



American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Wisconsin

Ninth District

March 2022 Newsletter

Members of the 9th District,

Spring is coming fast and it seems there's lots to do, as the year ends for the Auxiliary.

Don't forget to get the Year End Reports done and sent in on time. There are many sources out there to help you if you need help, just ask. It is important to fill out the papers even if that program doesn't apply to your unit, send it in with a N/A on it. We want every unit to fill out the reports, and we all know some units have more members, resources and are more active than others, and that's ok. We all count no matter what. The deadlines for the year end reports are as follows:

Due to April 15th – Unit Year-End Impact Report District President : **Marian Brown** 1312 S. Casaloma Drive, Appleton, WI 54914 email: mbrown4283@yahoo.com

April 15th – Narrative Report – Due To Department HQ : ALA Dept. of Wisconsin P.O. Box 140, Portage, WI 53901

**Narrative Program Reports Must Be Submitted On Separate Pages-
Annual Report Forms Can Be Accessed On The
ALA Wisconsin Department Website: www.amlegionauxwi.org**

We have the Ninth District Spring Conference coming up in May. Please plan to attend, more information coming soon.

SAVE THE DATE

Ninth District Spring Conference

Saturday May 7, 2022

Held at: Summit Town Hall

Langlade County

N8495 County Road H

Gleason, WI 54435

8-9am Registration 9am-3pm Program

Raffle Baskets/60-40 Raffle

Nominations for District Offices:

This year is an election year, so we will need some of the members to step up for our District offices. We have a 1st Vice and 2nd Vice, that plan to move up the chairs; 1st Vice Bonnie Blink and 2nd Vice Sue Keyzers. We will have nominations for the incoming 2nd Vice position, as well as any of the other positions if you are interested and want to be nominated. ***Anyone interested in holding an office contact me as soon and have a nominator designated to make the nomination from the floor at Spring Conference.***

Reminder, to get up to date officer forms, be it County or Unit, to Department and myself; to allow us to keep everyone informed as information becomes available. These forms should be filed with Department yearly, even if your unit does elections less than that. There are many items from Department and other sources I am sharing.

It is important that the units report items they are doing, done or plan to do in the near future. Be it a paragraph or just a line, this will help share what the Units of Ninth District are doing for our Veterans, Military, their families and the community. There have been a couple of units doing this on a regular basis, "Thank You".



Madelyn Bales, a 2021 Wausaukee High School Graduate, won two first place awards in the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) 2021 Poppy Poster Contest. It is quite a distinction to win at the ALA National Level in this contest. All Poppy Poster Contest entries from Wausaukee School were judged by the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 66 of Athelstane/Silver Cliff and Unit 428 of Amberg. The first place winners in all classes were then sent on to the ALA Ninth District Competition. The district winners were sent on to the ALA Department of Wisconsin Competition in Middleton, WI this past July. The Wisconsin First Place Winners were then sent on to the ALA National Competition in Phoenix, Arizona. Madelyn's poster won first place in the Best Poppy Poster Central Division, Class VI. She also won First Place in Best Overall Poppy Poster Central Division. Congratulations go to Madelyn Bales for a job well done! A special "Thank You" to Wausaukee School District Art Teacher Jaime Wszelaki for overseeing all of the Poppy Posters in-process by the students in her classroom.

The American Legion Auxiliary is a proud sponsor of the Poppy Poster Contest, the Americanism Essay Contest, the Badger Girl Program and many other youth oriented programs each year. Contact any of the local American Legion Posts or Auxiliary Units for more information.

Pictured above is a picture of Madelyn's Poppy Poster which now has a permanent home in the American Legion Auxiliary Archives in Indianapolis, Indiana. In the other picture is Madelyn Bales with her two awards and **Dee Farley, President of American Legion Unit 66 of Athelstane/Silver Cliff. ALA Unit 66** was one of the sponsors of the local Poppy Poster Contest. .



Brianna Mueller, a 2021 Wausaukee High School Graduate, received a \$1000 Scholarship from the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 66 of Athelstane/Silver Cliff and a \$1000 Scholarship from the Silver Cliff Fire & Rescue Auxiliary. Brianna recently completed her first semester in Architectural Technology at Northeast Technical College in Green Bay. Pictured above from left to right is ALA Unit 66 President Deanna Farley, Scholarship Winner Brianna Mueller and SCFR President Barb Van Boxel.

Hi Presidents,

A reminder that there will not be room for District Caucuses at the State Convention this year, so any unit member wanting to be an alternate delegate to the National Convention must be elected at your Spring conferences and then that information be forwarded to the Department. Reminder, there are no expenses paid for the alternate by the Department, unless they are actually called upon to take the place of a delegate on the convention floor.

However, since the National Convention is in Milwaukee this coming August, it is a fantastic opportunity for ALA unit members to get a glimpse of what it looks like! Remind them to submit a notice to volunteer to Amy Luft, 2nd District President or to Maggie Geiger, Department 1st Vice President.

Also, please share with your members the following message below from Department Public Relations Chairman Ann Lotter...

Have great Spring Conferences!

Linda Coppock
ALA Dept of WI Sr VP
Service To Veterans

Ninth District photo's and activities request for the Facebook page:

"How many districts, counties and units have Facebook pages or use a social media form for putting out information to members and general public? Please send pictures and newspaper clippings to Department of Wisconsin Public Relations Chairman Ann Lotter 7792 County Road I lot 5 Oconto Falls Wi 54154 or email lotterann@yahoo.com. We also need these pictures for Department Convention. Thanks. Ann Lotter

Units wanting to enter a History Book at Spring Conference to contact Nellie DeBaker for the rules and criteria. They will be judged and one sent on to Department.
District Historian – Nellie DeBaker - Luxemburg Unit 262
N7197 County Road H, Luxemburg, WI 54217-9221
Email is nelliepdebaker@gmail.com
Home Phone 920 845-5033

Calling All Members....

Have you ever wondered what it's like to participate in a National Convention? Here's your chance!

Numerous volunteer opportunities such as inside/outside greeters, office assistance, and support staff will be available for the National Convention in downtown Milwaukee from August 26 – September 1, 2022. Members who are interested or would like to learn more should contact:

Amy Luft
ALA National Convention Committee Chair
amyluft@gmail.com ♦ 414-651-7300

Mid Winter: If you were unable to attend Mid Winter in January, here is some of the material covered to share, it was very educational.

The American Legion Auxiliary conducted a workshop at the 2022 Midwinter Conference. Several people asked for electronic copies of the handouts, so they have been posted on the department website for your convenience (<https://www.amlegionauxwi.org/program-info>). Scroll down to Midwinter Handouts.

Official Family:

Candidates for Department or National office must email their announcement (300-350 words) with a head/shoulder photo (JPEG format) to me (Bonnie Dorniak, deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org) by Monday, March 21, 2022 for publication in the April issue of the *Badger Legionnaire/Wisconsin*. As a reminder, ANY member may run for ANY office. Please share this with other Auxiliary members who may be interested.

From Karen Degner on coupons:

I have been watching to see if coupons are now being accepted at overseas commissaries. The website: www.grocerysavingtips.com/p/military-family has lists of commissaries accepting coupons. After choosing the branch of service (US Army, US air Force, US Navy/Marines) please read any comments listed below the address prior to mailing. Some commissaries have withdrawn from the program and/or closed and no longer accept coupons.

Even though coupons can be used for up to 6 months past the manufacturers expiration date, please do not mail those that are more than 2 months past expiration when you send them. By the time they arrive, they may be past the 6 month date.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. Thank you all for all you do!

Karen Degner
ALA Dept. of WI
National Security Chair
kdegner88@gmail.com
920-918-9772

Stay Safe and God Bless

Thank you to everyone for all you do for the District and the Veterans! Each one of you are the true strength of our organization.

Marian Brown, Ninth District President

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A GOOD LEADER

To some, the title “leader” implies a domineering, take-charge, charismatic individual. Leadership isn’t an adjective. Leadership is a mindset in action; it stems from social influence, not authority or power. Leadership has nothing to do with titles. You can be a leader in your workplace, your neighborhood, your family, and/or our organization, all without having a title.

Be Knowledgeable: It is not necessary to be an expert on everything, but basic knowledge is essential.

- Familiarize yourself with documents that govern the operation of your unit or committee
- Possess a level of familiarity with programs of the American Legion Auxiliary
- Strengthen knowledge on Parliamentary Procedure
- Know the process for the appropriation and control of money. Bad financial practices do not just hurt the organization; they can result in criminal investigations and prosecution.

Be Passionate: A good leader exhibits excitement; and through demonstrated, unswerving commitment to our vision, instills hope and inspiration to other members. A good leader “walks the talk” and in doing so, earns the right to lead.

Listen: If you exhibit a proper attitude in listening, really listening to your members, the potential for identifying new opportunities will emerge. Instill in yourself, and others, that listening is an opportunity to grow. In the end, your success as a leader will be predicated upon your ability to listen and understand the viewpoint of others.

Have a Positive Attitude: Leaders should have an upbeat, optimistic attitude that serves as a source of inspiration for others. If leaders seem discouraged or apathetic, members are likely to also become uninspired and demotivated.

- Be a cheerleader. Motivate others by your enthusiasm.
- Follow up with your members to ensure they are achieving the goals, objectives, and milestones established.

Lead with Integrity: A good leader must possess unquestionable character and lead with integrity. Integrity gives you so much as a leader; credibility, trust, confidence, influence, and more.

Lead by Example: Who says leadership is a one-way relationship? As you work toward developing leadership qualities in yourself, don’t forget to look to your fellow members for feedback and inspiration.

- Pay attention to the things that have been effective in the past and always be on the lookout for new ways to inspire, motivate, and reward your members.

- Be willing to delegate responsibility – use the talents of others!
- Always instill a climate of goodwill.
- Be respectful. Remember those all-important “shout outs” to deserving members and certainly the two most important words — thank you.
- Do you care about your members and strive to help build leadership capacity in them?

Be Confident: Be aware of the way and manner which you present yourself. Bearing is everything! Be confident and decisive in your decision-making. Members will pick up on your approach to leadership and find reassurance, clear direction, and security when a leader portrays confidence and positive demeanor.

Act Professionally: As a leader, you should be cordial to all of your members. You should also recognize the importance of dressing appropriately, showing up for meetings on time, and communicating in a professional manner. Your goals and expectations should be clear from the beginning. Members will be more motivated and less confused. Ask for input. Tell them that their perspective is crucial to your success.

IDEAS TO HELP SUPPORT MILITARY FAMILIES

So, what can we, as members of the American Legion Auxiliary, do to show how much we appreciate our military families? What can our members do to get involved in supporting the spouses and children of our servicemembers?

Through the ALA National Security Committee, members have the opportunity to provide as much support as we can to make life a little easier for a military family. We need to welcome military families into our local communities, tell them how much we appreciate them, and let them know The American Legion Family is available to help them. Whether it's babysitting so a parent can go to the store, or helping with projects around the house, we can be there when a military family needs help.

We hear so many times that a military spouse is in a new and strange community and is overwhelmed and they have no one to turn to for help. We can be there to help! Our unit members can work together to find local businesses willing to work with military families and create a list of local resources. If there is a Family Readiness Group nearby, they can distribute the list to them or have copies available at the community center or library.

Members of a local unit's National Security Committee can offer spouse-to-spouse support so that a military wife or husband doesn't feel so alone and stressed with everyday life. Our members can volunteer family-to-family support by having their family participate in local activities together with a military family. Our Junior Auxiliary members can play a vital role in supporting military kids by making sure they are included in activities and introduced to the other kids in their groups.

When we help a service family, they truly become a part of our community and our lives. But as is typical of military life, they soon may be reassigned to another duty station. Although we are sad to see the family leave our community, we can help them one last time by contacting a Legion post and Auxiliary unit in the area where they will be stationed next. This could help make the transition to a new home easier for them.

There is no one who can take the place of a deployed servicemember, but we can offer kindness and understanding and be there when a lonely spouse or child needs someone to talk to. The ways to help a military family are endless. We only need to put ourselves in their place for a moment and do whatever it takes to make sure our military families know they are not alone and are truly appreciated for the strength, resilience, and courage they show us every day

WHAT IS A STAND DOWN?

Stand downs, started in 1988 by two Vietnam veterans, are named after the military term for a combat unit's time to rest and recover while at war. Today, stand downs are a grassroots effort to offer services to homeless veterans. On any given evening in our country, 39,471 veterans are homeless, and 9 percent of those are women, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Stand downs typically include food, shelter, clothing, health screenings, benefits counseling, job counseling, and referral services. The philosophy of a stand down is to give homeless veterans a hand up, not a handout. Stand downs are organized by self-appointed community coalitions that take on the task of holding the event. Any group can decide to hold a stand down.

The traditional stand down lasts three days, providing shelter and food throughout the event, and may provide services such as haircuts, healthcare screenings, vision and dental care, VA benefits counseling, substance abuse counseling, and legal services.

Comments from veterans and their families have been very positive. These veterans were thankful they could attend the stand down, get help and get back on a positive course.

Finally, which type of stand down should we plan? Consider hosting a one-day health fair. Services provided at these events usually include health care screening; health care services; eye care services or referrals; dental care services or referrals; VA benefits counseling or referrals; governmental benefits counseling or referrals; substance abuse counseling/recovery groups; mental health counseling or referrals; or housing services. Additional services can include foot care, shoes, and socks.

DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN WORKING WITH MINORS

Public relations is never easy for a nonprofit organization to define. The Public Relations Society of America defines public relations as “a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and the public.” This definition is important when trying to truly work the public relations program for the American Legion Auxiliary because we need to be strategic in our communication with the public as we work to strengthen our brand and our place within the community.

Too much or too little public relations will result in less than beneficial relationships with the community that the organization needs in order to succeed. An important part of the American Legion Auxiliary that we celebrate is our work with children and youth and the work of our ALA Junior members, but when working with this very important subgroup, there are many things to consider, especially in regards to public relations.

Things to avoid when incorporating minors into your American Legion Auxiliary public relations plan:

- DON'T include photos with minors without first getting parental consent.
- DO get signed parental consent and when possible, get permission from the parents/guardians each time you use the images, videos, or work of a minor. For members of the American Legion Family, it may be as simple as drawing up permission for parents to sign that gives you blanket use. Children cannot give consent to the use of their photographs. Obtaining a child's consent is not enough to justify putting a child at risk. Parents or guardians must give free and informed permission for the publishing of any such material.
- In today's world of over sharing, using pictures of minors might not seem like a big deal, but we don't know the minor's history, family history, or how their name or picture might negatively impact their life.
- DON'T take photographs that focus only on one child or are a close up of their face. The use of images of children and minors has become a larger concern in recent years. There is a suggestion that such images may be used inappropriately, or in order to gain access to the children pictured. The issue has been further complicated with the advancement of Internet technology, meaning images and information are much easier to obtain and distribute.
- DO use photographs that include many minors in the photograph. Instead of using one child in your advertising and publicity where they are easily identified, try to incorporate others so that it is a group picture where many children are included (all with parental consent of course). This will allow the focus to be on the event and not just a single child. It will also lessen the threats that an adult may use the knowledge gained from the photos to gain unintended access to them through techniques that employ familiarity.

Social media has changed the way in which we publicize our events and as a rule of thumb, it is important to post where you have been and not where you are going to further protect the safety and

security of the minors you work with. In 1998, the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) was put in place to protect personal information of children on websites and online services — including apps — that are directed to children under 13. Generally, this applies to companies or groups that operate either commercial websites or online services directed at children (anyone younger than 13), which would include the American Legion Auxiliary.

COPPA requires those sites and services to notify parents directly and get their approval before they collect, use, or disclose a child’s personal information. Personal information in the world of COPPA includes a child’s name, address, phone number, or email address; their physical whereabouts; photos, videos, and audio recordings of the child; and persistent identifiers, like IP addresses, that can be used to track a child’s activities over time and across different websites and online services. Even though this was originally passed 20 years ago, it is still very relevant when making decisions regarding public relations.

Public relations is a vital program of the American Legion Auxiliary and the youth we work with, both within The American Legion Family and the community. Paying attention to these suggestions will help you maximize your work within public relations, while maintaining a level of safety for the minors that you work with.