



## 2016-2017 American Legion Auxiliary Action Plan Membership “SOAR FOR OUR VETERANS”



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**EVERY MEMBER!**

Membership and the 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan stresses by living our values, the members of the Department of Wisconsin Membership Committee, led by Department President, Laurel Dubois, will encourage and support the nationwide effort to attract, engage and retain a diverse, active membership – person by person – to ensure the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. (Goals 1 – 5)

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### **National Committee Contact Information**

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## **What is this program, and why do we have it?**

The role of the Department Membership Committee is to encourage and support the nationwide effort to attract and retain a diverse, active membership and establish new units to ensure the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. Members enable us to carry out our mission to assist veterans, military, and their families.

## **National Membership Vision**

By honoring our veterans and military through meaningful service, the American Legion Auxiliary will grow membership by our centennial anniversary. In order to grow the organization, we must let members know that they are the Auxiliary's most valuable asset. *Note: Our centennial anniversary will be celebrated during the 2019-2020 administrative year.*

*"Success is not achieved in one day; it is achieved by doing the right things every day."  
~ Kenneth Kuykendall*

## **Department Membership Vision**

By honoring our veterans and military through meaningful service, the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin, will grow membership by our centennial anniversary, during the 2019-2020 administrative year. In order to grow the organization, we must let members know that they are the Auxiliary's most valuable asset. By "Raising and Praising" all levels of membership, the eagle will soar in Wisconsin and reach our goals.

## **What Can You Do?**

### **1. Enhance member experience**

#### **Ideas:**

## Units and Departments

- Retain all current members
  - What is a member in good standing?
    - A member who is current with annual dues is a member in good standing. A member failing to pay annual dues by January 31 of the current membership year, shall be classed as delinquent and shall be suspended from all membership privileges.
    - **Unit, department and national leaders “Lead by Example” date: In the spirit of goodwill, the Department Membership Committee urges all members who hold an elected or appointed position on the unit, department or national level to have their 2017 dues paid by September 1, 2016.** Rational: Members follow leaders’ examples. Paying your dues early encourages others to do the same, giving you the rest of the year to concentrate on recruitment and Auxiliary programs.
  - What is the value of a volunteer’s time?
    - The time Auxiliary members volunteer is invaluable. In 2015, it was valued at \$3.1 billion!
    - To enhance a member’s volunteer contributions, offer ideas and opportunities in which members can support and deliver the Auxiliary’s mission.
      - Examples for members: Volunteer at a VA Medical Center serving as veterans’ escorts to appointments, participate in a stand down to provide necessities for homeless veterans, mentor military children with the big brother/big sister concept.
    - Recognize all members for any and all contributions — volunteering, serving as a chairman or officer, preparing food, organizing events, being a mentor to new members, contacting other members to renew, being a good example of *Service Not Self*, etc.
- Share member tools.
  - Help members set up a user profile on the national website, [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org), so that they can access the “Members Only” section and take advantage of all the tips and tools available.
  - Inform members of member benefits and discounts available.
- Rid units/departments of member discrimination. (Goal 1 & 2)
- Ensure a positive experience for all members.
- Be welcoming, kind and respectful to members of all ages and backgrounds.
  - Ask for new ideas and be open to them. Encourage personal contact between members of the unit. Demonstrate *Service Not Self* in all activities and interactions with others. Realize that not all members will attend meetings, and be respectful of their choice.
- Create meaningful participation.
  - Hold regular information sessions to refresh members on ALA programs.
  - Ask members to participate in programs they are passionate about.
- Establish a membership committee or team to support efforts throughout the department.
  - Deploy active and consistent communication with units and districts/counties. Share contact information of committee/team with units.
  - Use membership tools, available at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org), and ensure all units have access to all membership resources.

- Utilize your committee/team by giving them an assignment to make your program a success.
- Challenge members to help recruit members using “You Plus One, New or Renew.” Offer a small incentive for achieving the challenge.

## 2. Reach out to former members.

### Ideas:

#### Units and Departments

- Identify former members: Use the ALAMIS member database, or contact your department headquarters, to obtain an Unpaid Roster (information on members who have not paid dues since 2014).
- Reach out to former members: Set up a committee to establish a phone bank of members who will call former members. Meet periodically to make calls – monthly, quarterly, semi-annually. Develop a script to identify reasons for not renewing and what would cause the former member to consider rejoining. A sample phone script is included in the “How to hold a revitalization event or participate in TAL District Revitalizations” how to sheet. Send follow-up letters to those contacted, thanking them for taking the time to talk with you. Send letters to those you were unable to reach (*see “How to hold a revitalization event or participate in TAL District Revitalizations” for a sample letter to former members.*)
- Share former members’ feedback with the unit; determine what the unit might need to do differently to retain all members.

## 3. Attract new members.

### Ideas:

#### Units and Departments

- Ensure a positive new-member experience.
  - Personally contact a new member shortly after she joins.
  - Provide a personalized welcome letter from the unit president or membership chairman. Also send a New Member Kit, available at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org), and personalize it for your unit and department. *See “Suggested Additions to New Member Kit” to help create a complete new member packet.*
  - Find out how a new member wants to be involved and which volunteer activities might best suit her skills and interests. *Utilize the interest form provided in the Leadership Programs Action Plan.*
  - Offer a variety of volunteer opportunities in which new members can participate, at times convenient to them, to support and deliver the Auxiliary’s mission. *See the ALA Service Not Self Volunteer Toolbox at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) for tips, ideas and strategies on how to be a better volunteer.*
  - Be welcoming, kind and respectful to persons of all ages and backgrounds.
  - Do not expect all new members to attend regular meetings; be grateful for whatever way she wants to participate, even if only to pay her dues.
  - Assign a “big sister” or mentor to each new member.
- Increase the ALA’s visibility in the community.

- Increase community involvement by using ALA programs that encourage responsible, active citizenship supporting our military servicemembers and their families.
- Engage other community-based organizations in ALA projects such as welcome-home/deployment events, support of military families and providing services that may include plumbing, carpentry, childcare, etc., for families of those deployed.
- Volunteer at schools, giving flag demonstrations and serving as mentors, with a special emphasis on military children and the issues they face with deployments and transfers. Contact JROTC leaders to assist with projects.
- Encourage Junior members to recruit their eligible friends and relatives.
- Identify recruitment target groups such as women veterans, military families, and relatives of American Legion members, ALA Girls State alumnae and local colleges.
- Ensure the ALA is appealing to new members.
- Exhibit *Service Not Self* in all activities and interaction with others.
- Create a significant membership experience for Junior members. Encourage Junior members to attend the senior meeting to share their vision of the unit. Encourage struggling units to elect Junior members to positions that don't incur significant liability risks. Examples include: Chaplain, Sgt.-At-Arms, and Historian.

#### 4. Understand and Respect Member Rights

##### Units

- Membership dues
  - Members can pay dues in one of the following ways:
    - Directly to the appropriate member in their unit
    - Via the renewal notice sent by National Headquarters
    - Via [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)
  - Effective with the 2016 membership year, members have the *option* to renew their dues online.
  - Membership cannot be withheld from a member who chooses to pay her dues online.
  - Once a member has paid her current year's dues, regardless of payment method, she is a member in good standing and entitled to all rights and privileges of membership.
  - Units have a legal and fiduciary responsibility to process a member's dues (new or renewal) in a timely manner. Failure to do so is a violation of the members' rights and due process. Dues received by the unit should be transmitted to your department once a month (minimum).
- Membership cards
  - Membership cards are provided by the national organization and shipped to departments to distribute to their units.
  - Units must provide to members their membership card as soon as payment is received.
  - Units must provide membership cards to members who renew online as soon as the unit becomes aware that the member has paid, either by notification from their department or, for units having ALAMIS access, via the "Unit Dues Paid Online" report which is available 24/7.

##### Departments

- Membership Dues

- Departments have a legal and fiduciary responsibility to process a member's dues (new or renewal) in a timely manner; failure to do so is a violation of the members' rights and due process.
- Membership cards
  - Membership cards cannot be withheld from units for any purpose. Distribute membership cards and rosters to units in a timely manner so they can be promptly provided to members upon payment.
- American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System (ALAMIS)
  - Encourage units to sign up for access to ALAMIS. Units having access to ALAMIS can minimize work for the department by entering new members as pending members, update their member's profile, run reports showing who has and has not paid dues, and can pull the "Unit Dues Paid Online" report which means that units can promptly provide membership cards to members who pay dues on-line.

## **Membership Reporting**

### Mid-Year Reports

Mid-year reports reflect the program work of units in the department. Each department membership chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **January 5, 2017**, to the division membership chairman along with a copy to the national membership chairman.

### Year-End Reports

Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department. Each department membership chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **May 15, 2017**, to the division membership chairman along with a copy to the national membership chairman. Members and units should submit their reports by April 15, 2017. .

## **NATIONAL Membership Awards**

### **A. Member Award: Rejoin 1**

Guidelines: Rejoin 1 FORMER Auxiliary Junior or senior member (must not have paid dues after 2014). Submit Rejoin 1 form to National Headquarters **by May 1, 2017**, to receive a Rejoin 1 pin. All verified entries will be eligible for \$100 cash drawing. Note: One entry per recruiter.

### **B. Member Award: Recruit 1**

Guidelines: Recruit 1 NEW Auxiliary Junior or senior member. Submit Recruit 1 form to National Headquarters by **May 1, 2017**, to receive a Recruit 1 pin. All verified entries will be eligible for \$100 cash drawing. Note: One entry per recruiter.

### **C. Member Award: Recruit 10**

Guidelines: Recruit 10 or more NEW Auxiliary Junior or senior members. Submit form to National Headquarters by **May 1, 2017**, to receive an ALA microfiber cleaning cloth for your cellphone and electronic screens. All verified entries will be eligible for \$250 cash drawing. Note: One entry per recruiter.

### **D. Member Award: Silver Brigade**

Guidelines: Recruit 25 or more NEW SENIOR Auxiliary members to receive a special gift from the national president. Entry forms must be received at National Headquarters

**by May 1, 2017**, in order to qualify. All verified entries will be eligible for a \$500 cash drawing. Note: One gift per recruiter.

**E. Unit Award: Best Member Experience**

Guidelines: Units that demonstrate the most effective way(s) to improve the member experience must complete the Best Member Experience Award form. Units submitting the Best Member Experience Award form are eligible to receive a letter from the national president, recognition in *Auxiliary* magazine and at national convention, and \$100 to be used for membership and mission outreach.

Units must submit completed Best Member Experience Award form to your department Membership chairmen. Department Membership chairmen are to submit completed forms to their national division Membership chairman by **May 1, 2017**. The National Membership Committee will select *one winner per division*.

**F. Department Award: Most Outstanding Membership Chairman in each Division**

Guidelines: National Membership Committee will select one outstanding membership chairman per division. Selection will be based on department chairmen's year-end report. Year-end reports are due to your national division chairman by **May 15, 2017**. Each winning department membership chairman will receive a citation plaque. National Membership division chairmen will select three department chairmen from their division and submit nominations to the national Membership chairman, vice chairman and Membership committee members to select the winner in each division.

**G. Department Award: Best Membership Performance**

Guidelines: Overall membership performance will be based on a comparison of total 2016 membership as of 30 days prior to 2016 National Convention and total 2017 membership as of 30 days prior to 2017 National Convention. Seating at National Convention will be based on best overall membership performance.

**How To Sheets**

- How to create a new member packet
- How to hold a revitalization event or participate in a TAL District Revitalization
- How to create an account for the members only section of the national website
- How to make a personal connection to get members to renew

**Renewal Notice Schedule**

The first renewal notice will be mailed by September 15 for the following membership year. A second notice is mailed by January 15 for the current membership year. Units are welcome to supplement the national renewal notices with unit generated renewal notices. The ALA membership year is from January 1 to December 31.

**DEPARTMENT Membership Individual Awards**

All entries must be received at Department Headquarters by April 1, 2017.

**Recruit 1:** Members who recruit one NEW Senior or two NEW Juniors will receive a "SOARED ABOVE" button, a National Recruit 1 button, and all verified entries will be eligible for \$100 cash drawing sponsored by National Headquarters. A "SOARED ABOVE" entry form must be submitted to Department no later than April 1, 2017.

*NOTE: Only one button/entry per year per recruiter.*

**Rejoin 1:** Members who rejoin one FORMER Auxiliary Junior or Senior member (*must not have paid dues after 2014*) will receive a National Rejoin 1 pin and all verified entries will be eligible for a \$100 cash drawing sponsored by National Headquarters. A Rejoin 1 entry form must be submitted to Department no later than April 1, 2017.

*Note: Only one button/entry per year per recruiter.*

**Recruit 10:** Members who have recruit 10 or more NEW 2017 Auxiliary Junior or Senior members will receive an ALA microfiber cleaning cloth for your cell phone and electronic screens. All verified entries will be eligible for a \$250 cash drawing by National Headquarters. A Recruit 10 entry form must be submitted to Department no later than April 1, 2017.

*Note: Only one gift/entry per year per recruiter.*

**Silver Brigade:** Members who recruit 25 or more NEW 2017 Senior Auxiliary members will receive a special gift from our National President and all verified entries will be eligible for a \$500 cash drawing sponsored by National Headquarters. A Silver Brigade entry form must be submitted to Department by April 1, 2017.

*Note: Only one gift/entry per year per recruiter.*

### **UNIT AWARDS**

#### **Fearless Eagle**

10 Units picked at random will win \$50 if 100% by November 11, 2016.

#### **Visionary Eagle**

5 Units picked at random will win \$100 if 100% by December 31, 2016.

#### **Soaring Eagle**

5 Units with the highest percentage over 100% as of June 13, 2017 will receive \$100.

### **100% Units Deadline June 13, 2017**

All Units will receive a citation for 100%.

All Units will receive two complimentary 100% ribbons and the opportunity to Purchase more. No special entry form required.

### **DISTRICT AWARD**

The first District to reach 100% by June 13, 2017 will receive a special award from the Department Membership Chairman

Award entry forms are available on the Department website  
[www.amlegionauxwi.org](http://www.amlegionauxwi.org)

### **Additional Resources You Can Use**

1. American Legion Auxiliary Unit Guide Book, available at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) or from American Legion Emblem Sales.
2. Materials provided during the 2016 Department Leadership National Conference.
3. [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) for award forms and additional resources.
4. Our national committee members (see cover page of this program Plan).

**WISCONSIN WILL “SOAR FOR OUR VETERANS”**