

WISCONSIN



April 2024

American Legion Auxiliary
P.O. Box 140
Portage, WI 53901

alawi@amlegionauxwi.org

The official publication of the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary

www.amlegionauxwi.org

MEMBERSHIP

Sue Hembrook
Department Chair
genesuehem@wi.rr.com
262-945-9791

Many questions have arisen about the membership goals for units. These goals are meant to be incentives. Units are not penalized or shamed for not reaching their membership goal. However, the goals are an incentive to work toward.

Be visible in your communities, share your projects, show others that you enjoy what you are doing. Share your stories of whom you are honoring as we are all very proud of those we honor. They have given of themselves, some even with their lives, and we should share their stories with our communities. More importantly, we must educate our children on what sacrifices were made to make this United States of America the land of the free.

We need to join together in our units and put on a united front. It is human nature to have our best buddies, while ignoring or even shaming others. We must all unite and put our personal feelings aside to be able to truly honor those that we joined under. These men and women had to put their personal feelings aside to unite together to fight for the freedoms we all enjoy. It is our duty to do the same, understandably this may not be easy. Some of us have

opinions that we want others to adopt. We are all right and on the other hand we are all wrong. We need each and every one of your opinions to meld together in the pot, mixing together to come up with a common goal. Just as everyone has different skills, different jobs, different cultures, we have all mixed together to make this world a delightful mixture that makes up the human race. Celebrate one another, look for the good in each other and set aside your dislikes. We will all be better for doing this.

Units, you should be reaching out to members that have not shown up for meetings or events lately. Reach out to see if they need some assistance in any way. Like a lot of people, they may not want to ask for help but may accept it if offered. Sometimes a simple, "Hi! How are you doing! We all miss you!" is enough to get them engaged again.

Communication is lacking in all of us. We need to reach out to our fellow members and let them know they are needed to fulfill our mission. They also have joined to honor someone near and dear to them. We need to honor those they are honoring by supporting and welcoming our members, whether they are active or not. We need to stay in contact with all the members of our units in a timely way. By doing this we will strengthen our units and ourselves.

2024 Membership Totals (as of 3/19/24) – 80.17%

DIST.	GOAL %	MUSHER
12	89.08%	Baby Girl
6	85.88%	Denali
3	84.41%	Ranger
5	83.75%	Little Girl
2	83.06%	Sloane
4	81.39%	Winkle
7	80.73%	Hero
8	80.28%	Isabella
9	79.53%	Percy
1	79.39%	Diamond
10	79.26%	Balto
11	72.01%	D.O.G



The American Legion Family

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY TESTIMONIAL

Department of Wisconsin Celebrates:
TAL Commander Karl Stuvengen
ALA President Maggie Geiger
SAL Detachment Commander Allen Watry
ALRA Director Corey Doehrmann

When: Saturday, May 18, 2024

Where: La Sure's Banquet Hall
3125 S Washburn St
Oshkosh WI 54904

Schedule: 5:30 – 6:30 pm, Social Hour/Cash Bar
6:30 pm, Opening Ceremony/Family Style Dinner

Dinner: Main Entrees: Crispy Fried Chicken and Pork Loin w/Honey Garlic Butter Sauce

Cost: \$40.00 per person

Housing: Hotel accommodations on your own
Cobblestone Suites (920-303-1133, block of rooms available under American Legion Testimonial)

Other hotels within 5 miles of La Sure's:

- Hilton Garden Inn 920-966-1300
- Quality Inn 920-232-0300
- Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott 920-233-8504
- Super 8 by Wyndham 920-252-6296

RSVP: Register no later than Wednesday, May 8, 2024



Register online at <https://events.eventzilla.net/e/tal-family-testimonial-2138606917>
OR

Mail check payable to Debi Stuvengen to: 414 E. Spring Street, Orfordville, WI 53576.

Name(s): _____

No. Attending: _____ x \$40/person = \$ _____
(Total enclosed)



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN

President Maggie's project is in support of Dogs2Dogtags, "Saving Our Vets One Dog at a Time." For God and country, we will raise funds together at the Department Convention to be held July 11 – 13, 2024.

I am asking every unit to please bring a donated basket for the raffles. I ask that they have a card with listed items and title of a donating unit, district, or member(s). Please wrap the baskets in cellophane.

Every day different baskets will be raffled off. On Saturday, any unclaimed baskets will be priced to be bought outright. There will also be a unique side fundraiser in honor of President Maggie's project.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

I look forward to a successful convention.

Thank you,

Crystal Shaw, Department Fundraising Chair
crystalspres@gmail.com 262-672-8205

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Betty Stone
Department Chaplain
bjstone626@hotmail.com

Matthew 6: 33-34

33 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

34 So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

PRAYER

Dear Lord,

You are the creator of the universe and everything in it. We see how you love color and fresh smelling air. Today, we are enjoying your season we call Spring. As we see the beauty around us, we lift up our praise and thanksgiving to you for the beautiful world you have given us.

You know our very need even before we need it. Lord, help us to internalize your love for us so we can count on you instead of worrying. Guide us and protect us, in your precious name, Amen.

MUSIC

Sing AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL as you look at the Spring come in.

PRAYER BOOK REMINDER

I am compiling a prayer book for President Maggie. If you would like to contribute to this book, send your prayers to: Betty Stone, **bjstone626@hotmail.com**. I thank you for your contributions.

Each District may submit a prayer book to me by July 1st for judging. Send your district's prayer book to: W5468 Main St., Sheldon, WI 54766.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Karen Runk
Department Chairman
kmrunk4@gmail.com
608-415-2001

April is Military Children's Month and April 15 is Purple Up! Day

Purple Up! is a day to recognize military children for their bravery, flexibility and courage while enduring countless parental deployments, relocations, school changes and more. It's purple because of the mixture of military branch colors.

So it's time to discuss budget, strategy and activities to observe Purple Up! Day with military children in your extended Legion family or children of reserve and guards in your local school. Simply contact the school administration to find out how many children, their ages, and if you could deliver activity packs, greeting cards with gift card or pencil pouches with Star-Spangled Kids, I Spy, or junior member and SAL info.

National Security Chairman Karen Runk and Lorie Ballweg of Unit 245 developed a printable Purple Up! Day card for units to send to the children of active duty Reserves/Guards and full-time military with gift cards, activity packs or pencil pouches, etc. The card can be printed from the department website (**www.amlegionauxwi.org** > Programs > National Security).

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

While Wisconsin has experienced one of the mildest winters on record, we are still anxiously awaiting the telltale signs of spring. Flowers will be blooming soon which also means National Poppy Day is right around the corner – May 24, 2024. But don't forget that poppies can be distributed all year long – Memorial Day, Flag Day, 4th of July, community celebrations, Veterans Day, etc. Sharing the crepe paper poppy and its story are great ways to remind the community how much our Veterans sacrificed on our behalf and how the ALA continues to support our Veterans and military.

Units and posts must submit 20% of their poppy profits to Department to support the VA hospitals in Wisconsin, Minneapolis and Iron Mountain; the Wisconsin Veterans Homes; Dayton Care Center in Kenosha; and Camp American Legion. Poppy profits also fund scholarships, grants to homeless women Veterans, emergency assistance for Veterans and active-duty military personnel, and the Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Units and posts use the balance of poppy proceeds for the direct benefit of Veterans or service members where a medical or financial need is evident. Thank you to everyone who supports the Poppy Program!

The 2024 ALA Department Convention is scheduled for July 11-14, 2024 at the Hilton Paper Valley hotel in Appleton. The opening procession will start at 9:15 a.m. on Friday, July 12 so the convention can be called to order at 9:30 a.m. A recognition program will be held on Friday at 3:00 p.m. including a tribute to honored Past Department President Florence Wasley and presentation of 2023-2024 district membership awards. Department's governing documents will be updated, new officers will be elected and installed, and Fundraising Chairman Crystal Shaw is coordinating a basket raffle. Visit the website for more convention details and please consider attending in July.

The 2024 National Convention will be held in New Orleans with ALA convention sessions from August 26-28, 2024. Registration and housing forms are posted on the department website and other information will be added as it becomes available. Anyone interested in attending should ask to be nominated as an Alternate by their District President. Members who prefer to attend as a guest only, should notify Bonnie Dorniak (**deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org**) to request a convention packet when available.

2024 ALA DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Wisconsin
Thursday-Sunday, July 11-14, 2024

Official Call: The 2024 American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention will be called into session at the Hilton Paper Valley, 333 West College Avenue, Appleton at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024.

Purpose: The purpose of the department convention is to elect officers for the 2024-2025 administrative year; elect delegates and alternates to the national convention; amend the department constitution, bylaws and standing rules as needed; receive reports of the department officers and chairmen; recognize outstanding unit achievements; and transact business as may be brought before the convention body.

Representation: Representation in the department convention shall be by unit in accordance with the provisions of the department constitution. Units with less than ten paid members or whose district dues have not been

paid shall have no representation. Delegates to department convention shall be unit members duly elected for that purpose.

Registration: All attendees to the 2024 Department Convention must submit a registration form and \$30 per person to The American Legion by July 6, 2024. Registrations after July 6 will be \$35.

Voting: All delegates must be registered by 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 13 and seated within their District for voting at 9:00 a.m. Business will resume as soon as voting is completed.

Housing Blocks: Housing has been arranged at the Hilton Paper Valley hotel, 333 West College Avenue in Appleton. Discounted room rates of \$112 plus tax will be available until June 11, 2024 or when the room block is filled, whichever comes first. Additional hotels in the area:

Hampton Inn Appleton - Fox River Mall
 350 Fox River Drive
 920-954-9211
 Room Block: Wisconsin American Legion
 \$114.00 plus tax

Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott
 130 S Nicolet Rd.
 920-939-8181
 \$119.00 plus tax

La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham
 3800 W College Avenue
 920-734-7777
 \$129.00 plus tax

Four Points by Sheraton Appleton
 300 Mall Drive
 920-993-1200
 \$139.00 plus tax

Deceased Members: Names of deceased members that are sent to Department Headquarters by April 26, 2024 on a Member Data Form will appear in the Joint Memorial Service Program.

Installation: Installation of 2024-2025 Department Officers and District Presidents will be on Saturday, July 13 upon conclusion of convention business.

POPPY PROGRAM

it won't be an easy task. And don't forget Little Miss Poppy. All those Poppy Princesses that did such an outstanding job bringing awareness of the Poppy and the program.

Have a little fun but be respectful. Always ask permission before distributing poppies at a business no matter how many years you may have been there. Ownership/management and policies change so confirm first, distribute second.

Be creative when distributing poppies. Unit 79 in Burlington got creative and up to date. They designed a bookmark with the *Who will wear a Poppy* poem on one side and poppies with the ALA branding on the other side. In our ever-growing cashless society, they are adding a QR code which will direct the recipient to a Go Fund Me page for their Auxiliary. The page will also have information about the Poppy program. That's being creative! With forward thinking.

NOTE: The May Public Relations Zoom meeting will feature how to create a QR code. PR Zoom meetings are held the last Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Stay for all or part of the meeting and everyone is invited. If you don't get notifications about these Zoom meetings, please reach out to PR Chairman Bob Shappell (**bobshap@aol.com**) to get the link.

I'm looking forward to reading all the unit reports for their Poppy programs. I'm sure there will be some creative ideas for distribution. I can't wait to share them with all of our units.

It will be a fun time at convention in Appleton this year, handing out awards.

Kay Grosskopf
Department Chair
kkgros44@gmail.com
715-881-1843

We are getting to the culmination of the Poppy year. May is Poppy month and May 24 is National Poppy Day this year. Has your unit thought about a Poppy Proclamation in your city, town or village? You can find a sample proclamation on the department website under Programs > Poppy. Post this proclamation in your local paper, via the Chamber of Commerce, on your Facebook page, or any other means you use to communicate to the public. Then go out in force and distribute poppies.

But remember that May is not the only month to distribute and promote the poppy. All year we should be educating the public about the poppy. We can educate our youth through the poppy poster contest. Before students embark on designing their poster, they should know the background and story of the poppy (besides the rules). What better time than Veterans Day? Or Pearl Harbor Day? Or Armed Forces Day (May 18)? Of course, Memorial Day. The Poppy Poster contest can be conducted any time of the year, only the judging takes place in the spring. Think about this as you plan for the coming year's events.

Thank you to all the students that participated in the Poppy Poster contest. They have not been judged as of this writing but I'm certain

PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

HONORING PDP FLORENCE WASLEY (2010-2011)

Past Department President Florence Wasley will be the honored guest at the 2024 Department Convention at the Hilton Paper Valley in Appleton, Wisconsin. Florence is a 48-year PUF member of Unit 493 in Linden, Iowa County, District 3. She served as Department President from 2010-2011.

Florence's eligibility for membership is through the 20 years of Air Force Radio Operator service of her late husband, Emery Wasley, Sr. and her son, Emery Junior, who served 20 years as a Superintendent of Base Systems earning the rank of First Sergeant. Currently, her granddaughter, Korra Wasley, is in the ROTC program in the Nursing Corps. Upon graduation in 2025, Korra will be a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army.

Florence was employed as an elementary school teacher for 30 years in California, Japan, Florida, and Wisconsin before retiring in 1996. Florence continued substituting until 2008, when she became more involved in the Auxiliary.

Florence's experience and leadership were gained by her many chairmanships and offices in her unit, county, district, and department levels.

Florence's theme, "Striving For Excellence," has proven to be a part of her life from attending a one-room country school. Her special project was helping Homeless Women Veterans, which has become one of Wisconsin's grant programs. She wants to thank each of you who contributed in any way to help our women military veterans in need. Florence also wishes to thank Kathy Wollmer and her staff for their assistance in getting this supportive program off the ground.



Florence will be honored during the recognition program on Friday, July 12 at 3:00 p.m. Please make plans to join her.

Florence will be honored during the recognition program on Friday, July 12 at 3:00 p.m. Please make plans to join her.

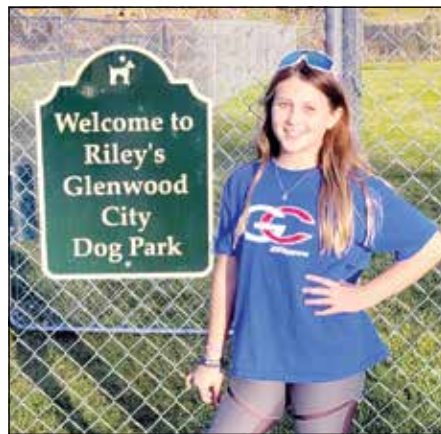
CHILDREN & YOUTH

Margaret Larson
Department Chairman
715-410-7936
maggiedoit@hotmail.com

Are you looking for that special "hero" or child that has done a good deed? I am proud to announce that I will be presenting a Good Deed Award later this month to Riley Unruh, age 10, who took it upon herself to get the first-ever dog park in her hometown of Glenwood City, Wisconsin.

The idea started when Riley, who wants to be a veterinarian when she grows up, had to write a paper in the third grade. All her friends were writing about why there should be a class pet. Riley took it a step further and wrote why there should be a dog park. She took her idea to the city council with her plan – where it was going to go, what materials she was going to use, and how it was going to be funded. She didn't miss a beat. Riley's plan got approved in November 2022 and she began fundraising. She created flyers, placed donation boxes around town, and even advertised at a local basketball tournament. After nearly a year and countless hours of hard work, Riley's Dog Park opened at Hinman Park. Riley was at the ribbon cutting ceremony and Channels 13 and 18 televised the event. She also has a Facebook page: Riley's Dog Park.

A Youth Hero Award will also be presented in the near future to Charley Jorgenson, age 8, from Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Adam Jorgenson had just gotten a car wash at Kwik Trip and got out to dry it off, leaving the car running. Someone from a nearby Buick SUV asked him for directions. While looking over at them, he saw his own vehicle take off. He immediately



started screaming, "There are kids in the car! They just stole my car with my kids inside!"

Adam's wife Brittany used the "Find my iPhone" feature to locate the vehicle, which had stopped behind a Batteries Plus store, just a short distance from the Kwik Trip. She relayed the location to her husband who was talking to the police on a second borrowed line when she saw she had a new voicemail from her husband's phone. It was their 8-year old daughter, Charley, screaming for help. Charley said a person stole the car and was telling her to leave, but she didn't want to leave her 2-year old sister behind. Then another car pulled up alongside the stolen car and the thief jumped out and into the car and drove off. Charley noticed that he left her dad's phone behind, so she called her mom. They were all reunited with much hugging and both girls received teddy bears from the police officers. Adam Jorgenson said there are true benefits to having the "Find my iPhone" app.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Bonnie Jakubczyk
Department Chairman
bon6862@yahoo.com

It is time to kick Spring off by recognizing our volunteers during April's National Volunteer month. While visiting our VA medical facilities, it is heartwarming to see how our very devoted volunteers are making a difference for our Veterans. Thank you to all those who work directly with our Veterans and give them a great first impression of the American Legion Auxiliary. To all those crafty ones who make items such as tray favors, lap blankets, baby items, or cards, thank you for your talent and time which bring joy to them. A huge thank you to our volunteers for your dedication, time, and money.

One of my highlights at Zablocki is the annual baby shower. Thanks to your generous donations, we can purchase items twice a year for the showers. There were some adorable crocheted animals, blankets, and hats made by our volunteers and President Maggie helped serve the food.

Does your unit have some extra money that they are looking to donate? VA facilities' wish list items do change, so please check with the Hospital Representatives for what the current needs are at their facilities. There is also the National Veterans Creative Arts – four Veterans from Zablocki are going to Denver in May to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Make sure to share what your unit has done this year by filling out the Unit Impact report due to your District President by April 15 and VA&R Unit Annual Narrative Report for 2023-2024, which is due to Department Headquarters by April 15, 2024. Remember to include pictures (JPEG format),

stories, newspaper clippings, flyers, activity reports, and success stories. By sending in your reports, we can share your activities with National, thus highlighting how our Wisconsin units are working on our mission.

Sharing this quote from Elizabeth Andrew, "Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart."

The American Legion Family is promoting the Be The One mission to end Veteran suicide and has joined forces with Columbia University to develop training for those who want to learn more about interacting and responding with Veterans who may be in crisis.

After the training, participants will be able to:

- Use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to determine at-risk individuals.
- Identify risk factors and warning signs.
- Outline the types of suicidal ideation and four behaviors that indicate imminent risk.
- Communicate effectively with individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves.

Members of The American Legion Family are encouraged to take part in this training. For more information, visit <https://www.legion.org/betheone>.

**BE
=THE=
ONE**



UNIT 33 PIE FUNDRAISER

ALA Unit 33 in Neenah celebrated Presidents' Day with a pie social, raising over \$700 for the unit. They sold red, white and blue pies by the slice or in whole (cherry, apple and blueberry pies). The unit looks forward to making this an annual event.

Rebecca (Becky) Mueller for Department President

I am excited and humbled to announce my candidacy for the office of ALA Department of Wisconsin President. I have appreciated the opportunity to serve you for the past years as an officer and chairman. I hope during these past years I have earned your trust and that you have confidence in my ability to lead this great organization on the department level.



Rebecca (Becky) Mueller

I have gained my eligibility from multiple sources: my husband Clarence's service in the Army during the Vietnam era, my deceased first husband Richard Young's service as a Marine during the Vietnam era, and my deceased father's service in the Army during the late 1950s. Many family members have taken advantage of the opportunity to belong to this wonderful American Legion Family in various capacities.

I became a member of Krause-Kraft-Mueller Unit 106, Seymour in 2007. Since that time, I have served on the unit, county, district and department levels as the opportunity arose. My plan is to continue to be of service to and with this organization in whatever capacity I am needed.

Traveling to many parts of the state and visiting units and posts in every district, I have learned so much about and with you. Experiencing the care and compassion that you exhibit to your Legion family and beyond has been such a blessing. It is a joy to celebrate accomplishments and I look forward to our future endeavors together.

New Life United Methodist Church, Seymour has certified me as a Lay Speaker for the denomination. Within my congregation I serve on many committees, facilitate a weekly bible study, and occasionally lead the services.

For God and Country defines my calling and passion. I would appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve this organization and, most importantly, you, as we navigate together through the changes and challenges that are before us. Our mission is before us and I feel I can bring fresh insights and ideas to the table as we move into our second century of service to our Veterans, our military, their families (us) and our communities.

Thank you for your consideration and support. God bless you and the USA.

Sue Hembrook for Department Senior Vice President

Sue Hembrook announces her candidacy for Department Senior Vice President. Her journey in the American Legion Auxiliary began 21 years ago at the unit level. In addition to chairing many committees in her unit, she served as unit president for five years. She also was the 4th District President and President of the Milwaukee County Conference of Units. On the department level she has served as Education Chairman, Strategic Planning Group Co-Leader, Director of Hospital Volunteers, Representative at the Dayton Care Center, and Poppy Shop Supervisor.



Sue Hembrook

She was also appointed to positions at the national level: 2015-2016 National Legislative Committee, 2016-2017 National Education Central Division Chairman, 2018-2019 National Poppy Committee, 2019-2021 National Central Division Children & Youth Chairman, 2021-2022 National Central Division VA&R Chairman, 2022-2023 Central Division Americanism Chairman, and currently Central Division National Security Chairman.

She is eligible for membership through the service

of her late father, Norton Kaiser, a WWII Army Veteran and that of her husband, Gene, a Vietnam era Air Force Veteran. She has four children and nine grandchildren, all of whom are members of the Legion Family. Her son, Joe, is currently a member of the Air Force Reserve and son-in-law Jeremy is serving actively in the Navy.

Sue and her husband are members of Holy Cross Catholic Church in Wilmot, WI. She has been involved in her faith community with their school, parish council and many other fundrais-

ing events sponsored by the church and school. Her dedication to this organization and our Veterans has been steadfast. She supports the VAs wholeheartedly as they supported her family when her father contracted MS and he was admitted to a study being done at the time by the Milwaukee VA. She knows that her Dad had a much better and longer life due to the care given him and also the support given to the family. She will dedicate herself by doing her best to support this organization and our Veterans.

Amy Luft for 1st Vice President

Amy Luft is excited to announce her candidacy for the position of Department 1st Vice President. Amy is endorsed for this position by the Rose-Harms Unit 355 in Grafton.



Amy Luft

Amy's passion for the American Legion Auxiliary has provided her many opportunities. As a Paid-Up-For-Life 18-year member, she has served in many different officer positions including president of her unit, county and 2nd District.

Amy also participated in many different areas at the department level. Her past chairmanships have included Americanism (winning the National Award for Best Americanism Program), Leadership (winning the Department Award for Excellence), National Security, Public Relations and Membership team. In addition, she co-chaired the ALA In-the-Know and served on the Strategic Planning Committee. Currently, Amy serves as the Department 2nd Vice President.

At the national level, Amy had the honor of serving as the National Convention Chairman for the 2022 National Convention in Milwaukee. Currently, she serves as the National Leadership Chair for Central Division.

Amy has attended several National Mission Training classes and has completed many ALA Academy courses. She is also a graduate of the Wisconsin American Legion College.

As a member of Stars & Stripes Honor Flight since 2009, Amy served as Vice President for 10 years and continues to serve as an ambassador for the program. To date she has participated in 50 honor flights.

Amy is also a member of the VFW Auxiliary Unit 5373 of Ozaukee County. She volunteers with Interfaith Caregivers, Meals On Wheels and has served as a Village Trustee for the Village of Grafton since 2020. Amy has a degree in Business Management and spent over 22 years in sales and marketing in the senior healthcare industry. Currently, Amy works in the nonprofit sector at a local food pantry. Amy and her husband Todd have two daughters and two grandsons who belong to the American Legion Family.

Amy's goal is to promote the initiatives and programs of The American Legion Family while supporting and advocating for Veterans, military and their families.

A 16-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary, Karen Runk is eligible for membership through the service of her youngest brother who is currently on active duty and that of her late father following the adoption of the Legion Act. Service to Veterans is part of every chapter of Karen's adult life and continues to be her priority and passion.

Karen has been actively volunteering as a member of Kerl-Endres-Brannan Unit 245 of Cross Plains since 2008 from wherever she has resided, assisting units and other Veteran service organizations in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Illinois with fundraising, recruiting and volunteer events.



Karen Runk

Her beloved Unit 245 and District 3 have endorsed Karen's candidacy for Department 2nd Vice President.

Since returning to Wisconsin in 2015, Karen has served in leadership positions in her unit, county, district and department. She has previously served as Unit 245 Vice President and President, Dane County President, District 3 President, several District 3 chairmanships (Leadership, Military Families, VA&R, Community Service, and Children & Youth) and department Leadership committee member. She is currently serving as the National Security Chairman for the department of Wisconsin.

Betty Stone for Department Historian

I, Betty Stone, would like to run for Department Historian for the 2024-2025 administrative year. I have been an American Legion Auxiliary member for the last 47 years. I have held the following offices in the ALA: Unit - President, Vice President, Treasurer, which includes Membership Chairman, and Badger Girls State Chairman; County - President; District: 2nd Vice President and VA&R Chairman, 1st Vice President and Membership Chairman, President five times for two years each; Department - Scholarship Chairman, Chaplain, and on the membership committee.



Betty Stone

Outside of the ALA, I have been in church work since age 16; teaching Sunday school, youth groups, bible studies, and planning events. I take part in community activities, including Sheldon Village Board Trustee.

Currently, I am the facilitator for our prayer group that meets once a week. I also am in charge of the yearly Ladies Encounter at our church. I have been involved in our church camp where I have taught youth, cooked in camp, and been a financial supporter.

Our preamble states, "for God and Country we associate ourselves together..." Our mission is to serve others not self through the many programs and activities we support and participate in throughout the year. We serve Veterans and also the community.

Reading the history of our unit and district is a motivating factor to continue to serve our Veterans and community with enthusiasm. Thank you for considering my candidacy for Department Historian.



SHAMROCK SUPPER HOSTED BY BERLIN AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

Story contributed by Allie Borland
Berlin Journal Newspapers

The O'Connor-Chiers American Legion Family hosted a traditional St. Patrick's Day dinner for the second year in a row. Proceeds from the event are going toward various projects, with the biggest being Veteran gravestone restorations.

The project is a partnership with the Berlin Veterans Foundation, Inc. and the Berlin VFW. It involves cleaning and restoring all Civil War markers in Oakwood Cemetery and other Veterans' headstones which have been flagged for cleaning. The restoration project will advance to include other cemeteries in the area.

These groups also sponsor activities such as

Berlin's American Legion baseball program, high school and eighth grade scholarships, the Badger Boys and Girls State programs, Camp American Legion, The Highground, and VA medical centers.

The Shamrock Supper brought together Veterans of all ages, service status, and experiences – each with their own stories to share. Not only did Veterans attend, but many other

community members did as well. The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary served Berlin school teachers, bankers, and other citizens. The atmosphere was warm and welcoming to all who participated, and the event was altogether spectacular.

Photos courtesy of Berlin Journal Newspapers.

SERVICE NOT IN SELF: IN THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

ALA MEMBERS FROM UNIT 106 SEYMOUR, UNIT 154 MONDOVI HELPED MAKE HOLIDAYS BRIGHTER



Members of ALA Unit 154 in Mondovi worked with community volunteers and representatives from the City of Mondovi, Buffalo County Sheriff's Office and Department of Human Services, Alliance Bank, and Mondovi School District for distribution of Christmas Wish Tree gifts to those experiencing hard times at the holidays.

Jeff Frenette, Retired WI State Patrol; Dave Shapiro, City of Mondovi Chief of Police; and Cindy Giese, Unit 154 Vice President and retired Wisconsin Department of Justice-DCI.



Mondovi American Legion Post 154 Finance Officer Randy Crank and Auxiliary members join community volunteers on the project's day of distribution.



ABOVE: Lynn Cartier, Terri Carpenter and Debbie Court of ALA Unit 106 wrapped gifts for the Seymour High School clothes closet to aid students in need. Cindy Haak and Lynn Cartier organized the closet to make room for the new items.

BELOW LEFT: ALA Unit 106 raised \$500 at a fundraiser held at Seymour Dairy Queen to benefit Old Glory Honor Flights. Pictured: Unit President Juellaine Miller and Michelle Mueller, Dairy Queen Manager. BELOW RIGHT: The Our Kids Backpack Program provides weekend snack bags for over 200 students on the Seymour School campus each week. Debbie Court of Unit 106 presented gift cards to Kate Schaumberg for each recipient on behalf of the Auxiliary.





Karl Stuvengen
Department
Commander

★★★★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

Ah, April and the dawn of Spring and rebirth. The Wisconsin winter is passing and soon we will be bewitched by the crack of the bat, and the beginning of another baseball season. Baseball and The American Legion have a long and storied history. With more than 3,400 teams and over 55,000 youth participating, this American phenomenon is gearing up for another summer of excitement, sportsmanship and life-long memories. With the addition of American Legion Softball, we have an exciting new way to further promote this storied program.

Addressing the 1925 South Dakota Department Convention, Big Ten Commissioner Maj. John L. Griffith stated, *The American Legion could well consider the advisability of assisting in the training of young Americans through our athletic games. Athletic competition teaches courage and respect for others, fostering their growth into active citizens.*

All of our Americanism programs are modeled after this premise. They pride themselves on teaching many of these life skills to our nation's youth. These values are as important today as they were in 1925, and our youth continue to look to us for the opportunity to learn. As with most American Legion programs, this starts at the local Post. Many of our Posts conduct one or more of these fundamental activities, and often see their candidates succeed at the higher levels

of these contests.

Sadly, some of our Posts no longer conduct Legion programs in the community. There are literally tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships left on the table every year because of this. The life skills taught through these programs are desperately needed by today's youth. We have the perfect vehicle to provide them. Does it require effort? Does it require an engaged membership? Yes, on both counts. Promoting these programs can often boost membership as well as visibility in the community. This is especially enticing to younger veterans. They want the same things for their children that we did. They want their children to learn about sportsmanship, respect for the flag, weapons safety, our Constitution and many other values. What a perfect opportunity to engage them in our programs and eventually recruit them into membership in our organization.

So, as we enter this season of re-birth, I urge you to consider starting or expanding one of the many Americanism programs we have available. Let those younger veterans provide you access to your local schools. Let them take the lead in promoting, coaching and running the programs. All you need to do is provide some guidance. Don't dwell on membership in the beginning. That will come as they discover what we have to offer.

Our nation's youth are calling. I urge you to step up, and answer that call.



Maggie Geiger
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE

What is the American Legion Auxiliary? What do you do? How do you become a member? How do we get into schools to share the Americanism Essay and Poppy Poster contests? How do we get the word out to our communities?

Do these questions sound all too familiar? These are some of the questions that Public Relations Chairman Bob Shappell and his committee have been addressing in the PR monthly Zoom chats on the last Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Join in whenever you can and participate for as long as your schedule allows, but don't be surprised if you stay on the entire time. This is an interactive meeting that will help give you ideas not only how to promote your unit in your community, but also how to promote your unit within your unit.

Yes, you read it correctly – promote your unit within your unit! We need to take the time to appreciate our own members, acknowledging them and their contributions that help make our units a success. Poppy calls, birthday cards, rides to and from a meeting, appreciation certificates for continuous years of service to name a few. Take time during your meetings to introduce new members, explain when your unit was chartered, read some of the minutes from unit meetings in years past. Spotlight one of the ALA programs – just a few minutes will help members understand better Who We Are and What We Do! These are some of the topics that have been discussed during the monthly PR Zoom chats.

Invite Legionaries, SAL and Legion Riders to attend these monthly PR chats as well. The entire Legion family needs to work together to help reach our communities so they understand we are there not only for veterans, military and their families, but also for our youth and our communities. Sign in individually or as a group to attend the monthly PR chats, there is a wealth of knowledge and new ideas.

If you have any questions, or would like a copy of past PR chats, contact PR chairman Bob Shappell at bobshap@aol.com.

Hope to see you on the next chat!



Allen Watry
SAL Detachment
Commander

★★★★ SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

Happy Spring! Hopefully Winter has ended and we do not have to endure a late April/early May blizzard!

I would like to start this message with a shout-out to the Hartland Legion Family (294). They held another very successful Operation Homeless Veteran Event in February. I believe they have exceeded \$100K in monetary donations. They also received an overwhelming amount of durable goods

donated. OUTSTANDING JOB!

When I mention this successful event to others while traveling around the state, many times the discussion quickly turns to "How can we do something that big and successful?" There is a lot to unwrap with this question; I am not going to try to do that here. But I would suggest their success starts with having strong community visibility and engagement. I had the opportunity to spend 2 to 3 hours at their event. I was amazed at the continuous stream of individuals/local businesses stopping to make donations. The Hartland Legion Family is well known in the community, they are engaged in their community (year-round), and I believe that is a key to their success.

With spring here and summer around the corner, Legion Families will have many opportunities to deepen/strengthen their visibility, engagement, and involvement in their local communities. Very soon community parades, patriotic celebrations, and other community based events will be held. These are great opportunities for squadrons (as well as Posts, Units, and Rider Groups) to be visible and engaged. Can we, as an organization, have a positive impact and support our communities if we are not visible and engaged? My challenge to the Squadrons in Wisconsin is to be involved and engaged in your community activities this summer. My belief is this will create the strong foundation needed to have the positive impact needed in our communities.

Now to close, a couple quick business-related items. Squadrons, remember to submit your updated Squadron Data Information, even if there are no changes in location, dues, or officers. Also, remember Squadron Data Reports are due on May 31. Both forms are mandatory so please be proactive and submit these in a timely manner. They can be found in an electronic version on www.wisal.org, under the tab "Resources".

Thank you for all you do to support the Legion Mission.



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

★★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★★★★

The American Legion Riders are promoting a three-day motorcycle ride to raise funds for two great programs that support veterans. **The Wisconsin Legion Riders – Cruise for a Cause, 'Stu's Cruise – 24'** will be held on June 28 - 30, 2024.

The Wisconsin American Troop and Family Support Fund offers temporary assistance to active-duty members, qualifying veterans, and

their immediate families. This is a nonbudgeted restricted fund supported solely by grants and donations from both our members and the public.

The Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund provides a one time only assistance grant for Wisconsin female veterans who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Funds are paid directly to the landlord, utility company or other vendor. The veteran is required to participate in a support program within or approved by the Federal or State VA system.

We need your help to make this a successful event, there are several ways to do this. First, you can donate by making a check out to "Stu's

Cruise-24". Checks can be presented at a stop or by mailing to P.O. Box 388, Portage, WI 53901. Secondly, you can share our sponsorship form with people/businesses to ask if they would be willing to support these two programs. Lastly, we would love to see you along the way or at one of the stops. We will be posting our exact planned route on our webpage in June. Plus, we will be making updates on our Facebook page (American Legion Riders Wisconsin) throughout each day of the ride. All of this information is available on our ride page by going to alrawis.org and clicking on **Cruise for a Cause 24** on the left-hand side of the page or by scanning the **QR code** at left.

The Legion Riders are promoting this event; however, it is truly a family affair. We will have Department Commander Karl Stuvengen, Department President Maggie Geiger and Detachment Commander Allen Watry riding with us as we travel through the state.

If you have any questions about the Wisconsin Legion Riders don't hesitate to contact me: Corey Doehrmann/State Director, cell 262-305-0305 or email at alrawi.director@gmail.com. Our next meeting after the publication of this will be May 4 at Post 54 in Marshfield, WI.



Don't forget to register for
The Legion Family Testimonial.

May 18, 2024

See page A1 for details
and registration information.