

WISCONSIN



October 2021

American Legion Auxiliary
P.O. Box 140
Portage, WI 53901

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The official publication of the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary

www.amlegionauxwi.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Diane Weggen
Department
President

Attending National Convention was so much fun this year – having the chance to see friends from other states after a two-year hiatus.

This convention was fun and informative—the best way to learn!

Deserving congratulations are Department of Wisconsin VA&R Chairman Mary Petrie and Legislative Chairman Char Kiesling for “Best Program” awards in Central Division in their respective programs, and Mosinee Unit 107. Unit 107 received one of National President Nicole Clapp’s Awards for Excellence for their work during the past two years.

Speaking of learning and fun, I

hope many of you have participated in the ALA in the Know conferences. If not, there are other ways to learn more about the Auxiliary. Attend your unit, county, district and Department meetings, events, workshops and conferences. Go to units, counties, or districts outside of yours. Use your computer to take courses through the ALA Academy. Attend National Mission Trainings. Invite the Leadership team, any of the Department Chairmen or Department officers for a roundtable discussion or additional information on a specific topic at your unit meeting.

In addition to learning more about the Auxiliary, there are many opportunities for members and units to participate in activities every day to “Salute, Serve, Celebrate” our veterans, military, their families,

and our communities. Upcoming events include Halloween, Veterans Day, National Education Week from November 15-19, National Volunteer Day on November 20, Thanksgiving and Pearl Harbor Day.

As you consider your donations this year, please keep the veterans at the Chippewa Veterans Home in mind. The Chippewa Veterans Home Courtyard will enhance the quality of life for members by providing an accessible outdoor lighted area with seating and tables, including electrical outlets and a sound system for visiting, group activities, programs and Happy Hours. Poppy Funds, unit, and individual donations may be used to fund this project. Mail checks payable to “ALA-Wisconsin” to ALA-Wisconsin, PO Box 140, Portage, WI 53901

and write ‘President’s Special Project’ in the memo field or send with a Poppy Fund Suggested Donation Form from the department website. This project will serve veterans, their families and their caretakers for years to come.

Disbanding: Because I am hearing the word “disband” banded about, I am wondering if we truly understand what disbanding a unit means. The American Legion Auxiliary was established more than 100 years ago **both** to support veterans, service men and women, their families, and their communities **and** to honor the sacrifices they endured. When unit members decide to disband their unit, the message is **both** that there are no veterans, military, families or community members who need assistance/support **and**

that the majority of members who belong to that unit want to see the unit gone. Many times, the decision is made while not truly considering how all the members would feel if the unit no longer existed.

If disbanding a unit is desired, then the unit officers, unit members and the post need to follow the procedure set down in the *Department Red Book*. Each of the steps need to be completed and documented to meet the expectations of the American Legion Auxiliary and the laws of the state of Wisconsin.

With the visits I’ve made thus far, I see many opportunities for the American Legion Family members to support and honor those **both** who have served **and** those who are serving. Service, not self, is our decades long legacy.

MEMBERSHIP

Maggie Geiger
Department Chairman
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Units have been sending in their membership renewals and new membership applications! Members have embraced President Diane’s challenge; *every member has been asked to speak to one prospective member, asking them to join the Auxiliary*. Thank you to those who have asked and signed up a new member or two! Your dedication to our organization and to our mission is appreciated.

New membership packets/folders are a great tool to introduce new and prospective members to the entire Legion Family! In your membership packet, include a letter from your unit president(s) introducing the unit, the ALA

mission, and list some of the events your unit participates in, as well as letters from your Post Commander, SAL and Riders. Working with your Legion Family will ensure a great membership year!

Have members make **salute** calls to your members on a regular basis, reach out to those who you might not know. Perhaps a member who has not been at meetings needs a ride to unit meetings or events. You will never know if a fellow member needs assistance or a friendly voice unless you make a call. Salute call scripts can be found on the department website under the membership tab.

Be a mentor to a new or newer member, be available to answer questions at meetings, encourage their involvement. Share the passion and the knowledge you have for a particular

program with other ALA members. Showing kindness, recognizing everyone for their **service** or years of continuous membership will go a long way. Think what we can do for our Veterans, by working together!

Celebrate your units’ accomplishments, brag about what we do, why we do it, and why we matter! Set up a membership table at your events. Display projects list upcoming

events for your unit, county and district. Remember to take pictures of your membership tables and send them to us.

As a reminder, please do not hold on to your unit’s membership dues. Send them in on a timely basis and make sure that your unit’s 2021-2022 Unit Officer List is sent to department for your unit to be eligible for membership incentive drawings!

2022 MEMBERSHIP RANKINGS

District 3 (37.46%)

District 4 (36.76%)

District 2 (33.04%)

District 9 (29.47%)

District 7 (28.33%)

District 1 (26.87%)

District 10 (24.75%)

District 6 (23.68%)

District 12 (23.11%)

District 8 (21.25%)

District 5 (16.89%)

District 11 (15.25%)



Poppy Shop

ORDER DEADLINE: DECEMBER 15

Poppy orders will be processed in the order received and shipped as soon as they can be filled. Orders received after the new year may not be able to be processed or filled in time to meet your scheduled distribution dates.

Don't Delay – Order Today!



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Donna Jensen
 Department Chaplain
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"For everything there is a season, A time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest..." ~ Ecclesiastes 3

Fall in Wisconsin is a beautiful time to reflect on the busy and fun times of summer and recharge for the new adventures coming during the next months. It is a time to "reap what you sow" and enjoy the "fruits of your labors." This also applies to our spiritual outlook. Autumn is a time to prepare for harder times ahead (cold and snowy Wisconsin weather) and reflect on all the blessings we have been given. There have been a lot of challenges for everyone during the past year and a half and we are all ready for "normal" life to return. The Lord has a plan and it will be revealed in His time. Please remember that a little kindness and compassion can make a big difference in someone else's life and we may never realize the impact we had on them. A smile and kind word can have a big impact on those we interact with, in person or by phone. (Yes, you can hear a smile over the phone!)

Reminder – submit prayers, poems and inspirational pieces for President Diane Weggen's Prayer Book. Items can be original (signed by member submitting), from another source (provide name of author and source, and name of member submitting), and can include pictures or other artwork. I will put all items in a loose-leaf binder that will be presented to President Diane at the Department Convention in July 2022. That seems like a long way off but do not wait until the last minute to submit your contributions to this important memory of her year as Department President. You can mail items to me (6936 N 86th St., Milwaukee, WI 53224) or send by email. Please sign all submissions and include your Unit and District number.

Keep your meetings and other gatherings uplifting by including music in your program. You do not have to be a great singer to lead a song, just sing the first few notes to get everyone started or if you know someone who is more comfortable with leading a song, ask them in advance to do this. It is also a way to involve more people in the program and add some FUN!

"America The Beautiful"

(Lyrics: Katharine Lee Bates, 1895
 – Music: Samuel A Ward, 1883)

O beautiful for spacious skies,
 For amber waves of grain,
 For purple mountain majesties
 Above the fruited plain!
 America! America!
 God shed His grace on thee,
 And crown thy good with brotherhood
 From sea to shining sea!

Bonnie Dorniak
 Executive Secretary/Treasurer
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 deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org
 www.amlegionauxwi.org

Two resolutions that passed at the 2021 Department Convention are listed below for your information.

2021 National Convention celebrated the first 100 years of the American Legion Auxiliary and the start of our second century of service. Wisconsin was recognized with several awards; see page A6 for details.

Kathy Daudistel of Kentucky was elected National President for 2021-2022. Her focus for the year is on caregivers, especially military caregivers. Do you...care for an elderly or disabled friend or relative? ...make meals for a shut-in? ...take someone to doctor's appointments? If so, **you** are a caregiver. Kathy emphasized the need to "care for those who care for others." If you are a caregiver, don't forget to take care of yourself by planning some special "me time." If you know a caregiver, give them a break by providing respite care for their loved one or taking the caregiver out for dinner or to a special activity. It doesn't need to be much – even short breaks can help them re-energize.

National Headquarters mailed the 2022 membership renewal notices in mid-September. You may have received a renewal notice even though you recently paid your dues. National pulled the mailing list in early August so things

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

may have "crossed in the mail." If you believe you received a notice in error, please contact your unit membership chairman to confirm your dues were forwarded to department headquarters for processing.

Members may pay their dues through their unit, online at www.ALAforVeterans.org, or over the phone. You can pay for multiple family members at one time or pay for lapsed membership years if you pay by phone. Please call national headquarters at 317-569-4570, Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm (Central Time) if interested in paying by phone.

The 2022 Daily Sweepstakes mailing was sent in early September. If you want additional entry forms, please call department headquarters. Only original entry forms will be accepted for the drawing. Daily prizes are \$15, Sunday prizes are \$25, and there is a chance to win \$500 each month. Remember, you could win 365 times because winning entries are returned to the barrel after each drawing. The last day to enter is December 31, 2021. **THANK YOU** to everyone who already responded. Please remember that even though a donation is not required to enter the sweepstakes, the money raised allows us to maintain American Legion Auxiliary programs that benefit our veterans, the military, their families, and our communities – so **donations are greatly appreciated**. Official sweepstakes rules are posted on the department website.

Reminder: Poppies can be distributed **all year long**, not just during the Memorial Day Holi-

day. Veterans Day is a great time to do a distribution – especially if you haven't held a poppy drive this year or have poppies left over from a previous distribution. Units and posts interested in purchasing poppies for 2022 should submit their order by December 15, 2021. Don't delay – order today! Since the poppy shop has not been able to resume operations at the Zablocki VA Medical Center, orders are processed in the order received and shipped as soon as they can be filled. Orders received after the new year may not be able to be processed or filled in time to meet your scheduled distribution dates.

The American Legion Auxiliary will be offering a training session at The American Legion's Midwinter Conference on Saturday, January 15, 2022. Watch the department website and December issue of this newspaper for more information. Attendees will also have the opportunity meet Central Division National Vice President Denise Delaney-Wroten who will be conducting her official visit to Wisconsin at that time.

If your unit does something unique to support the Auxiliary's mission, please send pictures of the "mission in action" along with a caption so we can highlight it in the *Wisconsin*. Submissions should be sent to deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org within 45 days of the event, including a contact person's name, daytime phone and email address in case we need to clarify any information. Your ideas may be of interest to others who would like to do something similar in their own community!

2021 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION – APPROVED RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION # 2 ALA BADGER GIRLS STATE

Resolution on improving appointments to the Badger Girls State program for incoming Department Presidents.

WHEREAS the American Legion Auxiliary promotes the Americanism Program to our Youth through its premier Americanism program, ALA Badger Girls State (ALABGS); and

WHEREAS the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin's incoming President appoints an ALABGS Chairman, Vice Chairman, Executive Director, Assistant Director and committee members when said position terms expire; and

WHEREAS the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin's President and Senior Vice President have automatic positions on the ALABGS Committee along with

the Americanism Chairman; and

WHEREAS it would be beneficial to the incoming President's selection of ALABGS committee members, that all ALA Department of Wisconsin's Vice Presidents have a position as a committee member to the ALA Badger Girls State Committee; and

WHEREAS incoming presidential candidates would better understand how this premier program operates,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin's 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents be notified of all ALA Badger Girls State meetings, which may be attended at Department expense for informational purposes.

Approved by Convention Action on July 17, 2021.

RESOLUTION # 4 PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

Resolution on establishing an Outstanding Mentor Award for the Department of Wisconsin.

WHEREAS the Department of Wisconsin is actively pursuing the Goals established by the Strategic Plan developed by the Department and the National organizations; and

WHEREAS one important element of the Strategic Plan on multiple fronts is the encouragement of leaders, both past and present, to actively mentor other members; and

WHEREAS the program description of the Past Presidents Parley includes 'All Past Presidents at all levels are encouraged to

continue their support to the organization by accepting responsibility that their knowledge and wisdom as a past leader can make a difference in developing and mentoring the life of one member; and

WHEREAS 'as ambassadors for the organization, knowing there is much information to share to make each level of the organization stronger and maintain its growth with positive actions; and

WHEREAS 'The PPP recognizes the contributions of valued unit members through the Unit Member of the Year award; and

WHEREAS there are certain members that exceed the expectations of leadership and mentoring on a continuing basis beyond the scope of their office and/or position, such individuals do not seek recognition for their actions and are seldom acknowledged for their on-going positive influence in developing future leaders; and

WHEREAS it is vital we continue to ensure the continuation to fulfill the mission and vision of the ALA in the future,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that members of the Department of Wisconsin Past Presidents Parley shall work together to develop an award(s) for the OUTSTANDING MENTOR OF THE YEAR to acknowledge and recognize such service based on recommendation by unit members in meeting the established criteria of the PPP. This award to be presented at the annual Department Convention from nominations received.

Approved by Convention Action on July 16, 2021.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

I would like to thank the great Department of Wisconsin for all the prayers and support as I ran for National Chaplain. Even though the vote count indicated I came in second, I was the real winner with the outpouring of love shown by my American Legion Family. No one could ask for anything more.

Wisconsin you are fantastic!
 God Bless,
 Becky Mueller

POPPY PROGRAM

Marla Knuettel
Department Chairman
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‘The purpose of the Poppy Program is to honor veterans for their service and sacrifice by promoting circulation of the poppy, educating all people of the poppy’s history, and the significant financial benefit realized by our nation’s veterans as a result of its distribution.’

That statement begins the Poppy Program Action Plan, available on amlegionauxwi.org. Please copy it to all your Unit members! This is the basis for **year-round** support of VA&R projects and other Unit programs. Some suggestions to start off the year:

- Welcome a Poppy Chair! Ideally, someone who loves the poppy story.
- Create a poppy checklist. List unit/department/national poppy event dates/deadlines and then just work out the details!
- Tap into other leads to support the Poppy Program (i.e. Historian/Public Relations) to help educate or promote your projects through radio, TV, newspaper, Facebook, word-of-mouth, church bulletin, hospital/nursing home info display racks and CVSO calendar. Join the Chamber of Commerce – great PR!
- Familiarize everyone with John McCrae’s *“In Flanders Fields.”*
- Know who Moina (pronounced Mo-eena) Michael (not pluralized) is and read her answering stanza *“We Shall Keep the Faith”* and *“The Miracle Flower.”*
- Tempt your unit crafters into producing poppy-themed items for adding pizzazz to Legion Family events, community fundraisers,

school programs, etc.

- Engage a frugal buyer to check out Emblem Sales for ‘rewards’ or ‘awards’ for children/adults who participate in poppy events, school contests and more.
- Encourage shopping missions to find poppy items - stationery, fabric, scarves, dishes, etc.
- Task your Unit Secretary (or someone with nice handwriting) to do your requests and thank you notes for Poppy Distribution days or **year-round** canisters at businesses.
- Plan how the unit can improve last year’s poppy revenue. Invite Junior/Senior Auxiliary members and Veterans to participate. While the veteran-made poppy is preferred, check out alternate poppy distribution items (i.e. bookmarks, homemade poppies).
- Inform everyone on the do’s and don’ts of how poppy monies are used. Have your poppy fact sheet handy at all times.

When the unit isn’t fundraising, spend the time reaching out to children (poppy coloring book), or local government (proclamation), or social media (i.e. poppy symbolism, poppy recipes) or treating your veterans with poppy-wrapped treats. Build your poppy arsenal – use Legion Family sources and have poppy handouts, pictures and templates (Google!) ready to go.

Last, but not least, be sure your Poppy Chair/Committee is familiar with the Poppy Poster and Poppy Princess routines as well as end-of-year awards. Know the requirements and deadlines. When you have time, squeeze in the mid-year (optional) and annual reports. They may be one line with one picture, or a full page with 20 pictures or craft samples or PR copies... Start early and Good Luck!

LEADERSHIP

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President Diane’s theme of *Salute, Serve, Celebrate veterans, military, their families and our communities* will be the focus of the Leadership Team this year. We are here to help units retain members, recruit new members, work together as a team, bring members back to meetings, and build strong new leaders. Our plan is to work closely with the Membership Team to identify possible Leadership Training opportunities that will result in retaining members and strengthening communication.

Is your unit struggling to find officers, need help with identifying separation of duties, how to use the Auxiliary emblem, or just need an update on basic protocol? Then you may be interested in scheduling a Leadership Workshop, either a one-day full workshop or a specialized hour-long workshop at your district, county, or unit meeting. Please contact me to set up a date and time.

The Leadership full day workshop includes several wonderful sections for new

members and a refresher for existing members including the History of our Organization, the Secret of Leadership, Being a Good Member, and several other topics. Examples of possible specialized Leadership sessions are: Duties of Unit Officers, Conflict Resolution, How to Conduct a Meeting, Finding the heart of your Unit, Year-end Reporting, and Utilizing the Strength of your Members, or any topic you feel your unit needs. These hour-long sessions will be customized to your specific topic(s). Don’t be afraid to ask for a workshop, we are here to help strengthen units, bring members back to meetings, encourage a spirit of teamwork, and help to maintain our members for future generations.

Every member in our organization is important, each individual has a special talent or leadership ability that can help your Unit to GROW, either in membership or volunteer opportunities. Is there a person to help with Public Relations – to get the word out about our organization? Or someone who is a great planner and can help to organize your Poppy Drive or some other fundraiser? These are your unit leaders – utilize their abilities!

Department Leadership Team Members: Deanna Farley and Karen Runk.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Ann Lotter
Department Chairperson
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I am writing my first Public Relations article. I would like to thank President Diane Weggen for the appointment as Public Relations Chairperson. I do the Facebook pages for Abrams Unit 523, Oconto County Units and Ninth District. I have two Marketing Degrees from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay.

We have a great Public Relations team, Barbara McDaniel from Unit # 499 Gordon and Danie Wilson from Unit # 83 Sheboygan. You may think public relations is only the responsibility of your Unit President or department officers and chairpersons, but it is everybody’s job. If we work together in our units, it helps build relationships and better communication with our members.

If someone comes up to you and asks why you belong to this organization, are you prepared to answer? What are you doing to

make sure that your unit grows and flourishes? Wearing the American Legion Auxiliary emblem on a shirt or jacket can be a conversation starter. It is okay to bring attention to the American Legion Auxiliary and promote what we do. It is every member’s job to bring positive attention to what we do. Branding is very important to all units.

Some units only meet four times a year or some meet every month. You meet. You do support the American Legion Auxiliary and its programs by promoting who we are and what we do. You are the future of this great organization. YOU are our Public Relations.

So, what do we need from your units? We are looking for pictures, newspaper clippings and newsletters – anything to show what your members are doing. Each Unit, County and District Public Relations chairperson should be submitting to the Department Public Relations Team. Contact information is located on the Public Relations Program Action Plan. We wish our members a great year in helping our veterans, military, and their families. Thank you and God Bless America!

LEGISLATIVE

Joanie Dickerson
Department Chairman
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For God and Country, we advocate for veterans... These words are found in our mission statement and amplify the commitment we make each time we recite the Preamble to the Constitution – *To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion.*

One of the four pillars of The American Legion (TAL) is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. Ensuring our veterans are cared for and receive the benefits they earned is an ongoing process. Each year our Congress prepares a budget that seeks to focus on some segments of the population at the expense of others. It often feels as if Veterans are the ones being left out. Our ALA Legislative program strives to assist The American Legion in making certain this doesn’t happen.

How do we do this? We reach out to our Senators, Representatives, and state elected officials asking them to co-sponsor or support legislation TAL has prioritized. It is important to remember that TAL’s legislative policy is

determined during its national convention by elected delegates to the national convention and duly elected members of the National Executive Committee. No other person or group is authorized to form or determine national legislative policy.

Awareness and action are the keys. Knowing the legislative agenda is the first step. Learn about legislation currently the focus of TAL by going online to their Legislative Action Center found at: <https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Bills>. You can also contact your representatives in Congress regarding important legislation through this website. Share this information with members of your unit at a unit meeting and have a letter writing session. This will provide opportunities to participate for members without internet access. Record the number of letters sent and the number of replies received for your year-end report. Being an informed citizen is a responsibility we all share. Through our collective efforts we can move our elected representatives to take much needed action that will benefit those who sacrificed for our freedoms. Let’s join together as a Legion Family and salute our brave veterans by supporting our legislative program.

HISTORY PROGRAM

Sue Hembrook
Department Historian
genesuehem@wi.rr.com

We may all be asking, why do our units, districts, etc. need to keep an ongoing history of our projects, accomplishments and, yes, even our failures? It is because by building on our past we construct our future. It would be encouraging if all would look at their past histories and share them at a meeting. It is always interesting to see what accomplishments have been achieved. It may even spark a new interest in a proj-

ect even though it may have to be adapted for the current circumstances. Pictures and newspaper clippings are always wonderful so that we can indeed “look back.”

The current pandemic situation has brought out many innovative and creative ways for us to serve our veterans, military, their families and our communities. In 20-50 years, our members will be able to relate to the creativity expressed by our current members.

The following quote sums it up, *“If you don’t know history, then you don’t know anything. You are a leaf that doesn’t know it is part of a tree.”* ~ Michael Crichton

DAUIDSTEL ELECTED 2021-2022 ALA NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Kathy Daudistel of the Department of Kentucky was elected the American Legion Auxiliary National President at the 2021 National Convention.

Kathy is eligible for ALA membership through her father, William Kaelin Jr., a United States Army veteran who served during the Korean War era. An ALA member for 25 years, Daudistel has held numerous leadership positions at the unit, district, department, and national levels, including national vice president; national committee chair of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Children & Youth, Poppy, National Security, Americanism, Membership, and Leadership; national committee vice chair of Junior Activities; National Executive Committee and Alternate NEC.

She earned her Bachelor of Science



Kathy Daudistel
ALA National President
2021-2022

degree in information technology from Northern Kentucky University and retired from a Fortune 500 company after more than 30 years. Daudistel has two daughters, four grandchildren, and two sons-in-law.

National President Kathy Daudistel's focus for 2021-2022 is on caregivers, especially military caregivers.

Many people don't identify as a caregiver because they are family members taking care of family. According to a recent Rand Corp. military caregiver research study, there are approximately 5.5 million military and veteran caregivers in the United States. Of the 5.5 million, approximately 1.1 million are caring for veterans and service-members who served after 9/11. In fact, many of these caregivers are members of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Our mission includes honoring the

sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families. One way we can honor that sacrifice is to recognize these unsung heroes and help to make sure they have the resources and support they need to take care of their veteran. Many of our Auxiliary members are already doing this important work, and most without even thinking about it. What better way to carry out our mission than caring for those who care for others?

This year, through the ALA's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program, we plan to recognize a deserving military or veteran non-paid caregiver in every department, and hopefully when I visit your department, I can personally acknowledge them.

To further prioritize caregivers, be on the lookout for announcements

for webinars this administrative year. One such webinar is already available online in the ALA Academy: Mission Delivery through Caregiver Support. When you have a moment, I highly recommend you watch it. You won't be disappointed.

Our Juniors and Sons of The American Legion members can also get involved with the caregiver focus. As part of the ALA Patch Program, a new caregiver patch is available. Check out the Junior Activities page on the national website for more information on requirements.

I am looking forward to serving with all of you this administrative year as we continue to focus on our veterans, military, and their families, with an extra significance placed on caregivers. Thank you for all you do to support the ALA mission! ~ Kathy Daudistel

SALUTE, SERVE, CELEBRATE



Denise Delaney-Wroten
Central Division
National Vice President

DELANEY-WROLEN ELECTED TO CDNVP

Denise Delaney-Wroten, a member of Gary Unit 279 in the Department of Indiana, was elected as Central Division National Vice President at the 2021 National Convention. Denise gained her eligibility through her father, George Evans Jr., U.S. Navy World War II veteran; and late husbands William J. Delaney, U.S. Marine Korean War veteran, and John Wroten, U.S. Army Vietnam veteran.

Denise is a graduate of Indiana University Northwest with a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education. She retired in 2016 after 20 years teaching fifth grade. Denise currently teaches computers to students in grades kindergarten to fifth grade. She is a widow, mother of two sons (one is deceased), and a grandmother to six granddaughters and one great-grandson. She has memberships in Indiana's Retired Teachers Association and the 8 & 40.

Denise will be conducting her official visit to the Department of Wisconsin on January 15, 2022 at the Legion's Midwinter Conference. Please come and make her feel welcome in Wisconsin.



Mt. Hope Unit 229 SALUTES and CELEBRATES Margaret Furuseuth in recognition of 50 years of American Legion Auxiliary membership. Margaret crochets a patriotic doll dress and donates it for the ALA raffle each year. Thank you, Margaret, for your dedication and devotion to our Veterans. May you continue to SERVE for many more years!



Briggsville Unit 329 CELEBRATED over 450 years of continuous service for 15 members at their annual member celebration. The Unit specially SALUTED Lorna Hilliard for her dedication to veterans and the community she has SERVED during 50-years of membership. Pictured is Lorna Hilliard (seated) and Unit President Loretta Hundley.



Fremont Unit 391 SALUTED its 50, 60 and 70-year members and CELEBRATED at an annual banquet. Pictured (l to r) is Unit Treasurer Kay Grosskopf, 70-year member Vivian Voiss, and Unit President Lyn Strohmeyer. Vivian's award was presented at her home where she SERVED as a gracious hostess and enjoyed reminiscing about The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary in the earlier years.

VA & R — HOMELESS WOMEN VETERANS

Pat Smith
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WHY SHOULD I CARE?

The person your dollar helps could be a friend, a daughter, an acquaintance, or someone you don't know at all. It is a woman who is at the end of her rope. She is proud. It is that pride that may have left her to fall through the bureaucratic cracks. She may be living in her car or sleeping under a bridge. She may have been furloughed off her job and now money problems are on the horizon. Where will she get the money to pay rent, utilities, phone, or car? Who can she turn to?

Again pride, despair, humiliation, fear, mistrust, defeat, and so many other dark emotions are chipping away at her self-image. This woman is a veteran. She gladly served her country, but what now? She has sought help from various government agencies, including the VA. That's where the cracks start to appear. She can get help from different VA programs, but they don't cover immediate needs.

This is when and where your dollar makes a significant difference in this woman veteran's life. Through the American Legion Auxiliary's Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund, you can offer a helping hand up. This grant is awarded for any number of needs the veteran may have – within reason. The woman veteran fills out an application explaining her needs. Her sponsor (usually a VA so-

cial worker) questions what actions she has taken, who has she spoken to about her situation, and what help did they offer. Only as a last resort is this grant provided and it is with the understanding that this is a one-time-only assistance program to this veteran. The Homeless Women Veterans Grant chairman must verify the information in the application before funds are released by the committee.

Care – because you know you are making a difference! She cared enough for us to put her own life on the line. Now it is our turn to care for our women veterans. Please consider a donation to the Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund by mailing a check to ALA-Wisconsin, PO Box 140, Portage, WI 53901, noting "HWV" in the memo field or using a Poppy Fund Suggested Donation Sheet.

VA & R — HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

Sue Hembrook
Department Chairman
genesuehem@wi.rr.com

This past 18 or so months has been very hard on our hospitalized veterans and our hospital volunteers. For the most part, the volunteers are not allowed in their facilities. While this is understandable as it is for the safety of the patients, it is hard on our dedicated members that volunteer. Hopefully, things will change soon but with the new

variants, that date is looking farther and farther in the future.

We ask what we can do!! The hospital wish lists are being published in the Unit Mailing. Please look at these and see what you or your unit can do to provide some of these items. We want our hospitalized veterans to know that we are thinking of them during this time. When items are given out at the facilities our group is always mentioned. The staff are always appreciative of any donations and share with the residents who the donor was.

Besides the items listed on the wish lists, cash donations are always welcome. Checks should be made payable to "ALA-WI" and mailed to ALA-Wisconsin, PO Box 140, Portage, WI 53901 using a Poppy Fund Suggested Donation Sheet to ensure your donation is used as intended. Many last-minute circumstances allow our Hospital Reps and Deps the ability to provide individualized items to our veterans. Please contact me or any of the Hospital Representatives if you have any questions.

VA & R — CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP

Diana Sirovina
Supervisor
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Plans for another Christmas Gift Shop season are underway! It may seem early, but time goes by so fast and we need lots of time to be sure this great program is successful.

For those who are not familiar with Christmas Gift Shop, this program began a long time ago. It allows veterans in long-term care facilities to select gifts to send to their loved ones at Christmas time. Gift Shop volunteers visit the veterans with sample gifts and take their orders. Gifts are wrapped and returned to the veteran to give to their family when they visit. The program has changed many times over the years.

In the past, members donated items that were used as gifts. Most recently, due to lack of space to store the items, the exact number of gifts needed are ordered on Amazon. A large group of very dedicated volunteers meet on a Sunday morning and wrap all the gifts. The biggest change in this program came last year due to COVID.

Last year was the first time we were not able to visit our veterans to take their orders. It was also the first time all the gifts were shipped directly to the veterans' families. From conversations with the staff at the various facilities, we will be following the same guidelines for this year's program.

The 2021 version of Christmas Gift Shop will continue our long-standing tradition of providing gifts as

we have in the past. Our selection of available gifts will be photographed, and a "catalog" created for the veterans to view and select their gifts. Staff will assist us in completing the orders. Items will be ordered, sorted, and prepared for our annual wrapping day. A group of dedicated Legion Family members will gather to wrap the gifts and pack them for shipping. A couple trips to the Post Office and UPS will complete the project.

The cost of gifts, wrapping, and shipping are all totally covered by your donations. Checks payable to 'ALA-Wisconsin' should be mailed to Department Headquarters noting Christmas Gift Shop in the memo field. This program would not be possible without your generous funding. Thank you for supporting this program!

MISSION IN ACTION: UNIT 440



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 440 and American Legion Post 440, Clinton, WI honored veterans at the Housing 4 Our Vets transitional living home in Janesville by hosting a cook-out picnic. The annual event organized by ALA Unit 440 includes a meal of brats with all the fixings followed by a trivia game with veterans.

Pictured: Jim Schumacher, Carol Hahn, Carol Pastorius, Tom Van Treeck, Linda Schumacher, Dave Burno, Michele Burno, George Furman, Jeff Johnson, Angel Johnson, Lonna Morouney, Mike Morouney, and Bruce Hahn.

2020-2021 NATIONAL CONVENTION AWARDS

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin received the following national awards or acknowledgement for the 2020-2021 administrative year:

AMERICANISM

Americanism Essay Contest
Class I, Best Essay in Central Division Sponsored by Richland Center Unit 13, District 3 **Laura Stoltz**

Americanism Essay Contest
Class III, Best Essay in Central Division Sponsored by Crivitz Unit 413, District 9 **Samantha Lay**

Americanism Essay Contest
Class VI, Best Essay in Central Division Sponsored by Appleton Unit 38, District 9 **Trinity Grace Mulder**

LEGISLATIVE

Most Outstanding Overall Department
Legislative Program in Central Division **Department of Wisconsin**
Char Kiesling, Department Chairman

MEMBERSHIP

100 units that reached 100% of their 2021 membership goal by 11/10/2020 were randomly selected to win \$100 from the national organization. Wisconsin winners:

Mosinee Unit 107 Mazomanie Unit 437
Two Rivers Unit 165 Wisconsin Rapids Unit 442
Cross Plains Unit 245 Minong Unit 465
Black Earth Unit 313

PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

Unit Member of the Year **Karen Knudsvig**
of Waunakee Unit 360, District 3

Servicewoman of the Year **Captain Mary Ellen Durley, USCG**
Sponsored by Bagley Unit 482, District 3

POPPY

Poppy Poster Contest, Class V
Best Poppy Poster in Central Division Sponsored by Thorp Unit 118, District 7 **Kallee LeCloux**

Poppy Poster Contest, Class VI
Best Poppy Poster in Central Division Sponsored by Athelstane/Silver Cliff Unit 66, Dist. 9 **Madelyn Bales**

Best Overall Poppy Poster in Central Division
Sponsored by Athelstane/Silver Cliff Unit 66, District 9 **Madelyn Bales**

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Best Department VA&R Program in Central Division **Department of Wisconsin**
Mary Petrie, Department Chairman

2021-2022 NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Joanie Dickerson: ALA Girls Nation Committee Member & Alternate National Executive Committeeperson

Diane Duscheck: American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Vice President

Sue Hembrook: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee Central Division Chairman

Teresa Isensee: Constitution & Bylaws Committee Vice Chair

Bonnie Jakubczyk: National Executive Committeeperson

Amy Luft: Convention City Chairman (2022 National Convention, Milwaukee)

Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan: National Distinguished Guests Committee Vice Chair

Diana Sirovina: National Security Committee Chairman