



The Auxiliary Spirit



Volume 40

October 2025

Issue 3



American Legion Auxiliary
2025-2026
Department President



OHANA-means family. Family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten especially the men/ women who fought for our freedom!

Colors— Coral, (as a mixture of red and yellow) & tropical colors (red, yellow, blue, green, purple)

Department Officers 2025-2026

President-Kim Mellie
1st Vice President-Stephanie Handley
2nd Vice President-Peggy Swartz
Secretary/Treasurer-Paulette Anderson
Chaplain- Rebecca Farley
Historian-Holly Adams

District Presidents

1st District-Mary Richards
3rd District-Margaret Yost
4th District-Patsy Greiner
5th District-Lisa Harbour-Adkins
6th District-Peggy Swartz
10th District-Jill Davis

District Vice Presidents

1st District-Michelle Powell
3rd District-Sandra Harper
4th District-Rebecca Farley
5th District-Pat Withrow
6th District-Mary Spence
10th District-Chantel Ricketts

What an amazing weekend! I hope you all enjoyed the Fall Workshop as much as I did! I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping raise funds for my Special Projects. Your support means so much!

Aside from Pearl's little adventure of unplugging one of my crock pots, I hope everyone enjoyed the luau lunch—it was such fun to share that with you!

I'm also looking forward to attending your District meetings. I'll be with the 10th District on the 20th, and I'll see the 5th District in the Spring. I wish I could go to both, but that is not physically possible.

Calling all Units to submit their new officer form to Paulette at department@wvaux.org. We need the information to finish the directory. Also, be looking for additional information regarding the website and Chair emails!

I am entertaining the idea of having a few more DEC meetings via zoom. I will look into the possibility and keep you posted!

What a wonderful surprise to see that 16 Units reached the first goal! Keep up the great work: Wheeling Unit 1, Buckhannon Unit 7, Welch Unit 8, Huntington Unit 16, Charleston Unit 20, Spencer Unit 21, New Martinsville Unit 28, Morgantown Unit 174, Shinnston Unit 31, Gary Unit 38, Berkeley Springs Unit 60, Paden City Unit 86, Kirby Unit 134, Ridgeley Unit 136, Capon Bridge Unit 137 and Morgantown #174!! The Department is only at 18% but that is going to grow! Let see if we can all hit 60% by OUR (ALA) Birthday -November 10th,2025!

You are all invited to attend my homecoming, Nov. 1st at Shinnston Unit 31. The cost is \$20, all veterans eat free! Please text me 304-216-9943 to RSVP. You can pay at the door. The only hotels are within 20 minutes of Shinnston, but I will try to work something out.

Have a wonderful October! I will see some of you at your District meetings! Be safe and stay positive!

"The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion" by Simon Sinek

For God and Country
Kim Mellie
Department President





Our Mission matters to Navigate Life's Waters

Department 1st Vice President

Aloha, Starfish!

It was great to see all that attended workshop! Thank you for helping raise money for President Kim's fundraisers and all the great poppy paintings!! I hope you enjoyed attending as much as I did.

Congratulations to Buckhannon #7, Shinnston #31, Huntington #16, Charleston #20, Berkley Springs #60, Moorefield #64, Kirby #134, Capon Bridge #137, Ridgely #136, and Morgantown Unit #174 for reaching the first goal of 25%. Keep it up and there were others not far off. So just reach for the next goal. I know we can make this membership year a great one!!!

Don't forget that if you need or have any questions please reach out to your membership team.

Mahalo,
Stephanie Handley
Department 1st Vice President
stephaniehandley@msn.com



Department 2nd Vice President

Hello Sand Dollar

It is time to start on membership. I know a few has started already because I handed out a few 25% Certificate at the workshop just keep up the good work. I am looking forward to working with my Units.

I will be attending 6th District Fall Conference which will be September 27, in Bluefield and I am hoping to go to 4th District in October. So if District 1 will let me know when your Fall Conference will be.

God Bless Everyone
Peggy Swartz
2nd Vice President



HISTORIAN

Hello ladies

Remember recording your units history is vital and important so that we can continue to educate, preserve and promote our programs supporting our veterans, children and community.

A chronological monthly account of Unit activities and events is a nice helpful way to keep track. Keep your pens inked and moving!!

God Bless
Holly Adams
Department Historian
hollyadams847@gmail.com



Chaplain

Kindness is often called a simple act, but in truth, it is one of the most powerful forces we can share. As Auxiliary members, we know the weight our words and deeds can carry, especially when they are offered with compassion.

A kind word can calm a troubled spirit. A gentle smile can brighten a weary day. A simple act of service can restore hope in someone who feels forgotten. These gestures may seem small, but they ripple outward in ways we may never see, touching lives far beyond our own.

Scripture reminds us to "be kind and compassionate to one another" Ephesians 4:32. When we lead with kindness, we reflect the love of God, and we live out the mission of service that defines us. Kindness costs nothing, yet it is one of the richest gifts we can give.

As Chaplain, I encourage each of you to look for opportunities to extend kindness, within your Unit, your community, and your family. Let us be known as members who not only honor and serve but also uplift and encourage. In a world that can feel divided, kindness becomes our testimony and our strength.

Together, let's shine kindness everywhere we go.

Department Chaplain
Rebecca S Farley



Membership Chairman

We had a wonderful time at the Membership/Fall Workshop this past weekend, complete with a surprise visit from Moana and Maui! It was especially exciting to celebrate all units that reached the first target of 25% by the 9/15/25 deadline, which also happens to be the SAL Birthday.

Congratulations to the following units for hitting 25% or more of their 2025–2026 membership goal: Wheeling #1, Paden City #86, Spencer #21, Welch #8, Gary #38, Buckhannon #7, Shinnston #31, Huntington #16, Charleston #20, Berkeley Springs #60, Moorefield #64, Kirby #134, Ridgeley #36, Capon Bridge #137 and Morgantown Unit #174! A special shout-out goes to Wheeling Unit #1, already at 60% before the next target date—11/10/2025, ALA Birthday!

Right now, our Starfish Districts (3, 5, 10) are slightly ahead of the Sand Dollar Districts (1, 4, 6). Let's keep up the friendly competition, reach out to the membership team if you need support, and continue moving forward together.

Laura Clark
Membership Chairman
membership@wvaux.org





Department Headquarters

Hei Hei



Mandatory Funds: (*Unit's General Fund*)- *Bonding (\$5.00), Education (Scholarship), & Girls State Project (any amount the unit can afford or wish to donate)*;

Unit's Welfare Fund - Veterans' Welfare Fund (any amount the unit can afford or wish to donate), & 10% of Poppy Proceeds. If your unit has a little extra money please consider donating to the Cheer Parties and Gift Shops.

THE UNIT'S MANDATORY FUNDS HAVE TO BE PAID TO KEEP THE UNIT IN GOOD STANDING WITH DEPARTMENT. IF YOU ARE UNSURE OF YOUR UNIT'S STATUS CALL THE OFFICE—Thank you

ALA MIS system—it is not mandated by National nor Department that a Unit **MUST** use the system. A Unit needs to make a request to Department for usage. The Department will take it under consideration whether the Unit will be give permission.

Reminder: If you wish to receive spirit by email, please send me your email to: **department@alawvaux.org**
If you wish to receive spirit by mail please fill out form on back, and send \$20.00 to the address listed.

Member dues are based on a member age on January 1 of the Membership year. (Example—A Junior member that is 17 on January 1, 2026 will be billed as a junior member for 2026 membership year. If she turns 18 after August 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025 she will changed to a Senior member for the 2026 membership year.

When you receive your new roster make note of any changes to your juniors

New members—when sending in a new application please make sure they are completed. If you are unable to read the new application, how am I suppose to read it. Please clarify illegible writing. **The ONLY time that the unit secretary can sign an application is when a female veteran is joining under herself—No Exceptions! Applications will be returned.**

Credits for Member Online Dues payment will go out in the next few days to the units.

Reminder—Constitution Article VIII, section 4—All Department officers, Department Executive Committee and Chairmen of Standing must be in good standing in their Units. Dues shall be paid to Department by **November 1st.**

Just a small note; Posts and Units may meet on the same day. They just do not hold their business sessions together.

REMINDER TO ALL DEPARTMENT OFFICERS and COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Spirit articles can not be any longer then **200** words. Single spacing and 10 fonts.

Due into Department by the **17th** of each month. Department President, Membership Chairman, Department Vice Presidents, and District Presidents and Vice Presidents will receive their target sheet on the 15th of each month.

Department Headquarters

Office Hours
Monday-Friday
9:00am-3:30pm
Lunch 12:00-12:30

Phone 304-398-2070
department@wvvaux.org

Department Address:
1251 Doolin Run Rd.
New Martinsville WV 26155

Department Website:
www.wvvaux.org

Rhododendron Girls State Website
www.wvgirlsstate.org

The American Legion
Department of WV
wvlegion@suddenlinkmail.com

American Legion Auxiliary
National Website
ALAforveterans.org

Winner Cash Drawing at Department Workshop was Nancy Frost. She donated back a portion of her winnings to Department President's Special Project, Project Pearl.

Hei Hei



Articrafts

1st District Vice President

Happy Fall District 1 members,

What a great time learning at the fall workshop in Bridgeport WV. Thank you President Kim Mellie for our continue education. There was a lot of information handed out.

We all can learn new ideas from each other, to continue to support our veterans.

Department adjusted membership goal for the 2025-2026 year to reflect 1% increase over last year. We can meet our goal by connecting with your current unit members by email or a phone call checking on them. You may even get a member to come to your unit meetings or wanting to volunteer to help in your fundraisers.

Let's make our next goal date of 11/10/2025 of 60% membership which is the "ALA Birthday."

I hope to see many of you at the 1st District Fall Conference in Weirton Unit #10 on October 25th, 2025.

"Service not Self"

Michelle Powell

1st District Vice President

304-639-5379

mythreelabs@comcast.net

5th District Vice President

If you were not in attendance at the Membership workshop this past weekend, you missed a great time with your fellow Auxiliary members! The room was packed, and the purse auction was the largest yet. Over \$2500 raised for President Kim's special projects.

The District 5 Fall Conference was held at the American Legion Post in Ceredo-Kenova (Unit 93) on September 20, 2025. Mutiple topics were discussed. Attendance at these meetings is a great networking tool for your Unit.

Department President Kim' vision for the year is "Ohana means family, family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten especially the men/women who fought for our freedom."

Consider all veterans and their families as your mission for the year!

Patti Withrow

District 5 Vice President

304-415-4686

3rd District Vice President

I hope everyone is doing well and working hard on Membership and keeping your Units informed on what all is happening within your Unit and Post.

As you can tell on the spread sheet, EVERYONE is off to a great start . District 3 Fall conference is October 3rd, looking forward to seeing everyone and catching up on what you all have going on .

November 10th is our next goal date, is the birthday of American Legion Auxiliary. I am sure we will have another successful spread sheet being posted at that time. So get ready Starfish for Us to keep the arrow pointing in our direction.

By honoring our Veterans and Military through meaningful service, the American Legion Auxiliary will grow in membership. We must let each Auxiliary member know they are the MOST VALUABLE ASSET!!

American Legion

Post174,Morgantown is having an Open House October 11th from 1pm to 5pm . Please stop by and visit with Us .

(This date was picked before we knew it was district meeting)

If I can help in anyway, please let me know .

Thank you

Sandra Harper

3rd District Vice President

Sandy.harper265@gmail.com



4th District Vice President

District 4 is on the move reaching membership goals! Membership isn't just a number, it's the heartbeat of our mission. Each new member means more hands to serve veterans, more voices to advocate for military families, and more energy to power our programs forward.

Think about the impact: when we bring in one new member, we don't just add a name to the roster, we add new ideas, fresh passion, and the chance to reach more veterans and communities. Every recruitment is an opportunity to share our story and invite someone to join something bigger than themselves.

We all know someone who has the heart to serve: a neighbor, a co-worker, a church friend, or even a family member who may not realize they are eligible. All it takes is a conversation and an invitation. Together, we can keep the mission alive, strong, and thriving.

District 4, let's push with all we've got. Our veterans and their families are counting on us. With every eligible soul, we secure the future of our Auxiliary. Let's shine bright, finish strong, and bring it home for District 4!

Every Member Matters! Every Voice Counts!

Rebecca Farley

10th District Vice President

Aloha Auxiliary 'Ohana!

Surf's up, ohana! We're riding the wave into another sunny, fun-filled membership year! Fall Workshop was totally ono (deliciously awesome), and even though I missed Fall Conference, I've heard it was amazing!

Let's keep the aloha flowing by reconnecting with past members and inspiring our juniors—the little surfers who'll carry our ohana forward. Every new connection adds another colorful seashell to our circle of aloha. Get creative! Hula nights, luau vibes, beachside socials, or tiki fun any idea that brings new members in is a win!

Mark your calendars: November 10th—birthday of the American Legion Auxiliary! Let's paddle out together toward our 60% membership goal. With teamwork, aloha spirit, sun-kissed smiles, and lots of laughter, we've got this, ohana!

Mahalo nui loa for all you do to keep our Auxiliary thriving and our hearts full of aloha!

Chantel Ricketts

District 10 Vice President

1st District President

October is "Education"/Constitution & Bylaws" month. Set up committees. Unit Committee Chairs should be selected and the completed form to be sent to Paulette by October 1st.

I want to wish everyone a safe and fun filled Halloween.

Keep up the great work on membership!

Attend your fall community events in Auxiliary attire and be seen! Always have an Auxiliary application to hand out.

District One Fall Conference will be held at Weirton Post #10, 3140 Pennsylvania Ave. Weirton on Saturday October 25th. Registration is 9:00-10:00am and the cost is \$10.00 each. I am looking forward to welcoming and meeting everyone.

November is Membership/Public Relations Month.

Mary Richards

First District President

6th District President

Hello Everyone

Hope you are ready to start working on membership.

I am sorry if you missed the workshop, A lot of information was given out so next year maybe you can attend.

If I can help anyone with membership just let me know and I will be glad to help.

I am your Department 2nd Vice President and my District are 1,4 and 6. So please let me know if you need help.

I didn't put in the Spirit last month that Sixth District meeting will be at the First Christian Church, 2200 Bland Road, Bluefield, WV.

Please 6th if you need help on membership please ask and I will help.

So, until next time lets say a prayer for everyone.

Peggy Swartz

6th District President

3rd District President

Hello Ladies,

We missed seeing a lot of faces Saturday, September 13, at the Fall Workshop at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bridgeport. You missed a very good meeting and a very good meal provided by our Department President Kim. Our guest speaker was Jay Trickett, with his bird dog Pearl, he spoke on raising hunting dogs for Veterans.

Okay, ladies we are off to a slow start in getting our dues in, only about 2 or 3 met the first goal of 65%. National is supposed to have sent out the first notices September 15th, so let's work hard to get the dues in.

If you have not sent your list of officers and chairmen into Paulette, please do so. Also drop me a copy so that I know who the President and Secretary are. Don't forget that your mandatory funds are also due.

Fall Conference for Third District will be October 11, 2025 at Roy E. Parrish Post 13 in Clarksburg. More to come in the next week or so.

If you need any help, please let me or Sandy Harper know.

For God and Country

Margaret Yost

Third District President

304-629-06

4th District President

District Four will hold a Fall Conference on October 4, 2025, at Point Pleasant Post 23 located at 100 – 2nd Street, Point Pleasant, WV. Registration will be from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. Meetings will begin at 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be served immediately following the meetings. We hope to see all members of the Post, Auxiliary, Sons of the Legion and Legion Riders.

The membership theme of Department President Kim Millie is "Our Mission Matters to Navigate Life's Waters." Her theme is "Ohana" which means family and family means no one gets left behind.

District Four membership is growing steadily. National sends out membership renewals. We can increase membership by calling and visiting members and sending out auxiliary renewals. You can also send e-mail reminders. Always carry a membership application with you.

Thank you for all you do for our Veterans. If you love your Freedom, Thank a Veteran.

Patsy Greiner

4th District President

304-483-8296 (cell)

patsygirl2@gmail.com

5th District President

Happy Fall Everyone,

It was awesome to see everyone at Membership Training and at District 5 Meeting in Ceredo-Kenova Post 93. I want to thank the Auxiliary for hosting this and serving delicious food.

If you missed membership training you missed a lot of fun.

Please make sure your unit boing is paid for. It's \$5 for this and is part of the mandatory funds. Also, make sure you have sent your officers form that has everyone's name and contact information to Paulette at the office.

At Membership Training and at District meeting, you were informed that National has changed some things. One is Bylaws. Please watch the Spirit for these changes. If you don't get the Spirit, please let Paulette know so she can put you on the email mailing list.

Also if you use fliers to promote your activities make sure you put your unit number on them and take good quality pictures to show what you are doing. We want to show that West Virginia rocks for our veterans.

Please contact me if you have any questions. We are here for you and your unit. We want to showcase our state.

Thank you for all you do.

Lisa Harbour-Adkins

wvbravesfan@gmail.com

10th District President

District 10, I sure hope everyone is accepting membership and getting them in. Remember you do not have to wait until they receive their notice from National. Don't forget mandatory funds will be due soon.

I want to Thank everyone in Department for such a wonderful Workshop. Thank you Kim Mellie for making sure we all know just how appreciated we are. With that being said, I would like to Thank Everyone in each unit, your hard work does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. We all strive to do something special or extra for our veterans. Thank you.

Thank you to each that came to District 10 Conference, we had a blast and it was very informative. Remember I am here if you need me, my phone number is 540-303-6907 and my email is pits_me1@yahoo.com.

I sure hope that we remember no one is perfect and be kind in letting someone know what is correct, be sure you have documentation to show someone. I would like for everyone to get a long and agree to disagree at times. We have enough going on in the world that is negative, lets take a positive approach on disagreeing. We should love what we are doing because the veterans did not care to give up their life for us.

Thank you
District 10 President
Jill Davis

NEC

Lots of changes to governing document came out at National Convention. Some impact members and Units. Once National published updates, I will share so you can see exact wording. Touching on a few in my articles and on the Department Facebook page.

Standing Rules XI. Units, #7 **A Unit member within the same unit can challenge the membership eligibility of a current member or a person being considered for membership. This was removed.**

Standing Rules XI. Units, #10, This wording from #10 has been **removed. Disciplinary actions against members, including membership suspensions, are not appealable to the National Organization.**

National Constitution Article III. Eligibility. **Title Rename from Membership & added sections:**

****Section 3. A member whose dues are paid up-to-date and who is not subject to suspension or expulsion shall be considered in good standing and the member shall be entitled to full membership rights, privileges, and benefits in the Unit.**

****Section 4. Each unit of the ALA, except department headquarters units, has the authority to decide its membership and shall be responsible for verifying eligibility of prospective members, transfer or new.**

****Section 6. Membership can only be offered upon an affirmative vote of the unit members unless is in Unit by-laws (unsure of exact wording from unless)**

Lisa Cadwallader
Lisac.ala71@gmail.com

Americanism



Just in case you didn't know:
In the event that lowering your Flag to half-staff is not feasible, a black mourning ribbon or material streamer attached to the top of the flag servers as an appropriate expression of respect. For flags affixed to the house or indoor flag sets, the ribbon should be black, corresponding to the size of a stripe on the flag, and secured to the staff beneath the spearhead or ornament, with the ribbon (s) flowing freely.

I hope you all have had a chance to read through the material passed at Membership conference. If you did not attend and would like it, please send me your email address and I will get it sent back to you.

The Americanism Essay title this year **"Celebrating American's 250th Birthday and the Veterans who Fought for Our Freedom"**. Please have Essay's returned to me by **March 20th, 2026**, to get them sent to Central Division by April 15th, 2026, by :

Email: sandy.harper265@gmail.com or mailing them to my address: **298 Aarons Creek Road Morgantown, WV 26508**

Please, if you have any questions just reach out.

Thank you,
Sandra Harper
Americanism Chair 2025-2026

Constitution & Bylaws

As we start a new year, lets all look over our Constitution and Bylaws. The Constitution and Bylaws program informs and educates members of the American Legion Auxiliary on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed and updated documents, policies and procedures at all levels.

Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules are the basis for governance of your Department, District, and Unit. Other governing documents include your Articles of Incorporation (if incorporated) and Policies (e.g., Financial, Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Youth Protection and Whistleblower). The more we commit to writing, the less questions and misunderstandings will develop later.

Preparing and adhering to updated Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules will ensure a more successful organizational process and, provide the structures to follow at all levels of our organization. You can always look at your National Constitution, Bylaws an Standing Rules handbook which you can purchase at Emblem Sales.

As Department chairman and members we will be glad to look over your Units Constitution and Bylaws.

Michelle Powell
Constitution and Bylaws Chairman
304-639-5379
mythreelabs@comcast.net

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Fellow Auxiliary Members,

Does your family know what to do when a disaster strikes? Readiness starts at home. Create an emergency plan today by establishing meeting points, assigning responsibilities, practicing evacuation routes and creating a communication plan.

If I can be of assistance to you or your Unit in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Blessings,
Melanie Shambaugh
AEF Chairman
sham4wv@aol.com

Child and Well-Being Fund

Wow, did I have a wonderful time at the workshop this past weekend so much fun, but left there with our "PIG" upset with me. I knew he was getting hungry, but was having so much fun that I forgot all about that.

If you have money to donate to the Child Well Being Fund, you can either send it to me or Paulette in the department office.

I don't like seeing our pig lose weight because it is not being fed.

I thank you and all the children at benefits will thank you.

Beth Kilgore
Chairman



Community Service

It was great seeing everyone at fall boards and having a fun weekend.

October is a great time to get out into the community with all of the fall festivities & Halloween. I'm sure a lot of us are planning our veterans day services. Remember to count the hours for planning for the events and take pictures.

Blessings
Kelli Immel
kitbasket@hotmail.com

Children & Youth

We are in fall with a vengeance. Now it's the time to be thinking about any holiday party you have coming up.

Please send me pictures of your events so I can send them onto international. Be sure to keep track of your hours and monies spent.

Try to think outside the box when you are planning your activities. I have several suggestions of things that you can do to your parties. Get in touch with me if you need some help or ideas.

National is requesting that we have at least one good deed award and one youth hero award for each state. I know you are very good about submitting these awards. I not sure where to look for those deserving youth, keep an eye on Facebook, all social media apps. And your local newspaper.

I am here if you need me, please give me a call. You can reach me at. 304-654-7750 or 3609 mbk@gmail.com

Beth Kilgore
Chairman

Education

Fall is in the air. School has started and I saw where many units were collecting school supplies. Please take pictures and include the following the unit name and number, what you are promoting, and where. Please take pictures of when you give the Give 10 certificates. This is part of the awards for national.

Another requirement is American Education Week which is November 17-21. You can download from the national site blank thank you cards to fill out and give to teachers or schools. Again take pictures showing us what you are doing. National wants us to include pictures with our reports. They want to see how we are promoting not only the Give 10 and American Education Week, but scholarships and Veterans in the schools.

Veterans Day is next month so it's not too early to see about getting a veteran in the schools.

All information for these programs is on **legion-aux.org**.

Junior members are our future. If you know a current auxiliary member that was a junior and is in college, the auxiliary has a scholarship for them called Member Loyalty Scholarship. Deadline for all scholarships is March 31.

If I can be any help, please feel free to contact me.

Lisa Harbour-Adkins
wvbravesfan@gmail.com

Junior Activities

I am so proud of our West Virginia Juniors. We had an outstanding Fall Conference at Bridgeport, WV, this past weekend. Special thanks to all the wonderful senior members who helped make this an unforgettable event.

President Kim Mellie and Team 23 provided the means for the Juniors to present the Military Child's Table Setting Ceremony during the Senior Members' meeting. The girls did a wonderful job.

The Juniors made a patriotic craft for Veterans in local nursing homes.

Thanks to Lynda Lancaster-Loyd for teaching us how to correctly assemble poppies. The girls made 25 beautiful poppies! The best part of this project was the joy and love the girls put into every poppy they made. Just listening to the sound of their laughter and conversation as they worked made it even more special.

Thanks to every Senior member of the American Legion Auxiliary for their support and guidance. We are fortunate to have such Patriotic membership!

Seniors, keep up the great work you do with our junior members. They are the future generation of America.
God Bless our Veterans and their Families.
Patsy Greiner



Leadership

Leadership isn't just about titles or positions, it's about influence, inspiration, and action. Did you know that some of the greatest leaders in history shared surprising qualities?

Leaders are readers! Studies show that most top leaders read at least one book a week. Learning never stops when you lead. Listening is a superpower. Leaders who actively listen build stronger teams and more trust than those who only talk. Confidence is contagious. When a leader believes in a mission, others are more likely to follow with energy and enthusiasm. Small actions matter. Research reveals that simple acts, like saying thank you, are among the most effective ways leaders boost morale.

Anyone can lead. Leadership isn't tied to age, rank, or experience. History is full of young leaders and unexpected heroes who stepped forward when needed.

The American Legion Auxiliary thrives because members across our Department step up with their own talents, courage, and creativity. Leadership looks different for each of us, but every effort counts. Whether you chair a program, organize an event, or simply encourage someone else, you are leading.

Remember: leadership is not about being in charge, it's about bringing out the best in others!

Stay tuned for the roll out of the Lead with Purpose Workshop series.

Rebecca Farley

Music

My Plan of Works will be on the website, when President Kim gets it uploaded. Please look it over and start keeping information on what all you do for music this year. Use music at your meetings, either by singing, or listening to it on a cd.

Be creative using Hawaiian music in your events. Submit a short video doing something special. Put on those grass skirts and do a Hulu! Have a luau, and don't forget the music.

Paulette Anderson
Music Chairman



Legislative

Every Voice Matters! Tell Congress What You Think!

This is a phrase you will be hearing from me a lot this year. It is my Legislative motto for the year. While at the American Legion National Convention Legislative Commission Meeting, I had the opportunity to take part in some hands-on training. The very top of the training materials state: "Your voice matters. Meeting with your elected officials ensures The American Legion's priorities are heard directly by those in power. Whether it's protecting VA health care or defending our nation's flag, these meetings are key to shaping veteran-friendly policy."

Emailing through the Grassroots Action Center is also a great way to make your voice heard. Here you will be adding your voice to other Auxiliary members around WV, the Country, and the World.

The week of September 5th, WV was 4th of 55 Departments in emails sent that week to Congress. No one member can do it alone, together we can do anything.

"The single raindrop never feels responsible for the flood." Let each email be a raindrop in the flood of Grassroots Action Center emails sent from West Virginia to Congress.

Quote by Douglas Adams

Elaine Sampson
Legislative Chair
sampsonem@yahoo.com

Public Relations

Let's start the 2026 American Legion Auxiliary year with setting up a Facebook page for your Unit or District if you do not have one already! Please send me a FB request to join your group (new or existing) so I can see what you are posting. I'm listed as Patti Randolph Withrow.

Every event you host, every service you participate in, and every veteran organization we support should be documented and shared. Please make sure everyone gives you permission to use their photos online!

Facebook Groups are spaces on the social media network for ALA members to discuss or share news and topics related to each unit. Individual groups provide an arena for organic discussion about your local programs or services and present the opportunity to cultivate brand awareness. Visit the Public Relations Facebook Group for templates, how-to sheets, ideas, and more.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALAPublicRelations/>
Patti Withrow
Public Relations Chairman
304-415-4686

Poppy

HOW WILL YOU PROMOTE THE POPPY

It is important that members and especially those who are distributing the poppies know the history of the poppy. All members need to tell people about the poppy. Use the Flanders Field explanation and give a copy of the poem to the public.

Be present during civic events. Go to farmers markets and other gathering places—**HAND OUT POPPIES** at events to make the community aware of the poppy.

(IMPORTANT: You are not offering the poppies for a donation—you are giving them away and explaining their meaning and history. The purpose is to educate the public so when you have your Poppy Day, they will respond.

Attend parades and events recognizing veterans. Hand out Happy Veterans Day cards to veterans. Show veterans you care! Try to schedule school programs on Veterans Day. Use the ALA Poppy Coloring book, Miss Poppy, and encourage students to make poppy posters.

In 2026 the USA will be celebrating 250 years! Units are encouraged to display 250 poppies in their American Legion posts; get 250 names of veterans on a Wall of Honor; and raise \$250 for the welfare fund to benefit veterans.
Shirley Davis
Poppy Chairman



If you missed workshop, missed a very fun and informative workshops! One of the best!

Let's talk about the annual **Comfort Drive** we do at Mid-winter. During our E-Board meeting, it was announced by Lynda Lancaster-Loyd and Ann Buchanan had received complaints that some Units were not near a local VAMC's and that some Units wanted to donate laundry powder for the West Virginia Veterans homes. The last few years I have strongly encouraged taking to your local VA, even if that VA is in a neighboring state, it counts! I still strongly encourage taking your comfort drive items to your local VAMC's and CBOC. I've never indicated those wanting to give laundry powder to the West Virginia Veterans homes or those who might have to travel hours to a local VA cannot bring to mid-winter. Yes, you can. The idea is to cut down the amount that is hauled in, only to be taken right back to the same area's. Department Secretary, Paulette indicated in the meeting there have been years finding someone to haul several boxes back has been difficult. She also indicated it is not up to the VA&R chairman to locate people to haul. That it is up to the cheer party chairman to locate someone to haul back to your VAMC. The Comfort drive room is normally on the schedule to open at 8 am Friday. I normally come on Friday. I am 5 to 6 hours away and cannot leave till after dropping my dogs off at the boarders Friday. assuming I'm on the road by 9:30, and have no travel problems, I will not arrive until 2:30-3:30. I will be available in the room after I check in and unload. All items (checks, and in-kind donations) need to be in the room by noon Saturday. This allows enough time to sort, figure amount of in-kind donations and tally check donations. I will need cheer party chairs to provide me with who will be hauling your VA items by Thursday before leaving for mid-winter. I also need cheer party chairs to send me a list of what your VA and West Virginia Veterans home needs by November 12th, so I can you the listings in both December and January newsletters. If you have questions, recommendations or even complaints, please come to me, not someone else. I am willing to work with you to try to accommodate what is needed.

During workshop a new design for the VA Hospital Volunteer and Service to Veterans pins were displayed and votes cast either on the new design or the original pins. It appears for the Hospital pins, the heart design took the lead. For service to Veterans it tied between the heart and angel design. It was approved at the E Board to go with a new design pin. Since I'm still pricing and getting proofs, the E Board will decide once I have all options. I know I owe pins for the 2024-2025 year. Please be patient, while we work through this. You will receive them.

Lisa Cadwallader
Lisac.ala71@gmail.com
VA&R Chair

Please come share in the fun!

**My Homecoming will be
November 1st Social at 5 and
Dinner 6-8pm
Post 31 Legion Family
76 Bridge Street
Shinnston, WV 26431**

**Tickets will be on sale for \$20
Veterans are free!**

**Please rsvp by text to
304-216-9943**

October 2025

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	Wear R.E.D Until They Come Home		1	2	3	4 4th District Fall Conf Pt. Pleasant #23
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 3rd District Fall Conf. Clarksburg #13
12	13 Columbus Day	14	15 Target Sheet	16	17 Articles Due	18
19	20	21 Spirit Out Cheer Party Checks Out	22	23	24	25 1st District Fall Conf. Weirton #19
26	27	28	29	30	31 	



American Legion Auxiliary WV Rhododendron Girls State

Rhododendron Girls State

Happy Fall Ya'll—

The 2026 Girls State program will be held June 7-13, 2026 at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, WV. Once again the registration fee will be \$ 300 per citizen.

What an amazing opportunity you provide these citizens to witness from the time they arrive until they leave. They find themselves more engaged in leadership, patriotism and being an informed citizen and many new friends around the state.

We look forward to providing another great and successful session.

It is not too early to contact your school principals and counselors. Introduce yourself and let them know what our extraordinary program is all about. Start securing the funding now and you may have share sponsorships per citizen.

If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me or your district representative.

Lynda Lancaster Loyd
Girls State Chairman



District Representatives

1st Dist. — Susan Brown
2172 Grandview Rd.
Moundsville WV 26041
304-845-5122

3rd Dist. — Mary Jo Thomas
279 Rock Lake Road
Fairmont WV 26554
304-366-2912

4th Dist. — Cathy Post
308 Main Street
Middlebourne, WV 26149
304-758-5114

5th Dist.— Ann Buchanan
105 Cheyenne Trail
Ona WV 25505
304-654-9932

6th Dist. — Peggy Swartz
P O Box 124
Gary WV 24836
304-448-2394

10th Dist.— Debbie Fox
874 Longview Drive
Berkeley Springs, WV 25411
304-258-5804

Ways and Means

2026 Department Fundraiser tickets were at the Fall Workshop. Several units took some, but they are still a lot to give out.

I will be having them at Fall Conferences that I attend, 6th and 1st District.

If units or members need them mailed out, PLEASE send me an email and I will get them to you.

I don't want the confusion with getting a new account to keep you from getting anyone to purchase new tickets.

All ticket holders for 2025 have been mailed out up to August.

If you have anyone who has contacted you regarding their ticket winnings, please have them call the office at 304-398-2070.

There are about 5=\$25.00 winners in the old account that haven't cashed their checks. If they contact you, please have them contact me so I can reissue them another check from the new account.

UPDATE: Last month spirit heading for winners still showed for June, when it should read July winners.

Paulette Anderson
Christy Bland



August 2025 Ways and Means Winners

Name	#'s	City	State	Date	\$\$\$
Kathy Haynes	644	Petersburg	WV	8/1/25	25.00
	471			8/2/25	
Diane Robbins	289	Wheeling	WV	8/4/25	25.00
Sandy Smith	935	Augusta	WV	8/5/25	25.00
Colton Young	852	Old Fields	WV	8/6/25	25.00
Melissa Landis	096	Augusta	WV	8/7/25	25.00
	544			8/8/25	
Cormac Quinn	355	Charles Town	WV	8/9/25	25.00
Collin Rack	314	Upperplade	WV	8/11/25	25.00
Jerry Duncan Jr.	871	Elbert	WV	8/12/25	25.00
Bill Haggerty	163	Purgitsville	WV	8/13/25	25.00
Yvonne Sentner	302	Pittsburgh	PA	8/14/25	25.00
Elisa Letterman	905	Romney	WV	8/15/25	25.00
Stephanie McKinney	001	Bluefield	VA	8/16/25	25.00
Michelle Bunda	559	Harpers Ferry	WV	8/18/25	25.00
Robert Bennington	101	Bluefield	WV	8/19/25	25.00
Jim Auer	991	Augusta	WV	8/20/25	200.00
Iris Jean Duckwall	412	Berkeley Springs	WV	8/21/25	25.00
Wayne Floyd	890	Charles Town	WV	8/22/25	25.00
Miles Epling (Tommy)	422	Pt. Pleasant	WV	8/23/25	25.00
PDP Club	048	New Martinsville	WV	8/25/25	25.00
C J Bell	453	Romney	WV	8/26/25	25.00
Lenny Cooley	714	Welch	WV	8/27/25	25.00
Jenny Hansen	216	Kearneysville	WV	8/28/25	25.00
Noralee Condon	952	Kearneysville	WV	8/29/25	25.00
Mary Allen	994	Cameron	WV	8/30/25	25.00



OUR MISSION MATTERS to NAVIGATE LIFE's WATERS



First Target Date 09/15/2025

Department Goal 4672— Membership to Date— 841 18.00%
Department Unit 200 Goal 149— Membership to Date— 27



Peggy



Stephanie

District 1			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Wheeling #1	28	17	60.71%
Moundsville #3	260		23.08%
McMechen #5	12		
Weirton #10	71	10	14.08%
Cameron #18	118	2	01.69%
New Martinsville #28	107	41	38.32%
Wellsburg #34	21	1	04.76%
Follansbee #45	59	4	06.77%
Pine Grove #81	60	1	0.17%
Paden City #86	67	24	35.82%
Wheeling #89	10	1	10.00%
Newell #114	19	2	10.53%
Chester #121	122	4	03.28%
TOTALS	954	167	17.51%



**Starfish
Goal— 2460
To Date—495
20.12%**

**Membership
Chairman
Maui**



Sand Dollars

**Goal 2063
To Date 319
15.46%**



District 3			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Buckhannon #7	45	21	46.67%
Clarksburg #13	41	7	17.07%
Elkins #29	98	3	03.06%
Shinnston #31	253	65	25.69%
Braxton County #33	30		
Bridgeport #68	93	13	3.98%
Belington #96	11		
Pickens #122	18		
Morgantown #174	132	45	34.09%
TOTALS	721	153	21.22%

District 5			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Huntington #16	127	41	46.67%
Logan #19	12		
Charleston #20	15	4	26.67%
St. Albans #73	31	16	51.61%
Ceredo-Kenova #93	199	11	05.53%
So. Charleston #94	10	1	10.00%
Hamlin #111	40	1	02.50%
Milton #139	67	6	08.95%
Barboursville #177	152	20	13.16%
TOTALS	653	100	15.31%

District 10			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Martinsburg #14	67	15	22.39%
Piedmont #52	20		
Berkeley Springs #60	199	51	25.63%
Charles Town #63	34		
Moorefield #64	86	31	37.21%
Charles Town #71	127	29	22.83%
Petersburg #78	63	4	06.35%
Romney #91	137	14	10.22%
Paw Paw #128	33	2	6.06%
Kirby #134	28	7	25.00%
Ridgeley #136	66	17	25.76%
Capon Bridge #137	198	68	34.34%
Keyser #152	28	3	10.71%
Totals	1086	242	22.28%

District 4			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Parkersburg #15	380	43	11.32%
Spencer #21	22	6	27.27%
Pt. Pleasant #23	236	28	11.86%
Tyler County #48	37	1	02.70%
Sistersville #67	42	6	14.29%
New Haven #140	110	4	03.64%
Williamstown #159	78	12	15.38%
TOTALS	905	100	11.05%

District 6			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Welch #8	40	11	30.00%
Bluefield #9	18		
Beckley #32	12		
Gary #38	87	38	43.68%
Cowen #62	21	3	14.29%
Richwood #97	26		
TOTALS	204	52	25.49%

The American Legion Department Commander Rich Crumm Invites you to his Homecoming
Saturday October 25th, 2025
Benwood Post #46
412 Water St
Benwood WV



Social Hour 6-7:00 pm
Dinner 7:00 pm

Menu: Baked Chicken Breast with Cream Sauce, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Salad,
Dinner Roll, Half and Half Cake with Whipped Icing

Cost: \$20.00 Includes one drink ticket

Mail checks to: Rich Crumm
10 Cherokee Drive
Moundsville, WV 26041-1030
RSVP by October 1, 2025
Phone: 304-281-8200
Post: 304-232-4798

The SPIRIT is emailed to all **Unit Contacts** and any **Unit Officers or member** with an email address, and has asked for the Spirit to be emailed to them.

All Department Officers, Department Chairmen, District Presidents/Vice Presidents, Past Department Presidents with email addresses. Spirits are posted monthly on the website: www.wvvaux.org Unit Presidents **with no email contact** will receive a free copy by mail.

***Subscription will Cost \$20.00
Starting with 25-26 Year
Runs August through July Each Year***

MAIL TO:

**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of West Virginia
1251 Doolin Run Rd.
New Martinsville WV 26155**

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS OR PO BOX: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIP: _____