

# American Legion Auxiliary

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November 2022 \$3.75

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# Auxiliary

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**ON THE COVER:** Molly Brown, a member of the ALA Department of Indiana since birth, stands with the American flag during the installation of 2022-2023 national officers at the Auxiliary's 101st National Convention in Milwaukee (photo: Travis Perkins, ALA National Headquarters). **ABOVE:** Young women from the 1962 session of ALA Girls Nation pose for a photograph. This year, the program celebrated its 75th anniversary (photo: Forest Service).



**MISSION FOCUSED:** National President Vickie Koutz at a previous ALA Hoosier Girls State rally night when she was director. ALA programs have been at the heart of what Koutz believes in and continues in her role as the national president.

I am humbled to write this letter to all ALA members as your 2022-2023 national president. It's still hard for me to believe that someone who often prefers to be out of the spotlight and simply working the mission is now in this role within our organization. I am truly honored.

My heart and passion for why we do what we do remains with *the unit member*. We all start at that level of the organization, and our grassroots members are the movers and shakers who focus on doing what we do best every day — serving our veterans, military, and their families. This is at the core of my belief and will continue to motivate me throughout the administrative year. What *you* do matters and your determination to serve others helps move the mission forward.

I so look forward to meeting as many of you as I can during my unit and department visits throughout 2022-2023. I want to hear all about the unique ways you are working the mission and how we can better serve members at all levels of the ALA.

All ALA programs are important to me, but I do want to place an extra emphasis on one area: raising

funds for companions of veterans invited to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF). Veterans enrolled at U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health care facilities showcase their talents in local creative arts competitions before first place winners are invited to attend NVCAF.

### **What you do matters and your determination to serve others helps move the mission forward.**

I've been to this event multiple times as an ALA member and I'm always moved by the talent of our veterans in writing, dance, drama, and music. Some of the attendees need a companion to attend the Festival with them for various medical reasons. Oftentimes, the companions don't get to enjoy meals throughout the week with the veteran because they can't afford the meal plan.

Funds from our 2022-2023 focus will help change that! The monies could be used for a meal plan, travel, or a separate hotel room for the companion (depending on the relationship between companion and veteran), or all three. This is near

and dear to my heart, and I want our veterans and their companions to be able to enjoy the week *together*.

To donate to the national president special project, give online at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) or write a check and mail to:

ALA National Headquarters  
Accounts Receivable  
3450 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
Memo: 2022-2023 national

president special project

In addition to this focus area, I want to raise awareness of our country's Prisoners of War and Missing in Action. Remains from previous wars are being found to this day, and it's finally giving those families the closure they desperately deserve.

My goal is to raise awareness on this topic — that we still need to focus on our missing. Money will not be collected; this is solely a way to let people know this is still an ongoing issue. More information on this subject will be forthcoming, so stay tuned to ALA national media channels.

I am looking forward to another wonderful year of our American Legion Auxiliary, our American Legion Family, and continuing to stay true to our legacy of *Service Not Self*. Please follow @alanationalpresident on Facebook to keep up with what other units are doing as I travel across the country in support of our veterans, military, and their families.

God bless!

Vickie Koutz  
National President



## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ALA'S HIGHEST VOLUNTEER LEADER

Visit page 38 for a closer look at 2022-2023 ALA National President Vickie Koutz and the national focus for the administrative year.

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**01-27719-001-E24501**



**REMEMBER:** A special operations soldier approaches the drop zone during a military freefall operation at Mont Saint-Michel, France, in June. Airborne operations at this time of year honor past paratroopers who descended along the Cotentin Peninsula in Normandy during World War II (photo: Army Sgt. Hannah Hawkins).

It's easy to go on autopilot and zone out a bit when filling out a form. Think about the number of times you had to list your doctor, Mom's maiden name, address, etc., when completing some kind of form. With the digital age, forms are just part of life. But have you ever really *thought* about the



people we enter into those boxes, buttons, and drop-down menus? Every single person who joined the American Legion Auxiliary has done so through a specific veteran — someone who served in the United States military.

The veterans who made our ALA membership possible have stories. Maybe these people weren't actual storytellers per se, but they do have a feature or history surrounding them. If the veteran you entered on your ALA membership application

is still alive, lucky you! Use your opportunity to ask them questions about their service or what they're like as a person. Some of our Auxiliary members don't know much about their veteran because of an advanced age at the time of ALA signup, or the veteran is deceased.

Regardless of this status, it's our job as ALA members to make sure these veterans are appreciated, acknowledged, and never forgotten. On Veterans Day this Nov. 11, be sure to thank the heroes you entered on your membership application form. Show your gratitude in person if you can, and through a moment of silence if your veteran is no longer with us. "Thank you for your service" means so much when it comes from an Auxiliary member.



New ALA year, new look: Be sure to check out page 51 in this issue of *Auxiliary*, where you'll receive advance notice on the new American Legion Auxiliary marks (logos).

# American Legion Auxiliary

A Community of Volunteers  
Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families  
November 2022



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(317) 630-1200 [www.Legion.org/Riders](http://www.Legion.org/Riders)



The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families. Our members also support the mission of The American Legion in improving the quality of life for our nation's veterans. Proud sponsor of ALA Girls Nation, National Poppy Day® and recognized for advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the nearly 550,000 ALA members across the country volunteer millions of hours annually and raise millions of dollars in service to veterans, military, and their families. Founded in 1919, the ALA is one of the oldest patriotic membership organizations in the U.S.A. To learn more and to volunteer, join, and donate, visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).



**Celebrating memberships of 50-plus years in Minnesota**

Brainerd American Legion Auxiliary Unit 255 recently honored 15 women who have been members for 50 years or more. We had a light luncheon and handed out years of membership certificates. We also handed out a gift card for a meal at the Legion. The women included were Dorothy Adamson, Eloise Bierman, Diane Bubalo, Linda Engle, Karen Frank, Betty L. Johnson, Patricia Joseph, Hilda Lee, Esther MacArthur, Edith Mangelson, Betty Mattson, Karla Nelson, Teresa Olson, Rebecca Young, and Linda Engel. We are very proud of these ladies.

— Sharon Berg, Minnesota

**Illinois unit has served ALA mission for nearly a century**

Our organization, American Legion Auxiliary Unit 392, just celebrated 96 years of service to our servicemen and women and our community. From our outreach programs at the Manteno Veterans' Home where we hold Bingo games with the residents, to our poppy drives, Bingo every Wednesday night in our hall, and our Christmas party for the underprivileged that we share with the Legion post,

we support our Legion in many endeavors as well. We have a dynamite group of members who serve with their own resources to make this work. I am proud to be their president.

— Ann Marie Nagel, Illinois

**What do you think about this suggestion?**

As much as I enjoy our monthly magazine, I DO miss having recipes in it. I know. I know. It's been many, many years since the magazine had recipes in it. So why am I writing now? I just thought of it while being on the computer. LOL. Take great care. God bless our USA.

— Etta Beckner, Maryland



**Irresponsible wearing of the American flag ... or not?**

I was disappointed to see on page 50 of the August Auxiliary magazine an advertisement for clothing with the flag image. The use of our flag's image being hijacked for fundraising has become the norm, and it's very disappointing especially from a veterans organization. Do better.

— Lynn Gipe, Nebraska

*Editor's response: Thank you for contacting us, and thank you for your longstanding support of our veterans, military, and their families. The ad you reference was for*

*American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales. A division of The American Legion National Headquarters, Emblem Sales' mission is to give financial support to American Legion programs that enhance the quality of life for America's veterans, their families, and their communities.*

*We defer to The American Legion regarding the interpretation of U.S. Flag Code. If you visit the Legion's frequently asked questions webpage on displaying American flags — you'll see a common answer to the question, May I wear flag clothing? Their stance:*

*"It is the longstanding opinion of the Americanism Commission of The American Legion that it is acceptable to wear clothing that has an image of the American flag on it if that garment has not been made using an actual U.S. flag as the textile. It is The American Legion's opinion that, with few exceptions, the U.S. Flag Code pertains only to an actual flag. Early on in our campaign to protect the flag from physical desecration, Congress agreed in 1989 that the term 'flag of the United States' means 'any FLAG of the United States, or any part thereof, made of any substance, of any size, in a form that is commonly displayed.'*

*A shirt, necktie, hair band, etc., with the likeness of a flag, is not a form commonly displayed as any sort of flag. Many Americans simply want to express their patriotism and love of country by wearing an article of clothing or an item that has an image of the flag imprinted upon it. You should note that there are those who have differing opinions than that of The American Legion, so we are not able to say if you will offend anyone or not."*

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM you**

Email: [ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org) or send letters to: ALA National Headquarters 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268

Story and Photo Submissions: Visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org/Magazine](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/Magazine) for more details.



**ACTIVE IN THE ALA:** Ava Groth of the Department of Pennsylvania was named Junior Member of the Year at the 2022 National Convention. Groth is very active in her Auxiliary unit and encourages other Juniors to become active members.

## JUNIOR MEMBER OF THE YEAR PUTS MISSION FIRST

Just focusing on serving the American Legion Auxiliary mission to the best of her ability, Department of Pennsylvania Junior Ava Groth had no idea she was even nominated for ALA Junior Member of the Year until she received the phone call.

“I was so excited,” she recalled. “I remember getting the phone call and not even knowing what to say. I didn’t know my Auxiliary had put my name in for this award, so I wasn’t even expecting it.”

For 17-year-old Groth to be chosen for the national award, it meant a lot to her, coming from a small town.

“Especially because when I joined my Junior Auxiliary, there were no other active members,” she said. “I became the first active member in years, and even now, there are only four of us. So, it’s mind-blowing

that my work has been recognized on a national level. And it means I can show other Junior members from across the U.S. that even if their unit is small and they feel like their projects don’t leave an impact, they absolutely do.”

Groth is eligible for ALA membership through both of her parents who served in the U.S. Navy. Both are also dual members of The American Legion and the ALA.

Although involved with many programs of the ALA, Groth said her favorite is the ALA Girls State program.

“I went when I was a rising senior, but the program was virtual due to COVID-19 restrictions,” she recalled. “It was still very educational and fun, though, and I enjoyed it so much. I was invited back this summer as a junior counselor and that was when I got to see how great ALA Girls State is in person, and watching those girls become more confident and really become a community was such an amazing experience I’m so lucky I got to have.”

Being part of the ALA as a Junior has led to Groth making connections with both senior Auxiliary and Junior members. In fact, she’s already been in contact with the Auxiliary members at the unit near her college so Groth can continue her Auxiliary experience even when she leaves her hometown.

Groth offers advice to fellow Juniors who want to strive for leadership positions in the ALA.

“Ask for help,” she said. “I wouldn’t have been able to do anything without help from my Legion, my community, and so many others.”

Groth is thankful for the Junior Member of the Year award and is looking forward to continuing to serve the ALA’s mission as a Junior member and soon a senior Auxiliary member.

“It’s overwhelming to look back at all I’ve done, from signing up in seventh grade to wearing my past president pin at my high school graduation,” she said.



## REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR 2022-2023 NATIONAL JUNIOR MEETINGS!

These events give our younger ALA members the opportunity to make new friends, complete service projects, and learn more about the Auxiliary. Junior members age 8 or older who are interested in meeting other Junior members who share the same passion for helping veterans and servicemembers are encouraged to

register for national Junior meetings. Visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org/Meetings/National-Junior-Meetings](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/Meetings/National-Junior-Meetings) for more details.

**2022-2023 National Junior Meetings:**

- ★ Northwestern Division: Nov. 5  
Minneapolis
- ★ Eastern Division: Nov. 5  
Baltimore

★ Central Division: Jan. 21  
Indianapolis

★ Southern Division: Jan. 28  
Nashville

★ Western Division: Feb. 4  
Las Vegas

Watch our social media @ALAJuniors and your email for more up-to-date information.



## JUNIORS WHO ATTEND ALA GIRLS STATE BRING UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

Thousands of young women nationwide attend ALA Girls State each year. Many are unfamiliar with the sponsor of the program: the American Legion Auxiliary. But for some attendees, they know the ALA very well.

Two Junior members from Minnesota were selected to attend ALA Girls State and shared their experiences.

### Sydney Borntreger

“Being involved in the ALA, I have heard about the ALA Girls State program several times and it truly interested me,” Borntreger said when she learned she had been chosen to attend the program.

Attending the weeklong program as a Junior member made connecting with the girls around her easier, she added.

“It gave me something to introduce to them and help them learn more about the ALA,” Borntreger said. “I am very active at the department level, so I knew many of the ALA ladies who were putting it on.”

Throughout the week, Borntreger had a few girls ask her or approach her about the ALA, wanting to learn more about being a Junior member.

“I had a really good conversation with my roommates about becoming Junior members, and a couple of them were going to reach out to their local units,” she recalled.

Already having knowledge of the ALA as a member gave Borntreger the opportunity to see the program from a different perspective. This prior knowledge and experience helped her focus on making changes for veterans, serving as the chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee. The two bills presented during the ALA Girls State program were about preventing veteran homelessness and ensuring affordable and accessible health care for all veterans.



## HONORARY NATIONAL JUNIOR DIVISION VICE PRESIDENTS ELECTED

Congratulations to the 2022-2023 ALA honorary national Junior division vice presidents! These Junior members will be installed at the national meetings in their division, where they will help lead the meeting:

- ★ Central Division: Hayden Freeman (Illinois)
- ★ Eastern Division: MacKenzie McDaniels (New York)
- ★ Northwestern Division: Samantha Stai (Minnesota)
- ★ Southern Division: Jasmine Harris (Florida)
- ★ Western Division: Audrina Rosales (Arizona)

### Emily Suess

Suess had heard of the program as an Auxiliary member, and her mother, Renee, attended the 49th year of ALA Girls State.

“Being able to follow in my mother’s footsteps by attending ALA Girls State did not just mean tons to me, but she was thrilled to say her daughter took on the same opportunity as she did,” Suess said. “Not many can attend ALA Girls State, so being selected was a blessing.”

Suess said it was helpful being a Junior member attending the program, as meetings ran parallel to how Auxiliary meetings are conducted, making it manageable to follow and support other girls to

understand what to do.

“Altogether, it gave me some usefulness being a Junior member since I had been to some ALA programs beforehand,” she said.

After inauguration night, more attendees started asking questions about the ALA to Suess, many not even knowing they were sponsored by one of their local units to attend the program.

“Our [Junior] program would definitely have a brighter future if more knew about it and all the incredible work we do,” she said.

Suess said her ALA Junior membership, including being a past honorary national Junior division vice president, helped her excel in the ALA Girls State program even more.



**ALA GIRLS STATE:** Junior members Sydney Borntreger and Emily Suess of the Department of Minnesota were both selected to attend ALA Girls State this past summer. Both said being ALA members helped them connect with the other attendees because they already had knowledge of the Auxiliary.

*“If I can help him, I can help so many more people.”*

## ABIGAIL JOHNSON



computer at a very young age, but even before that, I was playing with my parents' technology. My parents joke that the entire reason I got a computer is so they could get theirs back. When I was young, I was exposed to programs I thought were fun video games, but, while still fun, they were actually coding classes.

**You won a \$10,000 grant for a new project to improve computer skills for local veterans. Can you share more about the project and how you decided the focus would be on veterans?**

I won the 2021-2022 Pilot Pen FriXion STEM Grant. My grandmother saw it advertised on *The Kelly Clarkson Show* last November, and she nominated me. I was informed that out of around 200 entries in my category, I was the winner. Since my grandmother had entered me, I was thinking of what I would do if I won. I thought about how the veterans at the Legion and the Auxiliary asked me for technology help, and I decided I wanted to build something based on that. Veterans Tech Support was also inspired by my grandpa. He is a self-proclaimed “tech illiterate,” and I had helped him many times before. A big thought process that helped the creation of Veterans Tech Support was the thought, *If I can help him, I can help so many more people.*

**What are your next steps with this program?**  
To acquire further funding, create

lesson plans, and to expand. The grant provided me with the funding for my local American Legion post and Auxiliary unit, but further funding is needed. I have registered with the state and received 501(c)(3) nonprofit status federally so that donations can be tax deductible. I have other Legions ready for the program, and I am working on both community funding and grantwriting to provide the equipment needed. Fortunately, I haven't been short on volunteers once we have the equipment!

**What does it mean to you to be only 15 years old and already have a nonprofit?**

It is a wonderful experience. It's a great lesson in responsibility, management, fiscal knowledge, empathy, public speaking, and more. Having a nonprofit isn't only helping those around me, but also helping myself. I've done so many things with my life, but this is definitely one of the most important to me.

**Do you have any advice for other young ALA members about pursuing their passions?**

Don't hold back because you're scared others won't like what you do. Be undeniably you, and laugh in the face of fear. It doesn't matter what anyone thinks of you, as long as you're happy. Do you like art? Sketch a little every day; learn from your peers who can help. Do you like cooking? Take a class; learn how to make something new. Are you passionate about veterans? Do anything from volunteering at a veterans organization to starting a nonprofit. See the world as you want it to be, and work to change it in that way. Remember: No matter how small a step you take into doing what you want, it is still a step.

**CARING FOR VETERANS:** Abigail Johnson with her grandfather, Michael Lake, and Post 711 Commander Polly Graham; Johnson with Willow Salter and Donna Kraft of ALA Unit 711; and Neil Baker and Johnson at Post 430 where Veterans Tech Support is expanding.

Veterans Tech Support, a nonprofit that provides computers and technical help to veterans, was founded in 2022 by American Legion Auxiliary Junior member Abigail Johnson. The 15-year-old had worked with computers for years and wanted to do something to help others with their skills — the opportunity presented itself at The American Legion Post 711 home.

**How long have you been an ALA member, and who made your eligibility possible?**

I have been an Auxiliary member since 2019. I am eligible through my grandfather, Michael Lake, a combat wounded, 100% disabled, Vietnam veteran.

**We understand you started your computer journey at a very young age. Can you tell us about that?**

I've been exposed to computers practically since birth. I got my own



### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit Veterans Tech Support at [www.veteranstechsupport.com](http://www.veteranstechsupport.com). For those who want to get on the list for equipment and training material (note: It will take some time to provide these), submit a request on the website.

**“The most beautiful things are not associated with money;  
they are memories and moments.  
If you don’t celebrate those, they can pass you by.”**

**— Alek Wek, fashion model**



It's not easy losing a loved one. With death, there is finality: a sense of closure and the green light to attempt moving forward. Imagine losing someone close to you ... and not having that conclusiveness. This is what happens when our heroes become Prisoners of War or Missing in Action. Let's make sure we tell their stories and keep their memories alive. They are not forgotten.

*Above: Barb Tulanowski and fellow Freeland American Legion Auxiliary Unit 473 members make a heart from glow sticks in front of the POW/MIA memorial in Freeland, Pa., following a National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony in September. Thirteen Prisoners of War who died from the Freeland/White Haven area from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, and seven missing persons were remembered (photo: John Haeger/Standard-Speaker via AP).*



## Help Wanted: Serve on an ALA National Committee

Got a passion for veterans, military, and all programs of the American Legion Auxiliary? Apply to serve on a 2023-2024 national committee! You need not have served as an officer in your district or department to be eligible for an appointment. Any members 18 or older are welcome to apply, including our male ALA members.

Visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) and search National Committee Appointment Application to apply today. *But hurry — the application window is Nov. 1 through Dec. 15, 2022.*

Scan  
here to  
apply  
today!



## IT'S ALL GOOD ALA MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

As we celebrate the ALA's 103rd birthday (Nov. 10), what question would you ask the women who founded our organization?



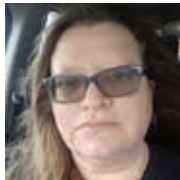
“What were your five- and 10-year goals for this newly formed organization? What were your plans to achieve these goals?”

— Paulette Caron, Maryland



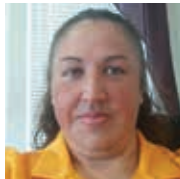
“What type of fundraisers did you have, and what community organizations did you help?”

— Tammy Ewbank, Indiana



“What would you like to see the Auxiliary doing now?”

— Mickey Weiss, Ohio



“We have seen a lot of changes in 100 years. How can we recapture the excitement of being a new organization and incorporate the modern family and technology?”

— Jody Schmale, Nebraska



“Have the members met the ideas and dreams you had?”

— Eileen Lopez, Texas



“How did you recruit members for a newly formed organization?”

— Diane M. Craig, New York



“Did you ever imagine the ALA celebrating 100 years of supporting our veterans, military families, and community? What advice or ideas did you find most helpful in initial organizing?”

— Anita Ritter, Arizona

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @ALAforVeterans. You could be featured in an upcoming issue of *Auxiliary*.

# BETTER THAN BOTOX: Takes Years Off Your Face in Minutes

Women are raving about the life-changing effects of this powerful formula.

There's no denying that people — mostly women — are on a mission to discover the best way to eliminate fine lines and wrinkles permanently. The \$14 billion dollars spent on aesthetic procedures in 2021 alone is a clear indication of that fact.

But now science appears to be offering a simpler solution. It's a special delivery technology adapted for skincare that gets superior results.

Known as advanced liposome technology, this powerful distribution system ensures that vital nutrients are delivered exactly where your skin needs them the most, providing your skin with maximum anti-aging benefits.

## New Age-Defying 'Dermal Filler' Cream in High Demand

Al Sears, MD, of Palm Beach, Florida, recently released an anti-aging cream that adapts this breakthrough medical technology into the realm of skincare, and he's struggling to keep up with consumer demand.

Dr. Sears is South Florida's leading anti-aging pioneer. He has authored over 500 reports, scientific papers, and books on anti-aging. A frequent lecturer at global anti-aging conferences, Dr. Sears spoke at the WPBF 25 Health & Wellness Festival featuring Dr. Oz, along with special guest, Suzanne Somers. Thousands of people were in attendance as Dr. Sears discussed his latest anti-aging breakthroughs.

This powerful cream, known as **Restore**, keeps selling out faster than it's produced — and people are raving about the effect it's having on their skin.

"Within a few minutes of applying the cream, it visibly plumps out the under-eye area and my cheeks as well as those annoying lines that deepen as we age between the nose and lips. It also felt like it was tightening and smoothing my skin at the same time. I definitely feel I look younger whenever I use it," said Amy B., of Montville,

New Jersey.

"The lines around my mouth and eyes are filled in and my skin is tightened. I love having younger-looking skin, so I will continue using **Restore**" raves Cathy C., of Florida.

The best part is that this cream has no adverse side effects, doesn't require a doctor's visit or prescription, and is 100% natural.

**"Advanced liposome technology ensures that vital nutrients are delivered exactly where your skin needs them the most."**

## Powerful Delivery System Ensures Nutrients Penetrate Deep into Your Skin

The dermis is the underlying layer of skin that supplies nourishment and oxygen, and removes waste. In other words, it's responsible for keeping your outer layer of skin healthy. Liposome technology is designed to support and nourish this deeper layer of skin by delivering nutrients directly to it.

"All of **Restore's** powerful ingredients are encapsulated in a liposome shell — an organic container that carries the beautifying agents deep into the skin cells," explained Dr. Sears.

"**Restore's** liposome shell is composed of phosphatidylcholine or PC for short. While cell membranes repel water, they absorb PC because they're actually made of it. As a result, **Restore** is delivered deep into the cell for maximum firming and volume."

When you apply liposome cream to your face, the liposomes in the skin cream work their way inside your skin, fuse with the skin cell membranes and then release their contents directly to the cells. Regular skin creams don't have this ca-



**Revolutionary Formula Reduces the Appearance of Wrinkles in Minutes**

pability.

## A Formula Designed to Take Years off Your Face in Minutes

Once it's penetrated the deeper layer of skin, **Restore** releases a unique blend of botanicals, vitamins and essential oils that reduces the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, gives skin a more even tone, and moisturizes the interior layers of your dermal cells, firming and plumping your skin.

**Restore's** first skin-enhancing agent is Madonna lily leaf stem cell extract. It helps produce an even-toned complexion. In a clinical study reported in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology*, participants treated with this extract for 28 days showed improvements in skin luminance and tone around the eyes.

**Restore** is also loaded with vitamin C, which British researchers have found reduces both wrinkles and dryness. "In **Restore** we use magnesium ascorbyl phosphate, a more stable form of vitamin C that doesn't break down in liquid as does ordinary C," explains Dr. Sears. "That means the antioxidant molecules stay intact within your skin cells where they can prevent damage from dangerous free radicals."

This powerful formula also features guarana seed extract, coenzyme Q10, and avocado oil. Japanese researchers have also found that coenzyme Q10 supports production of the thin

membrane that separates layers of your skin, and French studies have shown that avocado oil improves skin cell metabolism and enhances skin thickness.

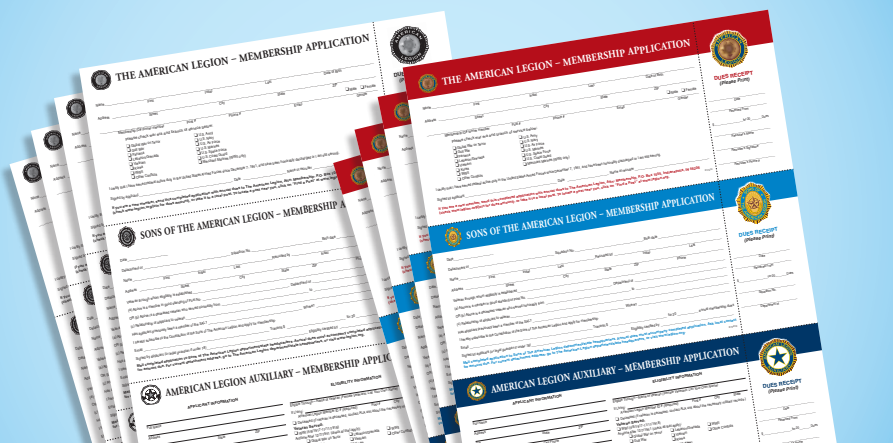
## Where To Get Restore

Right now the only way to get this powerful age-defying delivery technology is through Dr. Sears.

To get life-changing results like Amy and Cathy, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-235-3785**. "We simply don't have enough supply to get **Restore** shipped directly to stores," said Dr. Sears. "The hotline allows us to ship the product directly to the customer — the one who really wants it."

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about this product, that he offers a 100% money-back guarantee on every order. "Just send back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days, and I'll send you your money back," said Dr. Sears.

The hotline will be taking orders for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number may be shut down to allow them to restock. Call **1-800-235-3785** to secure your limited supply of **Restore**. If you are not able to get through due to extremely high call volume, please try again! Call NOW to qualify for this limited time offer provided at a significant discount. To take advantage of this exclusive offer use Promo Code: **AMLR51022** when you call in.



## WOMEN VETERANS ADD A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE TO THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

There are currently more than 2 million women veterans in the United States, and they are the fastest growing group in the veteran population, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

It is important for American Legion Auxiliary members to show support to these women. One way is to recruit them as Auxiliary members. Eligibility for women veterans in the ALA is unique in that they can be a member through their own military service, regardless if they're a member of The American Legion. They can be dual members (belonging to ALA and Legion), or they can be solely a member of the ALA or Legion.

Women veterans bring a different perspective to the Auxiliary because they know firsthand the needs of female veterans. Their experience in the military and then transitioning to a veteran may be vastly different from a man's experience. This can help in your mission delivery in your community.

Some women veterans may be interested in joining only the ALA or only the Legion, where others may want to join both. It is a personal decision on where they

want to devote their talents and time, but we shouldn't shy away from the ask.

"There are some women veterans who don't connect with membership in The American Legion in their own right," said Patricia Harris, North Carolina dual member and a 2022-2023 American Legion national vice commander. "Most times, it is based on the American Legion Auxiliary

**The ALA was my first beginning. I am the direct product of The American Legion's successful post/unit family.**

mission and purposes that have more attraction to what type of continued service she views in her wheelhouse."

Just because a woman veteran is already a Legionnaire, we should still ask them to join the ALA. You never know: She may have not joined because she was never asked or didn't know she was eligible. Just as she can bring a different perspective to your unit as a veteran, a female Legionnaire can bring a unique perspective as a member of the Legion.

"The importance of women veterans who are also Legionnaires with membership in the Auxiliary is to ensure the voice of the Legion Family is heard and represented," said Harris. "As a woman Legionnaire who is dual, I was an Auxiliary member first as a Junior. It's the continuance of a family legacy in patriotism and the education of 100% Americanism. As Legionnaires, we offer a special blend of leadership and knowledge through our service that animates the purposes of the American Legion Auxiliary, i.e., support and advocacy of military and veteran families."

Harris said it's important to give recognition to women veterans. "Recognize that women in military service have a lot to offer relative to the Auxiliary's mission and purposes — recognition of the fact that if she is married, she is a wife who can also be a mother. She constantly has a military lens on everyday military/veteran life."

Harris started her membership in The American Legion Family as a Junior, and it grew from there.

"The ALA was my first beginning. I am the direct product of The American Legion's successful post/unit family. Here I learned all about the fundamentals of leadership as a Junior Auxiliary member. The ALA's values worked well with my parents' teachings, personal integrity, service to God, and our country, respect for others, and being active in the communities," she said. "I take personal pride in the instruction of those values that led me to the value of service to our country. I served my country, and that made me eligible to join The American Legion. As the second generation in both, it means a family legacy I have passed on to my family. Dual membership to me is having the best of both worlds in selfless service."



### NEED AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS?

We have two versions available — color and black-and-white on [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). We created the black-and-white version to be printer friendly from your home office.

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\*Subject to credit approval. Interest is billed during the promotional period but all interest is waived if the purchase amount is paid before the expiration of the promotional period. There is no minimum monthly payment required during the promotional period. Financing for GreenSky® consumer loan programs is provided by federally insured, equal opportunity lender banks. NMLS #1416362. GreenSky® Program is a program name for certain consumer credit plans extended by participating lenders to borrowers for the purchase of goods and/or services from participating merchants. Participating lenders are federally insured, equal opportunity lender banks. GreenSky® is a registered trademark of GreenSky, LLC. GreenSky Servicing, LLC services the loans on behalf of participating lenders. NMLS #1416362 GreenSky® financing offers available at participating dealers only.

A hand holding a small American flag against a blue background with white stars. The hand is adorned with several rings and bracelets. The flag is waving and features the stars and stripes of the United States flag.

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on November 16-17th using code  
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KENDRA SCOTT



## A SPECIAL LABOR OF LOVE FOR HOMETOWN HEROES

For 13 years, members of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 44 in Newburgh, Ind., and community volunteers have helped to make Honor Quilts for veterans at the post home. They call themselves the Quilters Group, and they meet every Tuesday to create unique denim-based quilts to show veterans their appreciation.

"If it wasn't for our veterans, we would not have our freedom," said Unit 44 member Cathy Feldbusch. "This is a small way to thank them for everything they've done."

With symbolism stitched throughout, the quilts are considered rag-quilts for their torn edges. The quilts are the size of an Army blanket, with one side made of flannel and fabric, and the other made of denim, which is tough and strong like our veterans. The jeans are donated from

the community as a way to thank veterans for their service.

The Quilters Group will normally form an assembly line to make the quilts because there are numerous steps to get it to completion. A few members don't sew, but they help in other ways. Using a die-cutting machine, some members cut the blue jeans and squares so that they are equal. Other members clean the die-cutter constantly because it gets stuck easily and won't cut properly. One member will pin pieces of cloth together, and another will sew the cloth. The group also designates someone to sew the dedication and American flag on the bottom of the quilt. Seamstresses then sew the rows.

"It is a team effort — no one more important than the other," said Feldbusch. "We all work together and get it done: ALA members and members of the community."

After they make around 30 Honor Quilts, the group sends letters to post



**QUILTERS DON'T QUIT:** Cathy Feldbusch presents an Honor Quilt to a Post 44 Legionnaire.

veterans thanking them for their service and asking them to come in to receive a quilt. They present the quilts during American Legion Family meetings.

Post 44 has over 1,000 Legion Family members. The Quilters are trying to give every veteran of the post a quilt. They began giving quilts to World War II veterans, followed by Korean War veterans, and then Vietnam veterans.



**UPHOLDING HISTORY:** Mickey Weiss helps maintain veterans' graves for future generations.

## CLEANING VETERANS' GRAVESTONES TO PRESERVE HISTORY

Ohio American Legion Auxiliary Unit 179 member McKinzie "Mickey" Weiss cleans veterans' tombstones to honor these heroes and to help keep their legacies alive.

"The sacrifices our veterans have made for us — we can't measure them, and this is such a simple thing to do, to clean their headstones and make sure the headstones last for future generations so everyone can see what our veterans have done for

us," Weiss said.

Weiss has always had an interest in graveyards and cemeteries, finding them peaceful. She began cleaning veterans' graves after driving through a local cemetery and noticing how dirty the veterans' headstones were. Immediately, she began researching how to clean headstones.

"A lot of our veterans' headstones were so dirty that you couldn't see the names, or what war they served in, so I began to search how to clean headstones," said Weiss. "And it just developed this fascination for me."

After thorough research, Weiss uses a product called D/2 to clean and preserve graves, which is also the product used at Arlington National Cemetery. The D/2 product is recommended by other organizations because it isn't a harsh chemical. The cleaning supplies can be purchased from [atlaspreservation.com](http://atlaspreservation.com). The

website also offers classes and has YouTube videos on how to clean gravestones.

"Cleaning old headstones properly is essential," said Weiss. "There are other products out there that claim to clean headstones, but they can be damaging if you do it wrong."

Weiss emphasizes that patience is key when preserving headstones. They don't come clean immediately; sometimes it takes a month or two. She says to never use a pressure washer or any kind of metal scrub brush so as to avoid damaging the stones.

She started cleaning headstones at Myers Cemetery in Goshen, Ohio, and extended the generosity to her hometown cemetery in Blanchester. She has cleaned headstones that date as far back as 1812.

"In the area I live in, these aren't just veterans," she said. "These are the founding fathers of these communities. And I think it impacts our history and it's important to learn our history and learn about who these heroes were."



**CARING FOR OUR VETERANS:** Indiana Unit 172 members deliver cards, coloring pages, and poppies to veterans at local nursing homes.

**SUPPORTING VETERANS DURING WINTER MONTHS**

Helping to make sure our veterans aren't feeling the lonely winter blues, Indiana American Legion Auxiliary Unit 172 delivers seasonal cards with heartfelt messages and joyful coloring pages to veterans in their local nursing homes.

"I think it's important for us as Auxiliary members, or any member

of the Legion Family, to do whatever you can to help keep the veterans' spirits up, especially in the winter months when they are stuck inside and it's easier to get depressed," said Unit 172 member Lisa Garrett.

To show extra love during the dreary winter season, Unit 172 also gifts special Christmas presents to veterans at local nursing homes.

"Giving our veterans a card, or a coloring sheet, or a gift — letting them know somebody is thinking about them — is incredibly important," said Garrett. "It's heartwarming to see them appreciate something as small as a card. They smile, and they are so happy — they just appreciate it so much."

As they persevered through COVID-19 obstacles the past few years, Unit 172 members worked with nursing staff to coordinate safe ways to give gifts and cards to veterans during the holiday season.

"All of our veterans will always have something to open on Christmas," said Garrett. "Even with COVID, when we couldn't go in and hand deliver the cards and coloring sheets and gifts, we'd still go and drop them off and they'd pass them out from our Auxiliary unit."

Other ways Unit 172 helps veterans feel appreciated is by sending care packages to loved ones serving, along with extra Christmas cards inside for them to share with other military personnel. This is also an inexpensive way to spread some joy to those who may not be able to be with their families.

"They don't always get to come home for Christmas, so if we can send them a care package full of Christmas cards and candy canes, it's not a lot, but it's enough to let them know we are thinking about them," said Garrett. "It's not an expensive project, but I think it's one that is appreciated."

Unit 172 members fill out cards during Auxiliary meetings and in their free time. Garrett takes cards and coloring pages to Junior meetings and asks them to write something special for veterans living in local nursing homes. She also reaches out to elementary school teachers to get students to color some coloring pages.

"I've seen firsthand how something so simple as a card or coloring page can put a smile on a veteran's face — the smallest things really make a difference," said Garrett. "Anything you can do, they will appreciate it. Just let them know we remember them and they haven't been forgotten. We care."

**AUXILIARY'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**ACROSS**

- 2. we send care packages to them
- 4. game often played in Legion posts
- 5. where it all begins
- 8. awarded for continuing education
- 10. what you're reading right now
- 12. official Legion Family flower since 1920s

**DOWN**

- 1. making these brighter for those we serve
- 3. our heroes young and old
- 6. another word for ancillary/ supplementary
- 7. ALA's largest national event
- 9. you see us here a lot
- 11. acronym for National Veterans Creative Arts Festival

Answers can be found on page 50

## MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND OFFERS BENEFITS TO THE DONOR AND ORGANIZATION

The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation celebrated its 15th year of operation in 2022. In that time, over \$790,000 has been granted to units and departments nationwide to fund projects that directly benefit veterans. In addition, the ALA Foundation has awarded over \$490,000 to the American Legion Auxiliary to fund mission-related programs like ALA Girls Nation, the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, and many others.

The funds available to fulfill these grant requests and cover program expenses come from our dedicated donors and the interest earned from the Mission Endowment Fund: the cog that keeps the Foundation's wheel in motion. There are many advantages to having a healthy, growing endowment. Advantages include creating an ongoing source of income, enhancing organizational stability, relieving pressure on the operating budget, allowing program expansion, and providing independence. The purpose of the fund is to ensure the financial stability and longevity of the ALA Foundation. With a well-supported Foundation, it can continue to support our veteran projects, ALA



**PART OF THE ALA FOUNDATION LEGACY:** Veterans prepare for the 2022 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival stage show in St. Petersburg, Fla. Your donations to the Mission Endowment Fund help support programs like the Festival.

programming, and honor all aspects of our important mission well into the future.

The Mission Endowment Fund offers options to meet new organizational challenges by providing greater financial flexibility and self-sustaining revenue streams. Endowment contributions designated for specific purposes can provide a measure of independence from outside forces. For example, an Indiana retirement community was in danger of losing its chaplain when the board resolved to terminate all programs except those that generated enough income to be self-sustaining. This inspired a concerned donor to make an endowment gift with the specific purpose of supporting the program.

The end result? The chaplaincy program survived. Now, the program continues and enjoys a measure of independence from the need to generate income to support itself.

The future of the ALA Foundation is reliant upon your gifts to the Mission Endowment Fund. As the endowment grows, so does the opportunity to fund additional initiatives that will enable us to fulfill our mission of positively impacting the lives of veterans, military, and their families.

Join us and be a part of the ALA Foundation legacy. To learn more about the Foundation's impact and make your tax-deductible gift, visit [www.ALAFoundation.org](http://www.ALAFoundation.org) or call (317) 569-4500 to discuss a special gift to the Mission Endowment Fund.



**HURRICANE PREP:** Air Force airman Jeremiah Augustine stacks sandbags at Mississippi's Keesler Air Force Base in June to prepare for the 2022 hurricane season (photo: Kemberly Groue, Air Force).

## HELPING NOW, PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE WITH AEF

The winter months typically are a quieter time for most American Legion Auxiliary members. The snow seems to lay a peaceful blanket over us. But winter is sandwiched between a very active weather period — hurricanes in summer/fall, and tornadoes and flooding in the spring.

When Hurricane Fiona landed in the ALA Department of Puerto Rico in September, it dropped double-digit inches of rain and left the entire island without power. Days later, Hurricane Ian arrived in Florida, causing major destruction and taking numerous human lives. It's a scary waiting game

to see what havoc Mother Nature will wreak during our change of seasons.

There is hope.

For ALA members who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund's national grant assistance program can provide temporary emergency assistance to eligible members.

And for those who want to help — let's make a difference by ensuring we have funds now and in the future by making a donation to the AEF. Learn more at [www.ALAFforVeterans.org/AEF](http://www.ALAFforVeterans.org/AEF)



**DISCUSSION AND DEBATE:** Department of Washington, D.C. member Lauren Lloyd asks a question from the floor during discussion at the ALA's 101st National Convention in Milwaukee.

### NEC AND NATIONAL CONVENTION GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

The National Executive Committee (NEC) and ALA National Convention delegates were BUSY in Milwaukee this year. A complete list of changes is available on the ALA blog at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). In addition to approving a national dues increase to continue supporting our veterans, military, and their families, convention delegates voted to make much needed updates to our governing documents, including the articles

of incorporation, which had not been updated since 1932. Here is a sample of the actions taken:

- Created an Ethical Conduct Committee to review complaints against *national* leadership; passed other provisions to allow for discipline of any NEC member by the NEC up to termination from serving on the board.

- Some committees were missing purposes and vice chair designations. Delegates voted to update the purposes and vice chair designations,

but not change the size, of the following national committees: Auxiliary Emergency Fund, ALA Girls Nation, Community Service, Education, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Membership, Poppy, and Public Relations.

- Risk & Compliance Committee may now have an additional non-member serve in order to provide necessary expertise.
- Overhauled the department and unit charter cancellation process. Instead of charter suspension or cancellation being the only options for a department

with issues, the delegates added the option to “discipline” departments. This provides the NEC with more ways of assisting struggling departments. Delegates and the NEC also passed more clear procedures for a unit to appeal the cancellation of its charter. Cancellations are appealable to the NEC; unit discipline is not appealable to the NEC.

- Changed the terms “due process” and “equal protection” to “fundamental fairness,” which means adequate notification and an opportunity to be heard.

- Proposed amendments to the national constitution and bylaws now have a due date in late July in writing instead of a custom.

- Members’ names and contact information is for *official* ALA use only.

- Program reports are due to national chairmen by May 15; Department Impact Reports are due to National Headquarters by June 1 (not new dates, now they are just in writing).

The NEC also passed a number of amendments as part of the Resolutions Project; old “resolutions” were followed as customs but had not been adopted into the governing documents. This included ensuring departments receive notifications of NEC actions, as well as convention actions, keeping alternate NECs informed of NEC business, the most *recent* join date is now on membership cards, when the first renewal notification goes out, what the fiscal year is for the National Headquarters (October to September), and more.



### WHAT ELSE HAPPENED IN MILWAUKEE?

See a complete list of changes voted on by the National Executive Committee and ALA National Convention delegates via the ALA blog at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)

## ALA LOOKING FOR MEMBERS TO SERVE ON NEW ETHICAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE

The NEC and convention delegates both voted in favor of promoting a culture of integrity at the national level by adopting provisions to implement a revised National Leadership Code of Ethical Conduct. What had previously applied to only the 11 national officers now also applies to the NEC, Past National Presidents, and national appointees.

Allegations of violations of bylaws, standing rules, or other policies or procedures; violations of federal, state, or local laws that result in a conviction; or conduct, whether past or present, that presents potential liability risk, reputational risk, or hinders the mission of the ALA national organization will be reviewed by an independent Ethical Conduct Committee. The NEC will be responsible for voting on and implementing the recommendations of the committee with possible outcomes from counseling up to and including loss of position on the NEC.

The ALA is looking for volunteers with *demonstrated experience* in risk assessment, conducting investigations, and who are independent from the NEC, to serve one- to three-year terms on the new committee. If you have a job that impacts how much time you can volunteer, this may be the perfect fit for you. The committee meets only when called and has a limited timeframe in which to review and investigate allegations. All work and meetings are conducted remotely. Membership in the ALA is required, but volunteer experience in the organization is not.

# We're looking for YOU!



## ALA Ethical Conduct Committee



- The ALA is looking for members to serve on this national committee.
- Do you have demonstrated experience with risk assessment or conducting investigations?
- Do you want to use those skills to serve on a committee to *review allegations of Code of Ethical Conduct violations* by national officers, national committee members, and members of the NEC?
- Applications accepted now through Dec. 31, 2022, at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).



# Mailed with Love

## Units share tips for successful care package programs

The sights and smells of the holiday season are what make it such a wonderful time of year — presents neatly wrapped and nestled under the tree, twinkling lights reflecting off the snow, the smell of freshly baked cookies filling the house, and family members gathering together to watch the next Hallmark movie or bundle up to sing Christmas carols outside.

For our servicemembers who are away from home during this time of year, missing out on traditions can be difficult.

To help give them a taste of home and much needed items while deployed, American Legion Auxiliary units across the country make it their mission to send care packages to servicemembers who have sacrificed being home for the holidays in order to give us the opportunity to enjoy the freedoms we have as Americans.

*Auxiliary* magazine talked to two units with successful care package programs. They've shared tips and resource ideas that other ALA units can implement to send their own care packages to servicemembers who deserve a reminder that they're not forgotten.

### **ALA Unit 44: Elephant Butte, New Mexico**

Having the process down to a science, members of Unit 44 in New Mexico create an assembly line to put

together care packages for deployed servicemembers. The unit has been doing this since 2003 when Marty Novak and Liz Nellis started the program. In the beginning, seven packages were sent to a few people from town, and it grew from there as they added names to their mailing list — even sending as many as 95 boxes in one month.

“Sometimes, we got down to much less than that with the pandemic, but we have continued to send them every month,” Novak said. “We have only missed one month when the pandemic first started, and we were shut down.”

The number of packages can vary each month, depending on how many names they have. Some names come from local people or others in New Mexico — the area is a retirement community on a lake — but people come from other places and stay the winter there. Once they find out about the care package program, they too share names of those deployed so a care package can be sent.

In addition to names coming from locals and the state of New Mexico, other states have sent names of those deployed. Usually, the unit sends anywhere from one to three extra boxes (in addition to the named person on the box), according to how big the group

is so there are enough items to share among the servicemembers.

This year, the unit hit an amazing milestone — June 8, 2022, marked 10,000 care packages mailed since the start of this endeavor.

“It just blows your mind,” Novak said about the 10,000 packages. “We had no idea we would be doing it for over 19 years and never thought we would get to 10,000.”

Items in the care packages vary but can include wipes, socks, toiletries, salsa, jerky, packages of Oreos, homemade cookies, lotions, lip balm, shampoo, toothpaste, and more.

Socks are a big item — when one local servicemember came home on leave, the unit asked what else he wanted or needed in a care package, and he said socks.

“They are wonderful,” Novak recalled him saying. “They could go 41 days between showers. Now we put in three pairs of socks regularly in the care packages.”

The unit has received a lot of help locally, including a grocery store that has donated salsa to

the care package cause since the beginning.

“One of our local girls said when she got her package, the commander would divvy the salsa out by the spoonful so everyone would get some,” she said.

Another local recipient informed the unit how they used to split up packages of Oreos, leading to two to three packages sent in a box rather than just one.

“We would send the package of Oreo cookies with six in a package, and they would carefully break each Oreo into four pieces to share,” she recalled.

There are items the unit recommends not sending. Novak said perfumes or soaps aren’t included in care packages because “every piece of candy will taste like that soap.”

In addition to traditional items, care packages have included letters and drawings from kids at the local schools, copies of the local poppy poster contest submissions, pocket flags, and poppies.

“It’s kind of a community project,” Novak said. “A lot of people donate goodies to put in there.”

**Mastering Military Shipping with ShipThrifty (an ALA Academy course with all the details!)**

**Snapshot view of what participants will learn in this webinar:**

- **Meet your ALA member benefits provider — ShipThrifty — and how they can help you with all of your shipping needs this holiday season.**
- **Learn the ease of shipping with ShipThrifty, focused specifically on military care packages.**
- **Visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy) to take the course today!**



**PACKAGED WITH LOVE:** Members of Unit 44 in New Mexico put together care packages for servicemembers overseas; the note included in each package sent in 2022; members create an assembly line to box items; deployed servicemembers with their Christmas cookies; May 2022 — gathering items ahead of time for holiday shipping; a certificate of thanks from overseas.



**GIVING BACK:** Members of Waconia Unit 150 in Minnesota have had a care package program for three years. Members load completed packages into a trailer to take to the post office for delivery; assembling boxes ahead of the holiday season.

After seeing Unit 43’s Novak and Nellis giving a certificate of appreciation to the grocery store that donates the salsa, a man gave the unit a check for \$500 and has been donating for nearly 18 years. He lives 200 miles away in Albuquerque and comes to the area on weekends.

“We have a wonderful community,” Novak said.

The process of putting together care packages over the years has been perfected through trial and error with the unit finding its rhythm. Novak shops during the month

so they have enough supplies, other members help by making shipping labels and getting boxes and assembling them, filling the boxes, taking inventory of what’s left so Novak knows what to shop for next month, putting in any last-minute items, taping the boxes shut, labeling them, and taking them to the post office. They do include information in the package that lets the servicemembers know it came from their unit.

“It takes about an hour — we still have time to socialize and laugh and joke,” she said.

The program is funded by Post 44, bake and dessert sales, and individual donations.

Novak said the unit has received feedback from those who have received their packages — emails have been sent, as well as items such as flags and pictures of a deployed unit.

“When they say something about how important [the care package] was to them and the feeling they got that somebody cared — it touches your heart,” Novak said. “That’s the reward we all get. When I get an email or pictures, I read that to the ones who helped do the care packages.”

Novak offers advice to ALA units that may want to

launch a care package program.

“Start small,” she suggested. “It isn’t quite as overwhelming when you start small. Just make sure you have the names and addresses. Boxes have to be addressed to an individual. If they aren’t there and you just send it in a regular box, it can be thrown away. If you send it through priority mail, it can be returned.”

The project’s continued success each year keeps the unit members going and reminds them why we do what we do as an Auxiliary.

**Are you wondering what the servicemember in your life may want? These items are always a hit:**

- **Drink mix packets like water flavorings, cocoa, tea, and apple cider (note — coffee is restricted in some areas).**
- **Pre-packaged, individual-size healthy snacks like protein bars, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or beef jerky.**
- **Non-perishable, pre-packaged food and sauces.**
- **Pre-packaged, individually wrapped candy, cookies, and chips.**
- **Hygiene items like toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, roll-on deodorant, baby wipes, and feminine hygiene supplies.**

“It’s just something that is where my heart is,” Novak said. “I don’t think we will ever stop. We enjoy doing it. No one complains about it being care package time.”

**ALA Unit 150: Waconia, Minnesota**

This is the third year for Unit 150’s care package program. They send their boxes annually, typically during the winter. Their first year of the program began at the height of COVID-19.

Stephanie Hodge, unit president, sends a letter to businesses in town requesting donations of items or monetary contributions for the care packages.

After fundraising is complete, the unit decides when to buy the products.

Items sent overseas have varied but have included beef jerky, gum, pencils, books, candy, powered drink mix hydration kits, flavored water, granola bars, Pringles, Skittles, dried fruit and nuts, ChapStick, artwork from a local elementary school, and more.

“We try to think of a good variety,” she said. “We want good stuff in there.”

A local sporting goods store donated footballs (they are deflated before sending to help with spacing issues), and the



local library donated books that are out of circulation. One book is included per box. Each box averages about 25 pounds of items.

A note is also included in the boxes from the Waconia Auxiliary, along with a list of local businesses that donated to the cause.

Instead of sending all boxes directly to individuals as it can be hard to get individual servicemember mailing information, Unit 150 often sends the boxes to chaplains stationed abroad who then, in turn, distribute them among the whole group they are with.

The first year, 150 boxes were shipped and then the unit set a goal to double it to 300 the second year. Now, the goal for the unit is 300 a year. The unit has found that number to be manageable with the resources it has; any more than that would be difficult, Hodge said.

To begin the process of finding items not directly donated from area businesses, the unit turns to Costco to purchase supplies in bulk.

“A lot of thought goes into what we will buy,” Hodge said. “We try not to get the same thing each time and try to do high quality items.”

Once the items come in and are picked up in a trailer, unit members help bring them inside the post for inventory, figuring out quantities to go in each care package. They often include multiples of one item — they can’t just have one granola bar or one bag of Skittles per box, Hodge said.

“We have no problem filling them up,” she said.

People from the community often help with the assembly line process.

“We have a whole committee that works together to do all this,” Hodge said. “It has become our flagship event.”

Funding for this unit activity is completely by donations. The unit reaches out to local businesses, the local newspaper, and shares in post home newsletter, as well as on social media.

To help cut costs, the unit utilizes ShipThrifty, an Auxiliary member benefit since late 2021. They offer online shipping tools for individuals, military families, and small businesses and help create and print shipping

labels for major carriers online to save time, money, and hassles.

For example, the cost for the original boxes that had been physically picked up from the post office were quoted at \$6,645. The cost of ordering a different type of box online was quoted at \$3,384.

“It was life-changing,” Hodge said. “We were getting ready to fill out labels by hand. The people at the post office could only process one at a time and had to have extra people on staff to do so. This has saved time, money, and frustration.”

It took less than 10 minutes to create labels for all 300 boxes, she added.

There are no fees involved with ShipThrifty. They provide simplified shipping, discounts, tracking, and reporting. They particularly specialize in military care package shipping for APO, FPO, and DPO addresses to make it easier for families and organizations like ours. For more information, log on to the ALA national website at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) or contact them directly at [www.ShipThrifty.com](http://www.ShipThrifty.com).

Although a very rewarding project, there are some difficulties that come with putting together a care package program.

“The logistics of it all,” Hodge said. “It takes a big room to assemble the items. It’s like a two-day process.”

Hodge offers advice from her experience with care packages:

- For shipping, use ShipThrifty. It saved so much money.

- Get a good team of people who are problem solvers, solution driven.

- Be really organized.

- Keep notes for the next year. In the first year, you kind of guess and see how it goes. Then, after that, you will know what you bought the previous year. Take note of out-of-stock items; you want to spend all the money you have for the project.

And maybe the most important advice: “Have fun and go in with a great attitude,” Hodge said. “We put a lot of work into it.” ★

*By Sara Fowler, Staff Writer*

### **Is your unit interested in starting or improving a troop care package event? Here are some tips from the experts at ShipThrifty:**

- 1. Set your timeline: Keep in mind delivery times around the holidays.**
- 2. Determine your budget: Will you ask for donations? Think about product, shipping, and materials.**
- 3. Find servicemembers: You must ship to specific individuals, so collect addresses from the community. ShipThrifty’s Brandable Care Package Request Form makes it easy.**
- 4. Pick your box: Not all boxes are the same! A simple box switch can save a lot.**
- 5. Consider the restrictions on what you can send (they vary from base to base).**
- 6. Create prepaid labels and skip the handwritten customs forms and lines using ShipThrifty.**
- 7. Know your drop-off options: You can drop off packages or schedule a USPS pickup.**

**For more information, see ShipThrifty’s military shipping resource site: [www.shiptomilitary.com](http://www.shiptomilitary.com)**



# ALA Girls Nation 75 Years of Creating Once-In-A-Lifetime Experiences

In 1947, young women from across the country arrived in Washington, D.C. to learn more about the federal government — a time when it was rare to see women in politics. The teens were given an opportunity very few girls had at that time in our country.

This year, 98 high-school women from 49 American Legion Auxiliary Girls State programs arrived in our nation's capital to have those same opportunities given in 1947 ... and so many more. Not only have they seen a rise in women in local politics, but they've also witnessed the first female vice president of the United States.

These teens will finish out their senior year and go on to college with added knowledge and confidence after their week in D.C. Year after year, senators say the week deepened their interest in politics, shaped their education and career paths, increased their confidence, and created lifelong memories and everlasting friendships.



**Celebrating 75!**  
Watch a video slideshow of ALA Girls Nation through the years. Visit [www.YouTube.com/AmericanLegionAux](http://www.YouTube.com/AmericanLegionAux).

## Career Paths and Political Interests

This is a pivotal time in the life of these teens as they decide on college and career paths. Some attend the ALA Girls Nation program with a passion for a political career, while others come for the learning opportunity. In the end, the experience can solidify or change career goals.

“My experience at ALA Girls Nation reaffirmed my ambitions to be more involved in politics and to one day practice law in a way that can fight for the rights of Americans. Being at Capitol Hill and talking to senators’ aides and elected representatives was an incredible experience because I saw how much work went into each decision in Congress and how much impact that each elected official makes in the lives of their constituents. Being in D.C. confirmed for me that I want to be a part of the changemaking. I want to be a part of the effort to improve the quality of life of Americans and to expand the access to fundamental rights. ALA Girls Nation showed me that change can start small, with a single person, a single belief, and a single action.” — ALA Girls Nation Senate President Pro-Tempore Sabrina Brandeis, California

“I have always wanted to pursue a career in public service. However, after I attended ALA Girls Nation, I definitely will consider running for public office in the future. ALA Girls Nation has undoubtedly influenced my future career goals.” — ALA Girls Nation Nationalist Presidential Candidate Olivia Claire Williford, Mississippi





“I have always been interested in politics and have the privilege of working in politics locally. I am definitely more interested now, because I have an even wider understanding of the nation politically. I feel more connected to the issues, and I feel more informed of their solutions. It has solidified the fact that I want to work directly with people and their needs.” — ALA Girls Nation President Marli English, Georgia

“Even though I was already interested in politics before ALA Girls State and ALA Girls Nation, both programs have grown my interest in and desire to pursue politics. There are some days when our political climate can be disheartening, and I question my desire to go into the field. ALA Girls State and ALA Girls Nation have given me more hope for the future of our country’s politics and the role women will have in it.” — ALA Girls Nation Vice President Ava Foley, Tennessee

“My experiences at ALA Girls State and ALA Girls Nation have solidified my interest in being a public policy major, attending law school, and eventually working as a public interest attorney.” — ALA Girls Nation Senator Tracy McKittrick, Indiana

### ***Understanding Viewpoints of Others***

Just like real-life senators, the ALA Girls Nation senators bring different viewpoints and backgrounds. During the week, the girls learn about other perspectives and how to compromise when it comes to creating legislation.

“Being able to hear so many varying reasons behind people’s beliefs — oftentimes, it was location or experience, but being able to meet so many people, I learned so much more about the nation and ideologies.” — ALA Girls Nation President Marli English, Georgia

“While conversing with girls from all over my own state and all around the nation, it was fascinating to learn which political and social issues were important to the other delegates. Before the programs, my understanding of politics was largely limited to issues that affect me in my hometown in California. But talking to the other delegates broadened my horizons and allowed me to learn about how different political issues affect people across the nation with different life experiences and geography. I felt that I was able to experience political issues beyond the theoretical studies that I have spent most of my life reading.” — ALA Girls Nation Senate President Pro Tempore Sabrina Brandeis, California

### ***Increased Confidence***

ALA Girls Nation gives these young women the opportunity to grow and take chances they may not have taken in school. One common thing ALA Girls Nation alumnae have mentioned many times over the years is that they gained confidence during their week at ALA Girls Nation, and it helped prepare them for college and their careers.

“I gained a newfound sense of confidence. I don’t generally consider myself to be the type of person who can win elections and inspire people, and I didn’t think I was



**LEARNING & SERVING** (top left): Senators at the Twilight Tattoo; four senators were chosen to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; 2021-2022 ALA National President Kathy Daudistel and senators at the Lincoln Memorial; presidential bill signing; packing comfort bags at the American Red Cross; at the Twilight Tattoo.

capable of it. At ALA Girls State and Nation, I decided to put myself out there and at least try. I was shocked by the fact that there were people excited about me and what I had to say. I'll never forget how my peers believing in me and my ability to represent them made me feel. ALA Girls Nation made me realize I am much more capable than I think, and I can't hold myself back." — ALA Girls Nation Vice President Ava Foley, Tennessee

"I learned so much being surrounded and supported by such intelligent and resilient young women. ALA Girls Nation taught me to be more confident in myself. Because of this new confidence, I have decided to run for class president at my school this year. With the encouragement of my friends, family, and fellow senators, I have no doubt that I can be the best candidate for this position." — ALA Girls Nation Senate Secretary Elle Nassar, Mississippi

### ***Everlasting Friendships and Lifelong Memories***

The week provides experiences and creates bonds so strong that they last a lifetime. Women of all ages recall the lessons learned and friendships made.

"I got so much hands-on experience with how the government works. I've been able to learn so much from debating bills, going through elections, and creating a mock government. It was a life-changing opportunity." — ALA Girls Nation Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms Dana Ko, Colorado

"My community of Chevy Chase had the most supportive girls I have ever met. From all over the country with varying political views, we were inarguably the most tight-knit community. With each laugh and every tear, we stuck by each other's side through thick and thin. From dancing past midnight to creating our own national anthem, we created bonds that are sure to last a lifetime." — ALA Girls Nation Nationalist Presidential Candidate Olivia Claire Williford, Mississippi ★

*By Jennifer Donovan, Staff Writer*

***Highlights of the Week:***  
***Arlington National Cemetery***  
***American Red Cross Washington, D.C. monuments***  
***Capitol Hill Twilight Tattoo***  
***White House***

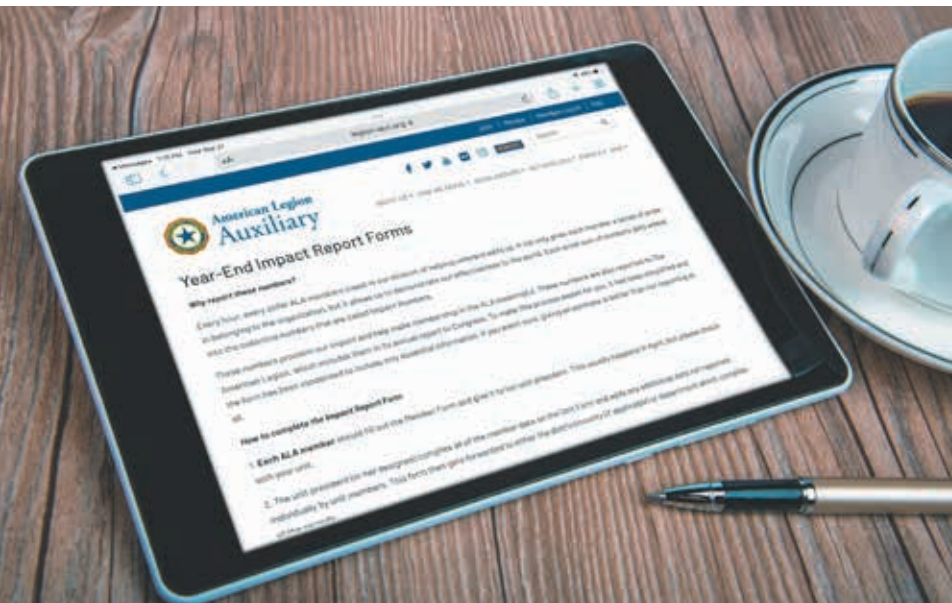


### ***ALA Girls Nation Service Project***

Each year, ALA Girls Nation senators participate in a service project. This year's activity tied in to 2021-2022 ALA National President Kathy Daudistel's focus on caregiving. The senators visited the American Red Cross National Headquarters to pack more than 650 comfort kits for the American Red Cross Military and Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN). "I was so happy we were able to learn more about the American Red Cross while giving back to caregivers of our military. Caregivers are so important to our society and keeping

veterans healthy," said Elle Nassar of Mississippi. "It was so special to learn about the caregivers and really highlight them and their stories. I learned we should show more gratitude to the 'behind the scenes' people in our lives and give them words of encouragement and thanks."

MVCN provides military and veteran caregivers with peer support, helping to reduce isolation and increase connection, provide encouragement, share knowledge, increase skills, and provide hope.



Service on the monthly tracking form. Both a printable form and an automated spreadsheet are available online.

Typically in April, transfer the yearly totals to the “Member Year-End Impact Numbers Report.” Give that report to your unit president, who will download a “Unit Year-End Impact Numbers Report” and will transfer the unit’s total numbers to this form.

Your department may require you to submit your unit form to your district/county/council or directly to the department headquarters. Ultimately, the department takes the report totals and submits them electronically to National Headquarters by June 1. National Headquarters then provides a summary of hours served and dollars donated in service to our mission to national committee chairs, as well as to The American Legion for its annual Congressional report.

**Reporting tips**

To make the reporting process easier, it has been simplified and the form has been condensed to essential information. If you are unsure about your numbers, even giving an estimate is better than not reporting at all. Also, all service for all veterans/military — whether active duty, retired, or reserve — is now combined in one section. Each section has better defined examples of the service that should be reported. Taking the time to report your valuable service to veterans helps us show others about our incredible impact!

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ALA IMPACT REPORTS**

Every hour and every dollar ALA members invest in our mission of helping veterans adds up. It not only gives each member a sense of pride in belonging to the organization, but it allows us to demonstrate our mission service and effectiveness to our donors and to the world.

**Why do we have them?**

Impact reports are a record of the time and money each member gives in service to veterans, military, and their families. Each small sum of numbers is added to the collective data called impact numbers, which proclaim our mission outreach and help make membership in the ALA even more meaningful.

**How does the process work?**

Members report numbers to the unit; units sometimes report to a

district/county/council or directly to the department, which then combines the numbers and reports them to the national organization. National Headquarters compiles, analyzes, and reports these numbers to The American Legion, which includes them in its annual report to Congress. With nearly 550,000 ALA members, that’s a lot of data to compile!

**When to record your impact numbers**

Waiting until the end of the year to recall service hours and amounts donated and spent during the year is a challenge — try to start early! Each month, members should track their service for 1) veterans and all military, 2) military families, 3) children and youth including ALA Girls State, and 4) Community

**IMPACT REPORTING RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON MYAUXILIARY**

National Headquarters has made it easy for members by providing both a monthly tracking spreadsheet/form and the Year-End Impact Numbers Report form. Download them both for free by logging on to MyAuxiliary at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org), select “Forms” from the top menu, and scroll down to “Impact Forms.” From there, you’ll see an instruction page, as well as an FAQ page to provide guidance on how to record your service. Forms for the member, unit, district/county/council, and department are included.



## EDUCATION: SCHOLARSHIPS AND THE MILITARY CHILD

 [www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAEducation](https://www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAEducation)

The American Legion Auxiliary has a long history of collaborating with its schools to assist the children of our military heroes in furthering their education. As Auxiliary members, we promote not only our scholarships but also provide information on the various opportunities available for military children's scholarships. It is never too early to collect scholarship requirements to ensure the scholarships best suit the applicant. By seizing this opportunity to assist in furthering the education of our military children, we accomplish the ALA's mission.

As Auxiliary members, we are asked why it is so important to assist military children in locating scholarship funds. The best answer to this question: "Military children likewise experience adversity due to the nature of their family situation. The deployment of a parent can result in extreme emotional distress, and children of active-duty

servicemembers are more prone to develop behavioral health conditions when compared to children in the general population. Due to the high relocation rate among military families, many children end up suffering academically." (Source: BestColleges.com)

ALA members should engage with military parents, schools, homeschooling organizations, National Guard, and military installations to provide early support to military children searching for scholarships. An article by Team MSF and Meg Flanagan provides "The complete military family guide to finding and applying for scholarships" at MilSpouseFest.com. The federal government also funds programs to assist military children with their college and trade school expenses of tuition, books, and living expenses.

Encourage military children to search for scholarships to continue their education by providing

scholarship search avenues. The American Legion Auxiliary continues to enhance its scholarship applications. This year, the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship was streamlined and continues as an online application. If we collaborate with colleges and military service organizations, it would enable the creation of an expansive database of scholarship information readily available to military parents and children. These youth have given their family members to our country — we should assist in all ways possible to help them achieve an education for their future, as they are the future of our country. Members participating in educational activities within their communities are building awareness of the Auxiliary and our mission.



**Sallie Rossman** is an 18-year member of the Auxiliary. She belongs to Virginia Memorial Unit 325 in Danville, Va.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS: PERCEPTION OF THE ALA MATTERS

 [www.Facebook.com/groups/ALApublicrelations](https://www.Facebook.com/groups/ALApublicrelations)

The No. 1 tool for public relations is you, the member. In your communities, branded or not, people know you as the face of the American Legion Auxiliary. You are the one who brings the veterans into community schools, you bring in the Poppy Poster Contest and the Americanism Essay Contest. You carry the flag in the parade. When they see you, they think of the ALA and our mission. All members need to realize how they can positively influence the public's view of our organization.

Public relations (PR) is defined as the practice of managing and disseminating information from an individual or an organization to the public in order to affect their public perception.

While we still must take advantage of the newspaper, radio, and local TV stations, social media is where we find most people gaining information. When we need information, we look to the internet. A well-maintained social media account such as Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram will make a difference in not only how the public views the ALA but can also bring volunteers for the mission and new members.

If you are unsure how to proceed, we have the tools ready to get you started. ALAforVeterans.org is available for all members. The ALA Academy, a dropdown on the website, has many excellent courses such as *ALA Branding and Why It Matters to Me*, *ALA*

*Communications Methods*, and *Using Social Media to Your Unit's Advantage*. Also on the ALA website is the Public Relations Committee page where you can find media templates and other useful tools such as the ALA Branding Guide and the PR Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment.

A great place to ask questions and see what other units are doing is the ALA Public Relations Facebook group. Go to [www.Facebook.com/groups/ALApublicrelations](https://www.Facebook.com/groups/ALApublicrelations) and request to join.



**Norma Tramm**, a member since she was 3 years old, belongs to Unit 455 Cold Spring, Minn.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE: MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES BETTER PLACES

**f** [www.Facebook.com/groups/ALACommunityService](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/ALACommunityService)

The American Legion Auxiliary Community Service Program promotes who we are through our commitment to our communities, state, and nation. Making our communities better places in which to live is something Auxiliary members can strive for each and every day.

Become visible in your community. Be the go-to organization for servicemembers and veterans in the community.

Become involved in community service projects, and work with other organizations, thereby bringing awareness of who the American Legion Auxiliary is and our mission to support veterans,

servicemembers, and their families in the community. And always remember to wear your ALA branded apparel or pin.

A good way to begin is to organize and participate in ALA suggested days of service:

- 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (Sept. 11)
- Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (third Monday of January)
- National Volunteer Week (usually the third week of April)

These are all great ways of showing your community who we are and what we do. Contact your local officials to see what is happening in your community and

if volunteers are needed. Then make sure to spread the word. Let your Legion Family members know what is needed and when.

If you want to do a project where you will need more resources and people, check to see if a similar program already exists that you can join. If not, don't be afraid to start your own. Be sure to spread the word that you are looking for and welcome new volunteers and community service projects.



**Melanie Taylor** is a 31-year PUFL member. She belongs to William Russell Ledford Unit 293 in Cloverdale, Calif.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION: HEALING THROUGH ARTS

**f** [www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAVAR](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAVAR)

The alignment between the arts and the military has always been strong and deeply rooted in the collective history we have as a people and a nation. As shared in the manual “Arts Deployed,” published by Americans for the Arts, “For servicemembers, veterans, and their families, participation in the arts — whether for expressive, educational, recreational, or therapeutic purposes — is proven to build resilience, enhance coping skills, increase self-esteem, and generate well-being.”

The American Legion Auxiliary's participation as a co-presenter of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival enables every member to play an active role in supporting our military and veteran populations. Whether volunteering at the local level, attending the Festival, or making a generous donation, our members can make a positive difference for the veteran community. The American Legion Auxiliary's national website at [www.ALAFORVeterans.org](http://www.ALAFORVeterans.org) has helpful

how-to resources for facilitating a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival, along with easy-to-complete grant opportunities to assist with the financial aspects required for supplies and resources.

The entire American Legion Family benefits when arts can be positively introduced as a therapeutic and communication tool to express feelings and emotions, and our military children benefit too. The BRAT Art Institute is the first multidisciplinary art institute for children who grew up with parents serving in the United States Armed Forces. Based in Virginia, their work honors the service and sacrifice of military youth by giving them a voice in their own narrative, history, and future.

For the 2022-2023 ALA admin year, American Legion Auxiliary National President Vickie Koutz's special project will support the companions who accompany our veterans to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Donations collected will assist with financial

support to help offset the expenses of those who travel with and provide vital medical and emotional support and companionship to our veterans while attending and performing at the Festival.

Consider downloading the easy-to-use “The Show Must Go On” can label from [www.ALAFORVeterans.org](http://www.ALAFORVeterans.org) and get started with supporting arts in the veteran community. Be sure to check out [www.artsacrossthemilitary.org](http://www.artsacrossthemilitary.org) for more information on how to strengthen the health and well-being of servicemembers, veterans, their families, and caregivers, through the arts.



**Trish Ward** is a 24-year member of John P. Hand Unit 250 in Louisburg, Kan.



### HIGHLIGHTING THE ALA DEDICATION AMONG NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS STAFF

Dedicated to the Auxiliary's longstanding mission of serving veterans, military, and their families, ALA National Headquarters staff are committed to helping members at all levels of the organization. In this issue of *Auxiliary*, we highlight the Programs and Events Division.

This small but mighty team oversees the planning and execution of nationally hosted ALA events, meetings, and trainings. They also manage all ALA mission-focused programs, including tasks necessary for the successful co-presentation

of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. The Events Team coordinates meeting logistics and travel schedules for ALA National Convention, Mission Training, ALA Girls Nation, and many more events. Their hard work behind the scenes is essential to the success of our organization.

#### How does the Programs and Events Division help Auxiliary members at all levels of the organization?

By providing continuity and expertise on matters relevant to our mission outreach programs to leaders at all levels; supporting our national committee chairs and officers; serving as ambassadors of the ALA organization by being the friendly face at events or voice on the phone answering member questions and guiding them through processes, whether it is event registration, travel reimbursement, VAVS certification, scholarships, ALA Girls Nation registration, and much more.

#### What are the busiest times for this area of National Headquarters?

December is the one month a year that we as a division are

not immediately faced with either planning or executing an event or programs-driven initiative. Whether it is events planning and execution, program support, collaboration with outside organizations, or supporting our national leadership, our team is busy almost year-round.

#### Give us a breakdown of what our Programs and Events Division handles and oversees.

The Programs staff provide continuity and support to members at all levels so they may effectively execute our mission outreach programs in their communities, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and schools, as well as continue to support the mission of The American Legion. These team members build and maintain relationships with outside organizations to better serve our mission to support veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

The Events Team works to put together the events and meetings driven by our programs and overall mission. They oversee all of the logistics, travel, and setup for the major events and meetings that take place throughout the year. They work closely with members to assist in registration and travel reimbursement for these events. While their work is mostly behind the scenes, the effort that goes into it is at the forefront of every national event, meeting, and training members attend.

## APPLY TODAY TO SERVE ON A 2023-2024 NATIONAL COMMITTEE

If you have a passion to serve our veterans, military, and programs of the American Legion Auxiliary, we encourage you to apply to be on an ALA national committee. It's an opportunity to make an impact on a larger scale. National committee chairs and members are appointed annually and confirmed by the National Executive Committee to serve on a wide variety of ALA committees for you to explore. The goal is to match skill sets and

talents that best complement the Auxiliary's mission of serving veterans, the military, and their families.

National committee members are the leaders, mentors, and teachers of our future generation. You need not have served as an officer in your district or department to be eligible for an appointment. Any members 18 or older are welcome to apply, including any of our male ALA members.

Some committees, like ALA Girls Nation, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival), and Junior Activities require physical agility and endurance.

The application process is efficient and convenient for all members — just visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) and search National Committee Appointment Application. The application window is Nov. 1 through Dec. 15, 2022.



Provided by Karen Peel, National Chaplain 2022-2023 | [www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAchaplains](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAchaplains)

## NOVEMBER

*“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2 (KJV)*

COUNT

*Author Unknown*

Count your blessings instead of your crosses,  
 Count your gains instead of your losses.  
 Count your joys instead of your woes,  
 Count your friends instead of your foes.  
 Count your smiles instead of your tears,  
 Count your courage instead of your fears.  
 Count your full years instead of your lean,  
 Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.  
 Count your health instead of your wealth,  
 Count on God instead of yourself.

At this time of the year, we are thankful for many things: the beauty of fall season and all the wonderful things that come with it — apples, cooler weather, and magnificent colors!

As we gather with family and friends, let us remember the true meaning of Thanksgiving and counting our many blessings.

Dear God, we come to You in prayer, thankful for our many blessings. We know this is a time of gratitude to You, our creator and provider, for Your love and guidance. As we spend time with our families, let us not forget our neighbors and the homeless who may not have families to gather with. Help us to reach out to those who are in need of our help and share.

God, we pray for peace among people all over the world. Guide and direct our world leaders. We ask for a special blessing upon our servicemen and women: Protect them and keep them safe. Return them soon to their families and friends. We ask for Your continued blessings and love. Give us a heart full of service, love, and thankfulness. We ask for this in Your name. Amen.

## DECEMBER

*“Harken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.” Job 37:14 KJV*

*However Cold the Winter*

*By Garnett Ann Schultz*

However cold the winter,  
 I find the golden sun.  
 However dark the night hours,  
 The dawn is sure to come.  
 Though storm clouds often gather,  
 There still is peace to lend,  
 And when the storm is over,  
 A rainbow 'round the bend.  
 However cold the winter,  
 The spring will melt the snow,  
 And then the Maytime flowers  
 Will set the world aglow.  
 The ever-changing seasons

Have so much to impart,  
 And somehow each in turn it seems  
 Lends laughter to my heart.  
 The beauty of the autumn,  
 The summer's magic bliss,  
 And each December snowflake  
 Is like an angel's kiss.  
 Each sunrise — every sunset  
 Has so much warmth to bring,  
 However cold the winter,  
 It always ends in spring.

On a snow day, we are reminded that God is in control.

In the book of Job, the author uses the idea of snow to communicate God's power and wonder. In 37:14, Job was encouraged to “stop and consider the wonderful miracles of God.” Snow days make us pause. Our routines are disrupted, and often we are graced with a “free day.” Today, stop and reflect on what God might want to teach us in the snowfall.

Precious Father, thank You for allowing us to benefit from beauty that You have created for us. We appreciate every season that holds the beauty that we enjoy. On winter's snowy days, help us to stop, look, listen, and behold your glory. Let us remember on these days that You are always in control.

We thank You for your continued blessings and love. In Your name we pray. Amen.

## JANUARY

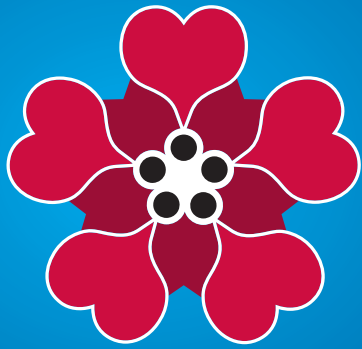
Whether you have generated a color-coded list of goals, dreams, and an execution plan for the next 365 days or you've banned resolutions and vowed to make this just another day on the calendar, the clean slate represented by the first day of a new year is filled with an undeniable air of expectation. The excitement of a new bauble or gadget pales in comparison to the promise of a new beginning. Deep down inside, there is a part of us which thinks, This could be my year! Guess what? It is your year. This day, and every one that follows, is yours. It is yours to choose who and how to love, to serve, and even to be. And the choice you make represents the choice to take this journey in the company of your God. That is a beautiful place to start.

Father, I give to You this year. I ask that You help me keep You in forefront of my mind as I make decisions and plans. I want to seek Your advice in everything I set hand to. I am grateful for all the blessings that You bestow to me every day. I am blessed to know that You guide and direct my path as a child of God. I come to You with gratitude in my heart and ask for Your direction in this new year. Help me to Be The One.

I ask for this in Your name. Amen.



**Karen Peel** is a 32-year member of Firestone Memorial Unit 449 in Akron, Ohio.



# 101<sup>ST</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION CELEBRATES CAREGIVERS, MEMBERSHIP MOMENTUM

What a year of Caring for Those Who Care for Others — the 2021-2022 focus on caregivers hit home for American Legion Auxiliary members over the past administrative year as many realized they had been, are, or will someday be caregivers themselves.

The 101st ALA National Convention in Milwaukee focused on Caring Hearts, celebrating all of our caregivers and those who help them.

“I met so many people living our mission every day and working to change the world one relationship at a time,” said Kathy Daudistel, 2021-2022 ALA national president. “These caring hearts deserve to have their stories told and celebrated.”

Auxiliary members opened up about their trials and triumphs as caregivers through *Auxiliary* magazine articles, blog posts, and on social media this past year, uniting many members with shared experiences.

In addition to celebrating caregivers, celebrations were also in order for ALA membership milestones achieved this past year — 21 departments reached 100% membership.

“With so many wonderful, inspirational ideas, our Membership Committee went above and beyond to enhance membership strength,” Daudistel said. “It goes to show you, we’re better together. We might still have a long way to go to ensure we’re able to continue our mission of service, but that doesn’t mean we can’t celebrate achievements along the way.”

To celebrate, the Wisconsin Center convention hall glowed with light sticks and confetti exploded out of cannons, bringing delegates, alternates, and guests together to celebrate remaining steady in membership for the first time in years. The excitement of seeing numbers go up can help with membership momentum going into the next administrative year.

## A CELEBRATORY WEEK

ALA members serve, honor, and advocate for veterans, servicemembers, and their families; mentor youth; promote patriotism and citizenship; and support The American Legion. Auxiliary members’ impactful and meaningful service, put forth by thousands of committed and diligent volunteers who ask for nothing in return, goes on year-round and has done so for more than a century. The same is true for ALA’s 2021-2022 administrative year.

This year’s convention opened with The Billy Brown Band for a live mini concert, filling the convention hall with patriotic music — starting the week with high energy and a focus on what we are all about as the ALA — our mission of serving veterans, military, and their families.

The weeklong ALA National Convention is held annually in cities across America at the same time and place as the conventions of The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion for the purpose of electing officers, receiving reports, conducting other ALA business — and most of all — having fun while celebrating our accomplishments from the administrative year.

One accomplishment for select units and departments was the winners of the 12 National President’s Awards for Excellence based on ALA committee/program achievements. The award was presented to Unit 7, New Hampshire; Unit 127, Iowa; Unit 15, South Dakota; Unit 164, South Dakota; Unit 34, Indiana; Unit 19, Texas; Unit 186, South Carolina; Unit 289, Illinois; Unit 434, Wisconsin; Unit 71, Minnesota; Unit 230, Indiana; and the Department of Mississippi. There were also two honorable mention departments — Texas and Wisconsin.

## What was voted on at the 2022 National Convention?

National Convention delegates worked diligently during the Tuesday general session as representatives of their departments to act on many important amendments to our governing documents. Read about the amendments in more detail on page 20 of this issue of *Auxiliary*.



## FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

The #GivingTuesday booth was out in full swing again this year — members were eager to give, starting on day one when many were already waiting at the booth for National Headquarters' Development and Finance divisions to arrive before they even officially opened for business.

The first day of giving back to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation and honoring a hero on the #WallofHeroes, sponsored by Amwins, was full of excitement at the financial impact to be made that week and emotion in remembering and honoring our nation's heroes.

Days two and three were just as special. Members nationwide waited in line to donate to the ALA Foundation to make an impact on the lives of veterans, military, and their families. They were also excited to put the name of a hero on the #WallofHeroes, taking pictures to send to family and friends. The ALA Foundation received 490 gifts in three days totaling \$31,379. Including the USAA's generous \$3,000 match, ALA Foundation supporters raised \$34,379.

In addition to the #GivingTuesday booth, for the second year, the ALA Foundation held a silent auction the last night of convention, and it was a great success.

"Thank you to the generous donors who gave auction items and those who purchased an item or experience," said Carley Schutz, National Headquarters' Development Division director. "You raised \$9,172 for the ALA Foundation!"

These funds will jumpstart the #GivingTuesday fundraising efforts and support the Foundation's Mission Endowment Fund. If you didn't get a chance to give at National Convention, you can still make your #GivingTuesday gift at [www.ALAFoundation.org](http://www.ALAFoundation.org) or send a check to the ALA Foundation at 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268.

#GivingTuesday is Nov. 29, so join the ALA Foundation in celebrating a global day of giving. It's a simple idea: Whether it's making someone smile, helping a neighbor or stranger out, showing up for an issue or people we care about, or giving some of what we have to those who need our help, every act of generosity counts, and everyone has something to contribute toward building the better world we all want to live in.

## ALA NATIONAL OFFICERS ELECTED

During the week, the 2022-2023 national officers were elected.

An exciting and bittersweet time, installation of the new officers sees the previous year's leaders pass the responsibility on to the next leadership group with the traditional transferring of pins and ribbons to the incoming officer, as well as heartfelt nomination speeches to introduce the new leadership.

Indiana resident Vickie Koutz was elected the ALA's 2022-2023 national president. Koutz's focus as the ALA's highest volunteer leader is on National Veterans Creative



**WHAT A WEEK:** National President Kathy Daudistel with Legion Family leadership; fun hats in the front row; members from Ohio; Little Miss Poppy Allie Paige Haywood, Department of Louisiana; two of the Salute to Servicemembers Award recipients, Hannah Luker and Julia Coleman; Daudistel with National Secretary Dr. Coral May Grout; Billy Brown Band; Marli English, 2022 ALA Girls Nation president; members attending the event; local Convention Committee members; members are all smiles for convention; Ava Groth, Junior Member of the Year.



**DESERVING OF RECOGNITION:** Daudistel is presented with the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Award; a Unit Member of the Year winner; National President’s Award for Excellence winners with ALA leadership; Unit Members of the Year recipients; one of the Public Spirit Award winners was DTOM Ranch with Dr. Tracy Diefenbach and Chris Reeder accepting the award; Unit Members of the Year recipients; award winners recognized; #GivingTuesday booth.

Arts Festival companions and raising awareness of our country’s Prisoners of War and Missing in Action. Read more about Koutz on page 38 in this issue of *Auxiliary*.

Other national officers elected to serve during the 2022-2023 administrative year: Lisa Williamson, vice president; Ann Rehbein, Central Division national vice president; Veronica Gurney, Eastern Division national vice president; Marlene Boyer, Northwestern Division national vice president; Linda Smiley, Southern Division national vice president; Eva Wallace, Western Division national vice president; Dr. Coral May Grout, national secretary; Marybeth Revoir, national treasurer; Karen Peel, national chaplain; and Laura “Susie” Clyde, national historian. Learn more about the national officers at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/about/national-leadership](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/about/national-leadership).

**LOOKING FORWARD**

National Convention is always a time of celebrating the past year while looking forward to the next. Focusing on our caregivers has helped open the door to conversations with those who care for others and has opened many members’ eyes that they are caregivers, or their fellow members are and what all that can entail emotionally, mentally, and physically. Continue to recognize our caregivers and lend a helping hand when able.

What another wonderful ALA year with membership numbers on the rise and a continued focus on our mission of serving veterans, military, and their families. As we enter the 2022-2023 administrative year, continue to put those we serve first, help grow membership, and always remember your reason for joining the American Legion Auxiliary.

**NATIONAL ALA AWARDS PRESENTED**

Several national ALA awards were part of this year’s convention highlights, including the Public Spirit Award, Unit Member of the Year, and Salute to Servicemembers.

**PUBLIC SPIRIT AWARD**

This year, Daudistel chose three Public Spirit Award recipients.

In line with her caregiver focus, Daudistel chose Janine DeGusto Dougherty, a caregiver for both her 96-year-old mother, Pauline, and her U.S. Navy veteran husband, Kevin.

“I first met Janine at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and we bonded immediately. Every Festival since then, I look forward to seeing her smiling face,” Daudistel said.

DeGusto Dougherty was unable to attend convention, but Daudistel previously had made a surprise trip to Boston to present the award.

The second award recipient was Eagle’s Healing Nest in Minnesota — a nonprofit committed to meeting the needs of veterans, servicemembers, and their families who suffer from the invisible wounds of war. Executive Director Melony Butler accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

The final ALA Public Spirit Award recipient was DTOM Ranch in South Dakota.

“I immediately connected with DTOM Ranch because of their equine therapy for veterans,” Daudistel recalled. “While I was visiting the ranch, I had the opportunity to try the therapy, and I was completely floored. There are no words that could come close to capturing that experience.”

Chris Reder, CEO and founder, and Dr. Tracy Diefenbach, founder, researcher, and primary clinician, accepted the award on behalf of the ranch.

### UNIT MEMBER OF THE YEAR

“These members have proven time and again how much they care about our mission,” said Linda Newsome, Distinguished Guests Committee UMOY representative. “They contribute time, money, and hard work for the sake of others, and they do this out of the goodness of their own hearts, with no expectations of glory or recognition. Without members like these, our organization would not be here to celebrate 100 years. And it is going to need many more members like these to continue for another 100 years.”

Award winners have never served in a leadership role higher than unit president to be nominated for UMOY.

The ALA thanks all award recipients. Extra exciting this year — for the first time in American Legion Auxiliary history, there is a male ALA Unit Member of the Year winner: Ted Kubiak from the Department of Wisconsin.

The 2022 ALA Unit Member of the Year recipients:

Alabama: Evelyn “Rene” Schoetzow; Alaska: Connie Landmesser; Arizona: Lisa Ruggiero; Arkansas: Kim Roberts; California: Martha McGrath; Colorado: Sherry Puls; Connecticut: Elaine Kotler; Delaware: Teresa Townsend; Florida: Ronna Jackson; Georgia: Margaret Jones; Hawaii: Erin Simonds; Illinois: JoAnn Brown; Indiana: Barbara Sandage; Iowa: Janet “Sam” Thomas; Kansas: Sharon Glenn; Kentucky: JoAnn Harvey; Louisiana: Ruth Powell; Maine: Carol Roach; Maryland: Deborah McMeans; Massachusetts: Marion Woodcock; Michigan: Sandra Nuechterlein; Minnesota: Edna Thayer; Missouri: Carleen Jung; Montana: Ila Prellwitz; Nebraska: Phyllis Schoenholz; Nevada: Donna Highland; New Hampshire: Noleen Picone; New Jersey: CeliAnn Santiago; New Mexico: Dorothy Pineda; New York: Sharon Jenkins; North Carolina: Suzanne Smith; North Dakota: Ruth Johnson; Ohio: Loretta Sue Adams; Oklahoma: Cynthia Bullock; Oregon: Lois Taylor; Pennsylvania: Karen Kalie; Puerto Rico: Luz Burgos; Rhode Island: Nicole Le Fort; South Carolina: Sylvia Corley-Drennan; South Dakota: Julie Malcolm; Tennessee: Elain Cronister; Texas: Donna Patterson; Utah: Alicia Summers; Vermont: Toni Lobdell; Virginia: Robin W. Lee; Washington: Bev Beierman; Wisconsin: Theodore (Ted) Kubiak; and Wyoming: Sherry Bushman.

Not all American Legion Auxiliary departments submitted names for this award.

### SALUTE TO SERVICEMEMBERS

This year, there were four ALA Salute to Servicemember award winners, with two able to attend National Convention in person:

U.S. Air National Guard: Staff Sgt. Julia T. Coleman

U.S. Air Force: Senior Airman Hannah N. Luker

U.S. Navy: Petty Officer 1st Class Carina Alberto

U.S. Army: Sgt. Jody Leal Jr.

“Thank you so much for your service and allowing us to honor you today,” said Mary Davis, Salute to Servicemembers liaison to the National Security Committee. “You are our true heroes.”

This award has evolved over the years from honoring women veterans to honoring active-duty women to honoring all military personnel currently serving our country in the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, and the National Guard/Reserve.

To learn more about this year’s winners, check out the ALA blog at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/blog](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/blog). ★

*By Sara Fowler, Staff Writer*

*Development Director Carley Schutz contributed to this article.*

### Missed the 2022 ALA National Convention?

**Catch up by watching archived videos of the general session livestream, plus national officer elections and installation — or view convention photos — by visiting [www.ALAforVeterans.org/convention](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/convention).**

**Want to attend the ALA’s largest national event? The next National Convention will be our 102nd, held in Charlotte, N.C., in late August 2023.**

**Follow our social media @ALAforVeterans to see future registration details.**

### American Legion Family leaders 2022-2023

**Not only did the American Legion Auxiliary welcome a new national president for the administrative year, but the Legion and the Sons also have new leadership.**

**American Legion National Commander Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola was elected during the Legion’s convention. His focus is the Legion’s “Be the One” suicide prevention initiative. Troiola is from the Department of New York.**

**Chris Carlton of Indiana was elected as the Sons of The American Legion national commander for 2022-2023.**

**Learn more about the leaders in *American Legion Family in Action* on page 46 of this issue of *Auxiliary*.**



# 'Still a unit member at heart'

## A closer look at 2022-2023 ALA National President Vickie Koutz

With a quiet persona and determined attitude, American Legion Auxiliary National President Vickie Koutz is driven by her passion to serve our nation's veterans, military, and their families.

Humble, kind, and considerate, Koutz puts others ahead of herself, truly living the ALA motto of *Service Not Self*.

Over the years when she was on a path to becoming national president, she said she was simply in shock.

"I cried and then I laughed," she recalled. "I couldn't believe someone like me could one day be the national president of the American Legion Auxiliary."

Staying true to the mission at all levels of ALA leadership has always been the goal. Serving in the top volunteer role at the national level, Koutz looks forward to meeting as many American Legion Family members as she can.

"Even though there are lots of responsibilities on the national level, I am still a unit member at heart, and I will always be that person," she said.

Koutz is the third ALA member to serve as national president from the Department of Indiana; the most recent national president was during the 1988-1989 administrative year.

In an interview with *Auxiliary* magazine, Koutz talked about her personal life, American Legion Family involvement, and her focus/awareness projects for the American Legion Auxiliary's 2022-2023 administrative year.

### Early Years

Koutz grew up in Boonville in southwestern Indiana, a town with a population of about 6,500, and has lived there her whole life. The town is situated about 30

minutes from Kentucky and Illinois.

She worked for her dad out of high school as a secretary for a non-union coal mine with about 145 employees. After Koutz's dad sold the mine, she started Hoosier Advertising & Designs Inc., a silkscreen business. She ran that for 14 years.

"It was long hours and hard work," she recalled.

After, she worked at Fox and Lutz LLC, a law firm for the past 11 years as a legal assistant, mostly working with adoptions. Retiring in November 2021, Koutz loved her job there, as they treated her like a member of their family, she said.

Koutz has been married to Jim for 50 years and they have a son, Michael. He works for a cruise line and lives in Florida.

"We snowbird in Florida so we get to see him then," she said.

Koutz also has two brothers, Rick and Dave.

### Legion Family Life

Jim served in the U.S. Army from 1969-1971 with a tour in Vietnam. When he returned, he joined the Legion right away. Koutz recalled the Auxiliary

encouraging her to join too, but once she was pregnant with her son, it was hard to find the time. Years later when Michael was in high school, Koutz said yes to the Auxiliary, joining Boonville Unit 200 through Jim, which put her on a path to one day fill the

organization's top volunteer leadership position.

"I joined as a card-carrying member at first," she said. "Jim was so involved and there all the time, and as Michael got older, it was easier to get away at that point to be part of the ALA."

Her local unit has about 170 members.

Since she first became a member of the ALA, Koutz has continued to get more involved.

She started off taking on unit chairmanships and committees. Her mentor, Vee Titus, got her interested in the district level of the ALA, where she attended district meetings and held a few chairmanships there as well.

**"Some families can't afford to buy a meal plan for their companion. It bothered me that they come all that way and they can't be there with them."**

Koutz became district president, department historian, chaplain, vice president, president-elect, department president, and then national division chair under Past National President Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan (2007-2008). After, Koutz then served as national chair of the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Poppy, Legislative, ALA Girls Nation, National Security, Membership, Constitution & Bylaws, Education, Children & Youth, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

She also served as vice chair of the Leadership, Community Service, and Junior Activities committees; member of the Future Focus Committee, Strategic Planning Committee Ex-Officio member, American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board of Directors designated director, National Executive Committee member, and national vice president.

When asked which leadership roles have meant the most to her out of all she's held at the unit, district, department, and national levels, she didn't hesitate — "kind of all of them."

While serving in various leadership roles herself, in 2012-2013, Jim served as The American Legion national commander. Koutz and her husband are the second married couple to serve in the roles of Legion national commander and ALA national president — Marty and Sharon Conatser were the first — but the Koutzes are the first to be from the same post and unit.

In addition to enjoying the various leadership positions she's held, Koutz enjoys the programs of the ALA — but she does admit to having a few favorites — the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, ALA Girls State/ALA Girls Nation, and the Poppy Program. She was on staff at ALA Hoosier Girls State for 27 years and director for seven.

For each of them, she has a few reasons why they are her favorite.

"Getting to work with veterans and companions at NVCAF just makes you realize how lucky you are," she said. "ALA Girls State is totally different. Watching the girls debate, how sharp they are to write bills and resolutions, and get into current events with what's going on in the world — I always loved watching them debate in senate. With the Poppy Program, I liked judging the Poppy Poster Contests. There are so many different kinds of posters and the talent that they have."

### National President Focus

Since her first National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, Koutz continues to name NVCAF as a favorite ALA activity.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities use the creative arts as one form of rehabilitative treatment to help veterans recover from and cope with physical and emotional disabilities.

The annual event is co-presented by the American Legion Auxiliary and the VA. The event brings together creative veterans throughout the country who



**OVER THE YEARS:** National President Vickie Koutz with her son, Michael, and husband, Jim; Koutz with National Veterans Creative Arts Festival performer Myra Ancheta in 2018; Koutz with ALA members at National Convention; walking in the National Convention parade in Indianapolis in 2019; Koutz driving their closed in 4-wheeler; installation ceremony as the 2022-2023 ALA national president; Koutz with her two brothers, Rick and Dave; Koutz and her husband are the second married couple to serve in the roles of Legion national commander and ALA national president — Marty and Sharon Conatser were the first — but the Koutzes are the first to be from the same post and unit.

made it to the national level after competing at local VA facilities. Entries are judged in 150 categories of visual art, creative writing, dance, drama, and music.

The first year Koutz attended the Festival, she met veteran performer Jackie Williams, who came down to mealtime with his wife, Karen. She would leave once they got to the dining hall, but Jackie needed help with getting his tray and food, so Koutz would assist him, getting to know Jackie in the process.

"I asked why, if she's his companion, was she not having meals with him?" she recalled. "Some families can't afford to buy a meal plan for their companion. It bothered me that they come all that way and they can't be there with them."

The experience has stuck with Koutz since then, seeing the same scenario play out over multiple years to other veterans and their companions. This firsthand experience led her to choose this topic as a focus for the 2022-2023 ALA administrative year.

Koutz's national president project is to help every companion who is medically needed by an NVCAF veteran. This could help come in the form of paying for a meal plan, paying for travel to the Festival, or paying for a separate hotel room (depending on the relationship of the companion and veteran), or all three needs.

"Any money collected will go toward this," she said. "Any money leftover will just roll over into next year to help more companions."

To donate to the national president's special project, give online at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)

or write a check and mail to:

ALA National Headquarters  
Accounts Receivable  
3450 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Write 22-23 NP Project in the memo line

## Raising Awareness

In addition to her focus on companions at NVCAF, Koutz wants to raise awareness on an issue close to her heart — our country's POWs and MIAs.

"They are still digging for remains even to this day, and I hope those families can get closure finally," she

said. "There will not be money collected as part of this, but spreading the awareness that we still have MIAs out there."

After serving in Vietnam, her husband Jim returned to the country years later and helped dig for remains. Hearing his stories and realizing there is still a lack of closure for many families has helped drive Koutz's motivation for adding this awareness aspect to her national president year.

"I can't imagine someone you love could be over there and there's no closure," she said. "They are finding more and more all the time."

## Looking Ahead

Focusing on the upcoming year, Koutz hopes to see higher membership numbers coming into the

ALA, especially being a membership-driven organization. Also membership related, Koutz is excited to welcome all new members to the ALA during her term as national president.

"Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions," she said of new members.

To help new members learn even more about the Auxiliary, Koutz recommends checking out ALA Academy, which includes self-paced courses and live virtual webinars on a variety of ALA topics. Both new and seasoned members can learn more at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy).

Be sure to follow Koutz on Facebook @ALAnationalpresident as she travels to units and departments. Social media is a great way to keep up with what other members are doing throughout the country and get ideas on projects and

different ways to give back to those who serve.

For members at all levels of the ALA, Koutz hopes they take to heart a few ideas she would like to see implemented during the 2022-2023 ALA year.

"I really like to work as a team," she said. "I'd like to see everyone work together, and be kind to each other. We can get more accomplished working the mission when working together as opposed to doing it all on your own. We have lots of different personalities in our organization. I want to see our members remember why they joined in the first place — to help our veterans, military, and their families." ★

*By Sara Fowler, Staff Writer*



## Fun facts about 2022-2023 National President Vickie Koutz

- 1) I enjoy riding our side by side (closed in 4-wheeler) with my husband and looking for deer.
- 2) I don't like heights and I'm claustrophobic, especially in parking garages.
- 3) I love potato chips — Lay's Classic.
- 4) I like to read pretty much anything.
- 5) I enjoy traveling. I went overseas with Jim to Asia when he was American Legion national commander. I like Hawaii, Pigeon Forge, and we go to Florida during the winter months.





# Help more heroes enjoy the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival

Each year, the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival celebrates the achievements of talented veterans from across the country.

Though all gold medal winners are invited to attend the Festival, not all are able to attend. For some, the cost of attending is too much for the veteran's companion, who is often so vital for everyday activities.

You have a unique opportunity to enhance the veteran experience by supporting the needs of companions at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Make your gift in service of this incredible program online today at [donate.legion-aux.org/NVCAFCcompanions](https://donate.legion-aux.org/NVCAFCcompanions).

Or you can mail a check to:  
**American Legion Auxiliary**  
 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268  
 Write 22-23 NP Project in the memo line

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# THE 2022 ANNUAL REPORT IS HERE

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENTS	95%
EVENTS REPORTING	73%
FINANCIAL REPORTING	9%
MEMBERS REPORTING	3,265,977
GRANTS AND RESOURCES RAISED AND SPENT	30,573
- veterans and military	4,216,418
- military families	9,084,238
- health, scholarship, communitie	\$11,087,706
- CAREGIVERS	\$1,590,272
- work on veterans and military	\$6,831,911
- work on military families	\$2,181,246
- work on youth, scholarships, communitie	\$34,874,660
AMERICA'S VETERANS/MILITARY	3,265,977
- veterans and military	\$5,270,351
- military veterans and military	462,239
- assistance	\$2,368,715
- Scholastic grants/scholarships	1,292,952
- distributed	\$1,789,158
- supplies	

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**WHEN CLIQUES BECOME A MEMBERSHIP PROBLEM  
ARE YOU PART OF THE UNWELCOMING COMMITTEE?**

For years, magazines and other forms of media have published introspective questions for their readers to easily identify whether they fall under a certain category. Sometimes, it's just for fun. Other times, a quick set of words or phrases can cause us to take a long pause and reflect. When it comes to inclusion in the American Legion Auxiliary, we need to look in the mirror and ask, *Am I part of the solution ... or problem?*

We know ALA units are often strapped for members to participate in mission outreach activities or community service events. In many units here and abroad, members are holding multiple chairmanships because of a lack of people. But what if that problem wasn't always because of quantity — what if it related to quality?

Take into consideration the following responses from the ALA member survey conducted earlier this year. A question asked, "How would you finish the following sentence? I believe the future outlook of the ALA is ..."

And while the majority answered "extremely positive," the "extremely negative" responses bear weight too:

- Work together rather than have individual cliques.

- My local Auxiliary is like a high school clique with some of the officers making decisions among themselves.

- Place is not welcome to new members at all. Never felt welcome there and noticed older members very cliquey. Probably will stop attending.

- The interaction I have had with the group can be somewhat cliquey.

**CLIQUES AREN'T JUST AN  
IN-PERSON THING**

Social media groups can be an invaluable forum for American Legion Auxiliary members who post questions about membership procedures, promote program activities, and more. But these groups can also become hotbeds of hate and disrespect. When we work together — collectively and not as a clique — it means more support toward serving our mission.

- The current officers are very cliquey and are not very friendly. They are always negative, and most members don't even want to attend the monthly meetings.

- It is very cliquey. They don't listen to your opinion or suggestions or want you to volunteer.

- There are members who've been around a long time and know the ropes, but sometimes demeanor

comes off as standoffish and cliquey to new people.

**We don't need new ideas; we're doing just fine, thanks.** People joining the ALA for the first time seem to have this complaint the most, based on feedback received at National Headquarters. It is 99.9 percent likely your new person doesn't have a mission to infiltrate your group of go-getters and destroy its existing services. But what they can offer is a different viewpoint. Remember the saying "work smarter, not harder"? Be open to the ideas — a new person could have lots of connections to help your unit work its mission outreach more efficiently.

**We don't have time to train someone new.** Just as our founding members did when the ALA was established in 1919, it's part of our duty to onboard people who made a commitment to join and serve our veterans, military, and their families. Think about it this way: These people took the time to learn about our organization, fill out a membership application, and pay their membership

dues because they believe in the mission. Now it's time for you to believe in them. Get the groupthink out of the way and make sure everyone is welcomed and consistently appreciated.

**Oh no — our ALA unit is a clique.** When the realization hits, it hits hard. Most of the time, people in cliques are good eggs. They just happen to like familiarity, embrace routine, and form tight bonds with one another. All of those

traits aren't necessarily damaging, but they can be when mixed together as one. So, now what? The answer is simple: Expand your group. Be welcoming. When someone new attends your unit meeting, ask them to sit in the front so they feel accepted. Encourage newbies to speak up and add their thoughts to a conversation. And most importantly, acknowledge and truly absorb what they have to say.

## TIPS ON LEADING PRESENTATIONS IN MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Let's face it — some people love giving public presentations while others loathe it. Whichever side you fall on, it's important to be prepared.

American Legion Auxiliary members not only deliver presentations and bring greetings at unit meetings, but sometimes we're asked to present on the ALA to local groups like Chambers of Commerce, the Lions Club, local libraries, and other community organizations.

As the saying goes, "dress to impress." What to wear can vary based on the type of meeting. Following are a few pointers to keep you representing your best self:

### In Person Meeting/Event

It's important to dress for the venue and for the event you are attending.

For example, if you are volunteering outside, wear an ALA branded shirt with pants you don't mind getting dirty. This way, if you are part of a larger event or people drive/walk by, they will see you are part of the ALA.

Branded items can be found online at American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales at [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org) or by calling 888-453-4466. A division of The American Legion National Headquarters, purchases made through here help support the Legion Family.

You can also purchase ALA-branded apparel at Lands' End Business. Members can shop here for high-quality clothing and merchandise that can be branded with the ALA emblem by shopping in a custom storefront. To start shopping, visit [www.ALAFORVeterans.org/Lands-End-](http://www.ALAFORVeterans.org/Lands-End-)



Business or call 1-800-920-1471.

Opposite of attending an outside, casual event, you may be asked to speak at a formal event. For this, professional/formal wear is required (e.g.), pant suit, dress, suit, and tie.

At any meeting or event — whether it's casual or formal — it's important to not wear anything that could possibly be inappropriate. This includes but is not limited to political shirts (we are an apolitical organization), shirts with bad language, too much skin showing, inappropriate images, etc.

Always remember that less is more. Whether presenting at your department convention or at a local organization's meeting, keep it simple. Solid colors are recommended versus wearing distracting patterns or big, bold colors.

### Virtual Meetings

We've all been in virtual meetings at one time or another over the past few years. But, just because it's virtual, doesn't mean what you wear isn't still important.

For video purposes, have a nice shirt/jacket on top. But nothing too distracting — you want people to pay attention to the content you are presenting, not your attire.

In addition to what you wear, also pay attention to what's in your background and the lighting in the room. It's important to test your video out ahead of time to make sure your background and lighting aren't too distracting. Try to find a blank wall or at least one with minimal items hanging on it. Be aware of what else could be in the video shot — boxes, clothes, trash, dirty dishes, etc. Again, you don't want people so focused on the clutter around you and behind you that they miss your message.

You also don't want the lighting to wash you out or make you appear like you're in the dark. This might require you to use a lamp versus an overhead light.

Once you have the lighting and background in check, make sure the camera is not aimed down your lap while talking. Make sure to have it eye level — stack some books under your computer to help raise it up if needed.



## YOU ARE READY!

Overall, what you wear to in-person or virtual meetings/events does matter, as well as your background, lighting, and position of your computer or phone. Keep these tips in mind the next time you attend an ALA function so your message will always be heard loud and clear.



**MEMORIES** (from left): 1967 ALA Girls Nation President Cathy Johnson Randall of Alabama; Randall and other senators in a senate session.

## ALA GIRLS NATION, AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION A TRADITION FOR THIS ALABAMA FAMILY

“What a transformational experience ALA Girls Nation was for me,” said ALA Girls Nation 1967 President Cathy Johnson Randall. “There are too many memories to list, but the major ones included the overwhelming support and encouragement of the ALA staff, laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Jane Pauley’s excellence as party chair to get me elected as president, and best of all, the opportunity as such to meet the 1962 Boys Nation president who became my beloved husband.”

Randall and her late husband, H. Pettus Randall III were both the first presidents elected from Alabama. That connection (and help from members in the Auxiliary) led to a meeting a few years later when she was in college and recruiting people to help with a gubernatorial campaign. Randall met her future husband for lunch to discuss the campaign, and almost a year later, they were married.

Their connection to these ALA and American Legion programs didn’t stop with their romance. Their three children also attended ALA Girls Nation and Boys Nation. Jaynie attended in 1994, Kate attended in 1996 and was ALA Girls Nation president, and Pettus attended in 1999. “This grateful family owes a debt to The American Legion and Auxiliary impossible ever to repay,” said Randall.

ALA Girls Nation has led to

lifelong friendships, not only for Randall, but her children too. Randall says the networking opportunity is phenomenal and shares the story of when she found out she would attend ALA Alabama Girls State. In 1967, one of her high school teachers delivered the news to her that she would be attending. That same teacher was her counselor at ALA Girls State. Fast forward 52 years later — Randall held the Bible for that teacher as she took the oath of office as Alabama governor. That teacher happens to be current Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey.

Randall is also an American Legion Auxiliary member and says her experience in the program inspired her to devote more focus on how to make our country an even better place, following in the footsteps of our brave veterans and their families. Randall continues to volunteer with the Alabama ALA Girls State program. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience,” she said. “It’s certainly been transformational in my life and every member of my family. I think it’s safe to say, you just can’t go to ALA Girls State or ALA Girls Nation without being transformed.”

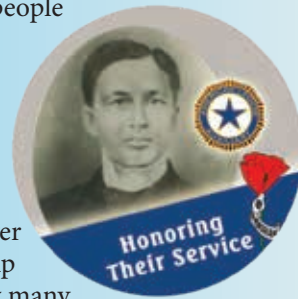
Randall earned two Ph.D. degrees from the University of Alabama and has received many honors, served on several boards, and volunteers with numerous organizations. Randall is chairman of the board of Randall Publishing Co.

## ALA CALIFORNIA GIRLS STATE HONORS SERVICE OF VETERANS

ALA California Girls State teaches young girls about the importance of honoring veterans. Each year, citizens and staff wear Honoring Their Service buttons during the session in June. The program asks that “Everyone Honors Someone.” Even if they do not have a family member who served, citizens choose people who served and inspire them.

“By engaging with the citizens about who they would like to honor, we uncover ALA membership eligibility among many participants who would not have realized they are eligible,” said Trish Ward, ALA California Girls State city liaison and 2022-2023 national Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee chairman. “The ask to honor a family member, friend, teacher, or famous American starts a conversation with our young citizens about who in their family may have served.”

“It is incredibly moving to hear citizens speak of family members whom they barely knew or a famous American who served to defend freedom,” said Ward.



Other ALA Girls State programs can emulate this practice of injecting the Auxiliary’s mission of serving veterans, military, and their families. Order buttons at <https://bit.ly/HonorButton>. Want to learn more about this project? Read the extended version on the ALA blog at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

**JUNIOR MEMBER LOYALTY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT PREPARED FOR FUTURE THANKS TO ALA**

Jessica Vaupel joined the ALA as a Junior member in 2007 and has continued her membership into her college years. Now a senior at Arizona State University, Vaupel attributes her involvement in the ALA as a contributing factor to pursuing a career dedicated to the betterment of others and our society.

**Tell us about yourself and your connection with a member of the military.**

I am a graduate of Peoria High School in Arizona. While in high school, I was the school's news producer and elected student body president. My activities included participating on the volleyball team, spirit line, and an internship with a radio program called Teen Talk in Scottsdale. My family has a proud tradition of military service that includes my father, who served in the Navy, and my brother in the Marines.

**What college degree are you pursuing? Why does this career interest you?**

Currently, I am a senior studying criminology and criminal justice. After graduation, I plan to join the Air Force Officer Academy, and ultimately, a career with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. I selected my college major and career path because of my interest in educating Americans on the negative effects of drug trafficking, illegal drug use, and how this is impacting the well-being of our citizens and the nation's security.

**Tell us about additional experiences preparing you for your career.**

In addition to my studies, I have



**READY:** Arizona State University student Jessica Vaupel (left) with Past Department President Jan Cushing at a Pearl Harbor Memorial; Vaupel in the Prime Minister's seat at the Belgian Parliament; Vaupel in ASU gear at a basketball game.

been employed as a TSA officer at Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix for the past year. It is my hope that my experience with the TSA will open future employment opportunities with other federal agencies. Over the past year with the TSA, I have received two Eagle-Eye Awards recognizing my commitment and dedication in my work to protect our transportation services. This award is given to officers who went above and beyond to stop a breach at the airport. Each one of these experiences, I must credit my participation and involvement in the ALA which helped to develop my interest in serving the public to this day and into the future.

**How will being a recipient of the ALA Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship benefit you?**

With the expense of higher education, the scholarship award will greatly help me in my senior year to offset the cost of tuition and related expenses. It is my goal to keep the cost of my education down so I can begin my career with minimal debt. This generous scholarship award, in addition to my current job as a TSA officer,

will help me to come closer toward accomplishing this goal.

**Why is it important for donors to support the ALA scholarship funds?**

When you make a donation to ALA scholarship funds, it is an investment in our members, their future pursuits, and strengthening the ongoing mission of the ALA. Every ALA member is related to a veteran or is a veteran themselves, and we owe our lives and freedoms to their sacrifices. Yet, often we forget about those left behind to support our country while they are away. As ALA members, we make that commitment, choose to volunteer, and work to fulfill that mission of supporting veterans, military, and their families. When donors support ALA scholarship funds, it is another way of going above and beyond our important work that we can support those remaining home to carry on. Whether it be a large or small donation, it all helps to better the lives of those in the ALA. I am so eternally grateful to all who gave to make my scholarship and numerous other ALA recipients possible over the years.



**Did you know the ALA has been offering scholarships to youth since 1942?** Imagine the many generations of youth who have been positively impacted because of your generosity, just like Jessica Vaupel. With your support, the ALA can keep these scholarship funds available. To make a one-time or monthly donation, visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org/donate](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/donate). If you are interested in learning more about applying for an ALA scholarship, visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org/scholarships](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/scholarships).



**NEW VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP:** The American Legion Family leaders for 2022-2023 are (from left) Sons of The American Legion Commander Chris Carlton, ALA National President Vickie Koutz, and American Legion National Commander Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola.

### THREE NEW NATIONAL LEADERS AT THE HELM FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY’S 2022-2023 ADMINISTRATIVE YEAR

Elected during the August 2022 National Conventions of each organization in Milwaukee were American Legion National Commander Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola (pronounced tree-ola) of New York, American Legion Auxiliary National President Vickie Koutz of Indiana, and Sons of The American Legion National Commander Chris Carlton of Indiana.

Troiola is a life member of American Legion Post 1682 in Rockland County, N.Y. He served in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserves from 1969 to 1974. He completed a tour aboard the USS Nitro, an auxiliary ammunition ship with the Sixth Fleet. He was honorably discharged as a boatswain’s mate third class. He is also a member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 1682 based on the World War II service of his father.

Troiola worked in the automotive service industry. He retired in 2017 as the director of service and parts at a Mercedes Benz dealership. He then began a new career as a school bus driver for the Falmouth School District and part-time motor coach operator.

Troiola has held offices at every level of The American Legion. He was elected department (state)

commander of New York for 2010-2011, and chaired several national commissions. He was elected national vice commander for 2016-2017. His theme as national commander is “V.E.T.S., Veterans, Education, Teamwork, and Sponsor.”

Koutz is a Paid Up For Life member of ALA Unit 200 in Boonville, Ind. She is eligible for membership through her husband, Jim, who served in the U.S. Army, with service in-country Vietnam. She has held numerous leadership positions in the organization at the unit, district, department, and national levels. Her president project is to help every companion who is medically needed by a National Veterans Creative Arts Festival



(NVCAF) veteran. In addition to her focus on companions at NVCAF, Koutz wants to raise awareness on an issue close to her heart — our country’s Prisoners of War and Missing in Action. Read more about Koutz on pages 38-40 in this issue of *Auxiliary*.

Carlton is a 16-year member of Squadron 495 in Indianapolis. He is the state’s first SAL national commander since Raymond Giehl Jr. in 2008 — who just happens to be Carlton’s father-in-law. His eligibility is through his grandfather, a United States Army veteran who served during WWII, and his father, a United States Army veteran who served during the Vietnam War era.

Carlton has held most offices at the squadron, district, and detachment level, becoming detachment commander of Indiana in 2015. On the national level, he has served as chairman of the Child Welfare Foundation Committee and chairman of the Veterans Employment and Education Commission.

Carlton is a journeyman sheet metal worker and is currently a mechanical team lead and certified welding inspector with Altec Industries.

2022 marked The American Legion’s 103rd, the ALA’s 101st, and the Sons’ 50th national conventions. In keeping with tradition, all three conventions were held in the same week in the same city.



Tune in to The American Legion’s podcast, *Tango Alpha Lima*, available each Tuesday by 9 a.m. Eastern. Find it on YouTube or anywhere you get your podcasts.



Stay up to date on news from The American Legion. America’s largest veterans service organization has 10 newsletters available on their website:

- Online Update and Monday Briefing
- Commander’s Message
- Flag Alert

Subscribe by going to [www.Legion.org/newsletters](http://www.Legion.org/newsletters).

## SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION CELEBRATE 90TH ANNIVERSARY

The Sons of The American Legion celebrated 90 years at their 50th convention in Milwaukee last August. They have set an ambitious goal for their 100th anniversary – 1 million members. Currently, their membership is around 361,000.

To add to that total, they gained two new members at convention: IndyCar driver Jimmie Johnson and IndyCar team owner Chip Ganassi were welcomed into the Sons by outgoing SAL National Commander Michael Fox.

Johnson also made a \$1.5 million dollar pledge to The American Legion. Johnson became involved with The American Legion Family as driver of the No. 48 Carvana-American Legion car.

## 'BE THE ONE' CAMPAIGN TACKLES VETERAN SUICIDE

Commander Troiola's platform and top priority is reducing veteran suicide. He encourages everyone to Be The One.

For a veteran, it means reaching out for help to assist a loved one, or calling a help line in times of crisis. The new 988 emergency suicide hotline is a valuable resource. You can also chat online at [www.VeteransCrisisline.net](http://www.VeteransCrisisline.net) or text 838255.

For a spouse, family member, or caretaker, it means recognizing when the veteran is struggling, and getting them the help they need. You are in a position to not only see the risk but have the trust of the veteran in his or her time of crisis.

For others, it also means being proactive to get the veteran the help they need. Don't assume someone else will act. Take the initiative.

For more information, visit [www.Legion.org](http://www.Legion.org).

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1. Yu J. et al (2016) Topical oxygen therapy results in complete wound healing in diabetic foot ulcers. *Wound Repair and Regeneration*. 24 1066-1072  
2. Lee A. (2021) Continuous topical oxygen therapy – Improving healing in the diabetic foot. Poster presentation DFCong

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*Sherri McGee is the current Department of Indiana Children & Youth chairman and served as the 7th District president, the first from her unit in 39 years. Following an ALA Mission Training event in Indianapolis earlier this year, McGee emailed national Auxiliary leadership, detailing her passion about the new direction on volunteers because her unit had lived it, and they know how it works.*

*McGee's unit used to make 100% in membership, but that didn't always translate to participation. Then it started to wane and so did participation under poor leadership. Members were unappreciated, ideas were ignored or shot down, gossip was an issue, and cliques existed, etc.*

*McGee, along with five other regular members, decided to refocus. They started doing new projects to increase interest and participation. They discussed membership but kept their focus on events and programs.*

*They weren't afraid to try new things, and that helped bring in new people, new ideas, and new friends who became new members. As a result of their work, participation in the unit is up, and membership is growing. This is the first year they made a targeted goal date for membership in five years, and will get to 100%.*

*McGee tells Auxiliary magazine that their unit members are younger and bring with them the much needed Juniors who are our future.*

**What does it mean to you to be an ALA member?**

I get to help serve our active-duty military, their families, veterans, and inform the local community about our organization and provide education. Having been a military wife and raised by a veteran, patriotism was a huge part of my life. I love my country and can't think of a better way to do "my part." Having a family who served made me aware of what was needed to give back and help.

**You helped breathe new life into the unit where you belong. Tell us more about that.**

Having low turnout at our meetings meant we weren't doing anything to interest members. I introduced the ALA Americanism Essay Contest, and we fine-tuned it to interest local children. We decided to read all of our essays as a group, and everyone brought a breakfast dish, so we made it a fun event.

We have since done a Creative Arts Festival, 9/11 Coloring Contest, and 9/11 ceremony every year with the local police and fire departments. We keep adding new events every year and work well together to get it done.

Rumors and gossip can kill a unit,

so we worked to stop it. This required refocus. I bought Auxiliary magnetic emblems, and I started focusing on the programs and how we should look when we participated at public events. Today, the members all get an Auxiliary magnet that makes every shirt official. If you ignore the negative and focus attention elsewhere, the negativity dies on its own because they are busy doing good work. Get them focused on the positive, and don't give them time to gossip. Make your members feel useful and appreciated. "Thank you" goes a long way.

**What advice would you give to units trying to do the same thing?**

Find one event, and enlist everyone's help. You have to make members feel appreciated and useful, or they will go somewhere else. People join because they want to do

something useful and make a difference. Add events, and ask members for their ideas. Take "no" out of your vocabulary. Keep positive comments even if you can't utilize their ideas.

**Why is it important for eligible members to join the ALA?**

My father, husband, ex-husband, son, grandfather, grandson, and daughter-in-law served. I know the problems they had — and have — and the programs in this organization all provide a way to support them. Members become Legion Family very quickly once they start working to support our Auxiliary programs. I lost a daughter-in-law who served because of her service. I need to do what I can to support the next person who has to deal with that. My son retired after 20 years' service. They were married 19 years and served at the same time. The support he received during this time was amazing.



**HELPING UNIT REVITALIZATION** (from top): McGee with her daughter Macina Cosat when McGee was installed as Martinsville Unit 230 president; McGee accepting a check from Mooresville Unit 103 President Sabrina DeGoyler; a Creative Arts for Veterans event.



## UNIT/POST HOME TOUR GUIDE TIPS

Is your unit's post home in a historic building, historic neighborhood, or an important part of your local community? Tours can be a great way to bring members of the community together, spike interest in membership, or just give people the chance for a sneak peek inside a building they've always been curious about. If you are interested in coordinating a tour for your local unit or post, here are some tips to get you started.



### Establish goals

The National Trust for Historic Preservation offers several tips on being a good tour guide. If you're planning a tour on behalf of an organization, make sure your planned activity ties back to your organization's mission and has a clear focus. This can mean fundraising, awareness-building, or inspiring action.



### Do your homework

The National Trust recommends contacting your local historical society and public library for information. Ask to see old photographs these places might have of your building or the surrounding land, historical maps, or even newspapers with specific articles that reference the history. In addition, they urge you to talk to people. This can mean talking to neighbors in the area, local business owners, and even the mailman. These people might be able to tell you more about the history and if any changes have been made over time. In the case of a unit/post home, this could also mean talking to current and past leadership, as well as your historians.



### Tell a story (historical or contemporary)

Johns Hopkins, executive director of Baltimore Heritage — Baltimore's nonprofit



**HISTORY ON HAND:** Many American Legion post homes, like Post/Unit 410 in Whitestown, Ind., have historical items on display. Are you prepared to talk about your facility's artifacts with interested parties?

historic and architectural preservation organization — advises in a tip sheet on their website to have a few fun and compelling stories to tell. People are more likely to feel engaged when they are listening to a story, Hopkins advises, rather than a list of dates and names.

Tour guides at ALA National Headquarters note it is also important to be aware of organizational alphabet soup or organization acronyms when speaking. National Headquarters' tour guides always make a point to define them for newbies when giving tours of the building in Indianapolis.



### Get moving right away

According to Hopkins, tours can often get bogged down before they ever begin with tour guides doing a "big wind-up" — welcome, introductions, providing context, etc. To help avoid this, he hints that if you have a script, the first line should tell you to "Move 30 feet up the street before you say anything." He also advises to plan to scrap 90% of any big introduction.



### Face the crowd, not what you're talking about

Hopkins points out that many tour guides often get so wrapped up in their subject that they forget to face the people they are addressing. To help avoid this, he recommends to

"deputize" somebody in the crowd to interrupt you if they can't hear you.



### Be personal

Another tip from Hopkins is that no matter how much we love buildings, it's a fact that people connect with people. He suggests it's good to have a few personal anecdotes ready, even if they're just about past tours you've done. By doing this, he writes, you'll build a more personal connection to your group and create a memorable tour.

ALA National Headquarters' tour guides also recommend to let people take selfies along the way, but not to hold up the whole group for it.



### Don't worry about being perfect

People don't expect you to be perfect, Hopkins emphasizes. He recommends to set the stage for human imperfection by acknowledging that people who may know more than you should speak up and share their knowledge with the group.

ALA National Headquarters' tour guides recommend that if you hear something of value, be sure to capture a few details, along with the individual's name and contact info. This will be a big help to your unit/post historians and the ALA's recordkeeping in general.



Visit our social media at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media)

## A GO-TO RESOURCE FOR MARKETING MATERIALS



Are you looking for newsletter templates, posters, brochures, or other materials to bring awareness to your ALA unit? You can find several downloadable resources at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE



For your convenience, in addition to traditional methods of paying your dues, you can pay online at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). You can also call (317) 569-4570, or mail in your renewal notice.

## DIG INTO THE PAST



Looking for an article from a past issue of *Auxiliary* magazine?

You can find copies dating back to 2010 at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/magazine](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/magazine). For older issues, contact [history@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:history@ALAforVeterans.org).

## WHAT'S COMING UP ON SOCIAL MEDIA



- Veterans Day is Nov. 11 – Share how you are honoring our veterans by using

#AmericanLegionAuxiliary and tagging @ALAforVeterans.

- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is Dec. 7 – We'll remember the more than 2,400 lives lost that day.



- 2022-2023 ALA Mission Trainings – Follow our social media to get the latest information and registration links.



## ALA COMMITTEE FACEBOOK GROUPS

Read about how other ALA members are working the programs or ask questions — that is the purpose of our ALA committee Facebook groups. These forums are private, so you will have to request to join. You can find a list of groups by visiting [www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/social-media).



## Now Available: ALA *America The Beautiful*, Poppy, and Halloween Coloring Books

Purchase at [emblem.legion.org](http://emblem.legion.org) or by calling (888) 453-4466, or download free at [www.ALAforVeterans.org/coloring-books](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org/coloring-books)



## Auxiliary Crossword Answers from page 18:

### ACROSS

- troops
- bingo
- unit
- scholarships
- magazine
- poppy

### DOWN

- holidays
- veterans
- auxiliary
- convention
- community
- NVCAF

“The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.”

— Charles Kettering, American inventor

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

**SUPPORT THE YOUTH OF OUR MILITARY**

Join us in raising awareness of the special challenges facing military youth. Together, we can support

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

**Where does your poppy donation money go?**

**WHO WE ARE**

For more than a century, we've been serving, educating, and giving to America's finest — our military. We answer the call of Service Not Self. We are the male and female spouses, grandmothers, mothers, sisters, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion. Some of us are veterans ourselves.

We are the American Legion Auxiliary. And we make a difference. You'll find us in nearly 8,000 local communities in the USA and in foreign countries. Founded in 1914, the American Legion Auxiliary has grown to support veterans and their families. And we love you! We are the American Legion Auxiliary. We are the American Legion Auxiliary. We are the American Legion Auxiliary.

**WHAT WE DO**

We are one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military, and their families. The American Legion Auxiliary helps

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**DUPLICATE RECEIPT (Please Print)**

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

**Support the Youth of Our Military**

Join us in raising awareness of the special challenges facing military youth. Together, we can support

**COME SEE WHAT WE'RE ABOUT**

If you value patriotism, responsible citizenship, volunteerism, veterans, the military, and their families, you will feel right at home in the American Legion Auxiliary.

You can educate school children about our nation's flag, assist our troops, or volunteer at your local VA medical center. As a member of a local Auxiliary unit, you'll have a ready-made team of like-minded individuals to help you in your service. In many hands-on opportunities to serve the ALA mission, membership dues, there are many ways to participate in the lives of those we serve.

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

**AUXILIARY MEMBER DISCOUNTS & SERVICES**

The value of being an American Legion Auxiliary member is growing! You bring untold value to the Auxiliary and America's veterans through your service to our mission. To show our appreciation, we bring valuable benefits to you! Your membership gives you access to a wide array of discounts, products, and services:

- ★ Supplemental insurance
- ★ Telehealth services, hearing, dental, vision, and prescription discounts
- ★ Hotel and resort discounts around the world
- ★ Discounted digital subscription to military news and more!

**The American Legion Auxiliary also offers:**

- ★ Free subscription to the quarterly Auxiliary magazine, which features news for and about ALA members, units, and those we serve
- ★ Opportunity to apply for scholarships
- ★ Eligibility to apply for emergency assistance through the Auxiliary Emergency Fund after three consecutive years of membership
- ★ Opportunity to attend the annual National Convention, held every August in rotating cities across America

In the spirit of Service Not Self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support the American Legion and 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.

**3 million hours of Auxiliary mission outreach services are volunteered annually for veterans and military families. Come join us!**

Read more about the American Legion Auxiliary at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)

Email your questions or comments to [ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:ALAforVeterans.org)

**Your Local American Legion Auxiliary Contact:**

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

**At a Glance**

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

**ALA FAST STATS**

- ★ 3.2 million hours volunteered in serving veterans and military
- ★ Nearly 8,000 local Auxiliary units
- ★ Nearly \$9.8 million raised and spent on youth, scholarships, and communities
- ★ \$1.4 million in scholarship support through our Missions
- ★ Learning opportunities through our Missions
- ★ Part of a membership of over 1 million members in The American Legion

**There are many opportunities for involvement in the American Legion Auxiliary. Help us get you connected!**

I am interested in learning more about:

Local American Legion Auxiliary Unit

National American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters

State American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters

District American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters

Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

For a detailed description of all discounts and services, visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)

Set against a gold background with symbolic rays of the sun, the ALA's traditional emblem has remained a fixture during our 103 years of service. In our next era, complete with new brand marks (see examples above) courtesy of The American Legion, our organization will still be represented as the go-to support for military, veterans, and their families — but with a different look. Because the blue star emblem is as much of a legacy as the Auxiliary itself, it will not be going away ... it will simply be used in specific applications. Be sure to follow us on social media @ALAforVeterans for more updates, and watch your mailbox for the February 2023 issue of *Auxiliary* for further details.



# American Legion Auxiliary

American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters  
3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268

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***A Community of Volunteers  
Serving Veterans, Military,  
and their Families***



**CHANGE  
THE  
FUTURE BY  
HONORING  
THE PAST**

## #GIVINGTUESDAY

No matter who you honor with your gift to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation for #GivingTuesday, your gift will change the future for generations of veterans to come.

You can make a gift today visiting [donate.legion-aux.org/GivingTuesday22](https://donate.legion-aux.org/GivingTuesday22) or by mailing a check (write Giving Tuesday in the memo line) payable to:

American Legion Auxiliary Foundation  
3450 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Scan here to  
make a gift  
today:

