



## MEMBERSHIP

**Becky Mueller**  
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I am so EXCITED! YOU are awesome. Memberships are flowing into department. We have officers stepping up and paying their dues in a timely manner as an example to the rest of us. We have new members being recruited. Our GNOME pins are traveling all over the state. Keep up the excellent work.

Continue to turn in your renewals – let’s get them all in before Christmas. I BELIEVE we can do this – then we can all concentrate on our mission by working our programs and projects. We are so important to our Veteran and military families. We need to continue providing support and encouragement to them.

Do not forget to focus on getting former

members who have fallen by the wayside or left because of something we as members did to discourage them from remaining part of our family. Or it was something we didn’t do to make them feel welcome and/or needed by us? Now is the time to make amends. Reach out to them. We know they are eligible for membership – they were prior members. They once found something that inspired them to become members – let’s inspire them again! Maybe the timing wasn’t right – schedules change, circumstances change – but we were important to them in the past. Renew that contact – invite them to events – let them know that they are part of our mission field whether they are a member or not. What can we do to make their experience with the Legion Family better and beneficial to them? Ask these questions, listen to the answers, and then act appropriately.

We are more important than ever – the needs

of our Veterans, military, their (our) families, and communities are ever-changing and evolving but the need for what we provide in the ways of support and service have not changed! Let us honor our WHY as we continue to show WHO we are and WHAT we do that matters so much to others.

As the season changes into fall, let’s harvest those members – send in their membership renewals, encourage those past members to come back to the family, and look for those new members seeking a place to belong and serve.

**BELIEVE!**

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments please contact your membership team members. Department Committee: Becky Mueller; Mary-Ellen Crandall; Donna Bellettiere; Barbara McDaniel; Andrea Stoltz, Department Program Coordinator; your District Presidents and Membership Chairmen; or any Department Officer. We are in the Red Book.

### 2022 Membership Rankings

DISTRICT	GOAL %
District 3	30.22%
District 2	28.35%
District 4	27.96%
District 9	26.54%
District 7	24.51%
District 6	23.79%
District 5	20.78%
District 1	19.53%
District 10	18.35%
District 8	17.64%
District 12	16.57%
District 11	11.89%

### VA & R — HOMELESS WOMEN VETERANS

**Pat Smith**  
Department Chair  
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**YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE** – Each of us are approached daily for contributions to any number of causes. The never-ending robo-calls are equally frustrating. It is irritating as well as just plain rude when callers do not even speak to you. Maybe it is time to get back to basics and things you understand and believe in. Do you remember the reason(s) you became an American Legion Auxiliary member? Of course, you do. Your membership honors a Veteran(s) within your family – men and women who served in our American military services to stand for this country and to protect and provide for us.

Sometime ago we heard the horror stories of women veterans living in their vehicles with their children; afraid to go to a Veterans’ hospital for fear of losing their children; alone and desperate. That is changing. The biggest problem facing women Veterans today seems to be issues related with COVID or health issues. The issues can be the loss of income, threat of eviction, the cost or need for medical attention, the upheaval of divorce or separation, or even abuse.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things a person can do is to realize they must reach out for help. That woman who proudly accepted her duty as part of our military forces must now swallow that pride and look for help. This is where you as a member of the American Legion Auxiliary can make a difference. Invite your county veterans service officer (CVSO) to speak at your unit meeting. Ask the CVSO what your unit can do. Keep track of what your unit does in this effort; whether you make donations to the CVSO’s emergency fund or give gas cards. Sponsor or help at a job fair or stand down.

Celebrate unit members’ birthdays by collecting or donating money to the Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund. That adds up! Have fun and do your own thing. Obviously, the easiest thing is to just donate to the grant fund. Your donations are greatly appreciated and most importantly, you can have that feel good moment knowing that every penny of your donation helps a woman Veteran. When a woman Veteran needs help, we want to be there with a hand reaching out in support.

### UNIT 477 AWARD RECIPIENTS AT STATE CONVENTION



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 477 Saint Nazianz received many awards at Department Convention: Award of Excellence for Membership Achievements, Membership “Revere Award,” and the Department President’s Award for Excellence. Included in this photo are Dean Augustine, Commander Post #477; Roberta Posvic, Manitowoc County President; Diane Steinert, 6th District President; and members of Unit 477.

## Poppy Reminder

**ORDER DEADLINE:  
DECEMBER 15**

Poppies can be distributed all year long.  
Veterans Day is a great time to do a distribution.

**Don’t Delay – Order Today!**





## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

**Linda Kostka**  
 Department Chaplain  
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 715-209-8135

*Psalm 86:7 — In the day of my troubles  
 I will call you, for you will answer me.*

As we look back in our histories, we had many gods. Native Americans had the four winds and every structured religion had various bibles that supported their faith. They wanted the freedom to worship as they believed. And therefore, we became a Nation of Faith.

Our forefathers found religion so important they put it into the First Amendment to the Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." And so, our American Legion Family's preambles start with, "For God and Country." We should pray often, as we are a country of freedom to worship as we choose without exception.

**Prayer:** Lord, I humbly come to pray and seek your guidance with the upcoming election. Forgive us for the wickedness and evilness around us and in us, please clean our bodies and souls. Search our hearts and remove our indiscretions. I humbly ask for your guidance during these troubling times. Amen, Amen

**Hymn:** Faith of our fathers, holy faith.  
 We will be true to thee till death.



**Wisconsin's cheesy volunteers made for a successful National Convention. Visitors from other states often commented on how gouda job they did and we know they had a hole lot of fun! Way to make Wisconsin proud!**

## GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

**Bonnie Dorniak**  
 Executive Secretary/Treasurer  
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The 2022 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A special thanks to Convention Chair Amy Luft/co-chair Maggie Geiger, Pages Chair Sandy Mack/co-chair Shirley Krier, Flowers Chair Linda Kostka/co-chair Darcy Kostka, Mail Room Chair Christine Johnsen/co-chair Morgan Johnsen, National President's Driver Donna Jensen, and the dozens of dedicated ALA members who volunteered throughout the weeklong event to ensure it was a success!

Wisconsin received several awards at the convention, including a National President's Award for Excellence to Marie Tabat, Community Service Chair for Unit 434 in Oak Creek! Unit 434 was recognized for promoting the American Legion Family's involvement in community events throughout the year. Rumor is that members of the unit were disappointed they had not been recognized previously for all their hard work, but they were told that the unit couldn't be recognized if they didn't report their activities. Well...Marie reported...and the results speak for themselves! Congratulations, Marie Tabat and the members of Oak Creek Unit 434!!! Keep up the great work.

Diane Weggen also received Honorable Mention for the National President's Award for Excellence on behalf of the Department of Wisconsin in recognition of projects done to support those who care for others. See the complete awards listing on page A5 for details of other achievements won by Wisconsin units/members.

Vickie Koutz of Indiana was elected National President for 2022-2023. Her focus for the year is to honor our Veterans every day and her special project is supporting the companions of National Veterans Creative Arts Festival participants. Read more about Vickie



**Working the ALA mission, and the caring demonstrated by unit members throughout the Department of Wisconsin, resulted in the Department receiving one of three 2022 National President's Awards for Excellence. Thank you, members, for giving me the privilege of being your president to receive the Honorable Mention at National Convention on your behalf. — Diane Weggen**

Koutz on page A5.

The National President will be conducting her official visit during The American Legion Midwinter Conference in Green Bay, from January 12-15, 2023. The ALA will be conducting a training session on Saturday, January 14 and a fun luau event is planned for Saturday evening so mark your calendars to gather with the Legion Family and meet the National President. Watch for details in the unit mailing and on the department website.

National Headquarters mailed the 2023 membership renewal notices in mid-September. You may have received a renewal notice even though you recently paid your dues. National pulled the mailing list in early August so things may have crossed in the mail. If you

believe you received a notice in error, please contact your unit membership chairman to confirm your dues were forwarded to department headquarters for processing.

Members may pay their dues through their unit, online at [www.ALAFORVeterans.org](http://www.ALAFORVeterans.org), or over the phone. You can pay for multiple family members at one time or pay for lapsed membership years if you pay by phone. Please call national headquarters at 317-569-4570, Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm (Central Time) if interested in paying by phone.

Thanks to everyone who already renewed their 2023 dues. Together, I BELIEVE American Legion Auxiliary members make a difference in the lives of our Veterans, the military, and their families.



**President Linda Coppock presented Marie Tabat of Oak Creek Unit 434 the National President's Award for Excellence that was received at National Convention. Congratulations, Marie on an award-winning report!**



## LEADERSHIP

**Joyce Endres**  
**Department Chair**  
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*"If your actions create a legacy that inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then, you are an excellent leader." ~ Dolly Parton*

Start with a positive attitude to inspire others to serve alongside you. When you accept a program chairmanship or office at any level, look for a mentor to help you. Work with a team of people with different skill sets to serve with you and learn, improve and strive to make a bigger difference. **Teamwork** makes things happen with a strong positive impact.

**Life happens!** If for some reason you cannot fulfill an obligation, contact the president to explain your situation. Members will step up to help you accomplish what you set out to do.

**Leadership, communication and trust** are important to serving together, as a team. As a unit, committee, or American Legion Family team, the following tips help us be better leaders:

- Share your knowledge, ideas, and experiences to help others achieve goals.
- Illustrate self-confidence and a positive attitude, both attributes of a strong leader.
- Motivate yourself and your team to move actions forward and achieve more.
- Build a strong trusting team by sharing and really listening to one another.
- Be consistent to ensure your team knows what to expect from you.
- Support and advocate for your team to build trust and creativity.
- Service not self. Serve alongside your members and team.
- Ask members and your team what motivates them the most. What is their skill set?
- Delegate! A leader does not do it all themselves! Personally contact members for help based on what interests them or what they enjoy doing.
  - Listen, and ask questions to learn and understand. If it doesn't make sense to you, it may not to others.
  - Ask 'WHY' often to define the rationale behind what we do and why we do it and to get to the root cause of a problem. Work with your team to define solutions that work best for the good of the Auxiliary and/or the American Legion Family.
    - Push for change. Needed change, not change for change sake.
    - Be open and fair. Talk with a member privately or the unit/team as a whole, to help understand the situation and problem solve together.
    - Be flexible. The unexpected happens often so we need to adapt expectations and goals as needed to accomplish what needs to be done.
    - Build trust with integrity and honesty.

If you would like to schedule a Leadership Workshop with your unit or district, please contact me.

**Teamwork Makes Dreams Work.**  
**HAVE FUN AND ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!**

## HISTORY PROGRAM

**Sue Turowski**  
**Department Historian**  
**sueturowski@hotmail.com**

I spent a couple of hours trying to look for a great quote to offer to each of you and the one that I thought of myself when I first sat down to type is the one that I keep coming back to, so here it is! *"If we do not record what our units are doing, then how will we ever know what is working for us and what is not?"* Sue Turowski, Department of Wisconsin Historian (2022-2023)

When we were all standing in the receiving line at the Department Convention in July, a member came up to me and mentioned that She is the Historian for her unit and that she is the one who is the keeper of all records! Therefore, when it is time for reports, their unit has no problems because she uses her records to fill out the reports! AND she told me that I could use that information. I just do not remember who it was so that I can give her credit. Thank YOU to that member for your words of wisdom, I am sharing them with everyone.

So, this year I would like to ask all HIS-

TORIANS to please ask your members to report to you EVERYTHING they do! Yep, every single task, event, item purchased, dimes spent for even the smallest thing, everything that is done in the name of your unit, please give to your HISTORIAN so that she may record it for your unit. Remember please, that a picture is worth a thousand words.

I love history (don't you?) and to be a part of history in the making is even more exciting to me, so I am really looking forward to seeing many of your history books this year. If anyone has any questions or needs any help, please feel free to reach out and ask. The suggestion from the member mentioned above is excellent and I hope that all of you will try it.

*"The best moments in reading are when you come across something – a thought, a feeling, a way of looking at things – which you had thought special and particular to you. And now, here it is, set down by someone else, a person you have never met, someone even who is long dead. And it is as if a hand has come out and taken yours."*  
**Alan Bennett, English playwright (1934-)**

## POPPY PROGRAM

**Patti Westpfahl**  
**Department Chairman**  
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The Poppy, that small fragile red crepe paper flower which is the symbol of strength, honor, sacrifice, and remembrance. Wear a poppy to promote conversation and awareness.

This program honors veterans for their service and sacrifice by promoting and educating all people of the poppy's history and the financial benefit realized by our nation's Veterans as a result of its distribution. This program includes the circulation of the poppy and promotion of its history and the significance of its distribution.

As units begin looking at which programs that they will be working for 2023, remember poppies can be distributed year-round so start working on new ideas. Decide if what worked last year is still a valid idea, or do you need to start to think outside the box? Invite all members of the American Legion Family to assist with distribution. Poppy distributions are likely to be different in most communities. Remember to always ask for permission to distribute in front a business location, just do not presume that it is okay. If local businesses allow, leave a poppy canister at their locations.

If you have not yet ordered your poppies, do so as soon as possible. The deadline to order is December 15, 2022. Orders will be filled as received so don't wait to order! As in past years, if you did not submit your 2022 Poppy Profit report, you will not be sent any poppies.

Sponsor a Poppy Poster Contest. Contact the art teachers at your local schools now and encourage them to enter the contest. Posters submitted for department citations are due May 1, 2023, and one winner in each classification will be sent on to Central Division for further competition. Each Unit Chairman should allow ample time to have posters judged at your district level as applicable.

The 2022-2023 Poppy Program Action Plan and poppy information and worksheets will be posted on the department website ([www.amlegionauxwi.org](http://www.amlegionauxwi.org)) or you can contact me for any information you may need to make your district, county, or unit Poppy Program a success.

Remember reporting is essential to achieve our mission of quality support for our Veterans. Mid-year narratives are due to me by December 3, 2022, and annual reports are due to department by April 15, 2023. Let me know all the creative ways your unit is promoting the Poppy Program. Photos and newspaper articles are greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from all of you!

## LEGISLATIVE

**Diane Weggen**  
**Department Chair**

BELIEVE, because we have the power to make a positive difference for family, community, state, and nation by participating in the legislative process. The American Legion Auxiliary is one of the nation's most prominent supporters of Veterans, military, and their families. Advancing the mission of The American Legion by helping to draft and pass the GI Bill years ago to helping pass the Honoring Our PACT Act, which President Biden signed into law on August 10, 2022, clearly demonstrates how members have the power to help Veterans and their families.

Too many times we feel we have no say and blame the government for whatever we feel is not right. The bottom line is: WE ARE THE GOVERNMENT.

As American citizens we have the right to vote to elect the candidates we feel will best care for us and our country. **Our soldiers are fighting every day for this right for all Americans. They are not soldiers serving to say I am right, and you are wrong, or that my beliefs are more important than yours.** Voting has become complicated because of this current attitude expressed across the United States of America.

Our lives are not one-dimensional, and yet, many of us vote based on only one issue or how our friends, family, and neighbors are voting rather than taking time to educate ourselves about all the issues that affect us every single day. As members of the American Legion Family advocating for Veterans, we must take time to discover which of our beliefs are

true and which are not. Many people are depending on us.

There are several actions we can take to educate ourselves and others.

- Sign up for TAL Action Alerts: [amlegionauxwi.org](http://amlegionauxwi.org) > Legislative page. PDP Joanie Dickerson walks the viewer through the process to sign up for Action Alerts and the latest information about bills The American Legion is supporting.

- Participate in "Get Out the Vote" activities.

- Host school board candidates in a round-table discussion about their beliefs surrounding curriculum, monies allocated for education, school choice, teacher certification, special education funding, etc.

- Make phone calls to encourage voting.
- Host a Town Hall meeting; make sure to include all candidates or their representative for the position/s.

- Educate the youth about our voting system.

The American Legion Family is A NON-PARTISAN ORGANIZATION (remains neutral within the political system) which continues to be instrumental on advancing legislation that improves the quality of life for our Veterans and service members. Because The American Legion does not promote any political party or candidates, it is important that members not wear American Legion branded clothing/accessories when attending or participating in political activities. Also, American Legion Family members and leaders should not promote any candidate or party on social media.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

**Sandy Mack**  
**Department Chair**  
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**262-388-9816**

Public Relations refers to managing how others see and feel about a person, brand, or company. It is about managing perceptions – how people see our organization. It aims to increase awareness, improve business reputation, and attract attendees, donations, etc.

Through the years I have seen many fliers from posts/units holding fundraisers. There are so many wonderful events held by our American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion Family. What sticks out to me are the letters ALA. To a non-member, what do those three letters mean? Chances are nothing. We are the American Legion Auxiliary and should be spelling that out. Request permission to

use logos on your fliers. The request form can be found online and response to your request is quick. The American Legion Auxiliary logo is a great way to promote the Auxiliary. Use your post and unit name and number, and include where the proceeds will go if available. One way of writing where the proceeds will go could be, “Proceeds to benefit Veteran organizations and their families.”

Please feel free to share a copy of your unit’s fundraiser flier and let’s start by sharing those with others. Let’s work together to show our support for other units. We are all here serving the same mission.

Both myself and my team Shirley Krier and Bob Shappell are hoping to reach out to all District Presidents to share unit ideas on best practices for public relations.

Thank you for all you do! Together we can make a difference!

## VA &amp; R — CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP

**Diana Sirovina**  
**Department Chairman**  
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**414-881-9581**

It may seem early but plans for the 2022 edition of ALA Christmas Gift Shop are underway! We are excited that we can bring this great program to our Veterans in some of the long-term care facilities once again.

For those who are not familiar with Christmas Gift Shop, this program began a long time ago. It allows Veterans in long-term care facilities to select gifts to send to their loved ones at Christmas time at no cost to them. The program has changed a lot over the years, but there is one thing that will never change, and that is our commitment to caring for our Veterans and their families. These past two years, our Veterans in long-term care facilities spent long and lonely hours for many months with no family visits. They were overjoyed when they heard that they would be able to choose

gifts for their families this year. Christmas Gift Shop allowed them to feel connected to their loved ones and gave them something positive to focus on.

The 2022 version of Christmas Gift Shop will continue our long-standing tradition of providing gifts as we have in the past. Our selection of available gifts will be photographed, and a “catalog” created for the Veterans to view and select their gifts. Staff will assist us in completing the orders. Items will be ordered, sorted, and prepared for our annual wrapping day. A group of dedicated Legion Family members will gather to wrap the gifts and pack them for shipping. A couple trips to the Post Office and UPS will complete the project.

The cost of gifts, wrapping and shipping are all totally covered by your donations. Checks payable to ‘ALA-Wisconsin’ should be mailed to Department Headquarters noting Christmas Gift Shop in the memo field. This program would not be possible without your generous funding. Thank you for supporting this program!

## VA &amp; R — DIRECTOR OF HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

**Sue Hembrook**  
**Department Chairman**  
**genesuehem@wi.rr.com**  
**262-843-4791**

Thank you, thank you very much! You are all so incredibly generous! Our Veterans are lucky to have you supporting them. In that light, the hospital wish lists will again be included in the bimonthly unit mailing. Please refer to these lists when looking for ideas to enhance the lives of our hospitalized Veterans.

Your generosity shows through the tremendous outpouring in the things our Veterans need or use to make their lives easier. However, if your unit, district, or individuals plan to donate items, please check with that facility’s hospital representative. You are so very generous that our facilities may be saturated with donations of one kind or another and may not have a need at the time you may want to donate. If your facility cannot accept your donations, please give me a call and I will put the word out to our

other facilities to coordinate those items. Our facilities applaud you because when they put out a need you surely come through. We must keep the safety of our Veterans as our top-most priority, so please let the facility know ahead of time of your desire to deliver items. COVID is still with us to some degree, and we must keep our Veterans safe.

Our facilities are all very unique so please use the wish lists as a guide for donations that are needed. We all want to serve our Veterans to the best of our ability. These wish lists are a guideline for you to serve those in need. If items are not on the list and you think they may be useful, please contact our hospital representatives as they are aware of the needs and wants of the Veterans they serve. Our facilities also welcome cash donations as they can provide items as needed. Please send these donations to department headquarters, earmarked for the facility you want the funds assigned. Again, thank you for all you do to serve our Veterans.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS &amp; REHABILITATION

**Mike Rohan**  
**Department Chairman**  
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On November 11, 2022, we will celebrate Veterans Day – a day to thank, celebrate, and honor all Veterans for their patriotism, love of country, willingness to serve, and sacrifice for the common good. Many of our Veterans have missed us these last two years of the pandemic as we have been “locked out” of celebrating their service. This year is the perfect time to stand united in respect for our Veterans and show them that they are loved and appreciated by the American Legion Family, their community, state, and nation.

This year, more than ever, we need to honor those men and women who truly understand sacrifice. We must celebrate those who realized nothing in their lives was as important as defending this nation. We need to thank those men and women, on behalf of a grateful nation, for being good citizens and giving us the freedoms we enjoy today because of their willingness to serve.

Honoring and supporting the sacrifice of those who serve is the foundation of the American Legion Auxiliary’s mission. Although Auxiliary members are dedicated to helping our nation’s heroes every day, Veterans Day – November 11 – is the one day set aside annually to show gratitude for all our Veterans and service members.

It is impossible to compensate Veterans for their great personal sacrifice, but we can honor them on Veterans Day by demonstrating our deep appreciation for all they have done. Traditionally, Veterans Day is observed with local parades, dinners, and celebrations, but there are countless other ways to show your appreciation to Veterans on this memorable holiday, and now is the time to start planning for them.

Beyond in-person events and volunteer activities, try giving back to Veterans through kind words and artistic projects. These small acts of kindness come from the heart and will be treasured by our past servicemembers forever. Honor military Veterans and educate our youth about the importance of Veterans Day this November 11 with these craft ideas that can be found at <https://www.legion-aux.org/Blog/Start-planning-now-Veterans-Day-ideas-for-your-uni>

- **Popsicle stick flag:** Get your Junior ALA members together to create these unique American flags for the Veterans in your community. This craft is a fun way to educate Junior members about the significant sacrifice United States servicemembers have made and continue to make every day to ensure our freedom and safety.
- **Handmade patriotic bookmark:** Looking for a creative craft to do with your Auxiliary unit for Veterans Day? These handmade bookmarks can be completed by younger members, older members, and everyone in between.
- **Personal thank-you cards for Veterans:** Often, our Veterans’ most memorable and encouraging gifts are thank-you cards/letters with special messages that will let them know how grateful you are for their sacrifices.

## VA &amp; R — SERVICE TO VETERANS

**Maggie Geiger**  
**Department Chairman**  
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**262-377-0329**

Fall is such a beautiful season in Wisconsin, nature shows its beauty by the brilliant colors on display. Families gather together to have a few more barbecues, parents are busy taking their children to school events, and of course every television channel has a football game on! Halloween decorations are flying off the shelves to make way for Christmas holiday décor.

ALA in the Know is in full swing. Districts and counties are hosting their Fall conferences. Units will be making plans to serve and honor Veterans for Veterans Day, packaging boxes for troops overseas, and plans will be made to help make Christmas better for Veterans at our VA facilities, along with their children and children in our communities.

Members take part in send-offs or welcome home events for Veterans who were on Honor Flights. Disabled Veterans will receive comfort items, including handmade blankets or other items purchased or made by members. Homeless Veterans will receive socks, hand-warmers, hats, gloves, and other items to help

make their lives a little better.

Meals will be delivered to veterans’ homes, groceries, prescriptions, transportation to various appointments, gas and food gift cards will be purchased as well as cards, and letters of encouragement will be sent by members.

Those members who are caregivers for their spouse or parent will be asked what can be done to help them take care of themselves, whether it is time for taking a walk, going to the hairdresser, getting a cup of coffee or a handwritten note, will make him or her feel appreciated and recognized.

These are a few examples of “Service to Veterans” for our Veterans, military, and their families that our members do daily without realizing the huge impact it makes on our American heroes and their families.

Remember to keep track of your hours, dollars, in-kind donations, and mileage you have already spent serving veterans, military and their families these past months. Your hours are tabulated and recorded at department headquarters. When you reach qualifying hours, a Service to Veterans bar or pin will be sent to you.

Believe in what we do – we help make the lives of our American heroes better, one day at a time!



# KOUTZ ELECTED 2022-2023 ALA NATIONAL PRESIDENT

“What a true honor this is,” said American Legion Auxiliary 2022-2023 National President Vickie Koutz during her installation speech at the 2022 National Convention in Milwaukee. We are on to another year of the ALA with a continued focus on serving our veterans, military, and their families with Koutz in the ALA’s highest volunteer leadership position.

Vickie Koutz is the third ALA member to serve as national president from the Department of Indiana. The previous national president, Alice Galka, served during the 1988-1989 administrative year. Humble, kind, and considerate, Koutz puts others ahead of herself, truly living the ALA motto of Service Not Self.

Koutz grew up in Boonville in southwestern Indiana, a town with a population of about 6,500, and has lived there her whole life. Koutz has been married to Jim for 50 years, and they have a son, Michael, who spoke about his mother during the installation of officers ceremony. “The day is finally here, and we are so proud of her,” he said. “I know my mom will accomplish a lot this next year. I encourage you to break out of your comfort zone.” For Koutz, getting-out-of-her-comfort-zone includes trying new foods, public speaking, and traveling alone, all which Michael is confident she will do successfully during her term as national president.

For the 2022-2023 ALA year, Vickie Koutz’s focus is to honor our Veterans every day. Additionally, her president’s project will be supporting companions of National Veterans Creative Arts Festival participants. “Sometimes, companions can’t afford to pay for a meal plan,” she said. “This



**Vickie Koutz**  
2022-2023 ALA National President

broke my heart. The one person who is a constant in their life couldn’t stay with them during meals.” Her project on companions is triple tiered – money for a meal plan, travel, and/or a separate hotel room if needed for non-family member companions.

Koutz is also working to raise awareness of our country’s Prisoners of War and Missing in Action. Her husband, Jim, returned to Vietnam years after his military service to help dig for remains, and since then, wears a POW bracelet all the time. “Listening to him talking about his experiences made me realize how important it still is today,” she said.

# REHBEIN ELECTED 2022-2023 CENTRAL DIVISION NATIONAL VP

Ann Rehbein was elected the 2022-2023 Central Division National Vice President at National Convention. Ann hails from the Department of Iowa and belongs to Ames Unit 37. She is eligible for membership through the service of her father, John Grutsch; brother, Mike Grutsch; husband, David Rehbein; and daughter, Jennifer Rehbein.

Ann’s family includes her husband, David, and their two children, Chris Rehbein and Jennifer Rehbein, along with three grandchildren – Greyson and Camille Rehbein and Devin Von Querner. Ann has a bachelor’s degree from Iowa State University. Her career includes five years as executive director of Quilts of Valor, a chocolatier, and store owner. She is a past president of Ames Main Street District and a member of Freedom Flight Committee. Ann also served as the Department of Iowa’s executive secretary.



**Ann Rehbein**  
2022-2023 Central Division National VP

## 2022-2023 NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

<b>Joanie Dickerson</b>	<b>Public Relations Committee Vice Chairman</b>
<b>Diane Duscheck</b>	<b>American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Vice President</b>
<b>Sue Hembrook</b>	<b>Americanism Committee Central Division Chairman</b>
<b>Bonnie Jakubczyk</b>	<b>National Executive Committee person and Poppy Committee Vice Chairman</b>
<b>April Kollmorgen</b>	<b>Legislative Committee Central Division Chairman</b>
<b>Diana Sirovina</b>	<b>Constitution &amp; Bylaws Committee Chairman</b>
<b>Diane Weggen</b>	<b>Alternate National Executive Committee person</b>

## 2021-2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION AWARDS

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin received the following awards or acknowledgement for the 2021-2022 administrative year:

### NATIONAL PRESIDENT’S AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

**Community Service Unit Award**  
**Marie Tabat, Unit Chairman** – Oak Creek Unit 434, District 4  
*for Promoting the Legion Family’s Involvement in Community Events throughout the Year*

**Honorable Mention**  
**Department of Wisconsin**  
Diane Weggen, Department President  
*for Supporting Those Who Care for Others*

### AMERICANISM

**Best Department Americanism Program in Central Division**  
**Department of Wisconsin** – Becky Mueller, Department Chairman

**Americanism Essay Contest**  
**Class II, Best Essay in Central Division**  
**Matthew Tolle** – Sponsored by Bagley Unit 482, District 3

**Class III, Best Essay in Central Division**  
**Camryn Schwarz** – Sponsored by Sparta Unit 100, District 7

**Class VI, Best Essay in Central Division**  
**Fiona Wendt** – Sponsored by Shiocton Unit 512, District 9

### HISTORIAN

**Best Department History in Central Division**  
**Department of Wisconsin**  
Sue Hembrook, Department Historian

### LEADERSHIP

**Unit Member of the Year**  
**Ted Kubiak** – Sponsored by Waunakee Unit 360, District 3

### MEMBERSHIP

**‘Together We Serve’ Award**  
Outstanding Membership Chairman in Central Division  
**Maggie Geiger** – Department Membership Chairman

**Department 75% Goal Award**  
Reaching 75% of their 2022 Department membership goal by 12/7/21  
**Department of Wisconsin**  
Maggie Geiger, Department Membership Chairman

**Units that reached 100% of their 2021 membership goal by 11/10/2021**  
Stoughton Unit 59  
Delavan Unit 95  
Black River Falls Unit 200  
Coleman Unit 280  
Birchwood Unit 379  
Ridgeland Unit 511  
Sheboygan Unit 83  
Two Rivers Unit 165  
Tigerton Unit 239  
DeForest Unit 348  
Cambria Unit 401

**New Unit Award – New Unit Chartered by 7/31/2022**  
Moe-Miller Unit 12, Spooner, WI (District 12)

### ‘10 New in 2022’ Award

Members that recruited 10 new Jr and/or Sr members by 6/4/2022  
**Mary-Ellen Crandall** of Pewaukee Unit 71  
**Jessica Elmhorst** of Neillsville Unit 73

### POPPY

**Poppy Poster Contest, Class I**  
Best Poppy Poster in Central Division  
**Clementine Didier**  
Sponsored by Port Washington Unit 82, District 2

**Poppy Poster Contest, Class VII**  
Best Poppy Poster in Central Division  
**Anna James**  
Sponsored by Crivitz Unit 413, District 9

### VAVS MEETINGS PERFECT ATTENDANCE CARD

**Pat (Joyce) Flanders, Hospital Representative**  
Tomah VA Medical Center, Tomah, WI

**Sheila Frye, Hospital Representative**  
Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital, Madison, WI

**Sandra Kaebisch, Hospital Deputy**  
Zablocki VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI

**Sue Middlestead, Hospital Deputy**  
Zablocki VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI



**Linda Coppock**  
Department  
President

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, the seasons are changing! Schools are back in session, football is in full swing, and it's that time of the year for ALA in the Know presentations! Conventions are over and a new year of fall meetings has begun. If you did not take advantage of the opportunity to attend the National Convention in Milwaukee, you missed a great time. It's been

several years since the American Legion Wisconsin delegation had a hotel with such great service and an environment for all delegates to enjoy each other's company. I am much better acquainted with the whole Wisconsin American Legion delegation than I was before I went. Congratulations to all ALA Wisconsin program recipients for the awards they received on a job well done! Look for the list of winners in this edition.

For my special project this year, I have decided to give back to the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary. We have been over the top generous on fundraising for any of our special programs in years past, but this year, I want our efforts to focus on the members of our own organization as well as the Veterans, active military, and their families. I **Believe** in the benefits our programs provide to our members, our Veterans, active military, all their families, and our communities. I also **Believe** we need to financially support the programs of our organization, our general fund included.

I was part of a discussion on how to keep expenses to a minimum while promoting all of the programs we do. My logic is basic. Take into consideration monies you raised in previous years for special programs. Now, think of the programs in our organization that could use that amount of funds. October is Education Month. Donations to the Education program would guarantee money for scholarships disbursed to Junior and Senior members. Donations to the M. Louise Wilson Loan Fund will continue to grow which allows more recipients to use that account to further their education. Donations to the General Fund will help fund the bi-monthly "Wisconsin", which, in return, helps keep membership dues from increasing.

November is Membership Month. Have you earned your GNOME pin yet? I did! Getting membership collected is easy if you make it fun! **Getting New & Old Members Excited** is everybody's responsibility. Help your membership chairmen as often as you can – I am sure they will appreciate the help!

Remember, **Believe** in what you do for this organization. I **Believe** everyone has a passion to work the mission and I **Believe** any effort to work our mission is of great value to our Veterans and active military, their families and our communities.

**Believe** in YOU! I do!



**Julie Muhle**  
Department  
Commander

## ★★★★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

I am now two months into my term as Commander and I have been enjoying it. I enjoy traveling and seeing our Posts and meeting our Legionnaires. In as much as I have been enjoying the year, challenges have been brought forth. It is during these challenging times that we can look the other way because it isn't part of the plan or I am just here for a

short time or, we do the right thing and take those challenges head on. Why do I mention this? Because the American Legion Post, County or District job you have is only going to be as good as you choose to make it.

We have a large variety of Legionnaires taking on roles within the Legion. Some are hat chasers, some are brand spanking new, eager to learn and others have run their course and are secretly awaiting relief. When you take on a role within the Legion, you are sworn in either at an actual event or by virtue of the new year. The oath you take calls on you to remember the cardinal purposes of The American Legion are the rehabilitation of all disabled Veterans; care of the dependents of those who have answered the final call; care of those who now are suffering from wounds, disease and want; the education of our children, and service to the community, state and nation. It seems to be pretty easy but we just cannot get out of our own way. We fight amongst ourselves or within the family. We try to solve world hunger when we just need to focus on events we have control over.

We need to look at what can we do to succeed. When we are thrown that challenge, how can overcome it? Each one of us can do something. Each one of you are a member because you believe you can do something for Veterans, their families and our communities. You can be an instrument of change. It starts with one. Listen to that small voice that says "I can do something". The members of our Posts can affect change. Our organization was founded on the basis that change comes from the bottom up, not top down. Stop asking headquarters to solve your problems. They can give guidance but it is not their responsibility to fix them. Our programs came about as a result of a resolution and where do resolutions start? Yep, at the Post level.

How will you serve The American Legion? How will you serve your Post? What do we need that your talent can

provide? What do you need that we can provide? The effect you have on others is the most valuable currency there is. You are ready and able to do great things. Listen to your heart, not the person talking in your ear. Don't let fear and excuses get in the way of your potential. You don't have to do everything for everybody but you should do something for somebody. Talents you have in your workplace or home can benefit others but you need to do something or there will be nothing for nobody.

You need to take a chance on success or failure and if it is failure, it isn't that YOU are a failure, it is the approach you took that didn't work. There is no shame in trying. Pick yourself back up and figure out how to do better. Maybe the next step is a failure but you succeeded in improving one thing. Think about your Post. If you get one more member than the year before, it is a success. Yeah maybe it isn't the goal that was chosen but don't let that get in your head.

It is important to let each other know that we are here. That we are a part of a larger self. See the end. Know what you want, then make that map to get there. We need to make sure our service members and our own Legionnaires know we have their back. This is our job and this is how we stay strong.

I am challenging each Post to call all of their members at least quarterly. This is a best practice of Posts who continue to be 100% and above. It isn't an unachievable task. Once you determine how many members will be making calls, you can divide that into the number of members in your Post. This will give you the number of members each person needs to call. Remember, the goal is quarterly. For example, if you have 150 members and 10 members who are willing to call, each caller then has 15 members to call. Now divide this number by 4 for the number of weeks in a month and each caller has 4 members to call per week. This can easily be completed.

This year I am asking everyone to learn. Use the Keys for Success you have available to you. Like every lock has a key, every challenge has a solution. You might not know where to find it but you have a plethora of resources available to help you look. Past and upcoming National Commanders, past and current Department, District, County and Post Commanders. National and Wisconsin American Legion College graduates (stand if you are here). Utilize these resources and all of the documents available. Keys stands for Knowledge and Education equals Your Success. Together we can succeed.



**Randy Timms**  
State Secretary  
American Legion  
Riders Association

## ★★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★★★★

If you are not a Legion Rider and own a motorcycle of 500cc or bigger, please consider joining! The roughly 750 Riders throughout the State do so much good for the Veterans we serve it would be impossible to list all the activities in one article.

So if you love to ride and love to support Veterans and Veteran causes, become an American Legion Rider today! And, it's a great way to call positive attention to your Post within your community!

Our much-anticipated Iroc's Badger Run was completed and by all accounts, was a huge success! We began the Run on June 24, 54 motorcycles strong leaving Sheboygan's Triple Nickel (Post 555), home to Department Commander Eirich. After traveling to 13 Legion Posts over the course of 3 days, we ended at The Highground on June 26. Ultimately, we provided the Highground Rising Project with a just over \$38,200.

It was so satisfying along the way to see the outpouring of support at every stop! And because of the amount raised, The Highground informed us the American Legion Riders Association of Wisconsin will forever have a plaque located at the Highground to recognize their contribution to this fine project. My hearty congratulations to all that helped make this Run a success!

When Corey and I started this, we knew it was something we'd love to continue. So, the conversations have

already begun on the "Run" for next year. Corey Doehrmann, Brad Heller, Gary Hess and I have begun discussions and we're in the early stages of planning. If your Post would like to host the Run, please drop us a comment and let us know. One Post per day would provide lunch, while all other Posts would simply provide a nonalcoholic beverage break. We'd stay at "beverage" posts about 45 minutes and the lunch Post about 75. Of course, which Post does what is dependent on the location of all Posts and the routing we're able to create. Ideally, your Post would speak to their local community and encourage them to meet us and make their contributions in person. What I can guarantee, is everyone involved is blessed by the outpouring of love and encouragement.

There are 500 Legion Posts in our State. Imagine if each one was able to donate just \$100.00! A donation of \$50,000.00 would make a Significant Impact on anyone! What several Posts did for Iroc's, was keep the "house" side of 50/50 drawings for a month or two and donated those dollars. Amazing how quickly that added up! Please consider your part in the Run for next year!

For more information about the Legion Riders, or to get more details about becoming a Rider, contact either: Ray "Godfather" Pasbrig, President, at [rpasbrig3@wi.rr.com](mailto:rpasbrig3@wi.rr.com) or at 262-853-4929, or, Randy "Music Man" Timms, Secretary, at [rtimms@twc.com](mailto:rtimms@twc.com) or at 262-441-1692.



**David Fuller**  
SAL Detachment  
Commander

## ★ SAL DETACHMENT ★ COMMANDER

Greetings PROUD Sons,

We have made it through our conventions and now it is time to get to work. We all know what we have to do to make the Sons stronger and to keep us moving forward. Last year we made a push at the end of the year to take us from 103% to 106% by the close of membership. Unfortunately, we were two weeks late to qualify for the triple

Nickel award. We cannot allow this to happen again so get your memberships in early and let's show the organization, and the nation that we are PROUD of who we are. As you begin your fundraising remember to ask people if they are members or if they want to be, show them that you are PROUD to be a member.

Last year we had a very disappointing 32% of our squadrons filled their CSRs. This report is one of the most important pieces of information that we have because it shows what we do to support our Squadron as well as supporting our Post. Last year with only 32% reporting, as a group we contributed a total of \$1,404,363.14 in goods, time and money. If we were to multiply that number out to show 100% reporting that number would be over \$4.2 million. Now that is something to be proud of. If you need help filing these reports, contact your District Vice Commander or any Detachment Officer and we will be glad to help. Let's get to 100%.

Speaking of the Detachment Officers I would like to tell you how PROUD I am of them; they are always willing to jump in and help anyone that needs it. They are very capable and knowledgeable to help you with whatever you need. Since we are on the subject of Detachment Officers, are you the one to step up and be the next one? You may find it to be very rewarding.

The underlying point of this article is to be proud of who you are and what you do. Your actions benefit many others.