



BADGER LEGIONNAIRE & WISCONSIN
Official publication of the Wisconsin American Legion Family

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Would you like to help Department save money?

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2026 ALA DEPARTMENT CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



LEFT: American Legion Riders raised money on the 2026 Cruise for a Cause Ride and presented a donation of \$18,000 for ALA Badger Girls State. **CENTER:** Diana Sirovina was recognized as the Honored Past Department President (2012-2013). **RIGHT:** ALABGS Executive Director Joanie Dickerson presented President Sue Hembrook with a proclamation from the ALABGS Senate, Assembly and Governor in appreciation for the American Legion Auxiliary's sponsorship of the ALABGS program.

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT SUE HEMBROOK PRESENTED FIVE AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE:



Hawley Dieckhoff Unit 33,
Neenah, District 6



Haugen Richmond Unit 73,
Neillsville, District 7



Peter Wollner Unit 288,
Cedarburg, District 2



Olson Grinde Unit 348,
DeForest, District 3



Andrew Van Ells-Robert L. Schanen
Unit 82, Port Washington, District 2



LEFT: Sam Catura of Unit 294, District 1 received the Mentor of the Year Award. **CENTER LEFT:** Christine Van Ryzin of Unit 38, District 9, received the Unit Member of the Year Award. **CENTER RIGHT:** Sergeant First Class Jessica Starks received the Service Member of the Year Award. She was nominated by Rio Unit 208, District 2. **RIGHT:** Maggie Geiger was elected as Wisconsin's nominee for 2027-2028 Central Division National Vice President. **BELOW:** Second District celebrated the election of their own Amy Luft as 2026-2027 Department President.



Several actions were approved by the convention delegates:

A dues increase was approved, effective with the 2028 membership year. In 2028, senior dues will increase by \$6.00 and junior dues will increase by \$0.25 for the department's portion of dues.

A resolution for the Membership Committee was approved. This resolution will add an additional member to the committee and allow members of the Department Executive Board to be eligible for

appointment to the Membership Committee. The Department 1st Vice President will continue to serve as Membership Chairman.

All proposed changes to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules were approved as presented. These can be viewed on the department website under Department Convention.

A resolution to dissolve the Resolutions Committee effective immediately and refer future proposed changes to the Constitution & Bylaws or Standing Rules Committee for review was approved.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Donna Jensen
Department Chaplain

Philippians 2:3-4: “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

Lord, please bless all those reading this article and their families. Give all of us your strength and blessings to navigate all the challenges before us today and in the future. Help us keep in mind the meaning behind why we are members of the American Legion Family.

“Service, not self,” is a phrase often used by American Legion Auxiliary members and these three words carry a big message. It is the basis of much of what we do as Legion Family members. It helps us to remember the meaning and mission and why we are passionate about what we can do to make the lives of active-duty military, veterans and their families better.

As we celebrate 250 years of freedom, keep in mind all those who fought and made sacrifices for those freedoms, and their families. Many brave heroes did not return home and many who returned home were forever changed, physically, mentally and emotionally, by their experience. May we show our gratitude for their sacrifices.

Music: “America the Beautiful”
– Lyrics by Katherine Lee Bates – 1893
Music by: Samuel Ward
(Original lyrics-inspired by a trip up Pike’s Peak by covered wagon and mules.)

O beautiful for halcyon skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the enameled plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
Till souls wax fair as earth and air
And music-hearted sea!

Asking for help: Please help me put together a “prayer book” for President Amy Luft that can be presented to her during her convention in July of 2027. Send prayers, poems and pieces that inspire you. They can be original or from another source. Please include the author of the piece along with the sender’s name, Unit and District. They can be sent to me by email (djensen20@gmail.com) or mailed to: Donna Jensen, 6936 N 86th St., Milwaukee, WI 53224.

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

Congratulations to Sue Hembrook on a successful year as Department President. President Sue’s year wrapped up at the 2026 Department Convention. See page 1 for convention highlights. A special thanks goes out to Bethany Fredericks, SuAnn Pagel-Rast, Dany Thompson, and the headquarters staff for creating a positive and fun event.

Department Convention concluded with the installation of 2026-2027 department officers and

district presidents. Newly elected Department President Amy Luft’s theme for the upcoming year is “Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight.” Her special project is Honor Flight. There are five Honor Flight hubs across Wisconsin and ALA members are asked to help veterans apply for an Honor Flight, especially veterans of color.

President Amy also encourages members to purchase raffle tickets to win an ALA Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) membership. Tickets cost \$20 each and the winner will be drawn at the 2027 Department Convention in Middleton. Tickets may be purchased from any district president or at department headquarters.

Although we are still collecting dues for the 2026 membership year, 2027 membership

cards and rosters have been sent to all the units. Any unit that has not received their membership packet should contact Andrea Stoltz at department headquarters immediately.

2027 renewal notices will be mailed from the national organization in mid-September, but you don’t have to wait to renew your dues. To expedite processing, you may pay your dues online (www.ALAforVeterans.org) or call the national organization during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 pm Central Time). Members who pay for multiple people can take care of everyone’s dues with one simple phone call to 317-569-4570! New members for 2027 can be processed after September 1.

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

ALA BADGER GIRLS STATE

The 2026 ALA Badger Girls State (AL-ABGS) session was a phenomenal success! 481 citizens from across Wisconsin gathered at UW Oshkosh to learn about running for office, serving veterans, and civic duty. It was a great week where we hope all the delegates learned a lot, laughed a lot, and made lots of friends.

We were once again blessed with many special guests this session. These guests took time out of their lives to meet with our citizens and help them understand their roles in society. We had county sheriffs, county executives, assembly people, and lobbyists. At Inaugural we were honored the Wisconsin Superintendent of Public Instruction, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Governor Evers, and Chief Justice Jill Karofsky joined us to swear in their ALABGS counterparts.

Our most talked about event was the Oshkosh Post presenting a flag disposal ceremony and answering the MANY questions the delegates had. The Department Commander helped President Sue Hembrook hand out Blue Star Banners to delegates who had family serving.

This week would not be possible without a few groups. First, is the dedicated group of counselors who give up their vacation, retirement, and other obligations to come to UW Oshkosh, live in a dorm, and work 18-hour days for a week straight. Without them, this program could not happen. The support the sponsors provide are also just as important. Whether it was sending delegates, raising coins for penny wars, or even offering other services, this is truly a family effort. On behalf of the AL-ABGS Committee, I thank all of you and hope for an even better 2027!



AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

PAID UP FOR LIFE
Raffle

ONE TICKET. A LIFETIME OF MEMBERSHIP.

You could be the lucky winner of a
PAID UP FOR LIFE (PUFL) MEMBERSHIP
★★★ in the American Legion Auxiliary! ★★★

\$20 PER TICKET

★ AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY ★

PAID UP FOR LIFE RAFFLE

WIN AN ALA PAID UP FOR LIFE (PUFL) MEMBERSHIP

TICKET COST: \$20.00

WINNER DRAWN JULY 2027



RAFFLE TIMELINE:
Raffle runs through July 2027.
Drawing at 2027 Department Convention.



WHO CAN PARTICIPATE:
Open to the entire American Legion Family – American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, and Legion Riders. Purchase a ticket for yourself or a special American Legion Auxiliary member.



HOW TO GET YOUR TICKET:
Each district president has been provided a bundle of tickets to sell to units within their district. To purchase a ticket, contact your District President or Department President, Amy Luft, directly! (amyluft@gmail.com)

THE BENEFITS OF A PUFL MEMBERSHIP:

- ✓ Forever in “good standing” status to receive benefits
- ✓ Never pay annual dues again
- ✓ Locked in – never increases in price
- ✓ No worrying about dues reminders
- ✓ Continued support of our mission
- ✓ Peace of mind for you & your family

★★★ SUPPORT OUR MISSION. WIN A LIFETIME. ★★★

★ 2026-2027 ★
NATIONAL PRESIDENT VISITS WISCONSIN

Coral M. Grout, 2026-2027 National President will conduct her official visit to the Department of Wisconsin in October.

She will participate at the Stars & Stripes Honor Flight on Saturday, October 10, 2026 at the Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport.

All American Legion Family members are invited to meet her and the returning veterans during the

★ Welcome Home Ceremony ★

MEMBERSHIP: The ALA Airlines Welcomes You!

Betty Stone
Department Chairman
608-738-9542
bstone.wiALA@gmail.com

**Wings of Honor –
Helping our Heroes take Flight**



GET MEMBERSHIP OFF THE GROUND AND FLY HIGH!

This is a start of a new year, new membership program and awards, new President and Membership Chairmen. Let me introduce our crew:

- Pilot – President Amy Luft
- Co-Pilot – Membership Chairman Betty Stone
- Chief Crewmembers – Mary Townsend and Nicole Welsh
- Crewmen – District Presidents
- Passengers – Unit Members

Our goal for 2026-27 is 100% passengers by December 31, 2026. We can do it! By working together as we sign up new members and renewals with the joy of being an important part of this group of dedicated volunteers helping Veterans and their families.

This is how we get started one step at a time.

Step 1 – Unit Officers, please fill out 2026-2027 Unit Officers form. It is important that every Unit complete the form for 2026-27 and have all

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION UPDATE!

The NEC approved a change to Standing Rule XI-Units, as follows:

Section 6. Membership eligibility through the service of a living veteran may be established by presentation of a current The American Legion membership card. Membership eligibility through the service of a deceased veteran may be established by certification of the deceased veteran's proof of military service by the post adjutant or other post officer or by the unit secretary or other unit officer.

What does this change mean? **The unit secretary or other unit officer may verify the eligibility of a potential member and sign the application.** By expanding the options for who may review and sign membership applications, we are removing barriers and assume this responsibility. If a unit wishes to continue to work through their Legion post, they may do so.

officers paid by September 30, 2026 to be eligible for membership awards. This form is used by department and chairmen. For us to serve you in every way, we need the most current information.

Step 2 – Those members in which National has your email address will receive an email renewal reminder. The first mailed renewal notice will be sent out September 15, 2026. Help save our organization the expense of sending out that notice by sending your dues in early. The less they spend on collecting dues the more can go to veterans.

I am so excited to see each and every one of you at one of the ALA In The Know conferences, so sign up now!

Your fellow member and Membership Chairman, Betty Stone.



YOUTH HERO AWARDS



ALA Unit 201 in Tomah recently awarded two Youth Hero Awards. Nolan and Jack, both 14 years old, noticed a child who appeared lost and alone. They promptly called 911, stayed with the child while waiting for help to arrive, and ultimately connected with a family member who was searching nearby. Their quick thinking, initiative, and care played a direct role in the positive outcome of this situation. Pictured (l-r): Nolan, Unit President Helene Stein, and Jack.

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

Bonnie Dorniak
Department HQ
deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org

What is the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF)? AEF is a national grant initiative available to eligible ALA members who have endured a significant financial setback because of a natural disaster or other personal crisis. AEF applicants must be ALA members who have maintained annual ALA membership for three consecutive years and have paid the current year's dues. Grants may be awarded up to \$3,000.

Disaster Grants must be received within three months of the disaster and are used to provide emergency assistance when the member's primary residence has been devastated by disaster. Applications require photos as documentation or receipts for reimbursable expenses for temporary shelter, temporary structure repairs, purchase of alternative power sources, or groceries needed due to being displaced. Receipts dated the day of the disaster or up to three weeks after the disaster may be considered. Assistance will not be granted for damages to a secondary or seasonal residence or expenses that occurred before the disaster or after the three-week time limit.

Hardship Grants will consider funding only for overdue expenses related to primary residence, basic household utility expenses,

and/or loss of income due to medical and/or employment reasons within the last six months. Requests for payment of medical-related expenses, taxes, general loans, insurances, credit cards, cellular/TV services, animal care, car payments, or home/vehicle maintenance are not eligible for funding. All documentation (utility bills, invoices, mortgage/rent statements, etc.) should be in the name of the ALA member and/or their spouse.

Only applications on the ALA website at www.ALAforVeterans.org/AEF will be accepted for processing. Applications must be submitted electronically or mailed directly to the national organization to maintain confidentiality. If applications are complete and contain all of the required documentation, a decision can be made in approximately 14 business days. All decisions by the national AEF Review Committee are final.

How can you help the AEF program? When disaster strikes or an ALA member is experiencing a personal crisis, please make them aware of the AEF benefit. Start a fundraiser with donations specifically designated to AEF. Members may donate online (one-time donation or monthly donations) at www.ALAforVeterans.org/donate or mail donations to department headquarters, marked "AEF." Donations cannot be earmarked for a specific individual or disaster area.



**A community of
volunteers serving
veterans, military,
their families, and
our communities**

Mission Statement

In the spirit of service, not self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad.

For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN 2025-2026 STATISTICS

Statistics are current as of May 31, 2026 and are based on the annual year-end reports from 207 of Wisconsin's 339 Units.

Wisconsin has over 14,400 members – grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, daughters, and granddaughters of veterans.

OUR SERVICE FOR VETERANS AND MILITARY:

- * Number of Veterans/Military assisted: 54,120
- * Hours volunteered: 252,528
- * Dollars spent: \$427,905
- * Dollar value of in-kind donations: \$66,529
- * Number of poppies purchased for distribution in WI: 193,100
- * Poppy dollars raised to support veterans: \$326,597
- * Number of veterans who made poppies: 19

OUR SERVICE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES:

- * Number of military families served: 8,306
- * Hours volunteered: 30,765
- * Dollars spent: \$137,408

OUR SERVICE FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH:

- * Number of children & youth served: 17,055
- * Hours volunteered for Legion Family youth activities: 14,986
- * Dollars spent on children & youth: \$45,152

OUR SERVICE THRU ALA BADGER GIRLS STATE:

- * Hours volunteered: 6,183
- * Dollars spent: \$300,394
- * Number of ALA Badger Girls State delegates in 2025: 498

SCHOLARSHIPS:

- * Number of scholarships awarded: 209
- * Dollar amount of local scholarships: \$92,605
- * Dollar amount of Department scholarships: \$24,000

OUR SERVICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES:

- * Hours volunteered: 206,527
- * Dollars spent: \$348,866

To learn more about the American Legion Auxiliary, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org or www.amlegionauxwi.org

NATIONAL SECURITY

Natalia Genovesi King
National Security Chair
kinggenovesi@gmail.com

Stars, Stripes, and Service:
A Year of Purpose and Participation

As we begin the 2026-27 American Legion Auxiliary year, the National Security Program invites every Wisconsin unit to join in a shared mission through our theme, *Stars, Stripes, and Service*. This year focuses on honoring those who serve, remembering those who sacrificed, supporting military families, and strengthening our communities through meaningful action.

No matter the size of your unit, every member can make a difference. Our goal is simple: participation, visibility, and impact. By working together at the unit, county, district, and department levels, we can ensure every Auxiliary member has an opportunity to contribute to our National Security mission.

Throughout the year, units are encouraged to participate in activities that support military members, veterans, and their families while promoting awareness and appreciation within their communities. As we move into the fall, units can focus on promoting POW/MIA awareness and planning observances that educate both members and the public. During the holiday season, attention turns to Blue Star and Gold Star families through banner presentations, recognition events, and outreach efforts that remind military families they are valued and remembered.

Winter and early spring provide opportunities to recognize the next generation of service by partnering with local schools, JROTC programs, and community organizations to honor students who have chosen military service. This is also an excellent time to identify and nominate deserving enlisted service members for the Salute to Servicemembers Award.

Throughout the year, units are encouraged to support community safety and preparedness initiatives, collaborate with first responders, participate in blood drives, and engage in activities that strengthen national security at the local level. Equally important is sharing your stories, photos, and accomplishments so Wisconsin can showcase the incredible work being done across our state.

To stay informed and inspired, units are encouraged to follow the ALA National Security Facebook page, *ALA National Security*. This resource provides program updates, project ideas, success stories, and helpful reminders that can assist units in planning meaningful activities and achieving their National Security goals.

Together, through *Stars, Stripes, and Service*, Wisconsin Auxiliary members can honor our military, support our communities, and ensure every unit plays a role in advancing the mission of National Security. Let us make this a year of service, remembrance, recognition, and pride!



Department of Wisconsin
2026 State Convention Citations

President's Award for Excellence – Sue Hembrook, Department President

5 – awarded to Neenah Unit 33, District 6; Neillsville Unit 73, District 7; Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; Cedarburg Unit 288, District 2; DeForest Unit 348, District 3

Americanism – Deanna Farley, Department Chairman

2 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Berlin Unit 340, District 6; Marathon Unit 469, District 8.
1 – Best Unit Prayer Book – awarded to Grafton Unit 355, District 2

Chaplain – Sandy Mack, Department Chaplain

1 – Certificate of Recognition – awarded to Grantsburg Unit 185, District 12

Children & Youth – Mary Petrie, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Caledonia Unit 494, District 1; Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; DeForest Unit 348, District 3; New London Unit 263, District 8; River Falls Unit 121, District 10

Community Service – Linda Tryczak, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; Grantsburg Unit 185, District 12; Banger Unit 40, District 7; Loyal Unit 175, District 7; Marathon Unit 469, District 8

Education/M. Louise Wilson Loan Fund – Delores Woolf, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Linda Zamrow of Beaver Dam Unit 146, District 2; Susan Turowski of Grafton Unit 355, District 2; Lisa Bowen of Lone Rock Unit 383, District 3; Sarah Stiff of Stevens Point Unit 6, District 8; Jeannine Conradt of Shiocton Unit 512, District 9

Historian – Christine Johnsen, Department Chairman

1 - Outstanding Unit History – awarded to Unit 201, District 7, Bonnie Owen, Historian
2 - Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Unit 355, District 2, Ria Marien/Judy Kuta, Historian; District 7, Vickie Dux, Historian

Leadership – Betty Stone, Department Chairman

1 – Unit Member of the Year – awarded to Christine Van Ryzin of Appleton Unit 38, District 9

Legislative – Becky Mueller, Department Chairman

2 – Wisconsin 250 Challenge: awarded to District 6 (Char Kiesling, Chairman); District 10 (Mary Townsend, Chairman)
3 – Certificates of Recognition – Neenah Unit 33, District 6 (Char Kiesling, Chairman); Thorp Unit 118, District 7 (Diane Weggen, Chairman); River Falls Unit 121, District 11 (Margaret Larsen, Chairman).

Membership – Christina Petranovich, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Crandon Unit 94, District 9 (244.44%); Hazel Green Unit 526, District 3 (200%); Land O' Lakes Unit 464, District 11 (188.24%); Montello Unit 351, District 6 (158.33%); Osceola Unit 221, District 12 (150%)
68 – Certificates of Achievement – Units over 100% by January 31, 2026
• District 1: Edgerton #30, Beloit #48, Burlington #79, Delavan #95, Walworth #102, East Troy #188, Delafield #196
• District 2: Pt. Washington #82, Sheboygan #83, Sheboygan Falls #149, Rio #208; Poynette #271, Cambria #401, Fredonia #410, Adell #462, Hubertus #522
• District 3: Stoughton #59, Mt. Hope #229, Ridgeway #257, Gays Mills #308, DeForest #348, Mazomanie #437, Dane #503, Hazel Green #526, Beetown #551
• District 5: Milwaukee #1, Milwaukee #455
• District 6: Brillion #126; Stockbridge #128, Campbellsport #222, Berlin #340, Montello #351, Mt. Calvary #454, St. Cloud #478
• District 7: Bangor #40, Rome #65, Owen #123, Black River Falls #129; Wonewoc #206, Humbird #320, Northfield #541
• District 8: Mosinee #107, Vesper #520
• District 9: Kewaunee #29, Hortonville #55, Crandon #94, Little Chute #258, Coleman #280, Washington Island #402
• District 10: Arcadia #17, Turtle Lake #137, Glenwood City #168, Durand #181, Prairie Farm #259, New Auburn #267.
• District 11: Odanah #25, Park Falls #182, Rib Lake #274, Kennan #362, Mercer #424, Boulder Junction #451, Land O' Lakes #464, Lublin #547.
• District 12: Bayfield #49, St. Croix Falls #143, Milltown #254, Webb Lake #403, Cable #487

National Security – Bob Shappell, Department Chairman

4 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Waterloo Unit 233, District 2; Plymouth Unit 243, District 2; Cross Plains Unit 245, District 3; Winneconne Unit 364, District 6
1 – Program of the Year – awarded to Cedarburg Unit 288, District 2

Past Presidents Parley – Diane Weggen, Department Chairman

1 – Mentor of the Year – awarded to Anita (Sam) Catura of Hartland Unit 294, District 1
2 – Certificate of Recognition – awarded to Char Kiesling of Neenah Unit 33, District 6; Carol Swenson of River Falls Unit 121, District 10

Poppy – Kathy Grom, Department Chairman

7 – Poppy Poster Awards – awarded to Hadley Richards, District 3 (Class I); Lady First, District 4 (Class II); Bluebell Gremminger, District 2 (Class III); Whitney Schall, District 9 (Class IV); Abigail Marose, District 6 (Class V); Dakotah Burkman, District 12 (Class VI); Gavin Aubart, District 7 (Class VII)

Public Relations – Natalia Genovesi-King, Department Chairman

2 – Certificates of Appreciation – awarded to Shelley Drager of Mazomanie Unit 437, District 3; Linda Lefky of Two Rivers Unit 165, District 6

CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH



AT LEFT AND ABOVE LEFT: Forestville Unit 372 celebrated America’s 250th Birthday by hosting a food drive. They donated the items collected to a food pantry in Maplewood. Unit 372 also placed 250 red, white and blue pinwheels at the Forestville Town Hall in Maplewood. The display serves as a visual tribute to the nation’s 250th birthday and a reminder of the community spirit behind the ALA. ABOVE RIGHT: President Cynthia Saylor of Unit 87 in Rice Lake displayed 250 ribbons, honoring each year of the 250th Birthday Celebration.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Dr. Christine Johnsen
Department Chairman
cmj102@aol.com
715-203-2015

Julianne Hyma
Vice Chairman

Good afternoon passengers. This is the pre-boarding announcement for flight 1024 to King, Wisconsin. We are now inviting those passengers with children, and any passengers with a special interest in Junior Activities, to begin boarding at this time!

To kick off an exciting new year of Junior activities, our Department of Wisconsin **Junior Fall Conference** will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, N2665

County Rd QQ, King, WI 54946. In the spirit of *Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight*, we will have several exciting activities that will be fun for all passengers! All Juniors and young SAL are invited to attend. The tentative itinerary will include a business meeting, lunch, and an activity with residents of the King Veteran’s Home. Make sure to return the registration form by October 3, 2026, to receive your boarding pass.

We’ll be at cruising altitude before you know it, so it’s time to start thinking about attending a **National Junior Meeting!** If your Junior is 8 years old or older, we want to see them at a national Junior meeting! We’re going to meet new friends, do a service project for caregivers, and have tons of fun! The meetings are on a Saturday, one in each ALA division, and held in conjunction with Mission Training for seniors. The event closest to Wisconsin will be held on

January 30, 2026, in Springfield, Illinois. We can’t wait to see your Juniors there!

As units begin planning activities for the 2026-27 administrative year, please make every effort to **involve our First Class Junior members** in community projects, whenever possible.

The **Wisconsin Juniors Flight Plan (PEP)** for 2026-27 will be available on the Department website in September (www.amlegionauxwi.org > Programs > Junior Activities). Please reach out to me if you have any questions (or ideas!) about Junior activities. **LET’S FLY!**



DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
FALL JUNIOR CONFERENCE
Wisconsin Veterans Home at King
N2665 County Rd QQ
King, WI 54946



Saturday, October 24, 2026, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

The Junior Activities Fall Conference will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, Moses Hall. In the spirit of *Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight*, we will have several exciting activities that will be fun for all passengers! This will include a business meeting, a Patch project, an activity with residents of the King Veterans Home, and a project in support of Honor Flight.

Registration, including lunch, is \$10, and Junior T-shirts can be ordered for \$10 each.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Johnsen at 715-203-2015 or cmj102@aol.com.

2026 JUNIOR AUXILIARY FALL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
Reservation must be received by October 3, 2026

Form submitted by (please print clearly):

Name: _____ District #: _____ Unit #: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

NAME / UNIT #	Grade	First time attendee? (Yes/No)	Junior member	Senior member	Registration & Lunch \$10	Youth Size S, M, L, XL \$10	Adult Size S, M, L, 2XL, 3XL \$10	Total per person
Totals					\$	\$	\$	\$

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Please send reservation form with check payable to American Legion Auxiliary to:
Christine Johnsen 159991 Granite Rd., Wausau, WI 54403

JUNIORS SUPPORT CAMP AMERICAN LEGION



Junior members raised money and received a grant from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation to purchase four kayaks, paddles and life jackets for Camp American Legion. This gift was donated to Camp Director Jim Klement during the Junior Spring Conference at Camp.



Steven Kohnke
Department
Commander

It is truly an honor and privilege to have been selected as your 2026–2027 Department Commander. I am deeply grateful for the confidence and trust you have placed in me to serve the Department of Wisconsin. I accept this responsibility with humility, enthusiasm, and a steadfast commitment to serving our veterans, our military, our youth, and our communities.

Before looking ahead to the year before us, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to the many people who supported me throughout this journey. I could not have reached this point without the encouragement, guidance, friendship, and support of so many members of our Legion Family. To those who believed in me, encouraged me, stood beside me, and helped me along the way,

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

GREETINGS TO THE ENTIRE DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

please know how deeply grateful I am. Your support has meant more to me than I can adequately express.

I am especially thankful to my fellow Legion Family members who took the time to support my campaign and share their confidence in me. I am also grateful to my family, my post, and all those who offered their time, advice, and encouragement. Every conversation, every kind word, and every act of support helped make this journey possible. I will carry that support with me as I begin this year of service.

Together, as one Legion Family, we will continue building a stronger American Legion by supporting our posts, growing our membership, strengthening our Legion Family, and ensuring that every veteran knows they have a place in our organization.

Through programs such as Wisconsin Legion College, we become **Smarter**. With that knowledge, we become **Stronger** and better prepared to serve our

members, our veterans, and their families in communities throughout Wisconsin. When you see someone wearing a veteran's shirt or hat, don't hesitate to ask, **"Are you a Legion Member Yet?"** or **"How can I help you?"** A simple question can open the door to a lifelong connection with The American Legion.

I encourage each of you to remain engaged, recruit new members, and take an active role in the initiatives and programs that will help move our Department forward. Your participation, ideas, and dedication to fulfilling our Legion Family missions and advancing the Four Pillars of The American Legion are essential to our success. Together, we can make a tremendous difference in recruiting new members and strengthening the future of our organization.

I look forward to working alongside each of you as we carry forward our proud tradition of **service above self**.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



President Amy Luft
2026-2027

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Department President. I look forward to working with each and every one of you as we strive to support the aims and purposes of The American Legion. I pledge to do my very best in representing you and the American Legion Auxiliary.

My special project for this year is **Honor Flight**, with the theme **"Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight."** The phrase "take flight" represents so much more than the incredible experience of an Honor Flight journey—it is a reflection of who we are as an organization. Through the dedication of our members and the work of our programs, the American Legion Auxiliary provides the support, recognition, and gratitude that allows our veterans to soar.

This year, my goal is to help raise funds for Wisconsin's Honor Flight hubs and additionally, reach out to veterans who have not yet had the opportunity to experience this life-changing journey and assist them with the process of signing up to take their flight. The ALA's Memorandum of Understanding with Honor Network allows ALA units and departments to donate funds generated from the distribution of our poppy.

The poppy program, as with all our programs, would not be possible without our members. A growing membership allows us to expand our programs, increase our impact and preserve the legacy of those who came before us. This year, to help assist with your recruiting and renewing efforts, there are new exciting department membership awards which are available to the entire American Legion Family. Plus, larger cash prizes!

As we move forward this year, I want to encourage every member to embrace our organization's vision statement, especially our commitment to being **the premier service organization in every community**. Our vision is the foundation that will guide our future and ensure that the American Legion Auxiliary continues to thrive as a meaningful and impactful service organization for generations to come. Together, through our mission, our programs, and our dedication to our veterans, we will continue to spread our wings and help our heroes take flight.



Jeremy Mason
SAL Detachment
Commander

It is with great humility and gratitude that I accept the honor of serving as the **Detachment Commander of the Sons of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin**. Thank you to the delegates and members who have placed their confidence in me. I am committed to serving our Detachment with integrity, respect, and a steadfast dedication to our mission.

My journey in the American Legion Family began when I was sponsored by my local American Legion Post to attend **Badger Boys State**. That experience ignited a passion for leadership, citizenship, and ser-

SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER

vice that has guided me ever since. I have also been inspired by the military service of my grandfather, whose example reminds me daily of the sacrifices made by those who have defended our nation and the responsibility we share to honor their legacy.

It has been my privilege to serve as Commander of **Squadron 15, District 2 Commander, and Detachment Vice Commander for Districts 2, 6, and 9**. Those experiences have reinforced my belief that the strength of our organization comes from dedicated volunteers serving together with a common purpose.

As I begin this new chapter, my focus is on **Tradition and Traction**.

Our traditions are the foundation of the Sons of The American Legion. They connect us to the vision

of The American Legion, preserve the sacrifices of our veterans, and remind us why we serve. At the same time, we must create traction by strengthening our squadrons, developing future leaders, growing membership through meaningful engagement, and expanding our service to veterans, military families, and our communities.

I look forward to working alongside our Squadron, District, and Detachment leaders, as well as our partners in **The American Legion Family**. Together, we will continue to build an organization that honors its past while embracing opportunities to better serve today and tomorrow.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I am excited for what we will accomplish together.



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

Greetings Wisconsin Legion Family. Like many of you I've just returned from the 107th American Legion Department of Wisconsin convention in Appleton, WI. What an awesome weekend! Every year when I come home I am more energized than ever to push the family's mission forward. I would like to congratulate Steve Kohnke, Amy Luft and Jeremy Mason on being elected to lead their respective parts of the Wisconsin family. I look forward to working with you in the coming year. To all of you reading, I encourage you to fit next year's convention into your busy schedules, July 21-25, 2027, in Madison, you won't regret it.

We continue to have a lot of interest in joining the Legion Riders when we are up at convention. To assist with this, we have a form to fill out so we can connect potential members to the appropriate district. Use this QR code to get to the form and fill it out if you are interested in being a Legion Rider.

Wisconsin Legion Riders – Cruise for a Cause, 'Family First – 26' update. As I

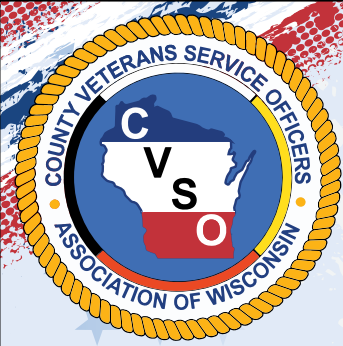
LEGION RIDERS DIRECTOR



shared on all three convention floors, every time I give a total someone gives me more donations. The 2026 ride is now closed and the total raised (drumroll...) was \$92,274.77. This breaks down to \$70,819.82 to the Veterans & Children Foundation, \$18,454.95 for Badger Girls and \$3,000 for Operation A.L.F. THANK YOU to all the Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units, Sons Squadrons, Rider Districts, local businesses and individuals who made this incredible achievement possible. The Riders facilitate but it is you who get involved that make this happen.

Coming up in September we have our annual Fall Ride to Camp American Legion. Camp will be busting at the seams with Legion Riders who are eligible to stay the week of the 14th. The week culminates with our ride in to camp for lunch and donations on Saturday September 19th. Our project this year is to refinish the concrete lodge floor. This is co-sponsored with the Wisconsin Legion Auxiliary.

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 alra-wi.director@gmail.com. Our next meeting/event after this publication will be our November 7 meeting at the Fremont Legion.



County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin

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