

WISCONSIN



February 2025

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

Department Membership Team

Amy Luft
Chair

amyluft@gmail.com
414-651-7300

Teresa Steinke

Committee Member
teresa.steinke_cmx@yahoo.com
715-828-7462

Diane Zwiers

Committee Member
dzwiers7280@gmail.com
920-378-1786

Andrea Stoltz

Program Coordinator
alawi@amlegionauxwi.org
608-745-0124

2025 Membership Totals – 81.54%



District	Goal %
4	88.51%
3	85.82%
5	85.31%
6	83.42%
9	83.19%
2	81.87%
11	80.39%
10	80.20%
12	79.89%
8	78.59%
7	77.07%
1	76.82%

(as of 1/21/2025)

We're over halfway through our membership year already. Time flies when you're having fun! We've learned that membership is definitely a team effort. Thank you for all your hard work in keeping the Department of Wisconsin near the top nationally. Below are a few highlights of our achievements:

*Top 15% of all Departments
62 units at 100% or better*

324 new members

Two new male members

Three counties over 100%

486 Facebook members

Without a solid membership we cannot carry out the many programs that comprise the American Legion Auxiliary. It's important to retain those on our rolls and actively seek out new members to remain the largest patriotic organization in the world. Don't be afraid to speak up! Encourage those eligible

CENTRAL DIVISION			
As of January 22, 2025			
Department	Total	Goal	% of Goal
Ohio	28,811	34,719	82.98%
Iowa	14,740	17,857	82.54%
Wisconsin	13,442	16,514	81.40%
Indiana	30,928	40,119	77.09%
Michigan	22,016	28,792	76.47%
West Virginia	3,668	4,923	74.51%
Illinois	14,713	20,083	73.26%
Kansas	6,709	9,189	73.01%
Missouri	5,609	8,114	69.13%
Total	140,636	180,310	78.00%

to join our American Legion Family. Sometimes all it takes is to simply ask the question. Trying something new can make things fun! Consider hosting an open house along with your Legion and/or SAL or host a "bring a friend" meeting.

MEMBERSHIP QUIZ

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MEMBERSHIP?

Take the true/false quiz below and find out. Answers are on page A2.

1. A potential Auxiliary member must join the post in which their service relative is a member.
2. An individual is eligible to join the ALA through the war service of a divorced spouse.
3. If a member does not renew and has several years of lapsed membership, they must start over by completing a new application and will obtain a new member number.
4. Membership year runs January 1 – December 31.
5. Units must have 10 or more senior members to keep their charter.
6. A unit cannot require that a member attend a certain number of meetings to vote.
7. If a member wants to transfer to a different unit, the Member Change Form must be signed by the current Unit Membership Chair.
8. Honorary Life Members do not receive membership renewal notices.
9. Members not paid by January 1 are not in good standing and are considered delinquent/expired.
10. Members should always carry American Legion Family applications with them.

MEMBERS VISITING MEMBERS



Members of Alois Dreikosen Unit 469 in Marathon spread Christmas cheer to the homebound. They also discovered it was a reunion of FIVE Unit Presidents: Betty Blume (2015-2019 & 2023-Present), Marlene Seubert (2009-2015), Ruth Franke (1962-1963), Bonnie Schult (2001-2002), and Kathy Grell (2021-2023).

2025 MIDWINTER CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The Auxiliary session at The American Legion Midwinter Conference was quite the success! Approximately 115 Auxiliary members of all ages had a great time learning about leadership opportunities and report writing, and the youth in our Department engaged members with sign language, pocket flag folding, and trivia contests. Meredith Clark, 2024 ALA Badger Girls Stater and recipient of a \$10,000 Samsung Scholarship, shared about her experience at ALABGS. The day also included a



Members folding pocket flags as demonstrated by the Junior members.



visit from SAL National Vice Commander Harl "Butch" Ray, service projects for our Veterans, information on legislative issues and strategic planning, and a presentation on the UW MIA Recovery and Identification Project.

ABOVE: SAL Detachment Cdr. Allen Watry, President Becky Mueller, SAL National Vice Cdr. Butch Ray.

AT RIGHT: \$10,000 Samsung Scholarship Winner Meredith Clark.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Donna Jensen
 Department Chaplain
 djensen20@gmail.com
 414-303-6186

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

— Romans 15:13

HOPE: trust, reliance; desire accompanied by expectation of fulfillment; something hoped for; one that gives promise for the future. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

The world is made better and the future brighter with a sense of hope. To me, hope is a feeling of optimism and plan for a future filled with good things. Hope is not a guarantee everything we wish for will happen but the positive attitude to believe it will be possible.

What do you “hope” for? Do you approach life with a positive mindset, believing some of the things you want to happen will actually happen? There is the “reality check” part of us that chimes in saying not all we hope for will happen. How do you deal with that? I find it more beneficial to keep a positive attitude but also prepare for what happens if all my hopes are not fulfilled. For me, prayer is a way to hope for good things and ask God for his help in making it happen, knowing sometimes the answer to my prayers could be “no” or “later.”

Music

“Whispering Hope”: by Alice Hawthorne 1868; Recorded by Jim Reeves in 1959.

Soft as the voice of an angel, breathing a lesson unheard.

Hope with a gentle persuasion whispers her comforting word:

Wait till the darkness is over, wait till the tempest is done.

Hope for the sunshine tomorrow, after the shower is gone.

REQUEST

Please help me put together an inspiring and beautiful prayer book for President Becky Mueller. I am asking everyone to please send prayers, poems and inspirational pieces to include in this book. They can be original or from another source. Include the author plus **name** and **unit number** of the person sending. You can send it to me via mail (Donna Jensen, 6936 N 86th St, Milwaukee, WI 53224) or email (djensen20@gmail.com). Thank you.



POPPY ORDERS

Thank you to everyone who submitted poppy orders by December 15. Poppies are sold out but current orders will be filled in the order received.

New orders will not be accepted until August 2025.

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- March 1** Scholarship applications
- March 15** ALA State Bowling Tournament entry forms
- March 15** Unit Member of the Year nominations to Leadership Chairman
- April 1** Online ALA Badger Girls State registrations for delegates and alternates
- April 15** Unit Year-End Reports
- May 15** Mentor of the Year nominations to PPP Chairman
- June 1** Department Resolutions
- June 1** District nominations for alternates to national convention
- June 1** Online Salute to Servicemembers nominations

UPCOMING EVENTS

- District Spring Conferences – Check with your District President for details
- June 14** Camp American Legion's 100th Anniversary Celebration
- July 17-20** Department Convention at the KI Center/Hyatt Hotel in Green Bay
- Aug 23-28** National Convention in Tampa Bay, Florida

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

The national organization mailed final dues renewal notices on February 1. If you received a notice but think your dues were paid, please verify with your Unit Membership Chairman that your payment was transmitted to department headquarters. Members may reinstate their membership by mailing a check to their unit or department headquarters or pay by credit card to the national organization (317-569-4570 or www.ALAforVeterans.org).

Unit presidents are reminded to submit Unit Year-End Reports by April 15. Members should be proud of all they accomplished and report it!

Please note several important deadlines that are quickly approaching.

MEMBERSHIP QUIZ ANSWERS

MEMBERSHIP QUIZ ANSWERS

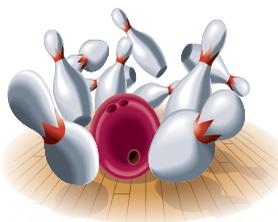
(from Page A1):

1. **FALSE** – The potential member is eligible for membership in any Auxiliary unit.
2. **FALSE** – A divorced person does not occupy the status of spouse and therefore has no eligibility. But the fact that a member has become divorced from the person whom they originally gained eligibility does not force them to surrender their membership, even if they remarry, as long as their membership has never lapsed.
3. **FALSE** – A lapsed member who wants to reinstate should not complete a new application. The original member number is reactivated. Eligibility must be reverified by the unit making sure that a person has not since divorced or the living Veteran is also a current member of The American Legion. Rejoins should be submitted on a Member Change form. Back dues do not have to be paid unless they want to keep continuous years/original join date.
4. **TRUE** – No matter when you joined, your membership term is always January – December.
5. **FALSE** – Ten senior members are needed to obtain a Unit charter. However, once obtained a unit may fall below ten senior members and still maintain their charter.
6. **TRUE** – The right to vote and the right to hold office are clear privileges of membership.
7. **FALSE** – Members wishing to transfer units must have the Member Change Form signed by the new Unit Membership Chair.
8. **TRUE** – Honorary Life Members do not receive membership renewal notices. The unit is responsible for paying dues annually for Honorary Life Members.
9. **TRUE** – A member is deemed delinquent for failing to pay dues by December 31 of the current membership year and is classified as expired.
10. **TRUE** – Absolutely! Membership applications can be downloaded from the ALA Department website or contact Headquarters to order membership brochures.

CANDIDATES FOR DEPARTMENT & NATIONAL OFFICES

Candidates for department or national offices must email their announcement (300-350 words) with a high-resolution head/shoulder photo to deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org **by Monday, March 17, 2025** for publication in the April issue of the *Wisconsin*.

WISCONSIN ALA STATE BOWLING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL 9-PIN TAP TOURNAMENT APRIL 12 & 13, 2025



Ten Pin Bowling Alley
 6285 Nesbitt Road
 Madison, WI 53719
 608-845-1010
 Hosted by Unit 385 – Verona

CONTACT INFORMATION
 Jenni Syftestad
 Tournament Manager
syftes@chorus.net

EVENTS

Double – Singles
 Team (4-Person)
 All Events

SQUAD TIMES

Saturday, 11 am or 2 pm
 Sunday, 9 am

Entry Closing Date
 ENTRIES MUST BE
 POSTMARKED
 NO LATER THAN MARCH 15, 2025

**SAVE THE DATE:
JULY 16, 2025**

**KICK-OFF TO DEPARTMENT
CONVENTION WITH
JOINT AMERICAN LEGION
FAMILY TESTIMONIAL**

**HYATT REGENCY HOTEL,
GREEN BAY
Watch for details...**

WANTED:

**ALA Department
Finance Committee Member**

Department Bylaws allow any American Legion Auxiliary member with appropriate experience to serve on the Department Finance Committee. **Candidates need to have experience in accounting, finance, budgeting, auditing or other relevant background to be considered.**

Candidates should submit a resume to deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org by **April 11, 2025.**

Upon receipt of all resumes, candidates will be contacted by the Department Senior Vice President for a telephone interview. The successful candidate will be appointed to serve a 3-year term (July 2025-July 2028).



HELP WANTED!

**ALA Badger Girls State Counselors,
and Staff are still needed!**
Friday, June 13 – Friday, June 20
UW-Oshkosh Campus

You can volunteer the whole week or just a couple days. Please review the opportunities available and submit an online application (www.ALABGS.org > About ALABGS > ALABGS Volunteer Info)

Questions?

Contact ALABGS Chairman
Danyelle Thompson

at alabgs.chairman@gmail.com

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Christine Johnsen
Department Chairman

Morgan Johnsen
Department Vice Chairman

Hello! It's me again, Lindsay Stiff, your Honorary Department Junior President. Did you see me at Midwinter? If you missed it, let me give you a recap. My fellow Juniors and I worked very hard on making a presentation to show how the Junior Activities Patch Program works for us Juniors. To earn patches, we have different tasks to complete, based on our age groups and category. Patches are available in Poppy, Leadership, Americanism, VA&R,



Junior Auxiliary Members performing a Membership skit.



Lindsay demonstrating the Pledge of Allegiance in sign language.

Fitness, Education, and a few more.

We completed seven different tasks with the Senior members at the Midwinter Conference. Some of the tasks included learning the Pledge of Allegiance in American Sign Language, folding pocket flags, learning facts about the ALA and the SAL, studying the history of the U.S. Constitution, learning facts about the poppy, and learning the signs and symptoms of a heart attack or stroke. These activities were chosen from various patches within the program. Once we completed the tasks, the Senior members earned a Certificate of Completion. We couldn't give actual patches because those are only available

for the Junior members that earn them.

If you have Junior Auxiliary members in your Unit, I encourage you to put together patch program workshops where they can work together on the patch requirements. It would even be fun to invite the Junior and Senior members to work together on these activities and build relationships within your Unit. If you have questions about the Junior Activities program, you can reach out to the program chair, Christine Johnsen at cmj102@aol.com.

Article submitted by Lindsay Stiff, Honorary Junior President.

AMERICANISM

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

As I pondered what to write, I kept coming back to our Preamble, "...to foster and perpetuate a 100% Americanism." What is Americanism exactly? Americanism is attachment or allegiance to the traditions, interests and ideals of the U.S. (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2023). Reflecting on the words "100% Americanism" truly indicates that our efforts will be continuously ongoing. Although this seems a bit overwhelming at first, it really isn't.

One important avenue we can put our effort into is our children and youth. They are our future. There are so many ways we can make connections

with our children and youth. If your unit has Education and Americanism Committees, work together to make connections with your schools, homeschooling parents, the local library, and clubs in your area. Units that do not have these committees, ask for volunteers within your unit who would like to contact schools and other groups to develop programs with them. When you plan events that are family oriented, have a variety of materials for various ages, including the "Star Spangled Kids Kits" which can be purchased from Flag & Emblem. At family events, you can have scavenger hunts, riddles and games that focus on American history, traditions, Constitution, etc. Educating our youth can be interactive, fun and exciting!

If you have not yet reached out to the various youth groups, consider contacting them regarding the Americanism Essay Contest. The essay

form, rubric and flowchart are on the Department website. Please remember that your unit reads and evaluates all submitted essays and selects the top one in each category. These are the only essays you should send to me by March 15. The Americanism Committee then reads and evaluates all the essays received selecting the top one in each category to forward to the division chairman by April 15. I know that the committee is looking forward to reading what our children and youth have to say and we hope you all consider participating in this wonderful opportunity. This is a great way to make connections within your community

Please send me any pictures or ideas you have. I would love to share the numerous ways we foster and perpetuate a "100% Americanism" with our Central Division Chairman. Feel free to contact me any time.

**American Legion Auxiliary
2025 District Spring Conference Schedule**

(as of 01/27/2025 - Subject to Change)

DISTRICT	DATE	LOCATION
1st District	April 26	American Legion Post 95, Delavan, WI
2nd District	April 26	American Legion Post 69, Mayville, WI
3rd District	April 26	United Methodist Church, Monroe, WI
4th District	May 10	American Legion Post 434, Oak Creek, WI
6th District	April 26	American Legion Post 70, Oshkosh, WI
7th District	April 19	American Legion Post 201, Tomah, WI
8th District	April 26	World War II Building, Wautoma, WI
9th District	May 3	Colonial House Supper Club, Kaukauna, WI
10th District	April 26	Prescott Food Pantry, Prescott, WI
11th District	April 26	Fifield Fire Station, Fifield, WI
12th District	May 3	Sheldon Community Center, Sheldon, WI

**SCHOLARSHIPS DUE
MARCH 1, 2025**

The American Legion Auxiliary offers more than \$25,000 in scholarships at the state and national levels. Applications and rules are posted on the department website.

Encourage eligible students to **apply by March 1!**

Questions? Please contact Chairman Diane Weggen at dsweggen@gmail.com or 715-644-2668.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP

Diana Sirovina
Department Chairman
dsirovina@icloud.com

For many years, the American Legion Auxiliary Christmas Gift Shop has brought joy to many of our Veterans in long-term care facilities. This year was certainly no exception! As we visited with the Veterans when we helped them select their gifts, we could tell by the smiles on their faces that this program means so much to them. Some Veterans told us about their loved ones, while others were just happy to have someone visit with them for a little while. Without a doubt, the program made a difference for these Veterans and their families.

For those of us involved in this amazing program, it is something we look forward to with great enthusiasm. As we moved through the process of scheduling dates for taking orders, selecting just the right gifts to offer, placing orders and receiving the items, and ultimately wrapping them for shipment, our volunteers are always mindful of the impact this program has for these very special Veterans.

This year, for the first time, we were able to expand our program. Through the generosity of our members, we were able to reach out to two additional care facilities to provide more Veterans the opportunity to select gifts for their families – all at no cost to them! When the ordering was complete at all four of the Veteran care facilities, we had gift requests from 265 Veterans. This was more than double the number of Veterans we reached in the past!



While the logistics of ordering and wrapping 834 gifts presented some interesting challenges, we know that no matter how much time and effort goes into the program, the amount of

joy that it brings to our Veterans and their families is well worth it.

The amazing Christmas Gift Shop 2024 is now history! Without the outstanding financial support from our

members all over the state, none of this would be possible. Even though Christmas Gift Shop season only lasts a few months each year, units can send in donations whenever they

have funds available. Your donations are vital to ensuring that this great program will always be available to our Veterans in long-term care facilities and their families.

ALABGS ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: HANNAH CATT



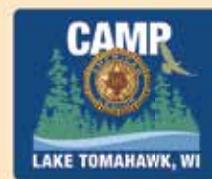
Hannah Catt

Hannah Catt was a delegate to ALA Badger Girls State in 2010 while attending Stanley-Boyd High School. After graduating, she attended Indiana University, double majoring in Political Science and Folklore & Ethnomusicology. She then attended the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law where she received her J.D., and then obtained an LL.M. in Agricultural and Food Law from the University of Arkansas School of Law. Hannah's experience at ALABGS served her well in law school by providing opportunities to network with peers, practice public speaking, and advocate for legislation as an ALABGS elected official.

Hannah currently lives in Arkansas and serves as a Corporate Counsel for Simmons Foods, Inc., a poultry processor and pet food manufacturer based in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. She is active as a board member of a local non-profit and continues to support ALABGS and the Auxiliary as a member of ALA e-Unit 352 based in Cassville. Further, returning to ALABGS as a counselor for many years enabled her to build lasting friendships with multiple generations of ALA members with the shared goal of shaping young women into tomorrow's leaders and advocates for our country.

Editor's Note: ALABGS Alumni are invited to submit a head/shoulder photo with a brief bio describing the impact that attending Girls State has had on them. The article should be 200-250 words and the photo should be high-resolution jpg.

Got Soap?



Units interested in donating items to Camp American Legion are encouraged to purchase Arm & Hammer laundry soap from Camp's Amazon wish list: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1E4GRD70KL0J7?ref=_wl_share. The item will ship directly to Camp for your convenience!

ALA MADISON UNIT 501 SUPPORTS HONOR FLIGHT



Chaplain Betty Ingwell of Severson-Cairns Unit 501 in Madison presented Badger Honor Flight Board Chairperson Brian Ziegler with a \$500 check funded in large part by the Auxiliary's poppy distribution.

CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

ALA-Wisconsin 2025 Department Convention Resolutions

A resolution is a written, formal motion. If written well, the resolution makes it easier for members to consider the proposal. Importance, length and complexity of the motion, and size and formality of the assembly are major considerations in using resolutions.

ALA-Wisconsin bylaws require that resolutions presented by an individual member must be approved by the unit or district to which the member belongs and submitted to department

by June 1 so they can be transmitted to units 30 days before department convention. Any resolution not approved by a unit or district, or when the district conference is held after June 1, must be approved by the appropriate department chair of the program to which the resolution pertains. After the Resolutions Committee and other appropriate chairs/committees have acted on all resolutions, the Resolutions Chair will present recommendations to the delegates at department convention.

Please visit the department website for the Resolutions Form and instructions for more details.

SALUTE TO SANTA: HUBERTUS UNIT 522



Hubertus American Legion Auxiliary Unit 522 sponsored a Salute to Santa event. Members served 75 families with a Waffle Bar that included sprinkles, chocolate chips, fruit, whipped cream and traditional syrup for everyone to make their own breakfast creations. Letters were sent to Santa and he even replied! The kids had a blast going into the Army truck to visit Santa.

THANK YOU

American Legion Auxiliary

I am taking this time to thank you all so much for the generous donations of gifts and beautiful cards during the Christmas time while my husband, Lester, was in the VA Hospital having a pacemaker put in and dealing with other health issues. You made our week, during his stay, much more cheerier as did the doctors and nurses that cared for him so that he was able to return home to me. He will be turning 95 on January 25th. I am so blessed to have him back home here with me.

Sincerely,

Cheri

EDUCATION

**Diane Weggen
Department Chair
dsweggen@gmail.com
715-644-2668**

SCHOLARSHIPS: NOW is the time to complete and submit scholarship applications. The purpose of the ALA Education Program is to promote quality education for children, especially military children, and adults. Applicants are encouraged to apply for every scholarship for which they are eligible.

The national scholarships—Children of Warriors, Non-Traditional Student, Spirit of Youth and Member Loyalty—are “live” on the national website (www.alaforVeterans.org). Each scholarship application has its own link and must be submitted electronically. To be eligible, Wisconsin applications must be submitted electronically by 10:59 pm on March 1, 2025.

Anyone starting one of the National ALA scholarships with intentions to complete it later, should know that the attachments (letters of recommendation, transcripts, etc.) cannot be saved. The attachments must be re-attached before submitting the final application to National. Applications will be disqualified if all the rules are not followed. Note: Essays must be the original work of the applicant and not generated by artificial intelligence. The national organization uses an AI Detector to review essay questions and will disqualify those created by AI.

The national organization sponsored a webinar to clarify criteria for the scholarships. The webinar was recorded and is now posted on the ALA Academy for members to access. Sign into the national website, select “meetings/trainings,” and under “online” select “ALA Academy.”

ALA Wisconsin offers twenty-two \$1,000 scholarships. Applications are due to unit presidents by March 1. Unit presidents or their representative should review applications to be sure the applicant has filled out everything

completely and followed all of the scholarship rules and guidelines, then be sure to sign it. After signing, unit presidents submit Wisconsin ALA scholarship applications to the Department Education Chairman by March 15, 2025.

In addition to scholarships, Give 10 to Education, Veterans in Community Schools, M. Louise Wilson Educational Loans, Legislation, and educating about AEF, ALA Foundation Veterans Projects Fund, and Be The One – are ways the Wisconsin ALA Education Program is “Serving our Veterans, Military and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts”.

Please email pictures to dsweggen@gmail.com demonstrating how you incorporated the ALA Education Program in your activities.

M. LOUISE WILSON EDUCATIONAL LOAN FUND: On February 4, 1925, the Executive Committee of ALA-Wisconsin established the M. Louise Wilson Educational Loan Fund with \$200 to aid women Veterans and female members in attaining a higher education.

This Educational Loan Fund offers interest-free loans of \$800 annually, renewable for up to five years for a total loan limit of \$4,000 available to women enrolled in college on a full-time basis. Repayment starts within six months after graduation or withdrawal from a full-time academic program with minimum payments of \$50 per month.

Since 1925, the maintenance and growth of the fund has been entirely dependent upon the repayment of loans and voluntary contributions from units and friends of ALA-Wisconsin. No other department has this program. Help keep this program a viable part of Wisconsin’s Education Program with a donation from the unit, county or district. Personal donations are also welcome. Donations should be payable to “ALA-MLW Loan Fund” and mailed to ALA-Wisconsin, PO Box 140, Portage, WI 53901. Thank you for supporting this great benefit for our members.

ALA UNIT 106: BE THE ONE!



BE THE ONE! — The Seymour American Legion Family participated in the 12th annual H.O.O.A.H. (Helping Out Our American Heroes) event in November. This was a Veteran suicide awareness march of 17.5 miles, representing the number of Veterans that commit suicide each day.

Pictured (l-r): ALA Unit President Juellaine Miller; ALA members Jaden Hauser, Bambie Thielbar and April Hauser; Tony Hauser and Legionnaire Chuck Miller.



Jim Johnson
Department
Commander

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

Hello Fellow Legionnaires,
I hope this edition of the Badger Legionnaire finds you all happy and healthy. We had an awesome time and increased our knowledge during the training classes at Midwinter in Appleton and are looking forward to the Department Convention. I truly appreciate all the hard work by headquarters team and volunteers that helped make Midwinter a resounding success! Attendance was the highest since 2020, we are stronger together and will continue to make Wisconsin #LegionStrong!

In addition to the 100% Post Commander drawing for a suite at Department Convention, every Legionnaire that brings a Legionnaire that has not attended a Department Convention will be entered in "Bring a Buddy" drawing for a Department Convention suite. The Wisconsin American Legion Family Leadership Testimonial will be held on Wednesday July 16 at the Hyatt Hotel in Green Bay as we launch our 106th Department Convention.

We are in the midst of our Wisconsin winter, that comes with isolation and at times loneliness. Now is an important time to check on one another with our Buddy Checks. I also encourage you to check on Veterans not yet blessed with American Legion membership and while you're at

it check your neighbors and other non-Veteran friends. Buddy Checks are not membership recruitment calls, they are a friendly call or visit to tell people we are thinking about them and for us to listen. Listening is a big part of Being The One, listening to another Veteran and hearing what they are saying, and being there for them when they need us.

I know quite a few of the Wisconsin American Legion Family received training on the Columbia Suicide Severity Scale training at Midwinter. If you missed it, you can find online classes at www.legion.org under the Advocacy tab select Be The One. I also encourage you to take the VA S.A.V.E. training provided by Psycharmor.org under the learn tab, select all courses and then select VA S.A.V.E. Or another outstanding training opportunity that will give you the tools to Be The One is R.A.C.E. Suicide Prevention located at racesuicideprevention.us.

Be The One is service to our fellow Veterans. Your Wisconsin American Legion is working toward becoming a resource for Veterans that call 988 and 211. Our purpose will be to take calls from Veterans that have been cleared through 988 as not suicidal. These are Veterans that just need to talk with someone, someone to hear them without judgment. If you can help with our assistance to 988 and 211, please let Adjutant Julie Muhle know. Her email address is adjutant@wilegion.org.



Becky Mueller
2024-2025
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Warm Heartfelt Greetings!

What an amazing Midwinter event we had in January! More members in attendance than expected – huge donations of toiletries and socks – hundreds and hundreds of homemade Valentine's Day cards – great questions and ideas expressed – learning to 'say' the Pledge of Allegiance in sign language – finding out we are NOT smarter than a Fifth Grader with our Junior members – meeting ALA Badger Girls State delegate and \$10,000 Samsung Scholarship winner Meredith Clark – and a great session with Charles Konsitzke from the UW-Madison MIARIP. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund support was also unbelievable, raising over \$1,300! Thank you to my entire American Legion Family and leaders Jim, Al, and Corey for your support and participation with us.

Members, please continue to check in with each other, especially during this FREEZING weather. Let's make sure everyone has the support they need. Pray for those who are struggling with illness and recovering from surgeries. I heard about so many of you facing difficulties at this time. Know your Legion Family has your back. BE THE ONE!

Testimonial time is approaching. Another new idea this year – Commander Jim, Commander Allen, Director Corey and I are hosting a joint testimonial dinner on the Wednesday night before the start of Department Convention in July at the convention hotel. Hopefully, this will make it easier and less expensive to attend both events. We are looking forward to seeing you there. More details will follow.

Events are springing up now that the holiday season is ending. Look forward to patriotic events in spring – essay and poppy poster entries arriving, Legion birthday parties and those early spring conferences in the next few months. My calendar is already filling up. Keep those invitations coming!

I am so proud of all of you and the diverse ways you demonstrate Service, Not Self. You are serving from the *depths of your hearts* and making such a difference to our Veterans, military and each other in our communities, state, and nation.

May God bless each one of you and your families.



Allen Watry
SAL Detachment
Commander

SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER

I am composing this article the final day of our Midwinter Conference. This year was another amazing Conference. After participating in Committee meetings where we talk about all the different activities you are doing, helping lead Training Sessions which covered a lot of great topics and questions, and hearing the accolades about the SAL from the rest of the Legion Family, all I can say is THANK YOU. You are making a difference in the activities you are doing! Keep up the great work.

As we are preparing for Spring, please make sure you are starting to plan the yearly activities which occur this time of year. These include holding Elections, updating/submitted Squadron Information Forms, attending Spring Conferences, and submission of a Squadron Consolidated Report. All of these are important activities which need to be completed yearly. Please contact myself or any other Detachment Officer if you need any help with any of these.

And now a request before I close this message. Please continue with Buddy Checks and helping each other when needed. There is a lot of pain out there and winter tends to be a tough emotional time

for many people. There are also many still trying to recover from the hurricanes which devastated parts of Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Now add the wildfires in California; we have many people who need our help and support. Please keep all of them in your prayers. And, if possible, please consider financially supporting them through programs like the Legion National Emergency Fund and the Legion Temporary Financial Assistance Program. These are two great programs which help fellow Legion Family Members through an emergency.

And again THANK YOU for continuing to live out the mission of the Wisconsin Legion Family!



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

LEGION RIDERS DIRECTOR

As I write this article I have just returned from the 2025 American Legion Midwinter event. These events provide some amazing opportunities to learn and grow in our knowledge of American Legion programs, as well as socialize with fellow Legion Family members from across the state. I encourage all to take time to attend next year's event if you've never been before. A couple of highlights from this past weekend were the Be The One Training - Columbia Protocol on how to evaluate and know if a person you're talking to is in need of help. Two other highlights happened during the Celebrate Your Heritage banquet on Saturday, Legion Rider Assistant Director Brad Heller serenaded us with some great David Allen Coe and the entire room singing and holding hands for God Bless the USA. On Friday there were also many chances to attend committee meetings and hear what is going on in the Department of Wisconsin.

Planning for the WI Legion Riders-Cruise for a Cause, 'Be The One for Wisconsin-25' is progressing well. We have locked in almost all of

our stops and are preparing the route itself. We also plan to have registration and hotel blocks published by March 1. I've had some questions and comments come up about the ride that I want to ensure we all have clarity on. All of our motorcycle fundraising rides that we've had over the years are planned by the Legion Riders, however, it is only through the involvement of the Legion Family at the post, unit & squadron level that makes these rides successful. If we don't have family members at the local level helping by promoting the rides in their community and making donations, the ride fails. We appreciate all the support we have gotten over the years and I wanted to make sure that Legionnaires, Auxiliary members and S.A.L. members all know. Toward that end, a big 'Thank You' to everyone that stopped by our table at Midwinter and participated in the 50/50 raffles on Friday & Saturday, we raised \$750 for the ride this year.

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 at 1 p.m. on May 3 at Post 263 in New London, WI.

**Veterans
Crisis Line**

DIAL 988
then **PRESS 1**



County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin

EVERY COUNTY AND TRIBE IN WISCONSIN STANDS READY TO SERVE ALL THOSE WHO SERVED AT NO COST TO YOU.

Your local Veteran Advocates, serving you since 1935

