

MEMBERSHIP

Sue Hembrook
Department Chair
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Membership Committee:
Becky Mueller
Amy Luft

We sent out a similar suggestion in honor of Mother's Day and would like to now be able to honor the fathers that have so gallantly served our country with their service and to those fathers who sent a son or daughter off to support our country. If possible, this may be a way to honor their service!!

PAY IT FORWARD HONOR A LOVED ONE

Father's Day is soon approaching and if possible, honor those fathers that have gone off to defend our freedom or those fathers who sent a son or daughter to do the same.

Pay it Forward is an expression for describing when someone does something for you, instead of paying that person back directly, you pass it on to another person.

Our Veterans paid it forward to us by serving our country, allowing us freedom each and every day. We honor them with our membership in the American Legion Auxiliary. But what happens to a person's membership when they

HONORING OUR MEMBERS



Karen Preuter, President of ALA Unit 44, presented Marlis Richards with a certificate of appreciation. Marlis has been a member for six years and is Vice President of the Auxiliary Unit. She has been very active in helping in all Auxiliary and Legion events and fundraisers to help our Veterans and communities. Marlis also received a certificate of appreciation from the Legion Post.

experience difficulty, either physically or financially? For many, it may mean a lapse or even worse, dropping their membership altogether.

This is your chance to *Pay it Forward*! Individuals or units can assist their members who are facing hardship by paying their dues. If donors wish, they may remain anonymous and all information is kept confidential. If you

are willing to let us know that you "Paid it Forward", we would love to recognize you. However, that is up to you individually to remain anonymous or share your gift with us. If you would like to be recognized in a future unit mailing, please contact me directly.

Kindness and generosity go a long way. Thank you for making a difference.



Leah Reynolds, a graduate of Mankato State, MN, received a commission as 2nd Lt. in the U.S. Army Reserves. She has been a junior, now, senior member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 324 in Osseo, Wisconsin as well as a past delegate to ALA Badger Girls State. She will be assigned to Ft. McCoy.

2024 Membership Totals (as of May 15, 2024) – 82.32%

DIST.	GOAL %	MUSHER
12	93.12%	Baby Girl
6	87.70%	Denali
3	86.20%	Ranger
2	85.33%	Sloane
5	84.38%	Little Girl
4	84.35%	Winkle
1	82.40%	Diamond
7	82.34%	Hero
8	82.05%	Isabella
10	81.88%	Balto
9	80.62%	Percy
11	74.63%	D.O.G



DOGS2DOGTAGS



Pictured (left to right):
Leanne Theis, Karen Dowd, State President Maggie Geiger, Cheryl Gyzen and Jeannie Ceckiewicz.

SAVING VETERANS ONE DOG AT A TIME

Dogs2DogTags (D2DT) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to rescue, train, and place dogs with deserving service members who have been diagnosed with post-combat stress and anxiety, all at no cost to the Veteran. President Maggie Geiger selected D2DT for her Special Project.

Land O' Lakes Unit 464 presented President Maggie

with a check for \$500 at the ALA District 11 Spring Conference. President Maggie was extremely touched by the donation, especially since Unit 464 was just chartered in June 2023.

The Land O' Lakes Unit works closely with the Legion Post to support Veterans. Keep up the great work!

ALA IN THE KNOW CONFERENCES

Register Today! Sessions are September 14, September 28, and October 5, 2024.
Visit www.amlegionauxwi.org/alaintheknow for details.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Betty Stone
Department Chaplain
bjstone626@hotmail.com

Romans 1:19-20
19-They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them.
20-For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

PRAYER
Spring has Sprung
How beautiful is the Spring!
We see the trees waking up from their winter nap.
We hear the birds singing in the trees.
We smell the smells of the flowers blooming
We feel the warm sun on our faces
God made it all for us to enjoy and know
He is here among us.

Let's pray together with Thanksgiving to our living God.
Dear Lord,
Thank you for spring and all it brings to us. We can see you in the trees, birds, the flowers and the warm sun. We see you in all the beauty around us. We are so blessed to have such a loving God. In your most holy name. Amen

MUSIC
As the schools have let out for summer vacation ask your Juniors to your meetings and be in charge of the music.
Have a great summer!

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

Bonnie Dorniak
Department Executive Secretary/Treasurer
deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org
608-745-0124

Members helping members – that is what the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is all about. Members needing assistance through AEF hardship or disaster grants should be aware that the maximum award amount was increased to \$3,000 this year and applications can be submitted directly to the national organization to maintain confidentiality. If you need help finding the application or eligibility guidelines, please contact me at department headquarters.

In order to maintain the AEF, donations are always needed. Units can raise money in a variety of ways – 50/50 cash raffles, basket raffles, meat raffles, or food events like pancake breakfasts, brat fries, bake sales, or food/beer tents at community fairs, etc. Some units collect money from each member at their meetings such as a penny per age or Packer game score. Encourage memorial gifts for Auxiliary or Legion members be designated to AEF.

Through various fundraising efforts, Wisconsin members generously donated \$7,885 to this year's AEF. From September 1, 2023 to April 18, 2024, the national organization awarded over \$100,000 through 41 hardship grants and 15 disaster grants. Three Wisconsin members received hardship grants totaling \$4,487. Thank you for your support!

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Bonnie Dorniak
Executive Secretary/Treasurer
608-745-0124
deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org
www.amlegionauxwi.org

May 24 was officially National Poppy Day. Units and posts that completed poppy distributions are reminded to submit their 20% poppy profit report to department headquarters as soon as possible. The report form can be obtained from the department website or by contacting Linda Cason at Auxiliary Headquarters. The remaining proceeds must be used for the welfare of Veterans, active-duty military, and their families where a medical or financial need is evident. As a reminder, poppies can be distributed all year long!

The 2024 Department Convention will be held July 11-14, 2024 at the Hilton Paper Valley in Appleton. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the Auxiliary, visit with old friends, and meet new ones. Registration is \$30, payable to The American Legion. Registrations received after July 6 are \$35. Please visit the department website for complete details.

The ALA National Convention is August 26-28, 2024 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Details from the national organization will be posted on the department website when they become available (usually mid-June). Members interested in attending should contact Department Secretary Bonnie Dorniak at deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org to request a registration packet.

Three ALA in the Know Conferences are scheduled in September and October. The reservation deadline is August 1. The reservation form was mailed to all units in April and is available on the department website under Programs > ALA in the Know.

2024 Department Convention
Hilton Paper Valley, Appleton
July 11-14, 2024

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS
(subject to change)

Thursday, July 11, 2024

- 3:00 pm – Past Presidents Parley (PPP) Business Meeting. Any past Unit, County, or District President is eligible to join the PPP and participate in decisions about PPP dues, scholarships, and the Mentor of the Year award. Questions? Contact PPP Chairman Char Kiesling at char.kiesling@gmail.com.

Friday, July 12, 2024

- 9:15 am – Opening Processional. General Session will open immediately following the procession.
- 3:00 pm – A recognition program will be held to pay tribute to Honored PDP Florence Wasley and award district membership awards.

Saturday, July 13, 2024

- 8:00 am – General Session.
- 9:00 am – Elections of 2024-2025 Department Officers and nominees for Alternates for the 2024 National Convention.
- 2:45 pm (ish) – Installation of 2024-2025 Department Officers and District Presidents.
- 7:00 pm – All Legion Family members are invited to a fun event with live entertainment, a taco bar, and cocktails. Admission ticket (\$25) must be pre-purchased by June 26 with convention registration.

Sunday, July 14, 2024

- 8:00 am – Joint Memorial Service.
- 9:15 am – Department Executive Board meeting. All members are welcome to attend.

AMERICANISM

Diane Burkhalter
Department Chair
262-284-6873
burkhalterdl@gmail.com

On June 14, 1777, the “Stars and Stripes” was designated the official national symbol of the United States. In 1885, Bernard J. Cigrand, a 19-year-old teacher in Waubeka, Wisconsin, asked his students to reflect on the meaning of this symbol and write an essay on what the flag meant to them.

In 1916, over thirty years later, President Woodrow Wilson declared June 14 as National Flag Day. In his address he stated, “My Fellow Citizens: We meet to celebrate Flag Day because this flag which we honor and under which we serve is an emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours.”

As Legion Family members, we have numerous opportunities to educate the future generations on proper flag etiquette, the manner of delivery of the pledge of allegiance to the flag, the history and symbolism of our flag, and showing respect for the flag. Partner with schools and youth groups to conduct flag folding ceremonies, give a short program on the proper handling and displaying of the flag, and how to respect the flag in various settings – such as a parade, raising and lowering, and during the national anthem.

Invite the community into your Posts for family days in which you have endless opportunities to educate young and old in exciting and fun ways. Remember Woodrow Wilson’s words, “The choices are ours.”

In the next few months, we will attend parades and events that will be honoring men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice and the birth of our nation. Let us all take time to do as the students did on June 14, 1777 – reflect on the meaning of our flag.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Sandy Mack
Department Chair
smack0555@gmail.com

Auxiliary members have had a busy year giving back to their communities by volunteering thousands of hours to assist where needed.

Different projects put together by our Wisconsin units include but are not, limited to:

Assisting the 4-H	Brat Frys
Fine Arts/Craft Fair	Food Drives
Blood Drives	Library
Read to children	Makers Market
Las Vegas Night	Bingo
Greeting cards for local nursing homes	Supplied nursing facility with Easter Baskets
Assist at the Senior Center	Blessing Backpacks
Habitat for Humanity	Donated baskets for injured children
Snack Bag Program	Support orphans in Africa
Assist at homeless shelters	Recycling
Cards to Central America	Pancake Breakfast
Fish Frys	Little Dresses for Africa
Birthday Party Kits for the Food Shelf	Spaghetti Dinner/Pork Dinners/Chicken Dinners
Book Fair	Concessions for Baseball/Football games

This is just a touch of things the Auxiliary Units have been doing.

A fantastic way to keep track of your hours is to keep a calendar marking every day you provide some type of Community Service. At the end of the year, you take a form and fill it out. Totalling hours on a monthly basis would also help. It is important to record your community service hours.

On April 27, 2024, American Legion Family Day, 2nd District Ozaukee County, held a Suicide Awareness Class. This was open to all of 2nd District Legion Family members and to the community. They had a great turnout. The public that attended appreciated that the program was opened to them. If you would like a contact person to hold a class in your District, please let me know.

Let us show our communities who we are and what we do. Celebrate our rich history and show the pride we have in our organization. Reach out to a Veteran and ask them how they are doing, listen when they need to talk, and if you see them struggling, let them know help is out there. Call 988 and press one, or text 838255 or visit the VA Crisis Line website.

“Be the One” — *Together, We Can Make a Difference.*

Zondra Morris for Department 2nd Vice President

I, Zondra Morris, announce my candidacy for the office of Department 2nd Vice President. I am eligible through my grandfather Harold Hall, Jr. who served in WWII and my son Allen Morris who enlisted in the Marines in 2005. I have been endorsed by the Well, Davis, Young, Neal Unit 209 in Orfordville.

I have held many positions over my 19 years. I started as historian, then Rock County President, Unit President, District 1st Vice President and currently the 1st District President.

Our unit helps with all events and programs, helped Union Grove with monetary and food donations, plus the many other VA hospitals in Wisconsin. I have been part of the returning of the VetsRoll when they come back from their 4-day trip. It is a very emotional event.

I worked in food service for 19 years. I worked in Madison at Union South as a barista and wine server. I went to UW-Whitewater where I have been for the last five years. The building that I take care of is Hyer Hall. I am one of two custodians in the building.



Zondra Morris

teach the younger members about the programs and what each of them do and how we work them. I have heard many times I did not know or I did not understand. I hope to help in teaching more about our programs and get younger people excited about being a member – heck maybe even get some of the seasoned members excited again.

Our preamble says it best. To promote peace and good will on earth, to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy. Thank you for your time and I would greatly appreciate your vote.

I enjoy being around people and getting to know them and having a good time.

My passion is V.E.T.S. (Volunteers Encourage Team Spirit).

For everything that our military has done for us, whether past or present or future military people, I say thank you for your service. If it were not for you, we would not be here doing all these wonderful things and helping Veterans and their families. I take pride in being a part of this organization. It would be a really nice thing to

Christina Petranovich for Department 2nd Vice President

Christina Petranovich is excited to announce her candidacy for the position of Department 2nd Vice President. Christina is endorsed by District 7 ALA, Clark County ALA and her home unit of Cecil-Tormey Unit 118 of Thorp.

Christina is a 20-year Paid Up For Life member and has served in many leadership roles throughout the ALA. She has been Chaplain, Secretary and President of Unit 118. She has also been the District 7 President for almost 2 terms, taking over the position when the previous President stepped down. She has been a chairman of several programs in the district including Poppy, Juniors, National Security and Public Relations.

She did not join the ALA at first, allowing her mother-in-law, Genevieve, to sign up her daughters and get them active in the American Legion Family. It was her daughters, as very active junior members, that finally convinced her to join and take an active role. She would love to see every unit in Wisconsin involve and have junior members.

Christina has attended several Department and National Conventions as well as Mission



Christina Petranovich

Trainings. She is very active in her church – Saint Bernard Saint Hedwig Catholic Church -- and her community. She has served on the Parish Council, Education Committee, and Fundraising Committee.

Christina is eligible for membership through her father, the late Roger “Frosty” Frese, who served in the Army. She has two brothers, a sister, and two sons that served. Her oldest son was a Marine in the USMC, a soldier in the Army National Guard, and recently became a member of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Christina is a Postmaster and has worked for the USPS for the past 31 years, currently on a 2+ year detail for USPS Headquarters. She has six children, one stepdaughter, four grandbabies, two step-grandbabies, and two step-great-grandbabies. She has been married to her husband Wayne for 33 years.

Christina has a passion for God and Country and feels strongly to advocate for our military, our youth, and our Veterans. Thank you for your consideration and support for Christina as Department 2nd Vice President.

Donna Jensen for Dept. Chaplain

Donna Jensen is announcing her candidacy for the office of Department Chaplain. She is a Paid-Up-For-Life, 18-year member of the ALA. Her eligibility is through her brother who served in the Air Force and her husband, Past Department Commander Wayne Jensen, who served in the Navy during the Vietnam era as well as the Navy Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve and Air Force Reserve for a total of 28 years.



Donna Jensen

chairmanships and she is currently the Milwaukee County President. She has volunteered at ALA Badger Girls State for four years and plans to continue her involvement this year.

It has been a great honor for Donna to have attended American Legion National Conventions for the past 25 years and to have been able to volunteer at the three National Conventions held in Milwaukee in 2000, 2010 and 2022. She was asked to be the driver for the American Legion National Adjutant for one and the driver for the Auxiliary National President for two of the them. She has also attended Auxiliary National Mission Training.

Donna has been a member of St. Bernadette Catholic Church for the past 51 years and has volunteered for many fundraisers and activities as well as singing in the church choir for the past 30 years. She and Wayne have been married for 53 years and have two daughters and two granddaughters who are all members of the ALA. She is retired from Travelers Insurance where she worked for 25 years.

Family, faith and serving others have been very important to Donna and she is grateful for the ability to serve Veterans in many ways. She is asking for your support and the opportunity to serve again as the Department Chaplain for the American Legion Auxiliary.

Donna has been active in the ALA on many levels and served as the Department Chaplain in 2021-2022. She has been Department Chairman or served on committees including Fundraising, Children & Youth, Leadership, and Auxiliary Emergency Fund. She has also been the 4th District President, Secretary, Historian and Chaplain as well as many program

2024 Scholarship Winners

H. S. & Angeline Lewis – (1) \$1,000 – Graduate Student
No qualified applicant

H. S. & Angeline Lewis – (5) - \$1,000
Brooklyn Danke, Greenville, Hortonville #55-9
Ava Toufar, Eleva, Eau Claire #53-10
Payton Skortz, Hatley, Rosholt #509-8
Eleanor Zgonc, Brookfield, Brookfield #449-1
Christopher Cullen, Kewaunee, Kewaunee #29-9

Past Presidents Parley – Maximum of (3) \$1,000 awards
Nursing:

Lydia LaPorte, Pewaukee, Pewaukee #71-1
Hannah Danielsen, Marshfield, Marshfield #54-8

Health Career:
Carson Welter, Mauston, Mauston #81-7

Department Presidents – (3) - \$1,000
Sandra Brierton, Junction City, Wautoma #317-8
Kendall Luzinski, Thorp, Thorp #118-7
Raegan Davis, Luck, Balsam Lake #278-12

Child Welfare – (1) - \$1,000
No qualified applicant

Van Deuren Memorial – (1) - \$1,000
Colin Berger, Wautoma, Hancock-Coloma #343-8

Merit & Memorial – (8) - \$1,000
Adalin Macauley
Adia Hardt, Chippewa Falls, Chippewa Falls #77-10

Eleanor Smith
Aleece Jandrain, Luxemburg, Casco #319-9

Pearl Behrend
Bridget Lemanczyk, Rosholt, Rosholt #509-8

Barbara Kranig
Jonah Slavik, Muskego, Muskego #356-1

Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan
Sadie Liebelt, Irma, Ettrick #354-10

Diane Duscheck
Charlotte Gunby, Mt Horeb, Madison #501-3

Harriet Hass
Ella Slusarski, Oshkosh, Oshkosh #70-6

Merit Scholarship
Ava Ahnen, Albany, Avoca #335-3

National Scholarship Nominees

Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship
– Wisconsin's Nominee (\$1,000)
Katelyn Eilbes, Brownsville

Non-Traditional Student Scholarship
– National Winner (Awarded \$2,000 from NHQ)
Leslie Kronstadt, Wisconsin Rapids

Spirit of Youth for Junior Members Scholarship
– National Winner (Awarded \$1,000 from NHQ)
Molly Janke, Ellsworth

Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship
– Wisconsin's Nominee
No applicant

ALABGS Scholarships

Badger Girls State General Scholarship – (6) - \$500
Addison Bauknecht, Two Rivers
Alyssa Durrant, Waupaca
Jennifer Espinoza-Quiroz, Athens
Katie Kim, Middleton
Jade Levandoski, Westby
Josie Meister, Darlington

Eileen Knox Memorial Scholarship – (1) - \$500
Kate Fechner, La Crosse

Harry & Shirley Kuehl Foundation Scholarship – (1) - \$500
Alivya Young, Richland Center

2024 Americanism Essay Winners

“What does Freedom mean to you?”

Class I – Grades 3 & 4

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Shubhreet Kaur | King #161 |
| 2. Emily Jing | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 3. Kenneth Buck | Wauzeka #458 |
| 4. Landon Myers | Richland Center #13 |
| 5. Kaitlyn Johnson | Port Washington #82 |

Class II – Grades 5 & 6

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Jack Egan | Port Washington #82 |
| 2. Stella Schluneger | Thorp #118 |
| 3. Laylana Bakke | Plum City #365 |
| 4. Austin Seifert | Butternut #272 |
| 5. Presley Beranek | Richland Center #13 |

Class III – Grades 7 & 8

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Laila Smith | Plum City #365 |
| 2. Sonya Nikolai | Port Washington #82 |
| 3. Arabella Flegner | King #161 |
| 4. Nolen Luzinski | Thorp #118 |
| 5. Lydia Van Gelderen | Menomonee Falls #382 |

Class IV – Grades 9 & 10

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lizzie Henn | Plum City #365 |
| 2. Eric Moser | Pewaukee #71 |
| 3. Emma Sutton | Siren #132 |
| 4. Caleb Van Gelderen | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 5. Anna Schloer | Butternut #272 |

Class V – Grades 11 & 12

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. John Guarnero, Jr. | Jackson #486 |
| 2. Mia McCartney | New London #263 |
| 3. Yoselin Gea | Plum City #365 |
| 4. Charity Shultz | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 5. Jacob Ciolkosz | Thorp #118 |

Class VI

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Josie Perez | Twin Lakes #544 |
|----------------|-----------------|

District 1

Leadership: Our district officers worked hard to come up with unique and creative ways to help our district not only learn new skills, but to support each other. Our 1st Vice created a poker run in a sense, called “Going Wild for Vets.” It entailed a pamphlet with all counties being represented by a part of the world and each unit an animal from within that area. They were encouraged to travel to other units to share ideas and support their fundraising efforts. When they visited another unit, they would get a sticker of the animal that the unit represented to make it more exciting.

Our district also put together an end of the year report workshop. We passed out documents that we created with specific events that our district was doing in each narrative section as examples. This encouraged and successfully got units to feel less nervous reaching out for help. Multiple units scheduled times to complete reports together, demonstrating the District President’s theme of Teamwork.

Membership: Our district worked very hard with units that needed

assistance. We also reached out to units and attended fundraisers and events to support and see if we could be of any help. This was a great way to start rebuilding connections with units that had stopped attending district events.



Zondra Morris
1st District
President

We also revitalized a unit. With the help of a Legionnaire, we obtained most documentation from the past deceased president to help new officers restart. We met with them and gave them a Unit Guidebook to help them get off on the right track. In the process, a new member signed up and became treasurer. We are still working with this unit to help them get on their feet.

Thank you to the Diamonds of the 1st District – without you this would not have been possible. You are the reason that we are Diamonds – we shine bright no matter what.

District 3

What an AMAZING year this has been! District 3 received an increase in reporting this year – it is encouraging to see units sharing their successes. Members from the Mississippi River to Wisconsin’s capital and everywhere in between really poured their hearts and hands into supporting our Veterans. Unit members served 34,600 hours supporting Veterans and military families, allocating almost \$87,000 in assistance and events this year. An amazing investment by units who distributed 14,500 poppies, generating \$34,200 in poppy funds. Our group of hard-working members are also very generous with their time and resources!

Members of District 3 worked with their communities and schools through Americanism, Children & Youth, Community Service and VA&R programs. Engaging in activities such as essays, flag programs, donating gift cards for school supplies, snow pants to school kids, distributing quilts of valor, making self-care packages, parades, military Purple Up! Day events at schools, legions and military bases in April. Members fulfilled VA facility wish lists, supported Camp American Legion, sent greeting cards to facilities, and created

mail call for Honor Flights. Units distributed poppies, fundraised and collected donations for giving trees, Christmas programs and pantries. Units awarded \$15,000 in scholarships and invested over \$18,000 and 1,800 hours in Children & Youth programs! They also reported 18,900 hours of Community Service, investing \$31,000 in community activities and events. Many units report collaborating with other organizations within their communities.



Karen Runk
3rd District
President

District 3 units fundraised and collected donations for numerous causes and organizations serving Veterans, such as VetsRoll, Habitat for Humanity, Second Harvest, USO, and Dogs-2DogTags! Over 1,500 military families were impacted by our units that reported. Service to

military, Veterans and their families is certainly at the heart of what District 3 members and units have been doing this year. Thank you for your dedication – District 3 members are AMAZING!

District 5

Another year has passed since the COVID pandemic and 5th District is slowly getting back on track.

Since the Zablocki V.A. Center has given permission for the Auxiliary to come back in, one unit has been doing holiday tray favors ten times per year. That unit also still has their knitting group working on lap robes and afghans for Zablocki. This unit also sends out a yearly dues renewal statement right after Department Convention. They utilized an idea that was reported at convention and mailed a poppy with each renewal statement asking for donations. It was well worth the effort and enabled them to donate to four suggested Poppy projects.

Another unit celebrates each military birthday (Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, etc.). Post and Auxiliary members take a sheet cake to different restaurants/bars in their area and share with customers at these locations. They also take up a poppy collection during these times and have a poppy collection in May.

Two other units meet with their Post members but have been unable to work the Auxiliary programs as yet. There are plans to improve on that this coming year.

Another unit, which has gone without a president for several years, will install a president at Spring Conference. This should get their unit with some activity again. District President Linda will work alongside her to gain experience.



Linda Bartell
5th District
President

Our last unit in 5th District is the Women’s Veterans. They have their Post meetings and bring up any Auxiliary business as needed.

5th District as a whole has been sending cards for Valentines, Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Halloween and Christmas to the Union Grove V.A. Facility. The feedback has been the Veterans are greatly appreciative of this as they are remembered. 5th District also enjoyed the Milwaukee County functions, George Washington

Luncheon, small Christmas tree decorating, tray favors for Christmas and cards.

Things are looking up for 5th District.

District 2

The Mighty 2nd District has been extremely busy this past year. Our 40 units are focusing on working the Auxiliary programs. All units have and still are focused on recruiting new members and maintaining existing members.



Sandy Mack
2nd District
President

I attended all County Council meetings held in both the Fall of 2023 and Spring of 2024, along with attending close to 20 unit meetings across the counties. I have met so many new members that are filled with so many great ideas!

I attended 2nd District Legion meetings, Four Chaplains Dinner, Legion revitalization meetings, held mini forums for presidents, secretaries and treasurers – discussing position descriptions in each county. We worked together in a small group and interaction was wonderful. The forum was well appreciated. I also send out a monthly newsletter and a bi-monthly Did You Know.

Donations went to Dogs2DogTags, Camp American Legion, Stars & Stripes Honor Flight, Camp Hometown Heroes, USO, MVHI, a spa day for female Veterans at Zablocki Medical Center. Donations were made to several other non-profit organizations, along with scholarships and ALA Badger Girls State, food pantries, War Memorial Center, Highground, Poppy Shop, Zablocki Christmas Gift Shop and more.

The units are knitting hats and gloves for children and adults in need, even mittens for kittens at the Humane Society, prayer shawls, school supply drive, hygiene products drive, blood banks, sewed little dresses for Africa, made cloth diapers, quilts for foster children, fish fries, shop for cops, food pantry needs, served food at music in the park, restoration of a lion head in the city park, and the list goes on.

I am so proud to be a part of the Mighty Second!

District 4

The units in District #4 logged 20,000 hours of volunteer time. Whether our unit is large or small, the hours recorded are meaningful. Together we got to a pretty big number. The work and efforts we put into everything we do for our Veterans, their families and our community matters.



Kathy Grom
4th District
President

We’ve helped children’s groups including the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. We held Christmas and Easter events for our Veterans’ children. We also had the opportunity to hand out a National Hero Award to a child in our community. We distributed over 2,600 poppies this year and we are honored that the 2023 Department of Wisconsin Little Miss Poppy was from our district. We also help young women learn leadership and government through Badger Girls State by volunteering and sponsorship.

We celebrated birthdays with our Veterans and post members and we helped with celebration of life events when called on to do so.

We held spaghetti dinners, fish fries, pancake breakfasts, and a ‘Souper Sunday’. That doesn’t count the times we worked with our posts for Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans’ Day events handing out hot dogs and ice cream, cooking at barbecues, and catering luncheons as well as holding food drives.

We partnered with our Legion family to do Buddy Checks and did our own Poppy Checks. We volunteered at the VA Hospital. We are proud of our partnership with our Legion, S.A.L. and Legion Riders, helping them by working bingo, selling 50/50 tickets, assisting with basket raffles and meat raffles.

We may not be able to work all of the ALA programs but the things we do are done with passion and dedication. Looking at our accomplishments, we can confidently check off everything on our mission statement as fulfilled.

Congratulations, District 4, for all you’ve accomplished this year.

2024 9-PIN TAP BOWLING TOURNAMENT RESULTS

(top 3 places in each category)

Team:

- 1st Place – (2457) Bonduel Gals 3, Unit 217 Bonduel
- 2nd Place – (2423) Betty’s Foxy Bowlers, Unit 437 Mazomanie
- 3rd Place – (2359) The Wild Ones, Unit 118 Thorp

Doubles:

- 1st Place – (1303) Judy Crooks/Anna Miller, Unit 84 Monroe
- 2nd Place – (1255) Shannon Churchill/Stacey Zier, Unit 385 Verona
- 3rd Place – (1195) Mary Sawle/Stacey Sutcliffe, Unit 437 Mazomanie

Singles:

- 1st Place – (720) Jenni Syftestad, Unit 385 Verona
- 2nd Place – (706) Shannon Churchill, Unit 385 Verona
- 3rd Place – (673) Bonnie Field, Unit 84 Monroe

All Events:

- 1st Place – (1971) Kay Grosskopf, Unit 391 Fremont
- 2nd Place – (1946) Rosemary Tellock, Unit 391 Fremont
- 3rd Place – (1944) Shannon Churchill, Unit 385 Verona

District 6

By working the ALA programs, the units of District 6 have been "Enhancing the Lives of our Veterans, Military and their Families, One Day at a Time".

The 2023 Department Convention was held in Rothschild where several units received recognition. The Children & Youth "Believe & Achieve" Award went to Neenah Unit 33. A History Program Certificate of Participation was given to Patricia Katalinick of Chilton Unit 125. Two Rivers Unit 165 received an Extra-Gnome-inary Membership Award. A National Security Certificate of Recognition was also presented to Neenah Unit 33. We are very proud of Natalie Myers from Winneconne Unit 364, who was named 2023 Junior Member of the Year. Congratulations to all!

During the year, units within the district

held parties for Veterans, participated in Poppy Days, coordinated fundraisers, marched in parades, sponsored girls for ALA Badger Girls State, held special programs in area schools, participated in Veterans Day activities, and many other activities too numerous to mention!



Diane Steinert
6th District
President

The units worked hard all year long and District Impact Report numbers were impressive! Our service to Veterans & Military totaled 11,869 volunteer hours and \$38,800 spent. 20,335 poppies were distributed with \$42,937 raised. Hours of service representing

ALA in our communities was 15,252 and a total of \$9,200 was presented in scholarships. Awesome job!!

We were challenged to "Grow our Membership, Poppy Up for a Veteran." Units of the 6th District proved quite successful retaining and finding new members. As of this writing, one county and six units have reached/exceeded 100% membership. I am pleased to report 6th District is currently in 2nd place. Great job everyone! Keep up the good work!

Thank you for the invitations to your unit/county meetings, special events and installation of officers. Your dedication and willingness to serve our Veterans, military and their families and our communities is truly appreciated. I am looking forward to another remarkable year as your District President!!

District 9

I feel humble to have worked with so many Auxiliary members and Veterans in the Noble 9th District these past two years. Units have been quite busy from hosting meat raffles, chili cook-off along with a golf scramble, going to VA hospitals, to playing Bingo with the Veterans. Units donated to Honor Flights, welcomed the Veterans home at the airport after a long memorable day, and handed out flags.



Bonnie Blink
9th District
President

Units helped schools and students by hosting socks and shoe drives, presenting how to say the pledge of allegiance, reading to classes and making healthy snack bags for school children. Units promoted the Poppy Poster and Americanism Essay contests, organized and stocked clothing for the students to get free, while also supporting teachers with needed supplies, gifts, and treats.

Units marched in parades and presented the colors at community, school and sporting events. Noble Ninth distributed over 800 flags. Several units served local Veterans, their families and the community by donating and making food and sending boxes and cards to service members overseas. Units donated a playground for all abilities. Auxiliary members dress up like condiments at their Brat Fry – way to go Ketchup, Mustard and Hot Dog!

Units helped their Posts with events and fundraisers such as a Gunless Poultry Shoot, brat fries, raffles, funeral honors, color guards, blood drives, Christmas parties, Easter egg hunts, flag retirements, and the list goes on. Units are striving to work with the Post for the betterment of the Veterans, their families, and the active members of our military.

Units have given more than 20 scholarships for a total of over \$10,000, distributed over 19,000 poppies, and raised over \$35,000 to help our Veterans. Members' cars have traveled over 674,578 miles this past year in ALA service.

I want to thank the 9th District members for their dedication. It was my honor to serve as your President these past two years.

District 7



Christina Petranovich
7th District
President

District 7 held two very successful fundraisers this year. The funds raised will be used to help Veterans, military and their families within our district. We realized the need when notified of an active soldier and his family that were displaced from their home due to severe storms that had gone through the area. Together with District 3, we were able to provide for the family's immediate needs and to point them in the right direction for further assistance. The first

fundraiser was a purse raffle and auction to "Make a Difference for Veterans" hosted by Unit 73 in Neillsville. The second fundraiser was a Designer Bag Bingo with a Kentucky Derby theme hosted by Unit 51, West Salem.

Fall workshop (Neillsville Unit 73) was held, as well as the spring conference (Sparta Unit 100). We had several newer members step up to leadership roles. The units that attended gave great reports on the events they've held and

provided ideas for other units to try.

Our district membership team traveled to several units that had been requesting assistance and provided support, guidance and leadership. They were able to aid in getting members signed up, get leadership roles filled, and give instruction on how to run a meeting. It was a very successful year and I look forward to turning over the reins into the more than capable hands of Jesse Elmhorst. She is going to rock District 7!

District 8

My third year as 8th District President has been busy. I helped several units with their summer events and made unit visits as well.

The units have been working hard on their membership. As of the time of this writing, 8th District has three units at 100% and several units are within 1-3 members to reach 100%. We also have one county that just needs one member to be a 100% County.

Everyone has been doing a fantastic job on fulfilling the mission of the ALA. From the year-end impacts reports that I received, members have volunteered over 20,000 hours for Veterans, over 3,400 hours for military families, and over 11,000 hours in our communities.

The Fall Conference was hosted by Wisconsin Rapids Post 9. Eight units were represented with 23 people in attendance. 8th District

Commander Adam Klapperich and Post 9 Commander Jerry Krofta brought greetings. Department Senior VP Becky Mueller gave greetings on behalf of Department President Maggie Geiger. Department Poppy Chairman Kay Grosskopf talked about the poppy program. Fran Bender gave the membership report. Lani Rethaber, the Executive Director of Patriot K9s, spoke about their service dog training program for



Linda Tryczak
8th District
President

Veterans with PTSI. SAL Detachment Commander Allen Watry presented the ALF Dogs Program. In the afternoon everyone participated

in a craft and made patriotic lanyards.

We held an Executive Board meeting by teleconference in late November.

The Spring conference was hosted by Stevens Point Unit 6. There were 13 units, 49 members and two guests in attendance. We had a video greeting from Mayor Mike Wiza; Sarah Stiff gave greetings for the Post Commander; and Penny Peeters gave greetings from District Commander Adam Klapperich. Sarah Stiff did a presentation on the common complaints heard at Department. Penny Alwin and Susan Reetz presented the documentary entitled, "Honor in the Air" which is about Penny's brother Cpl. Scott Alwin. The history books were judged and the winner was sent to department.

I am looking forward to both conventions and visiting units.

District 10

The first year of my term as 10th District President has been eventful. It began at the 2023 State Convention where I was sworn in, escorted by my husband Jerry, a 12-year Navy Veteran.



Mary Townsend
10th District
President

At the 2023 District Fall DEC Meeting, I proposed three new ventures. The first was the "Highlight Our Heroes" campaign. I asked each unit to highlight a Veteran, men and women who honorably served our country, and tell their story. These heroes would be highlighted in the district newsletter and at the conferences.

The second was the Red/White/Blue awards. I divided the 44 units into three categories. The Red Award was for units with 55 or more members, White was for units with 35 to 54 members, and Blue was for units with 34 or less members. The awards, based on something outstanding the unit did with an Auxiliary program, were awarded at the Spring Conference.

The last was the 10th Connection – a plan to connect the district staff with the county presidents and program chairmen. Email groups were set up to receive and send information.

Units have been busy with many activities – marching in parades, presenting Quilts of Valor, holiday events, Poppy drives, a Female Veterans Boutique, and much more. Some units participate in "High School to Heroes," where students are honored for entering the Armed Services. One unit is working with Habitat for Humanity to build a house for a Veteran. Units also help with Chippewa Veterans Home, Minneapolis VA, and Klein Hall by donating money, supplies, and their time.

I have enjoyed going to county and unit meetings, events, and parades. Thank you, members of the 10th District, for your support and kindness. I am very proud of every unit of this district for all the work they do serving others. You are the reason we are "The Mighty Tenth!"

District 11

Eleventh District members continue "Enhancing the lives of our Veterans, Military and their Families, One Day at a Time." President Maggie spoke at our Spring Conference encouraging members with the above bolded words of her theme. Her special project, "Dogs2DogTags" sparked units and members to continue working ALA programs and events that indeed enhance the lives of many Veterans and their families.

Our little racing pup, D.O.G. (Department of Giving), while not a leader in the great membership race is hardworking and persistent. Three of our 22 units have attained 100% membership while nine units have reached over 75% so far. District members truly enhance lives as they work the ALA mission through their chosen projects. Success stories were shared at our Fall Conference at Lake Tomahawk and at the Spring Conference in Ashland.

Generous donations were made to our Nation-

al Commander's project "Be The One", the ALA Badger Girls State fund, and President Maggie's special project. Donations were raised in fun



Claudia Osero
11th District
President

ways such as basket raffles and live auctions. The Fall Conference featured Halloween dress-up, too! The 11th District gatherings mixed business with songs, fun, socializing, and joint memorial services with TAL and SAL. Guest speakers at the Fall conference were PDP Joyce Endres and PDP Linda Coppock presenting Leadership sessions. At the Spring Conference President Maggie educated us about her special project. Department 1st VPSue Hembrook spoke to us about poppies and about April being the month of children,

"Purple Up!", and the Children's Table. Linda Dunbar, a Gold Star Mother of Unit 25 Odanah, spoke about Camp Benesi founded in honor of her son, MSGT Jonathan Dunbar, killed in 2018.

This District President is proud of each unique unit. Recently, I traveled to our new Unit 464 in Land O'Lakes to witness President Maggie and PDP Linda Coppock present them the Unit of the Year award. This unit's enthusiasm, accomplishments, and 145% membership inspire us all to persist in the great dog race!

Spring flowers are blooming and poppies are being distributed. Many units are collaborating with members of the American Legion family to remind everyone about the symbolism of the remembrance poppies. Have a beautiful Memorial Day!

It has been wonderful to serve as 11th District President. I look forward to seeing many of you in July at Department Convention.



Karl Stuvengen
Department
Commander

As this Legion year draws to a close, I have so many wonderful moments on which to look back. I am both humbled and grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as your Department Commander. The many events and meetings I have attended allowed me to see first-hand all of the great work that the Legionnaires in Wisconsin do on a daily basis. The service to our communities, state and nation is unrivaled, and makes me proud to say that I am a Wisconsin Legionnaire.

As our National Commander has stated many times, The American Legion *changes lives and saves lives*. Our members have shown that they truly embrace that ideal, and work hard everyday to **BE THE ONE**. Our drive to embrace our four pillars is truly a higher calling, and the fulfillment we receive from that work outweighs any cost we

★★★★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

pay to be a member of this great organization. As this is my last column for the Badger Legionnaire, I want to take a moment to recognize and thank all of my officers for joining me on this journey. They have supported me from day one and fully bought into my vision for the Wisconsin American Legion. I hope that when you see them, you will join me in thanking them for their commitment to this organization and to our brother and sister Veterans. The same can also be said for my committee chairs and all of the Department committee members. They took on the work of the Department with vigor, and showed that when we come together, we can accomplish anything. I also want to thank all of the Past Department Commanders for their wise council this year, as well as in past years. Their mentorship and the willingness to pass along their experience has been invaluable to me as I've progressed through the Legion.

Adjutant Julie and our Headquarters Team

are amazing. There is literally nothing that they won't do to advance the cause of our programs and to take care of our members. Their dedication allows our Posts to flourish. They work to remove any impediments that might crop up that would prevent us from completing the mission.

As I told the Department Executive Committee this spring, our work is not done. As we transition to new leadership at every level of the Department, I hope that those who have held office in the past will make themselves available to these new officers. Mentorship is an ongoing process, and your wealth of experience will be sorely needed as they take over our mission. If we are to continue the work of The American Legion, it will take all of us, each playing a role to make it happen. **RECRUIT THE NEXT YOU!**

The American Legion is 105 years old. That is no accident. We have endured this long, because those who came before us willed it to be so. Will the same be said of us, 105 years from now?



Maggie Geiger
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE

As my year is coming to an end, I would like to thank all of you for your support, encouragement, kind words, laughs and of course the potlucks and desserts!

I was able to visit all 12 Districts and many units and County Councils around the state. Tweedle Bug, aka the ALA department car, along with my Husky "Buck" drove in straight lines, on curved roads, diagonally, left to right, north to south, and I can confess sometimes in circles! But when I arrived at my destination, the warm welcomes and information that was shared was so invigorating! If every member was treated with the same respect and kind words as I have experienced, we would all have over 100% in our membership totals!

I was invited by The American Legion to attend and address members at their Fall and Spring meetings. We also have had monthly Zoom meetings with the Legion, Riders and SAL. We shared information and I know that by working together as a Legion Family we are stronger and can accomplish more things than if we try to do things by ourselves.

Commander Karl and I were able to visit all VA facilities around the state. When the opportunity presented itself, I asked to see the Volunteer Service offices, to see what kind of items units send to the facilities.

I don't get speechless very often, but wow, the number of items sent to the facilities is unbelievable. Many units work tirelessly to raise funds and add their personal finances to make sure our Veterans' needs are met. If it wasn't on the shelf today, it will be there tomorrow in triplicate!

I have experienced so many wonderful things this past year. I cannot express how grateful I am that you entrusted me to be your president for 2023-2024. As I've been reading year-end reports, know that our units and members are alive and working the ALA mission not because they have to. It's because they enjoy themselves and they know how important what we do as members, and who we work the mission for, is so important. We need to make sure that the needs of our heroes are met, because the sacrifices they made to keep us a free country, are priceless!

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity I had to serve all of you, for God and Country.



Allen Watry
SAL Detachment
Commander

We call ourselves a Legion Family. So why is it important to think of ourselves as a family?

I was reminded why in late April and early May. I was fortunate enough to be able to visit my Aunt Joann (of Belgium, WI) and Uncle Phil (of Sumter, SC) the weekend of April 19. Both were in hospice; both passed away days after I visited them. Which led to attending both funerals. It was a long emotional three weeks, and I was able to get through it because of the multiple families

I have supporting me. This includes our Legion Family. Thank you for your support over these tough three weeks. I was saddened that I ended up missing several Legion events due to being at their funerals, thank you to those groups for their understanding and support.

This also reminded me of the importance of Buddy Checks. Both Aunt Joann and Uncle Phil were surrounded by family during their last weeks. But others in the facilities they were in were not. Uncle Phil told me how saddened he was that others in the facility did not have many visitors. He felt so fortunate for all the visitors he had. So please continue to do Buddy Checks

for those around you.

Finally, we are closing in on our 2024 Summer Convention. My intent, after enduring those three weeks, is to treat this Convention like a Family Reunion. We have many accomplishments to celebrate. Hopefully we can celebrate our accomplishments together as a family. So please consider attending this year's Convention in Appleton the weekend of July 12, it would be awesome to have every squadron represented and celebrating with us.

For God and Country,

Allen J. Watry

WI SAL Detachment Commander

★★★★ SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

Same mission through a different name. Greetings everyone, ALRA state Judge Advocate Ken "Rhino" Rynes here for director Corey.

Back in 1993, a couple of Legionnaires from Garden City, Michigan, had an idea to promote and expand their post by forming a small group of motorcycle riding Veterans into their post. With help from the Michigan state judge advocate, the "Riders" were born. They are now nationwide and 110,000 members strong.

In 2006, the Riders took on the mission of funding the "American Legion Legacy Fund". The National organization had put out the call and goal to raise 20 million dollars for this fund that would give scholarships to children who

had a parent killed in the War on Terrorism.

The Riders truly answered the call. The National "Legacy Run" debuted in 2006 riding from Indianapolis to Salt Lake City, Utah. When the 300 - 400 bikes rolled into town they brought \$120,000 for the Legacy Fund. The run continued to grow each year to a point that it was bringing in over one million dollars annually right up to 1.2 million dollars in 2023.

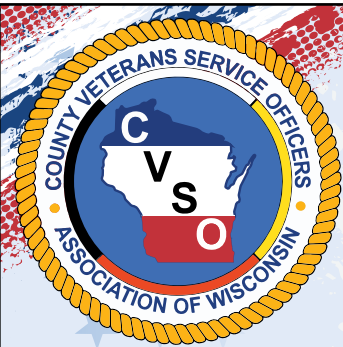
With that great success, the goal of 20 million dollars was reached to fund the Legacy scholarships. With energy levels still high for the run, a home for the funds raised was needed, but had to follow the original path of care for Veterans and their families. That location was found in the VCF or Veterans & Children Foundation. Established in 1925, VCF has awarded millions of dollars to military families in need

and helping them traverse the winding road of applying for and receiving the funds due them from the VBA for service-connected injuries and disabilities.

Like the goal of 20 million dollars for the Legacy Fund, The American Legion has established a goal of 25 million dollars to fund the VCF in perpetuity. With this new mission and goal, the Riders are kickstands up and taking the challenge head on to take care of our fellow Vets and their families.

The Legion Family has supported the Riders at every level these past 17 years and we are asking for that continued support into the future of Veterans helping Veterans and their families. So as I stated in the beginning, same mission through a different name. Thanks in advance, Rhino.

★★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★★★★



County Veteran Service Officers Association
of Wisconsin

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TO SERVE ALL THOSE WHO SERVED AT NO COST TO YOU.

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