



MEMBERSHIP

Becky Mueller
Department Chair
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Congratulations to the Department of Wisconsin for meeting National's goal of being 85% in membership by the Legion's birthday – March 15. We barely did it – but we accomplished that goal by working together. Let's continue to work together for the next milestone and eventually being 100%. Unrealistic – maybe, but we won't know until we try!

Congratulations to all of those units, counties and districts that have achieved their goals. I know it was a struggle and seemed unobtainable, but you did it! Many more are still working to meet their goals and expectations – not only those set by National – but those set by themselves. You have been innovative and creative. You have thought outside the box and looked to each other for ideas and support. You have achieved great things!

Now is not the time to stop. Continue to reach out to your delinquent members. Invite spouses of your Veteran members to join. Introduce your daughters and granddaughters to the programs and projects of our organization. Continue to recruit all family members – for the Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders. Let's make it truly a family affair. Have you given your currently serving military members a membership in the Legion family? Female Veterans can join both the Legion and the Auxiliary. Your sons can join the Legion while still serving on active duty. What about becoming a Legion Rider and being eligible to ride together on leave? Don't forget the SAL – we want to involve the entire family in this great organization. (The District & Department leaders and the entire Membership Team are willing to assist you!)

Reminder if you are intending to become a Paid Up For Life member (PUFL) – NOW is the time – complete the process prior to June 30, 2023, to join under the current membership dues amount. Dues will be increasing for the 2024 membership year, as

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS: UNITS CELEBRATE OVER 150 YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP!



LEFT: Members of Mayville Unit 69 presented continuous membership awards and lap robes made by the Auxiliary to Alyce and Eugene Wurtz. Alyce is an 80-year member of the ALA (she joined as a young child) and Eugene has been a member of American Legion Post 69 for 70 years! Pictured (back row): Marilyn Finke, Unit Treasurer; Judy Pfalzgraf, Unit President; Carol Miller, Unit Secretary; and Ron Pfalzgraf, Post Judge Advocate; (front row): Alyce and Eugene Wurtz. Congratulations, Alyce and Eugene!

RIGHT: Ruth Breitung from Unit 224 in Alma, Wisconsin joined the American Legion Auxiliary in 1946 and was honored for 77 years of continuous membership! She celebrated her 99th birthday on November 1, 2022 and is the longest living member in the Alma unit. Ruth has been very active in all areas of the unit. Congratulations and thank you, Ruth, for all that you have done!



approved at the 2022 National Convention. The reasons were discussed and debated. If you would like insight into this decision, please contact your district and department leadership. Many attended and participated in the process. That said – because of your efforts on the department level – we have not had to increase our department dues – just the national portion. The best way to hold the line on a Department of Wisconsin dues increase is by paying your dues in a timely manner and increasing the number of current members in our state. Membership dues pay for

our department level expenses and add support to our programs. If we can increase our total membership and continue to cut unnecessary expenses, we can maintain our current level of department dues and not cut our programs.

I know many of you are involved in processing your reports. We have a lot of good things to report. Every unit has something to report – send it in. Together our numbers add up to fantastic amounts of service and dedication. Be proud of what you have accomplished and the good you have achieved.

Many, many lives have been touched and changed for the better because of your work through our organization.

Thank you again for making a difference. Invite others to join in your programs and projects. Check on each other – just to say hello and touch base. Remember every one of us is part of the mission and vision of the American Legion family by virtue of our eligibility and membership. Thank you for making a positive difference to my life. God bless you all.

CHILDREN & YOUTH (C&Y)

Mary Petrie
Department Chairman
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920-261-8161

'I think of a child's mind as a blank book. During the first years of his life, much will be written on the pages. The quality of that writing will affect his life profoundly.'

~ Walt Disney

The C&Y purpose is to protect, care for, and support children and youth. The American Legion Auxiliary takes that statement to heart. Monetary and in-kind donations, volunteer hours, partnering opportunities, and prayers have filled chapters in that blank book, and have indeed profoundly

changed the lives of many children.

Hats off to our own Wisconsin Sons of the American Legion for creating A.L.F. Thank you for supporting this project. That cuddly little puppy in the arms of a child eases anxiety during serious illness and through a parent's deployment. As you know, A.L.F. stands for **American Legion Family**, but each puppy can be renamed by its recipient.

In 1952, Arkansas Department Commander, Dr. Garland D. Murphy, Jr., offered to gift The American Legion a large contribution if it could be used solely for children. On agreement, the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) was established, which provides grants to nonprofit organizations addressing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of children across the country. Dr. Murphy provided deeds to fractional mineral rights on

nearly 10,000 acres of oil-rich land in Montana and North Dakota. In 1955, the first three grants, totaling \$22,500, were presented to three organizations. Millions of dollars have been awarded since, and the ALA has backed that as well.

Visit the Wisconsin website's Children & Youth program. Among other printouts, you'll find the American Legion Auxiliary *America the Beautiful* coloring book which can be donated to places that serve children. Schools, libraries, churches, food pantries, children's events, dentist and doctor offices, police and fire stations, and grocery stores are great places to check with. Remember to include your contact info. It's great PR, too!

April's "Purple Up!" originated in 1986 by Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to celebrate our military children. They're serving, too, and

face unique challenges. The combined colors of the Armed Forces produce purple: Air Force blue, Army green, Navy blue, Marine red, and Coast Guard blue. Wear and share a purple ribbon!

Thank you to all who responded to a plea to send birthday cards to Delaney Krings, a terminally ill Pewaukee girl. Her family celebrated her 5th birthday and Christmas. Your quick response made a huge impact on her family before she passed away.

Those blank pages filled quickly, and as the year winds down, your reports add more pages, sharing your ALA story, dedication, and determination to make a tremendous difference in the lives of our children, not only in April, but year-round.

What you do impacts beyond expectations, and it all started by *Believing*. Thank You!

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Linda Kostka
 Department Chaplain
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 715-209-8135

EXPLORING RELIGIONS, PRAYERS AND CUSTOMS

The major faiths throughout the world are Christianity, Baha'i, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism. And our society still has many examples of Greek mythology and astrology that people live their life by. This year as your Chaplain has made me aware of the religious experiences that others may follow. For me, I put my faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God the Father, but I remain respectful to others and their beliefs. Thank you for an amazing year!

Psalm 141:1-2

O Lord, I call to you: come quickly to me. Hear my voice when I call to you. May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.

REMINDER

**I need more input to
 President Coppock's
 prayer book.**

Please send prayers, poems and hymns to me to add in this book to enhance her year as President. All family members to include Legionnaires, SAL and Riders can contribute. Thank you for your support on this project.

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

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

POPPY UPDATES: After what seems like a never-ending winter, flowers will be blooming soon which means National Poppy Day is right around the corner – May 26, 2023! But don't forget that poppies can be distributed all year long – Memorial Day, Flag Day, 4th of July, community celebrations, Veterans Day, etc. Some units have even been successful with mailing poppies to their members and local community leaders and simply asking for a donation in return.

SUPPORT OUR VETERANS: Units and posts submit 20% of their poppy profits to Department to support the VA hospitals in Wisconsin, Minneapolis and Iron Mountain; the three Wisconsin Veterans Homes; Dayton Care Center in Kenosha; and Camp American Legion. Poppy profits also fund scholarships, grants to homeless women Veterans, the Veterans Creative Arts Festival, and emergency assistance for Veterans and active-duty military personnel. Units and posts use the balance of poppy funds for the direct benefit of Veterans or service members where a medical or financial need is evident. Thank you to everyone who supports the Auxiliary's Poppy Program!

PUFL MEMBERSHIP: At the 2022 National Convention, a \$6 dues increase was approved, effective with the 2024 membership year. Anyone interested in becoming a Paid Up For Life (PUFL) member is encouraged to submit an application by June 30 to take advantage of the current rate chart. After July 1, PUFL fees will be based on the 2024 dues rates.

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION: The 2023 Department Convention is scheduled for July 20-23, 2023 at the Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center in Rothschild. The opening procession will start at 9:15 a.m. on Friday, July 21 and the convention will be called to order at 9:30 a.m. A recognition program will be held on Friday at 3 p.m. including a Tribute to Honored PDP Sue Vorwald and presentation of 2022-2023 district membership awards. Fundraising Chairman Lorrie Barber is coordinating a basket raffle, governing documents will be updated, and new officers will be elected and installed. Please visit the website for more convention details and we hope to see you in Rothschild in July!

NATIONAL CONVENTION: The 2023



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
ALA IN THE KNOW (Important Info for Every Member)
2023 REGISTRATION FORM



DEADLINE: AUGUST 1, 2023
 (Please submit one form per person)

Members are encouraged to register early---space is limited! Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Registrations received after capacity is reached, will be returned. **No reservations will be accepted on site. Reservation deadline for all sessions is AUGUST 1.**

Session is \$25/person and includes morning refreshments, a light lunch, and program materials. Sessions will include information on a variety of topics and Auxiliary programs. New topics will be covered, so come out and join the fun!

Schedule for all conferences:

7:45 am – 8:15 am Registration/Morning Refreshments
 8:15 am – 2:30 pm Informative presentation, lunch break, interactive program session, Q&A

Reservation deadline for ALL sessions: August 1, 2023

Please print clearly:

District #: _____ Unit #: _____ Unit City: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: home cell: _____ () _____

Select One:

	DATE	LOCATION
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday, 09/9/2023	American Legion Post #360 417 East Main Street, Waunakee, WI 53597
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday, 09/16/2023	Tigerton Community Center 221 Birch St, Tigerton, WI 54486 Parking in Back / Use Back Door
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday, 09/30/2023	Fletcher Pechacek American Legion #121 701 N Main St, River Falls, WI 54022

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (\$25/person): \$ _____

Mail check, payable to ALA-Wisconsin, by August 1 to:
ALA Wisconsin, P. O. Box 140, Portage, WI 53901-0140.

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for any check returned by the bank.

Please share one (1) question you would like addressed during the session: _____

National Convention will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina from August 25-31, 2023. Wisconsin PDC Dan Seehafer is the Leading Candidate for National Commander. Pending election results, he will be installed on Thursday, August 31. Registration and housing forms and other information will be posted on the department website as it becomes available.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Do you want to learn more about the Auxiliary? ALA in the

Know Conferences are being held in September. Sign up today! The registration form is above.

SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS: Thank you to everyone who supports the American Legion Auxiliary annual sweepstakes. It is the only direct mail fundraiser conducted by Department and raises thousands of dollars so we can continue working the ALA mission. Winners are listed at <https://www.amlegionauxwi.org/sweepstakes-winners-list>.

POPPY PROGRAM

Patti Westpfahl
 Department Chairman
 pjw1975@ymail.com
 920-299-0943

National Poppy Day is May 26, 2023, so I am sure by now you are working hard on your poppy program. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you prepare for a successful poppy day.

- Committee has been selected – remember they are only the leaders and are not expected to do all of the work, it takes a team effort.
- Arrange for distributions of poppies – contact distribution locations to receive per-

mission to distribute on their properties.

- Contact City Hall for a proclamation.
- Arrange for Poppy Proclamation to be published in local papers.
- Create a display for the library or city hall.
- Write articles announcing distribution days.
- Get photos into the local papers.

Check out the Poppy Tool Kit resources that are available. Sign into the national member portal and go to <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/poppy/poppy-days>.

Share your poppy story. Join the Poppy Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALAPoppy> and share how you have

worked the Poppy Program and how members participated.

Every unit is asked to submit poppy contact information for the unit and what the unit's plans are using this link: https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/national_poppy_day_activities. Help our national organization by sending in your information so they have an idea of what is going on in the field leading up to National Poppy Day.

Go to <https://www.legion-aux.org/member/awards/poppy-program-awards> to apply for national program awards by 5:00 pm EST on June 1, 2023. The contests and awards are available to everyone, so complete the 2022-

2023 Poppy Award Cover Sheet completely and accurately to be considered for an award. The 2022-2023 Poppy Program Action Plan and poppy information and worksheets are available on the department website (www.amlegionauxwi.org) or you can contact me for any information you may need to make your district, county, or unit poppy program a success.

Remember reporting is essential to achieve our mission of quality support for our Veterans. **Annual reports are due by April 15, 2023.** Let me know all the creative ways your unit is promoting the Poppy Program. Photos and newspaper articles are greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from all of you.

HONORING PDP SUE VORWALD (2008-2009)

Past Department President Susan “Sue” Vorwald will be the honored guest at the 2023 Department Convention at the Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center in Rothschild. Sue is a 32-year PUFL member of Unit 121, River Falls, and served as Department President from 2008-2009. Her eligibility for membership is through the WWII Army service of her late father Raymond and late brother Stephen, a Vietnam Army Veteran. Sue worked at Anderson Window Corporation in Bayport, Minnesota for 28 years.

Sue’s experience and leadership was gained through the many chairmanships and offices she held at the unit, district and department levels. At the unit level she has served as Chaplain, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, and President. Susan was 2nd Vice President and President for 10th District. She held many unit and district chairmanships including Poppy, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Historian, Junior Activities, Leadership, Americanism, Children and Youth, along with many more. Much of her leadership experience came

from an early start in the following programs: leadership program for Neighborhood Youth Program, Future Business Leaders of America, 4-H, and Home Education and Children.

Serving at the highest office for the Department of Wisconsin fulfilled a dream of her late mother Gloria. Gloria started Sue as a charter junior in the Auxiliary, where she was able to kindle her interest as a member in her very active unit. Sue continues to be the unit’s Fundraising Chairman and helps at Bingo. She volunteers as a driver for Center for Independent Living of Western Wisconsin and New Freedom Transportation.

Sue’s theme was “Oceans of Love to our Veterans” and her special project was “Support Military Families.” Her commitment as a volunteer and her love of country motivates her desire to serve our military families. Wisconsin won the National President’s Award for Excellence during her term as Department President. Sue will be honored along with the district membership team, during the recognition program on Friday, July 21 from 3–5 p.m. Please come join us!



Susan “Sue” Vorwald
PDP 2008-2009

PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

Bonnie Jakubczyk
Department Chairman
bon6862@yahoo.com

Has your unit offered to pay the Past Presidents Parley dues for your past presidents? Are your former leaders already enrolled for the 2022-23 year? If not, please honor them by encouraging their membership. Thank you to all the units who have done this. Your dues payments go toward the PPP Scholarship Program to fund three scholarships in the nursing and health care fields. A direct donation to the PPP Fund is also appreciated and used to support the scholarships.

A reminder to check out the Past Presidents Parley Mentor of the Year Award. Nominations for this award must be sent to PPP Chairman Bonnie Jakubczyk by May 15.

PPP members are encouraged to attend the annual PPP Business Meeting at department convention on Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 4 p.m.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Mike Rohan
Department Chairman
mdnrohan@gmail.com

It is springtime once again and we turn our attention to spring cleaning. Look at your cameras and phones for pictures of events and activities you have worked on over the last six months. Share those pictures and let the world see what you did for our Veterans in Wisconsin. Here are some ways you can report your activities:

First and foremost, fill out the VA&R Unit Annual Narrative Report for 2022-2023. It is due to Department Headquarters by April 15, 2023.

Please include pictures, stories, newspaper clippings, flyers, news articles, activity reports, or anything that helps share success stories and shows activities that serve our mission. The narrative reports do not need to be complicated. It is your message!

In filling out your annual reports, consider these points:

Did you try a new project or fundraiser benefiting the VA&R program?

Does your unit have a favorite tried-and-true project?

Did you partner with another unit or organization on a project? Did it work well? Will it be repeated?

Has a picture or two (please email in a JPEG format) been sent showing your activities?

Do you have a unique story about one of your Veterans? (Ask their permission)

What makes your unit stand out from others?

PTSD MONTHLY UPDATE

As The American Legion kicks off its “**Be the One**” campaign to destigmatize asking for mental health support, provide peer-to-peer support and resources and educate everyone on how they can **Be the One**, be sure to check out the PTSD National Center for PTSD to learn more about services available. The National Center for PTSD is the world’s leading research and educational center of excellence on PTSD and traumatic stress. Sign up to receive the PTSD monthly update electronic newsletter by going to: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/publications/monthly_update.asp.

The Changing Face of America’s Veteran Population – Be sure to check this out so you can be better informed and better prepared to serve our Veterans in the coming years. The story includes links with information to reports offering a plethora of data regarding the veteran landscape in the coming years.

Plan an event around a special holiday to help your unit get active:

April 9 - National Former POW Recognition Day

April 15 - Purple Up Day for Military Kids

May 4 - National Day of Prayer

May 12 - Military Spouse Appreciation Day

May 20 - Armed Forces Day

May 26 - National Poppy Day

May 29 - Memorial Day

Thank you for your continued service to your unit, your community, and especially to your Veterans.

2023 ALA DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin
Thursday-Sunday, July 20-23, 2023

Official Call: The 2023 American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention will be called into session at the Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center, 10101 Market St, Rothschild, WI 54474 at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, July 21, 2023.

Purpose: The purpose of the department convention is to elect officers for the 2023-2024 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 2023 Department Convention must submit a registration form and \$30 per person to The American Legion by July 15, 2023. Registrations after July 15 will be \$35.

Voting: All delegates must be registered and seated within their District on Saturday, July 22 by 9 a.m. for voting. Business will resume as soon as voting is completed.

Housing Blocks: Housing has been arranged at the Best Western Plus and Bantr hotels. Discounted room rates will be available until June 20, 2023 or when the room blocks are filled, whichever comes first. Additional hotels may be available after April 26, 2023.

Best Western Plus

803 W Industrial Park Avenue
Rothschild, WI 54474
715-355-8900

\$105 plus tax for Standard King or Two Queen Rooms

\$120 plus tax for Large Suite with 1 King & Pull out Sofa Sleeper (only 3 available)

Group Block: American Legion (Cut Off: June 20, 2023)

Bantr

805 Creske Avenue
Rothschild, WI 54474
715-241-6300

Studio: Thurs. \$109 plus tax, Friday-Saturday \$139 plus tax

Suite: Thurs. \$119 plus tax, Friday-Saturday \$149 plus tax

Lofts: Thurs. \$129 plus tax, Friday-Saturday \$159 plus tax

All rooms have 2 Queens and price is based on 4 people per room

Group Block: American Legion RB 2023 (Cut Off: June 20, 2023)

Deceased Members: Names of deceased members that are sent to Department Headquarters by April 28, 2023 on a Member Data Form will appear in the Joint Memorial Service Program.

Installation: Installation of 2023-2024 Department Officers and District Presidents will be on Saturday, July 22 upon conclusion of convention business.

Maggie Geiger for Department President

Maggie Geiger is excited and honored to announce her candidacy for the office of President for the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin.

Maggie has proudly served in various capacities and chairmanships on the unit, county, and district level including Sergeant at Arms, Chaplain, 2nd and 1st Vice President, and President. Some special projects are co-founding Sweat4Vets; working with the VSO on "To Whom Honor is Due" Dinner honoring Veterans, in conjunction with Concordia University, and facilitating a WWII Veteran secure his Honorary College Degree.



Eligible for membership through her father, Herbert "Buck" Masters, a WWII Veteran, Maggie is a 18-year Paid Up for Life (PUFL) member, has attended leadership trainings with the American Legion Auxiliary, ALA Mission Training, and the American Legion College, served as co-chair and presented ALA in the Know conferences, served on the ALA Strategic Planning Team, Americanism Chair, ALABGS Committee, and has chaired Americanism, Poppy, Membership, Service to

Veterans, was co-chairman for the 2022 National ALA Convention, and also served as Department Historian.

Her passion is for our nation's heroes, promoting ALA programs and its mission. Serving God and Country with ALA members from Wisconsin is a privilege. Serving as chair for different department programs has allowed her to gain more appreciation and recognize the love, compassion and struggles our ALA members/units have, how hard unit members work to retain and gain members, while working the programs and mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Members are not just volunteers, but a family working together to make the lives of our American heroes better one day at a time. Maggie believes ALA members need to continue to show each other kindness and work closely with our American Legion Family, mentoring and embracing new ideas from members, while reaching out to our youth and communities. Together we can continue to meet the needs of our Veterans, military and their families.

Maggie and her husband, Brian, of 47 years are members of Alliance Bible Church and lifetime members of Ozaukee County Historical Society. They are proud parents of son Patrick, daughter-in-law Jackie, daughter Katie, son-in-law Michael, grandsons Gabriel, Emre, Hoban, and granddaughter Theodora – all members of the American Legion Family!

It has been Maggie's honor and blessing to serve as Department Senior Vice President, and she humbly asks for your continued prayers and support as candidate for the office of President of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin.

Rebecca (Becky) Mueller for Dept. Senior Vice President

I am excited and humbled to announce my candidacy for the office of ALA Department of Wisconsin Senior Vice President. I have appreciated the opportunity to serve you for the past year as your Department Officer and Membership Chairman. It has been wonderful to talk to and work with so many of you.

I gain 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 in Vietnam, my deceased father's service in the Army. Our family members also belong to the American Legion Family and understand the importance of this membership opportunity.



Since 2007 I have continued to be a member of Krause-Kraft-Mueller Unit 106 in Seymour. I served as Unit Secretary and President and continue to serve on many committees and projects. Currently, I am the unit's VA&R Chairman. I have served as the Ninth District President. I serve on committees on the unit, county, district and department levels as the opportunity arises. Serving on the

Department Membership Team has been an enlightening experience. My plan is to continue to be of service to and with this organization in whatever capacity available.

I have learned so much as I have traveled the state and met so many of 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 all that we have done and to look forward to all our future endeavors together.

In addition to the Auxiliary, I am a member of New Life United Methodist Church, having been certified as a Lay Speaker and serving on many committees and occasionally leading 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 1st Vice President

Sue Hembrook wishes to announce her candidacy for Department 1st Vice-President. Her journey in the Auxiliary began 20 years ago at the unit level. In addition to chairing many committees in her unit, she served as President of the unit for four 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. 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, and currently National Central Division Americanism Chairman.

Sue 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. Her grandson Jonathan is eagerly awaiting his place in military life. At the age of 17, he is currently a member of the Navy program Sea Cadets, and Air Force JROTC at the high school he attends. His brother Jacob, 15, is also enrolled in the Air Force JROTC at the high school. Every branch of the military is covered by one or another family member, with the exception of the Coast Guard.

Sue and her husband of 49 years are members of St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church in Franklin, WI. She has been involved in that faith community with their school, parish council, and many other fundraising events sponsored by the church and school.

Her dedication to this organization and our Veterans has been steadfast. She supports the VA's 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 to him and also the support given to the family. She will dedicate herself by doing her best to support this organization and our Veterans.

Betty Stone for Department Chaplain

I would like to enter the running for Department Chaplain for the 2023-2024 year. I have been an American Legion Auxiliary member for the last 46 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 terms for two years each.
- Department – Scholarship Chairman, Chaplain, and on the Membership Committee.

Outside of ALA I have been in church work since



age 16; teaching Sunday School, Youth Groups, Bible Studies, and planning events. Currently, I am the facilitator for our prayer group that meets once a week. I am also in charge of the yearly Ladies Encounter at our church and involved in our Church Camp where I have taught youth, cooked in camp, and 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 not only serve Veterans but also the community. Love for God and Country is where my heart is. Thank you for considering my candidacy.

Mary Petrie for Department Historian

Growing up in the Legion Family, thanks to her father Bill's service in the Navy, Mary never dreamed of the journey membership would offer. As a 67-year member, opportunities abounded, and friendships grew. In her words, "I have been gifted with much, feel it a privilege to have served, and am extremely honored by the faith entrusted in me."

Mary has Pitterle-Beaudoin Unit 189 and Jefferson County Council endorsements and awaits such from District at Spring Conference.

Having held various unit offices and chairmanships, she is currently President. Mary is the County Secretary and has served the Mighty 2nd as Secretary, President, Parliamentarian, and Historian, along with several chairmanships. She and her mother have the distinction of being the only two-generation family to serve as 2nd District President.

While District Historian, Mary was also the Unit Historian, earning department awards for both each year. Referring to it as hitting the trifecta, she handled unit, county, and district secretary at the same time.

Department chairmanships include PR, Children & Youth, and VA&R, receiving National awards for penning



stories of member dedication. She served on the Membership Team twice and was Wisconsin Strategic Planning Goal Champion for Membership.

Mary has been a church secretary for nearly 22 years. Married for 44 years, she and Tom (S.A.L.) have two children, Matthew (S.A.L.) and Rebecca (ALA).

As members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Mary taught Sunday School and created a newsletter as Superintendent, was the church newsletter editor for 15 years,

volunteered on the 125th Anniversary committee, is a former church musician, and is currently Ladies Aid secretary.

Coordinator of Watertown's American Red Cross Blood Bank for 16 years, and donating as many gallons, Mary is also a VFW member, former Voice of Democracy contest judge, was a 30-year city band member, hit the Guinness Book of World Records as a World's Largest Orchestra participant, an Elk's National Community Service Award recipient, proudly accompanied her dad on the Stars & Stripes Honor Flight, and enjoys crocheting (especially for the VAs), crafting, reading, and volunteering.

Following in her parents' footsteps, Mary's journey continues...

Amy Luft for Department 2nd Vice President

I am excited to announce my candidacy for Department 2nd Vice President. I am a Paid-Up-For-Life member of the Rose-Harms Unit 355 in Grafton and have been endorsed for this position by the Ozaukee County Council and the Rose-Harms Unit 355.

My passion for the American Legion Auxiliary has provided many opportunities. As a 17-year member, I have served in many different officer positions including President for my unit and county. During my term as President of Unit 355, my unit received the Department Most Outstanding Unit Award. Currently, I serve as President of the 2nd District.

My department 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. I co-chaired the ALA In-the-Know and served on the Strategic Planning Committee. I was chosen by the national organization to serve as the National Convention Chairman for the 2022 National Convention in Milwaukee.



Education about our organization is important to me which is why I have attended National Mission Training and have completed courses of the ALA Academy. I am also a graduate of the Wisconsin Legion College.

I have learned much about our Veterans through my experience with the Honor Flight program which I have been a part of since 2009. I served as Vice President for Stars & Stripes Honor Flight for 10 years and continue to serve as an ambassador for the program. To date, I have participated on 48 honor flights.

I am also a member of the VFW Auxiliary Unit 5373 of Ozaukee County. I believe strongly in giving back to our community. I volunteer with Interfaith Caregivers and Meals On Wheels. I serve as a Village Trustee for the Village of Grafton and teach Sunday School at my church. I have a degree in Business Management and spent over 22 years in sales and marketing in the senior healthcare industry. Currently, I work in the nonprofit sector at a local food pantry. My husband, Todd, and I have two daughters and two grandsons who belong to the American Legion Family.

Sue Turouski for Department 2nd Vice President

I am humbled to announce my candidacy for the Department of Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary 2nd Vice President. I have had the privilege of serving as your Department Historian and because of this, I feel the importance of moving forward to continue the mission of the officers with whom I have been serving.

I'm a member of the D-2 Legion Riders, and a PUFL member of both ALA Rose-Harms Unit 355 and VFW Post 9202. I'm privileged to come from an extensive line of Veterans. I joined the ALA in honor of my brother, Staff Sergeant Steven von Nida, USMC. Since joining the Auxiliary in 2009, I have held the offices of Unit President, 1st Vice, Secretary, Chaplain, Historian, Membership Chair, and Sergeant at Arms. I've held chairmanships on both the District and Department Level.

I initially joined to honor my brother's sacrifices, wanting to do something so his legacy could live on. And by the grace of God and what this organization stands for, I have been able to do just that. My husband



and I have helped in many ways with the Dry Hootch. I am privileged to sit on the board of the Hometown Heroes Foundation, which founded and operates Camp Hometown Heroes (a camp for the children of the fallen since 9/11). Without my association through the ALA, I never would have had that opportunity.

My goal is to help promote our organization through sustaining our membership and helping to educate our members that "anyone can do anything!" Together,

with the help of our mentors, we should be able to get back to the grassroots of the Auxiliary by promoting our 4 Pillars.

Not everything is for everyone ~ that is why we need ALL of us to accomplish our mission!

I truly believe that when we all listen to each other and respect that we all have different abilities, ideas, and opinions, then learn how to put that all together, we will be unstoppable again.

Let's lean on each other's strengths instead of pointing out each other's weaknesses!

Bonnie Jakubczyk for National Executive Committee person

Bonnie Jakubczyk is a 43-year member of Oelschlaeger-Dallmann Unit 434 in Oak Creek. Her eligibility for the American Legion Auxiliary is through the Army service of her late father Raymond, the Air Force service of her husband Dan, and her son Dennis who is currently in the Air Force Reserves. Bonnie has held many offices at the unit, county, district, department, and national levels.

On the Department level, Bonnie is currently the Past Presidents Parley Chairman and the Hospital Representative for Zablocki VAMC. She has worked her way up to Department President and served on Constitution and Bylaws, Resolutions, ALA Badger Girls State, Membership, Chaplain, and Historian. She has attended the National Learning Department Leadership Conference, Department Leadership National Conference, Mission Training, along



with numerous state and national conventions. She has served as the Central Division VA&R Chairman, Central Division Girls Nation Chairman, is currently the National Poppy Vice Chairman, and the Department of Wisconsin National Executive Committee person (NEC).

Bonnie believes the position of National Executive Committee person is important to our department and our members, by expressing our mission, accomplishments, and goals. The NEC is the link to make sure the ALA keeps moving forward. She takes this position very seriously and believes we need to work responsibly so that we can continue for the next 100 years.

Bonnie is married with two children and two granddaughters, all are members of the American Legion Family. Bonnie has been endorsed by her unit, district, and county.

LEGISLATIVE

Diane Weggen
Department Chairman
dsweggen@gmail.com

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Legislative program provides information and assistance for members to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion (TAL). The easiest way to be informed and to **help pass legislation** supporting Veterans, service men and women and their families is to sign up for **Action Alerts** and legislative updates at the ALA (amlegionauxwi.org) or TAL (www.legion.org) websites. If you have signed up, please let dsweggen@gmail.com know you are participating in Action Alerts.

Did you know thousands of military families experience "low food security" because of the way Defense Department and Agriculture Department programs are constructed, causing service members to be ineligible for either program? Contact your legislators to correct this.

The American Legion Auxiliary supports the 2023 priorities adopted by TAL: **Adequate Funding for**

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): programs and services.
- Housing and Urban Development: permanent supportive housing program for homeless Veterans (HUD-VASH).
- Labor: Veterans' Employment and Training Services (VETS).
- State Veterans Homes: Veterans' long-term care facilities.

Healthcare

- Availability: Ensure modern, geographically distributed VA facilities and care communities.
- Quality: Monitor healthcare provided by the VA.
- Treatment for Women Veterans: Ensure adequate and qualified staff and settings.
- Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, Military Sexual Trauma: Improve Veterans' access to mental health and substance use services.
- Wounded Warrior: Provide health and rehabilitation support for returning wounded service members.
- Caregiver Support: Expand current caregiver benefits to Veterans of all eras.

Disability

- VA Benefits Claims: Eliminate the backlog in processing of claims and appeals.
- Concurrent Receipt: Eliminate deduction of disabled Veterans' disability pay from their military retirement pensions. (Concurrent Receipt is a real sticking point with career Veterans. Veterans with some degree of disability are required to use their personal retirement money to pay for their disabilities rather than receiving disability pay from the government as others do).
- Medical Record Sharing: Expedite implementation of an information system for electronic sharing of medical records between the U.S. Departments of Defense and VA.

Education and Employment

- Education Benefits: Ensure proper administration and Veterans' utilization of VA education benefits.
- Credentialing: Incentivize states to recognize education and skills gained during military service as sufficient for state occupational credentials.
- Federal Preference: Monitor federal agency application of Veterans' preference in hiring and contracting.

Troops and Family Support

- Defense Funding: Provide for military operations, equipment, maintenance and facilities, servicemember pay and benefits, and retiree healthcare.
- Housing: Ensure that Basic Allowance for Housing keeps pace with housing costs.
- Transition Assistance: Ensure opportunities for servicemembers and families participating in pre-deployment, pre-separation, and transition assistance briefings and services.
- VA Benefits Claims: Eliminate the backlog in processing of claims/appeals for Veterans' benefits.
- Medical Record Sharing: Expedite implementation of information system for electronic sharing of medical records to reach Veterans no matter where they reside.

**Sweepstakes winners
are posted at
amlegionauxwi.org
under the "More" tab.**





Linda Coppock
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I think I see Spring is finally here! It's a good indication by the number of District Spring Conferences that are scheduled. Units, some counties and some districts are also preparing for their election of officers. If you have been doing your job well, you should have mentored your replacement these past few years! A good leader can be a mentor just by their actions as a leader and not even realize they are mentoring anyone! I "Believe" we all mentor members, but we all have our own unique style. Everyone has a passion and a reason for belonging to this organization and I will continue to encourage members to share their beliefs and their passion.

As many of you are aware, at the 2022 National Convention held in Milwaukee, the national organization proposed a \$6.00 dues increase. After much discussion, the increase was passed. The base rate without any unit dues added will be \$34.00 per senior member. I have heard much grumbling about the increase and I also know firsthand that department staff bore the brunt of the complaints. They are just doing their jobs in keeping the unit members informed. They did not make this decision to increase the national dues. As Department Officers, members can call anyone of us to field your questions and concerns, we are the ones that attended the convention.

And no, the Department of Wisconsin is not raising its portion of dues at this time. My intent of choosing the Department of Wisconsin as my project this year was to avoid that very thing. By giving back to the ALA, to donate to the non-sustaining funds as well as the General Fund, I am hoping we can avoid a dues increase for many years to come. My passion is to give back to the organization that has given so much to me. A great part of the person I am today is because of the programs we have that support our Veterans, and most recently, the active military and their families. My true passion is to mentor our members, help them to be better leaders, and to help them understand why we promote the programs we do have.

That said, April is Children & Youth Month and has been expanded to include the Military Child. "Purple Up" people! April 15 is National "Purple Up" Day. I know we have units and counties that go above and beyond to celebrate and honor the military children.

May is Poppy Month – are you ready to promote your poppies? Are you Getting New & Old Members Excited? Remember to honor those who have served and are no longer with us. Believe in their sacrifice, they did...



David Fuller
SAL Detachment
Commander

**SAL DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**

Fellow Sons we are nearing the end of the third quarter of our current membership year. At the time of this article we need just 366 more membership renewals to reach our goal. This is testament to the hard work of the Sons on every level, but if you should need help for that last push to get to 100% or more, please reach out to your Detachment Officers for help. Let's get to 105% by June 1.

As spring approaches, we will be getting busy with our fundraising efforts and I wish you all a big success. I would like to remind you that our A.L.F. dog program relies on donations to keep it going. Our program is the only one like it in the country, although we have a number of other states asking how we started and maintain our program. Our program is fully supported by donations, and that is why we ask you to please consider the A.L.F. program for a donation.

Another concern of the Sons is that of LEADERSHIP, we need help at every level — Squadron, District and Detachment. You, yes You, may be the answer. Give it a try you may find that you like it and that you are capable of being so much more than you had ever imagined. District conferences will be starting soon, go to one and see how it's done. Get a group together from your Squadron and make a day of it.

As temperatures rise and we move closer to our spring months I hope you all have good health and all the happiness you can get. I hope to see all of you at the District conferences. Be proud, stay proud.

For God and Country.

 **Veterans Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**



Julie Muhle
Department
Commander

★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★

Programs are the crown jewels of The American Legion. Each of our pillars has programs within them that strengthen the pillar. Let's take the easy pillar of Americanism. Americanism is the unflinching love of country, loyalty to its institutions and ideals, eagerness to defend it against all enemies, individual allegiance to the U.S. flag and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity. Considering the above, is it any wonder the programs under Americanism consist of Operation Comfort Warriors, Legion Baseball (and Legion Softball), Scouting, Wisconsin American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy, Junior Shooting Sports, Boys State and Nation, Oratorical Scholarship Program, Flag Education, Scholarship programs and Citizenship.

In order to maintain these programs, we need to ensure funding for them. Our dues and donations help keep our programs going. Unfortunately, membership continues to decline. As it declines, so does the amount

of money funding our programs.

I am asking that as your post, unit, squadron or chapter raises money for donations, please keep in mind our programs. There is nothing wrong with raising money for other veteran or community causes. I applaud all the posts, units, squadrons and chapters that are able to make donations. As your post, unit, squadron or chapter determines where the donations are going, keep the programs of The American Legion in mind so we can continue to make a difference in the lives of our Veterans, their families and the community.

How can you donate to the programs? Go to wilegion.org and in the upper right corner, there is a red box labeled Support Us. The next screen will give you a variety of programs to donate to. If you click the small arrow to the left of each program listed, it will give a brief description as well as the donation progress made towards that program. You can even choose to make your donation a recurring transaction! Checks are accepted as well. Simply make the check payable to Wisconsin American Legion and write in the memo section where you would like the donation to go to.

Thank you for everything you do!



Randy Timms
State Secretary
American Legion
Riders Association

★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★★

This is the Mission Statement for The American Legion Riders – "To participate in parades and other ceremonies that are in keeping with the aims and purposes of The American Legion. To promote motorcycle safety. To provide a social atmosphere for American Legion members who share the same interests. To use our association to promote and support the programs of The American Legion, the community and other motorcycle organizations."

Like most of the Family, the Legion Riders are in the midst of holding elections for State Officers. Our voting process will remain open until the 15th of April. As State Secretary, I receive the mailed ballots from those folks that either do not have email capabilities or for whatever reason elect to have a ballot mailed to them. Those ballots remain sealed and are only opened at the May meeting by a small committee. They are tallied with the electronically executed ballots and the results are read to the membership. This year we had only one office where multiple nominations were made, so the voting is pretty straight forward. I'll gladly reveal who wins that contest in our next issue of the *Legionnaire*.

As of our February meeting, we enjoyed the membership of 710 throughout Wisconsin. We have 335 Veteran members, 162 Life members, 23 Active Duty

members, 107 Auxiliary members and another 83 SAL members to round out our total. So if you or a friend owns a motorcycle and is part of the Legion Family, ask them to consider joining. They find a friend here!

As I have written before, this year our 3-day Tour will collect donations for Camp American Legion. Corey, Brad, Gary and I are working hard behind the scenes to develop a safe and exciting ride and one we can be proud of. But we're not the only ones! There are many people behind the scenes doing their part. One of the BIG items is the level of cooperation we've received from so many posts. I'm sorry that we could not arrange this year's tour to stop at every Post that offered. Don't fret, because next year will be here soon enough and I kept your offer on file!

We will be collecting donations this year at posts located in Juneau, Princeton, Mauston, Ontario, West Salem, Holmen, Eleva, River Falls, St. Croix Falls, Rice Lake, Spooner, Bruce, and Medford. 13 posts stepped up to help and we ALL appreciate their efforts. We plan to end at the State Convention on Wednesday, July 19. So come early for the party at Bulls Falls Harley, right down the street from the convention center. We'd love to see you there about 1600.

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

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