residents or those in need.

A Zoom meeting had been set up for the Juniors to see what other units are doing for their community and information as to how they can improve or assist, as needed. I have received positive feed-back on the

Zoom meetings as attending in-person meetings is not always beneficial. I am hopeful that this process will continue in the years to come.

Juniors are encouraged to attend senior member meetings. The seniors are mentoring the Juniors. This would give them the opportunity to see how the meetings are run and to give them the knowledge they will need as they move up.

Total of materials and goods was \$15,203.63 and the Juniors volunteered 1,630 hours which is valued at \$56,724.62 for a grand total of \$71,928.25. Veteran's served were 3,190. I was VERY proud of the Juniors on what their accomplishments.

I have enjoyed being the Junior Activities Chairperson this year and will look forward to seeing what they do in the future.

Leadership

Lucille Mozzillo, Chairman

I am honored to have served as the Department of New York Leadership Chairman this year.

This year, NY was host to the Eastern Division ALA National Mission Training. A total of 74 Senior and 9 Junior members were attendance. Mid-Winter Conference was held Friday, January 16-17, 2026, in Albany. We were honored to have National President Pam Ray in attendance. We had 225 Senior members and 9 Junior Members in attendance. Friday evening began with a committee fair, where each department chairman created a display and provided materials and were present to answer questions. The evening also included a general session. Saturday morning began with breakfast and the National President's address. Following the address the Junior members presented the POW/MIA Ceremony. The day then continued with presentations by Education, Empire Girls State, VA&R, WFA, and Junior Activities Committee along with the ALA Foundation and Reporting. As part of the Conference, members had the opportunity to participate in two service projects. Members donated several boxes of nonperishable items that were donated to the Veterans and Community Housing Coalition in Ballston Spa and the Stratton VAMC. We also held a blanket making session on Saturday afternoon. A total of 27 no sew tie blankets were made and donated to veterans in nursing homes.

Several units, counties and districts reported holding leadership sessions throughout the state this year. Topics covered during these trainings included promoting and discussing Be The One, roles and duties of officers, detailed discussions of each committee and how/what to report for each, how to mentor and encourage new members, distribute materials obtained from attendance at other conferences, how to access the ALA Academy and encourage members to participate, promotion of Unit Member of the Year, how to check and make necessary changes to constitution and bylaws and so much more. In addition, thirty-six units and thirty-five counties held trainings on "nurturing a culture of goodwill" which included fostering a welcoming, positive environment focused on the mission of "Service Not Self". This included mentoring new members, recognizing success stories, fostering internal and external collaboration, and consistently communicating the mission with passion and unity.

I encourage everyone to regularly use the plethora of information that can be located on the Department and National Websites. Also encourage members to sign up and take advantage of the ALA Academy. There is so much to be learned about the organization itself and benefits for members.

Thank you to President Maureen for interesting me with Leadership this year. I enjoyed it a great deal while being able to learn new things myself.

Legislative Dr. Dena Restaino, Chairman

The American Legion Department of New York: A Vanguard for Veteran Advocacy

The American Legion Department of New York serves as the resolute voice for over 200,000 veterans, service members, and their families. Operating as a resolutions-based organization, our policy positions inherently reflect the collective will of our membership. These directives are firmly grounded in the institution's four foundational pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.

Advancing Mental Health Care: The "Be the One" Initiative

In strategic collaboration with Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, the Department of New York American Legion Auxiliary remains steadfast in its mission to enhance mental health care and peer support infrastructure. The flagship "Be the One" suicide prevention initiative anchors these vital efforts through two primary operational avenues:

- **Training and Crisis Intervention:** Auxiliary units systematically host specialized training sessions in conjunction with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) clinics and hospitals. This curriculum equips members to identify veterans in distress and provide continuous, stabilizing support until a safe transition to professional medical care is achieved.
- **Administrative Support:** Dedicated volunteers routinely assist VA personnel with critical administrative operations, ensuring the efficient processing of "Be the One" inquiries and the timely execution of resource requests.

Legislative Priorities and Congressional Outreach

Our constituency remains a formidable advocacy force within the nation's capital. Leveraging the Call-to-Action Center, members consistently engage with Congressional representatives to champion vital legislative measures. Chief among these is the Major Richard Star Act, which seeks to authorize "Chapter 61" retirees—service members medically retired due to combat-related injuries with fewer than twenty years of service—to receive both their Department of Defense (DoD) retirement pay and VA disability compensation concurrently, without reduction.

Furthermore, throughout the 2025–2026 legislative session, the Department vigorously advanced the following priorities:

1. **The Pay Our Troops Act of 2026:** The American Legion unequivocally endorses this bipartisan legislation to guarantee compensation for members of the Armed Services during government shutdowns. It rectifies the operational inequity wherein service members are required to perform their duties without remuneration during congressional funding lapses, effectively ensuring that those who risk their lives to protect the nation are never denied their rightful compensation.
2. **Preservation of the Chaplains Hill Memorial (H.R. 3838):** The American Legion urges Congress to adopt Representative Bill Keating's amendment within the fiscal year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act. This measure compels Arlington National Cemetery officials to authorize the National Conference of Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) to update and preserve the Chaplains Hill Memorial, properly honoring fallen military chaplains from recent conflicts whose sacrifices have remained unrecognized due to previously ambiguous regulatory language.
3. **The Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act (H.R. 2605 / S. 1441):** Recognizing the profound impact of service animals on veterans' autonomy—specifically in assisting with daily tasks, retrieving items, and providing balance support—The American Legion champions this legislation. This advocacy is firmly rooted in Resolution No. 134: Service Dogs for Injured Service Personnel and Veterans with Mental Health Conditions.

4. The SHIPS for America Act: To safeguard national maritime security, the Department supports the Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security Act. This legislation addresses systemic vulnerabilities within America's maritime infrastructure, mitigating the risks posed by aging vessels, diminished shipbuilding capacity, port maintenance backlogs, and critical shortages of qualified mariners and sealift capacity.
5. Consistent, high-level congressional outreach ensures that The American Legion's strategic priorities remain paramount among our nation's lawmakers.

Commemorating the United States Semi-quincentennial

In honor of the United States' 250th anniversary, the New York American Legion Family has initiated a statewide campaign promoting physical and mental wellness. This initiative mobilizes veterans and civilians alike to engage in community service while generating critical funding for the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation, directly supporting disabled veterans and military families in need. By successfully executing collaborative service projects, driving fundraising initiatives, and formally reporting these accomplishments to the National organization, units across the state are securing their commemorative flags and proudly marking this historic milestone.

2025–2026 Advocacy Metrics and Impact Report

The Department of New York has demonstrated verifiable excellence across all facets of veteran advocacy. Our proactive civic engagement has set a definitive standard for how to demand accountability and action from elected officials. The fiscal year highlights include:

- **Direct Communications:** Members executed 1,121 targeted calls, letters, and emails to local, state, and federal elected officials. This outreach yielded direct, actionable responses from prominent legislators, including Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, alongside U.S. Representatives Mike Lawler, Tom Suozzi, and George Latimer.
- **In-Person Advocacy:** Members conducted 188 personal constituent visits and attended 23 regional Town Hall meetings, ensuring the American Legion Family remains fully apprised of evolving legislative frameworks.
- **Civic Forums:** Local Posts successfully hosted 35 dedicated events featuring elected officials in attendance, augmented by two formal "Meet the Candidate" forums.
- **Information Distribution:** The Department secured 251 new subscriptions to crucial legislative networks, including the Dispatch, the Auxiliary legislative e-newsletter, and the Capwiz advocacy portal.
- **Volunteer Investment:** Members logged 803 official volunteer hours dedicated exclusively to legislative affairs, representing a tangible service value of \$27,936.37 for the Department of New York, alongside an additional \$155.00 in direct legislative operational expenditures.

Member Spotlight: Past Department Commander Keith Koster

The Department of New York formally commends **Past Department Commander Keith Koster** for his exceptional grassroots activism. His rigorous and sustained dedication to engaging

Congressional Representatives and Senators has proven instrumental in the advancement of veteran rights. Commander Koster's tireless efforts ensure a resonant, uncompromising voice for our veterans within the halls of Congress. The Department extends its deepest gratitude to Keith for his exemplary leadership and unwavering commitment to the Legion's mission.

National Security

Patricia Rama, Chairman

From the Canadian border to the Montauk Point Lighthouse on Long Island Auxiliary members wore R.E.D. on Fridays to Remember Everyone Deployed, supported Military Appreciation Month and draped the POW/MIA table chair for meetings. I would like to report that all units and counties reported activities, but that was not the case. Received many reports with the # of volunteers, hours, value of goods & materials & dollars spent- but no description of the actual activity. Please remember to include a brief description of the activity.

- Sent care packages & books to deployed troops
- Distributed blue star & gold star banners
- 3 Families notified of POW/MIA remains
- Held blood drives & donated blood 77 units
- Clipped coupons, sent to overseas commissaries
- Volunteered at Buffalo Airport Military Lounge
- Promoted National Military Appreciation Month
- Sponsored & attended disaster preparedness sessions
- Attended "Law & Order" Presentation Ceremonies
- Thanksgiving & Christmas dinners for military families
- Attended/participated in POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremonies
- Housed active military service member
- Housed active military service members' family
- Citizen Corps in the community Operation Comfort Warriors
- Numerous units signed up to "Adopt A Platoon" at Ft. Drum – now with May 2026 deployment
- Family to Family Support
- Attended 9/11 Memorial Ceremony
- Christmas cards sent to deployed troops
- Donations to local military-based food pantry

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency Facebook posts shared to Department, District and local County Facebook pages. "Vial of Life" kits distributed at Department Mid-Winter Conference

A unit member in Greene County has housed an active-duty service member, 5-7 days a week, for about a year. Her Auxiliary Unit has joined in her support of the service member and his family. The family was invited to join him at Thanksgiving, Christmas & other special days, she housed them also. The service member has invited the unit member to attend family military functions. The unit donated \$300.00 to the service member, so he could purchase holiday gifts. Another unit member knitted matching hats for all 4 family members

For more than 20 years, Unit 1634 Sgt. John Sardiello President Carol-Lynne O'Pray has read the POW/MIA Vigil Ceremony at the Town of Babylon/American Legion Post 1634 sponsored Annual Ceremony at Town Hall in Lindenhurst New York. The evening now begins with a Veterans BBQ- grills are manned by the West Babylon Fire Department members & students from The Patriot's Club at Deer Park High School set-up, serve & clean up. Many local Scout troops participated. Pre-Covid there was an all-night vigil by the Boy Scouts. Now, just a walk around the Remembrance Monuments after the ceremony. A candle lighting ceremony was added along with the reading of the names of POW/ MIA service members from the Town of Babylon.

IMPACT

Service for Veterans/Military

- 1.Total hours members volunteered: 1274
- 2.Total dollars spent: \$6,905
- 3.Total number of military assisted: 362

4. Total number of "Veterans in Community Schools" presentations facilitated: 0
5. Value of in-kind donations received: \$ 20,812
Service for Military Families
6. Total hours members volunteered: 363
7. Total dollars spent: \$2600
8. Number of military families served: 119+

Value of Volunteer hours: (1487 x 34.79) \$51,733

Miles reported: 1574

Value of goods and materials used: \$9,098

Total # of Volunteers: 302

Coupon Values reported: \$6,068

Parliamentarian Linda Tome, Chairman

Although Parliamentarian is not a reporting committee, I just want to remind you that if you ever have any questions about how to conduct meetings more efficiently or make decisions more effectively, your Parliamentarian is the go-to person! In addition to that, you also have your Constitution & Bylaws and your Standing Rules to refer back to. Still confused? If all else fails, refer to *Robert's Rules of Order!*

To end my year as Parliamentarian, I would like to quote Alice Sturgis, a parliamentarian in the early 20th century who devised a streamlined and modern version of Robert's Rules and the rule of parliamentary procedure. "The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to *facilitate the transaction of business and to promote cooperation and harmony.*"

Poppy-Poppy Poster Kathy Soule, Chairman

Wow, what an excellent Year! Our 4 Poppy Supervisors were having poppy party after poppy party all through May. We are continuing to keep our hands busy making poppies. You go, Auxiliary!

I received an email from a Post requesting poppies just last week. I transferred the message to Barbara, and she worked her magic. I heard last night that we are still producing Poppies.

There were 121,850 poppies ordered on paper for a value of \$45,495. There were 43768 poppies distributed.

Great Job getting the gifted donations, ladies. To quote Flanders Fields by Col John McRora.

"If ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders field."

There will be a display at convention of the winning poppy posters submitted to National.

Please, for next year, consider applying for Awards and taking more pictures of your activities. Everyone would like to see what you are accomplishing for our vets.

"We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, loved and were loved, and now we lie in Flanders fields."

Public Relations, Patricia Murphy, Chairman

Public Relations has certainly been a challenging and educating experience. All forms of media were utilized by units, counties and districts. Reports included an encyclopedia full of newsletters, newspaper articles, and pictures. Narratives included activities of the Units and American Legion Family activities. All included utilizing branded attire and printed identifiers of the organization. Social media posts identified

recruiting, retention, supporting veterans and communities through public relation tools. All reports met national suggestions of public, and how this idea developed. One report includes using Canva for posters and flyers as was discussed in the National quarterly meeting in February.

The reports on Public Relations across the State are impressive.

Hours volunteered	23,463.10
Total Pictures submitted	51,789
Newsletters	24
Donations	\$44,184.13
Newspaper Articles	254
Posters	52
Dollars Spent	\$14,448.82
Radio (hours)	1,022.70
TV (hours)	4

Thank you to everyone that contributed to this committee spreading the word of who we are and what we do.

Warrior Family Assistance Laura Booth, Chairman

The Warrior Family Assistance is a NYS only program.

This grant program assists veterans and active-duty families that need assistance. The \$1500.00 grant is available once a year.

This year we received and approved 23 applications.

I want to thank everyone who donated and supported this program.

I also want to thank my committee for all their help and support.

Please look out for our updated application and rules for 2026-2027.

American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Cathleen MacInnes, President

The mission of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation is to positively impact the lives of our veterans, military, and their families by funding programs of the American Legion Auxiliary today and for future generations.

Our goal in 2025-2026 was to increase awareness of the ALA Foundation, especially the Veteran Projects Fund. A total of 17 Veteran Projects Fund grants were approved for Units and Departments across the nation, with a value of \$119,329 to be used to enhance the lives of veterans both in facilities and in their communities.

Local Veterans Creative Arts Festival (VCAF) grants will be discontinued at the end of this administrative year. With the changes the VA has made to the entry requirements for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, the local contests are no longer mandatory.

Total donations made to the ALA Foundation were \$155,975 - \$7,324 of which came from the Department of New York. THANK YOU!

Both Terri Wallace, ALA Foundation Board of Directors Treasurer, and I welcome your questions as we move forward into the 2026-2027 administrative year.

