



# Department of Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary 6<sup>th</sup> District Newsletter



December 2023

## Membership

Our sled dog Denali and membership are *Slip, Slidin' Away!!* Although the November 28, 2023 membership report shows that 6<sup>th</sup> District has added 118 new/renewed members since the beginning of the month, we still have dropped into 8<sup>th</sup> place. Please do not hold memberships. Send them to department in a timely manner. Let's give Denali a few pats on the head, a couple puppy treats and get back in the race!!

## 6<sup>th</sup> District Fall Conference

The draft minutes from our Fall Conference are included with this newsletter. Please note one change, the District Spring Conference has been rescheduled to Saturday, May 4, 2024. Each Unit is expected to give a report at the Spring Conference covering ONE phase of work for the year, beginning after the previous Spring Conference. I also ask Units to present their annual reports with tri-fold boards featuring photos, flyers, newspaper articles, etc., showing how your units and members have been working the mission!

## 2024 Midwinter: ALA Service Projects Needs

More information about the service projects the ALA will be doing at the 2023 American Legion Midwinter Conference.

1. **Tie Blankets** – Attendees will make fleece tie blankets for veterans at Tomah VA. While some material will be provided, any donations of fleece fabric would be greatly appreciated. The VA has requested twin size blankets so fleece should be 2-1/2 yards for each side of the blanket, or a total of 5 yards. A sharp pair of scissors would also be very helpful.
2. **Socks of Love** – Attendees are asked to bring men's athletic socks and small toiletry items to put into the socks which will be donated to veterans in need.
3. **Valentine's Day Cards** – Attendees will make Valentine's Day cards for veterans in VA hospitals and veterans' homes. Please bring your creative talents (construction paper, stickers, markers, stamping supplies, envelopes, etc. would also be helpful!)
4. **Winter Clothing Drive** – The ALA is also conducting a Winter Clothing Drive so bring **NEW** men's and women's winter hats, gloves, mittens, scarves and warm socks for veterans in need.

There is still time to register and join in the fun. Attendance and registration forms attached.




If you are unable to attend and still want to help, supplies for any of the service projects or the winter clothing drive may be brought to me or to Department Headquarters (Attn: Bonnie) by Friday, January 12, 2024. Call, text or email me to make arrangements.

## 6<sup>th</sup> District Outstanding Americanism Person of the Year

There is still time to nominate that one member you consider outstanding in promotion of Patriotism and Americanism activities in your American Legion Auxiliary unit and community. The completed forms (attached) will need to be returned no later than December 31, 2023. Awards will be presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> District Annual Americanism Recognition Banquet.

### **Poppy Program**

A reminder from Kay Grosskopf, Department Poppy Program Chairman – 2024 Deadlines

-  March 15<sup>th</sup>: Deadline for Poppy Poster contest.
-  March 15<sup>th</sup>: Deadline for Little Miss Poppy contest.
-  March 15<sup>th</sup>: Deadline for Poppy Narratives

Historically we have judged Poppy Posters at our Spring Conference. To meet this year's deadlines, 6<sup>th</sup> District Units should send their winning posters to District Poppy Chairman Patti Julius by **March 1, 2024**. Please contact your schools/contestants about the change as soon as possible. Mail posters to:

Patti Julius  
141 Andrew Ave  
Neenah, WI 54956-2205

Judging for District Little Miss Poppy was usually completed at our District Junior Conference. This year, District Junior Spring Conference will be combined with the Department Junior Spring Conference. More details will be provided as they become available.

Please remember to get your Poppy order placed by December 15, 2023 to ensure you get the poppies you will need. If you have not yet sent in your 20% poppy profit from this year, your poppy order will be delayed until that is received by Department.

### **District Dues**

District dues are payable in January of each year at the rate of \$1.00 (one dollar) per member based on the membership of the Unit for the previous full year as recorded in the Red Book. If you have not already done so, please pay as soon as possible. Make check payable to: 6<sup>th</sup> District ALA and mail to: Treasurer Beth Puddy, 349 Stow St, Fond du Lac, WI 54965. Thank you to those units that have already sent in their dues.

### **LEGISLATIVE**

All members of the American Legion Family are strongly encouraged to sign up for Legislative Action Alerts and to contact their representatives when action is required to support our veterans. Visit <https://www.votervoice.net/mobile/AmericanLegion/home> and click on the link to sign up for action alerts.

## Public Relations

The Department Public Relations Committee (Bob Shappell, Debi Stuvengen and Crystal Shaw) has developed a plan to offer regular opportunities for our units to discuss and share their questions, frustrations, and successes with PR efforts in their community.

The first “PR Chat – Assessing your unit” was held November 29<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. Subsequent Chats will be held the last week of each month from January to June, with each chat having a special topic. The topics will be:

- Jan – PR Tools – What tools (paper, electronic, and personal) are available, and what are the appropriate audiences and uses of each method?
- Feb – Internal PR – What PR methods can you use to better communicate with your own members to keep them informed, and hopefully inspire some of them to become more engaged with the Unit’s activities?
- Mar – External PR – What PR methods best match your Unit’s situation to communicate with your community, publicize events, and better relate to those community members who know very little about your Unit?
- Apr – Local Media – How can you most effectively reach out to local media outlets and create a relationship that would build their interest in your mission and activities?
- May – Social Media – How can you best use your current social media, start a social media program, or expand to other types of social media?
- Jun – Community Involvement and Visibility – How can you effectively create a visible presence in your community, providing more personal contact with community members, other organizations, and potential ALA members for you? This topic will be an integral part of all the Chats.

District Public Relations Chair Nancy Rivera participated in the first PR Chat and felt it was very worthwhile and recommends attending even if only for 15-20 minutes. Next Chat is in January and I will send out the ZOOM link when it becomes available.

## Dates To Remember

- January 18-21, 2024 – Mid-Winter Conference, La Crosse
- February 24, 2024 – 6<sup>th</sup> District Oratorical Contest, Post 70, Oshkosh
- March 23, 2024 – Department Oratorical Contest, Ripon
- March 23, 2024 – 6<sup>th</sup> District Americanism Banquet, La Sure’s, Oshkosh
- May 4, 2024 – 6<sup>th</sup> District Spring Conference, hosted by Two Rivers
- June 16-21, 2024 – American Legion Auxiliary Badger Girls State, UW Oshkosh
- July 10-14, 2024 – Department Convention, Appleton
- August 23-29, 2024 - National Convention, New Orleans, LA

*Diane Steinert*  
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Oshkosh, WI 54904  
920-573-1846  
[djdmsteinert@gmail.com](mailto:djdmsteinert@gmail.com)



American Legion Auxiliary  
6<sup>th</sup> District – Fall Conference  
Meeting Minutes  
October 28, 2023

The 6th District Fall Conference meeting was hosted by Oshkosh Unit 70 and called to order at 9:10 am President Diane Steinert. An opening prayer was read by Chaplain Mary Koslowski, followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, Auxiliary Preamble and Mission Statement.

President Diane welcomed everyone to the venue. Guest 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander Dave Steinert was introduced. Maggie Geiger, Department President, will be joining the conference later. The 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander Dave Steinert welcomed members to the conference.

Roll call was taken: President Diane Steinert, First Vice President Sandy Hinkle, Second Vice President Mary Raatz, Secretary Tracey Koach, Historian Dorothy Gruber, Parliamentarian Diane Duschek, Sergeant-at-arms Daralyn Wessels, Assistant Sergeant-at-arms Karen Wessels, County Presidents Mary Lannbrecht, Beth Puddy, and Sandy Hinkle, and Chairpersons Linda Lefky and Kathie Boyette were all present.

Chairpersons Patti Westpfahl, Char Kiesling, Nancy Rivera, Phyllis Schultz, Patti Julius and County President Patti Westpfahl were all excused.

Roll call was taken with 13 Units and 33 members present.

Minutes from the Spring 2023 conference were distributed and approved as printed. The Treasurer's Report was read, approved and filed for audit.

Correspondence was shared – The ALA National Emergency Fund raised its grant amount from \$2,400 to \$3,000 for 2023/2024. Information as to how to apply can be found on the ALA National and Department websites.

The passing of member Betty Kohl was noted.

Reports from the following chairpersons were given, starting with Pres. Diane:

- Highlights from 2023 Dept Convention including Convention Citations; Newly elected Dept President Maggie Geiger's mission is enhancing veterans lives and Dogs 2 Dog Tags. Poppy pins are given for new member recruitment.
- National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina – Racing was the convention theme as National President Vickie Koutz is from Indiana. Newly installed National President Lisa Wiliamson mission is to destigmatize mental health and prevent veteran suicide (Be the One).

First Vice President – No report

Second Vice President – No report

Historian:

- Recommends all units take pictures at events and keep them as photo documentation and to consider submitting them to various print papers/journals such as Navy Times.

Chaplain:

- Mailed a few get-well cards, sympathy cards, and one wedding card.

Treasurer:

- Reminder to review the Red Book
- Form 990s are required to be filed with the IRS annually.
- Raffle license reports are also submitted annually to the state.
- Unit dues to the District by January 1, 2024.

Sergeant-at-arms:

- President Diane thanked Sergeant-at-arms Daralyn Wessels and Assistant Sergeant-at-arms Karen Wessels for their work at Department functions/events.

Department President, Maggie Geiger, greeted attendees and stated that she has been traveling throughout state and meeting members. She reminded members to remember families of deployed military and to work the mission and program but also have fun.

Americanism, Linda Lefky

- Americanism Essay Contest, essay title “What does freedom mean to you?” Essays are due to Americanism committee by February 5, 2024.
- Oratorical contest will be held on March 23, 2024.
- Americanism banquet will be held Saturday March 23, 2024 at LaSure’s in Oshkosh.
- Outstanding Americanism Person of the Year - completed nominations are due back to Pres. Diane no later than December 31, 2023. One member per Unit can be nominated.
- Take time to review what the Department website offers for information to share when reaching out to schools.

Children & Youth, No Chairperson but President Diane shared:

- District needs a chairperson
- Review the Department website for job description and Program engagement.
- Consider participating in the Child Welfare Foundation.
- Develop contacts for active-duty children.

Constitution & Bylaws, Diane Duscheck

- If your Unit hasn’t updated its Constitution and Bylaws recently, please do so. Recent National changes should be included such as changing pronouns, change membership eligibility, and changing meeting style to be flexible (e.g., Zoom meetings).

Education & Scholarships, Alice Bartow absent but President Diane shared:

- Continue to monitor Department website because scholarship application forms are not available yet.

Finance, Diane Duscheck

- Units should have a budget and get all expenditures authorized prior to spending funds.
- Keep receipts for paper trail for auditors.
- Units should audit their books annually and the Unit president and treasurer are not eligible to audit books.

Juniors, Char Kiesling absent but Barb discussed the District’s youth camp out at Camp Hometown Heroes in Kettle Moraine and the programs the camp offers.

Legislative, Kathie Boyette

- Sign up for weekly National Legislative newsletter (on-line).
- Write to your representatives to support veteran issues. The Legion website has the “American Legion Legislative Action Center” that can help with this.
- There is also an app for your phones.

Membership, Patti Westpfahl absent but President Diane shared:

- 6<sup>th</sup> District is in 7<sup>th</sup> place as of October 17, 2027.
- Reminded members of the Great Membership Race and Denali is the 6<sup>th</sup> District Sled Dog.

National Security, Phyllis Schultz absent but President Diane shared:

- Go on-line and review the National Security Program

Poppy, Patti Julius absent but President Diane shared:

- Department Poppy project wants Posters submitted by March 15, 2024. Be alert to District notification when to have them to District.

Public Relations, Nancy Rivera absent but President Diane shared:

- Creation of a District Facebook public page was discussed at the DEC meeting earlier this month.
- Bob Chappell, Department PR, offers a monthly Zoom program for information and all are invited. See the Department website for information.

VA&R, Sandy Hinkle:

- Camp American Legion expressed gratitude for the paper products. It is always looking for volunteers as well.

Diane Duschek reported that the ALA Foundation has changed to two available funds, Veterans Project Fund which offers a \$10,000 grant with a 20% match for a first-time project and the Veterans Creative Arts (VCA) fund for arts for veterans grants. Please give to the VCA.

Pres. Diane announced:

- District Executive Committee will have their Spring meeting on March 17, 2024, at Post 70 starting at 1:00 pm
- 6<sup>th</sup> District Spring Conference would be hosted by Two Rivers on ~~April 13, 2024~~ **May 4, 2024 (DMS)**. More information will follow at a later date. Units will present their annual reports with tri-fold boards. Committee chairpersons do not require trifold boards with their reports.

Announcements were made by each Unit. Many have Veteran's Day dinners and/or assemblies coming up on November 10<sup>th</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Raffle basket drawing was completed with \$260 collected.

Fall Fun Project was creating fall decorations with springs.

The meeting was closed with a prayer and ended at 2:15 pm

Submitted by Tracey Koach, Secretary



The American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Wisconsin  
6<sup>th</sup> District Americanism Program  
Outstanding Americanism Person of the Year  
2023

Basis for Recommendation:

Outstanding in promotion of Patriotism and Americanism activities in the American Legion Auxiliary and community.

**ONLY ONE MEMBER PER UNIT CAN BE NOMINATED**

Auxiliary member being recommended:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Unit #/Name/City: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Unit President or Secretary)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return no later than December 31, 2023**

Send to:

Diane Steinert

6<sup>th</sup> District President

2850 Homestead Dr

Oshkosh, WI 54904

[djdmsteinert@gmail.com](mailto:djdmsteinert@gmail.com)

**6<sup>th</sup> District Americanism Program**  
**Outstanding Americanism Person of the Year**  
**Nominating Form**

In no more than 100 words for each category listed below, tell how your candidate has been outstanding.

1. In Community Service Activities:

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2. In Service to God and Country:

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3. In Educational Activities:

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4. In Flag Educational Activities:

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5. In Youth Activities:

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6. In Patriotic Holiday Programs:

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7. In Unit and Auxiliary Programs:

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# 2024 MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

JANUARY 18-21, 2024

LA CROSSE CENTER

300 HARBORVIEW PLAZA ~ LA CROSSE, WI 54601

## REGISTRATION FORM

Pre-register for The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin 2024 Midwinter Conference by returning this registration form and \$25.00 per person (1 person per registration form) to Department Headquarters by January 2, 2024, and **save \$5.00!** Registrations received after January 2, 2024, will be \$30.00 per person. Or register online at [wilegion.org](http://wilegion.org).

*(Please type or print clearly in order for your badge to be printed correctly- List your name how you wish it to be printed on your badge)*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBER ID # \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_ POST \_\_\_\_\_ UNIT \_\_\_\_\_ SQUADRON \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	NO	PRICE	TOTAL
Registration Fee (only one per form)		\$25.00	
Reg. Fee After 1/2/24 (only one per form)		\$30.00	
Recruit the Next You Celebration Check here if you are a new recruit. <input type="checkbox"/> Recruited by: _____		\$40.00 <i>(RSVP By January 2, 2024)</i>	
<b>Total Enclosed</b>			

**Make check payable to The American Legion, or Enter Credit Card Information Below**

Cash  Check # \_\_\_\_\_

OR

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_ Card Type \_\_\_\_\_ Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Sec. Code \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:  
The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin  
Attn: Midwinter  
P.O. Box 388  
Portage, WI 53901  
or email to [angela@wilegion.org](mailto:angela@wilegion.org)



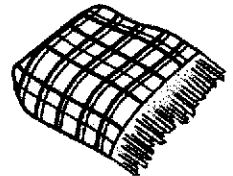
**2024 MIDWINTER CONFERENCE  
 AUXILIARY SESSION ~ JANUARY 20, 2023 (9:00 am – 1:00 pm)  
 RADISSON HOTEL ~ WISCONSIN ROOM 102  
 200 HARBOR VIEW PLAZA, LA CROSSE, WI 54601**

Come join the American Legion Auxiliary for a **FUN** session at the 2024 Midwinter Conference!

The session will include **FUN** projects to benefit veterans at the VA Hospitals and Veterans Homes supported by Wisconsin. Department Adjutant Julie Muhle will also motivate everyone in attendance with her presentation, "React or Respond!" Finally, the session will close with a round table discussion / Q&A segment.



Participants will make tie blankets and are asked to bring men's athletic socks and small toiletry items for the Socks of Love project. The ALA will also conduct a Winter Clothing Drive during the session, so please bring **NEW** men's and women's winter hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, and socks for our veterans in need in Wisconsin.



9:00 am	Opening Ceremonies
9:15 am – 10:30 am	Veterans Project (Tie Blankets)
10:30 – 11:00 am	"React or Respond," Department Adjutant Julie Muhle
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Veterans Project (Socks of Love)
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Round Table Discussion / Q&A Session

To participate in the ALA's **FUN** session, you must also register with The American Legion for the 2024 Midwinter Conference and pay the registration fee (\$25 by January 1st, \$30 afterward). A registration form is included in this unit mailing.



Please return the bottom of this form by **January 1, 2024** if you plan to attend the ALA's **FUN** session so we can ensure we have enough supplies for everyone.

Email form to: [deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org](mailto:deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org) or mail to: ALA-WI, PO Box 140, Portage, WI 53901-0140.

- YES! I plan to attend the ALA's **FUN** session at the 2024 Midwinter Conference!
- YES! I would like to help make Tie Blankets for Veterans.
- YES! I would like to donate items for the Socks of Love (athletic socks and/or small toiletry items)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that to participate in the ALA's **FUN** session, I must also register for the Midwinter Conference with The American Legion and pay the registration fee.*