



AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

The Auxiliary Spirit



The American Legion Family



Volume 40

December 2025

Issue 5



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

Hello, wonderful Auxiliary family!

Although we didn't quite reach our 60% goal by the ALA Birthday, let's keep the positive momentum going!

A huge [congratulations](#) to **Paden City Unit 86** for reaching an incredible 107.25%! Outstanding work!

We also have many Units making strong progress:

District 1: 5 Units

District 4: 1 Unit (Williamstown 159)

District 6: 3 Units

District 3: 7 Units

District 5: 2 Units

District 10: 6 Units

All of these Units have reached **60% or more**—keep up the fantastic pace!

I've created a map showing our great state and all Units compared to their Posts. I'll be posting it on social media soon. After reviewing the numbers, I was surprised by how many Posts—**42** of them—do not currently have an Auxiliary Unit. If any of these Posts would like help starting a new Unit, please reach out. I would love to Charter one (or even several!) new Units. We may also want to consider partnering with neighboring counties to generate more interest and expand our reach.

The **Program Engagement Plans** are up and running! Visit [wvaux.org](#) and click on **Programs** for details.

The **Past Department Presidents list** has also been updated through the present.

DEC members: Please watch for my email and link with important upcoming information.

Starfish Units—wonderful job!

Sand Dollars—I'd love to see you catch up with them!

Remember, **Mid-Winter Conference** is right around the corner. Make your room reservations and come join the fun! Plans for **Pam Ray's visit** are also underway—more details soon.

As always, please remember that while we all have different perspectives, our shared purpose—**to serve veterans, military, and their families**—should guide us to approach challenges with patience and understanding. You never know what someone else may be going through. A calm, compassionate approach strengthens our teamwork and reminds us why we joined this amazing organization in the first place.

For God and Country,

Kim Mellie

Department President

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of WV

304-216-9943

president@aux.org





Our Mission matters to Navigate Life's Waters

Department 1st Vice President

Greetings Starfish,

I hope everyone is ready for the holidays.

I would like to congratulate Buckhannon for reaching **100% goal**. Way to go!!

Starfish, you are doing great with membership. Keep up the good work so we can reach our goals.

District Presidents please reach out to the units who have no or low membership.

With the holiday season approaching, this time of the year is also a good time to connect with members and potential members with holiday functions or events taking place in your communities.

Wishing everyone Happy Holidays
Stephanie Handley



Department 2nd Vice President

Hello Sand Dollars

We are still behind but I think we can catch up with a phone call or two.

Come last of December we are going to be in arrears. So keep up the good work. I am pulling for you.

Love to all

Peggy Swartz

Department 2nd Vice President



Chaplain

There is one word that has the power to transform everything we do in the American Legion Auxiliary, **LOVE**. Not a sentimental love, but a steadfast, intentional love the kind that chooses compassion over criticism, unity over division, and understanding over assumption.

Love changes the way we serve. When our actions are rooted in love, our service becomes more than a task to complete, it becomes a gift we offer from the heart.

Love softens our approach and strengthens our purpose. It reminds us that behind every program, every project, and every veteran or family we support, there is a human being who deserves to feel seen, valued, and uplifted.

Love also changes the way we communicate with one another. In a world where hurried words and quick reactions are common, love invites us to pause. It encourages us to listen more deeply, to speak with kindness, and to remember that each of us carries joys and burdens that may not be visible. Love allows room for grace when misunderstandings arise. It restores connection where frustration may try to take root.

As Auxiliary members, we are called to be a light. When we let love guide our tone, our leadership, and our interactions, that light grows stronger. Our units become more resilient. Our teamwork becomes more joyful. And our mission becomes more powerful.

May we choose love, in our service, in our speech, and in every moment, we have the privilege to care for one another.

Rebecca S Farley
Chaplain@wvaux.org
304-674-9908



Membership Chairman

Membership Milestone Celebration!

Congratulations to more than 20 units for reaching the 60% Target Date by the 106th ALA Birthday on November 10th! Your dedication to renewals and new memberships is truly commendable.

Special applause to Paden City Unit 86 and Buckhannon Unit 7, which have already achieved 100% of their goals—amazing work!

Top Units by District:

- 1st: Paden City Unit 86 – 113.43% (Highest in Department!)
- 3rd: Buckhannon Unit 7 – 100%
- 4th: Williamstown Unit 159 – 67.95%
- 5th: St. Albans Unit 73 – 67.74%
- 6th: Bluefield Unit 9 – 94.44%
- 10th: Kirby Unit 134 – 82.14%

Starfish vs. Sand Dollars: Starfish lead with 59.91%, while Sand Dollars follow closely at 56.71%. Keep pushing—every member counts!

Next Target Date: March 15 (TAL Birthday) – Goal: 85%. Many units are already on track, and together we'll surpass expectations.

Let's keep the momentum going! Every member matters, and united, we can achieve incredible things for veterans, families, and communities.

Ohana Means Family!

Laura Clark (aka Maui)

Call/Text: 304-939-3607



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.

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.

Please use the department email address and phone number for all correspondence, as my personal email and phone number is no longer used for department.

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@wvaux.org

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

Department Website:
www.wvaux.org

Rhododendron Girls State Website
www.wvgirlsstate.org

The American Legion
Department of WV
wvlegion@suddenlinkmail.com

American Legion Auxiliary
National Website
ALAforveterans.org

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

Directory Updates:

Page 8: Central Division VP should be Rosemarie Hauck
Page 9: Susan Wade street address is changed to: 731 N. 4th Ave. Rest is okay
Heather Fauble street is Snow Shoe Ct.
Rest is okay
Page 27:Follansbee #45: Delete email
Page 28: Paden City: add Susan Wade as Treasurer
Page 29: Newell #114 Delete Mailing Address; add email: legionaux114@yahoo.com
Add President Michelle Stevens, 516 Haskas, Newell WV 26050 330-385-0141, Tina Quintin as both Secretary-Treasurer.
Paw Paw #128: Delete Email and add Mail to: ALA Paw Paw Unit #128, PO Box 608, Paw Paw WV 25434
Page 30: New Haven #140: Bonnie Williams address: 48375 Morning Star Rd.
Racine OH 45771
Heather Roush address: PO Box 83
New Haven WV 25265
Keyser #152 address for Kimberly Rolls
115 Chestnut Street, Keyser WV 26726

2026 Gift Shops Dates:

Beckley VA
Clarksburg VA-Dec 4th & 5th
Huntington VA
Martinsburg VA-Dec 5th



Articrafts

Hei Hei

1st District Vice President

Hello Team District 1,

It was very nice seeing a lot of units at Weirton Unit #10 on October 25th for the 1st District Fall Conference. Thank you Kim Mellie and Mary Richards for a great conference.

I am sorry I didn't get to make it to Kim Mellie's Homecoming. I am sure everyone had a wonderful time who attended.

Hope you all are working hard meeting your membership goals. I see Paden City Unit #89 has made goal of 113.43%. Congratulations Paden City! McMechen Unit #5 and New Martinsville Unit #28 you both are very close to getting your 100%.

I have reached out to several units already. If you need help, please don't hesitate to ask. Remind your members they will be delinquent at the end of the year!

Remember membership makes a great present for the holidays and helps our veterans too. Have a blessed holiday season!

Michelle Powell
1st District Vice President
304-639-5379
mythreelabs@comcast.net

3rd District Vice President

Merry Christmas to Everyone, it is one of my favorite times of the year.

What better way to have extra Christmas spirit than to be able to share making membership grow and reach goals, By renewing your dues, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS INTO OUR UNITS WITH OPEN ARMS AND WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN TO THEIR NEW AND AMAZING IDEAS.

By growing in all these ways we can continue our mission in helping our Veterans and Military.

KEEP UP THE HARD WORK!

The target sheets speak volumes! Christmas is also a great time to look out for our Veterans, not all have Family.

Please share your Units stories, it is awesome to learn from everyone. Make sure to include your Juniors and young Sons members in reaching out to our Veterans, they light up when the kids are around.

December 7th: Pearl Harbor Day
December 13th: Wreaths Across America, also the 126th Army-Navy Football Game
December 20th: Space Force Birthday

Thank you
Sandra Harper
VP District 3

4th District Vice President

I want to take a moment to cheer you on and lift your spirits as we push forward in our membership goals. This is the time to lean in, reach out, and remind our members that their membership matters to their unit, to our mission, and to our veterans.

No matter where your unit stands today, do not get discouraged. Every unit is different. Your goals were set specifically for the size of your unit. Every unit in District 4 has an achievable path to success. And as your VP, I believe we can meet and exceed those goals. The size of your unit does not define your potential. What defines you is your willingness to take action. So, let's take action together.

If you haven't seen a member in a while, give them a call. If you haven't heard from them, reach out with a warm reminder. A simple message like, "We miss you" can truly make a difference. Sometimes all a member needs is to know that someone noticed they're not there.

And as we enter the season of giving, consider something special: Why not give the gift of membership to someone in your unit? Covering someone's dues, especially a member who has been struggling or drifting away, can be a beautiful gesture of encouragement and belonging.

Let's rally. Let's encourage. Let's make those calls.

District 4 can do this!! Let's chase 100% across the Department!

Merry Christmas to you all!

Rebecca S Farley
District 4 VP
dccoachrebecca@gmail.com
304-674-9908

10th District Vice President

Happy Holidays, 'Ohana!

It's the season of **aloha, gratitude, and giving!** As we celebrate under the twinkling lights and tropical breezes, let's remember to share our blessings with those who've given so much—our Military, Veterans, and their families.

Let's make this holiday season shine with kindness, connection, and aloha. Together, we can wrap our Military Veterans, and our members in love and appreciation—because that's the true spirit of the season.

One of the most heartwarming gifts you can give this season is a **paid membership** in our amazing **American Legion Auxiliary**. By inviting others to join, we grow our circle of aloha and strengthen our mission of *Service, not Self*.

A big **mahalo** to all our Units who have already reached and surpassed the **60% membership goal for November 10th!** Your dedication truly sparkles. Remember those still working towards your goals we know you are working hard and your efforts are appreciated. Now let's keep that festive spirit rolling as we surf toward our next goal—**80% by March 15th, the birthday of The American Legion!**

District 10 Vice President
Chantel Rickets



1st District President

District 1 Fall Conference was held on October 25, 2025 at Weirton Unit #10. We had a wonderful turnout and were very happy to welcome everyone. Congratulations, Unit 10. You hosted a wonderful conference, and it was noted by many.

District 1 Membership is looking wonderful. Paden City #86 Beautiful Job at 113.43%. Several with the 60% goal and higher.

District 1 Spring Conference is going to be held at Chester WV Unit #121. Details will certainly develop and be shared with all as the time nears.

A beautiful Christmas tree, 6 ft tall. 3' across at the bottom. The tree is white and it is decorated in Americana ornaments. A photograph of the tree is being sent to the president of each District 1 Unit and can be seen on Mary Richards Facebook. There is only 100 tickets being sold. The tree is completely decorated, wrapped in cellophane and is stored in a non smoking home. Tickets are available by contacting District 1 officers Mary Richards, Michelle Powell and Christy Bland.

Everyone have a safe and joyous Thanksgiving. Remember all at home and abroad.

Mary Richards
District 1 President
Service Not Self

3rd District President

Hello Ladies of Third District,

Hope this dreary days find you all well.

From the target sheet for the 10th I see alt but two units made the 60% target goal. I also understand that Morgantown 174 made goal this past week.

Congratulations Ladies!! The rest of us need to get busy.

I want to remind the ladies that the Gift Shop at the VA Hospital is 12/4-12/5 all help will be appreciated. They are also planning a 75th birthday party for the VA Hospital on 12/3/25 starting at 4:00pm.

Until next time, have a Happy Thanksgiving.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY
Margaret Yost
Third District President
304-629-0688



4th District President

Hello All,

Congratulations to Williamstown Unit #159 for attaining the Target membership goal. On November 10, 2025, Williamstown was at 67.95% in membership! Parkersburg #15 is close behind at 57.63%. New Haven #140 is at 52.73% and Pt. Pleasant #23 is at 52.12%.

These next few weeks will be busy for all members. Please remember to visit Veterans in local nursing homes, hospitals, and rehab facilities. Veterans do get lonely over the holidays. Cards, personal visits, and holiday parties can brighten up the days for Veterans.

Carry membership applications with you wherever you go! You would be amazed at how many new or reinstated members you can recruit just by asking.

District 4 has come a long way in the last 3 to 5 years. Thanks to all members who have worked so hard to "grow" our auxiliary units. America needs to see and hear from our American Legion Organization. It's time to be seen and heard. Let's fill Facebook with pictures, reports, and stories about our achievements!

If you love your Freedom, Thank a Veteran.

Patsy Greiner
4th District President
304-483-8296 (cell)
Patsygirl2@gmail.com

6th District President

Hello everyone!!

I am back and do not have covid anymore, I just want to say thank you for all the get well cards I received

I am sure we are all still working on membership just keep up the good work.

This if going to be short so until next time God Bless each and everyone.

Peggy Swartz
6th District President



5th District President

Old man winter has made his appearance a little too early for my taste.

The Department missed the target of 60%. The department had 58.22%.

Congratulations to those units that met the 60% target by November 10, which was the auxiliary's birthday: St. Albans has 67.74% while Huntington Unit #16 has 63.78%. Some units are still struggling. If there is anything I can do or any officers, please let us know. Please do not hold any membership because it needs to be processed as soon as possible.

I hope all units are having poppy drives and getting the poppy art contest out to schools. That is coming up in February. Also the poppy chairperson should be working on their poppy hat for their contest. Mid-Winter is coming up in February and that really isn't too far away. I'm excited to see the poppy hat creativity especially since I'm an old hat lover.

Don't forget to keep recording all your hours and donations for your reports. Reporting is very important because it shows national and congress what the units are doing.

Keep up the good work and have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Lisa Harbour-Adkins
wvbravesfan@gmail.com
(304)633-0530

10th District President

Wow, can you believe the Holiday season is upon us? Happy Thanksgiving! Merry Christmas!!!

Remember not all veterans have family; we are their family. Be sure to go see them at the nursing homes or just your own post home. Life can get very lonely without anyone. When you are lonely, unpleasant things come to mind. We certainly don't want that to happen on our time. There is so much sadness in the world now, let's bring some joy to someone else. It only takes a smile or a friendly hello to brighten someone's day.

Congratulations to the 6 units that have made the 60% or above. Way to go!! We do have 4 units well on their way. There are 2 units that have 35% and above. 1 unit that has not turned in membership at this point. I know each unit is very busy but please try to remember to get those memberships in. With what is going on in the world and the uncertain times for the veterans, the memberships matter the most. We need these in as soon as possible so we can help those that mean so much to us. If you need help, Please I am begging you to contact myself or Chantel, we will help you in any way possible.

Starfish, you are leading the way, but Sand Dollars are not that far behind. Keep up the good work, and sometimes a great Christmas gift to an elder is paying their dues for them.

I hope everyone stays warm and safe, as winter is coming. Until we meet again, remember that you matter, and I want to personally Thank You for all that you do for your units, community, and veterans. Without you there would be NO US!

Jill Davis
District 10 President

Constitution & Bylaws

Hello members,

Just a reminder look over your units constitution and bylaws. If you need help, the committee is here to help you. Peggy Swarz, Mary Spence and I will help in any way. Also, on the department's website under programs, constitution and bylaws there is a copy of the department of Florida constitution and bylaws to use as a guide.

Michelle Powell
Constitution and Bylaws Chairman
304-639-5379

NEC

Let's try to clear up some confusion. Michelle Powell is the **Department Constitution and Bylaw Chairman**. Unit changes go to Michelle. I am the NEC, (National Executive Committee) I share information to Units in the Department that comes from National. During National Convention, several changes to the Constitution, Bylaws & Standing Rules, that impact our Units were made. I shared that information with you. Michelle may as well.

If you recall one of my earlier articles, talked about Units filing E990's and being in Compliance with National. That was unrelated to changes to Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules. However, does touch the area, because it's required to be in compliance.

In recent years National has made lots of changes to their governing documents, so it's always good to keep informed with what effects your Unit and make the necessary changes so your Unit is in Compliance with National.

I don't mind answering questions & helping. However, please contact Michelle **first**. She may also contact me if she has questions.

National has now opened the application to apply for a National Committee. Interested in applying, fill out the application by January 1.
<https://www.legion-aux.org/National-Appointment-Application>

Lisa Cadwallader
Lisac.ala71@gmail.com

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Fellow Auxiliary Members,

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning Prevention: When using generators, improper use and installation of generators could cause CO poisoning. Make sure your home has carbon monoxide alarms outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. CO can kill in as little as 5 minutes. Symptoms of CO poisoning include dizziness, headaches, nausea and tiredness. If you experience CO poisoning symptoms, get fresh air, do not reenter area and call 911.

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

Americanism



Here are just a few ideas for Americanism. Encourage Your Units to educate their members on the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Semi quincennial Celebration

a. Visit: www.America250.org

b. Encourage members to be part of celebrations at their Posts and in their communities.

c. Work together with Post and SAL members to plan and publicize .

d. Share information with Junior members and younger SAL members.

The Americanism Essay Contest topic for 2025-2026:

"Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans who Fought for Our Freedom"

THERE IS A NEW FACE SHEET, It will be attached in the Spirit.

Provide information to department chairmen to encourage their members to participate in and utilize Wreaths Across America patriotic curriculum:
<https://learn.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/teach>

Thank you
Sandy Harper
Americanism@wvaux.org

Children & Youth

We're about to become fully immersed in the holiday season. It is very easy for us to get so wrapped up in the holidays and everything that needs to be accomplished that we forget about our obligation to our children and youth. I hope units are planning some type of activity to celebrate the children in our community. It is especially easy to forget, military children that are missing one or both parents who have been deployed. They need some special attention this holiday season even if it is just a hug. You never know what they are missing. It might be just the thing to get them through the holidays with one or both parents deployed. this is a tough time of the year for a lot of people and I encourage you to make their life easier.

April is Children and Youth month and it is not too early to begin thinking about different types of projects you can do to celebrate the youth in our communities. I'm still waiting on pictures and articles from children and conducted has conducted.

Beth Kilgore
Chairman

Community Service

Happy Thanksgiving & Merry Christmas

Let us remember when we're in the community we're representing our American Legion Auxiliary so we put our best foot forward we're here for our Veterans & Community. We work as a team not one person.

Remember always have a membership application for the whole Legion, you never know who we will meet out in our community.

Blessing
God Bless
Kelli A Immel

Junior Activities

Let's Set the Record Straight: The goal of the ALA Junior Activities program is to develop our Junior members into leaders and stay connected with them. Juniors conduct their own meetings, carry out their own activities, and are encouraged to participate in senior member meetings and activities. Junior officers are honorary in title.

Americanism should be a major focus to teach patriotism, citizenship, and loyalty to America. The ALA patch program is very popular. There are 3 levels in the program. The Red level is for students kindergarten through 3rd grade. The Gold level is for students 4th – 8th grades. The Blue level for students 9 -12 grades. More information and requirements for each level can be found at www.ALAforVeterans.org on the Junior Member Activities page in the Members Only section.

The Department of WV has strong leadership and many years of experience with Junior members. Please continue to include Juniors in your meetings, activities, and programs. Thank you for all you do for our Juniors We appreciate you!

For God and Country

Patsy Greiner
Junior Activities Chairman
304-483-8296
Patsygirl2@gmail.com



Education

It's hard to believe that it is almost Christmas and the end of the year. I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I also hope that you celebrated National Education week, which was the week before Thanksgiving. I can't wait to see pictures of what you did. Shout out to Mountaineer Unit #174 for getting their Juniors pictures in the National Education Newsletter in November. I shared it on the Department's Facebook page which I try to do monthly because it has so much information and important dates.

Scholarships are due March 1st. Ask the schools if you can do a bulletin board about the scholarships or ask if the school is having a scholarship workshop that you could be a part of. Please get the word out about these wonderful scholarships. Information about these scholarships along with the forms can be found on the national website.

If I can be of any help, please feel free to contact me. Please note the email change: education@wvvaux.org.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Lisa Harbour-Adkins
(304)633-0530
education@wvvaux.org



Child and Well-Being Fund

ATTENTION:

The pig is very hungry and looking for something to eat! Can you help him? He is not picky. He will take coins and paper money to quiet his hunger.

If you think that your unit can help, please send your donation to Paulette in the Dept Office.

Beth Kilgore
Chairman



Leadership

It has been an inspiring few months serving as your Department Leadership Chair, and I am thrilled to share how well our Lead With Purpose training series is progressing. The participants currently enrolled have shown incredible dedication, curiosity, and courage as they embrace new tools to strengthen their units. I am deeply grateful to each one of you who has chosen to invest in your leadership journey. Your willingness to grow is already making an impact.

If you have been thinking about joining us, it is not too late. All sessions are recorded, and you are welcome to catch up at your own pace. I encourage anyone who is ready to take their leadership to the next level to come aboard, you will be amazed by what intentional growth can do for your unit.

As a reminder, all participants who complete the series will receive special recognition at Midwinter Conference for taking charge, stepping forward, and truly leading with purpose.

I also want to take a moment to reinforce a core message of our department: Lead, do not direct. True leadership inspires rather than demands. It guides rather than pushes. It invites others into the mission with clarity, encouragement, and purpose.

If your unit would like a deeper understanding of the Strong Starts applications or how to set strong SMART goals, please contact me. I would be honored to visit your unit and help your members build confidence, vision, and momentum for the year ahead.

Together, let's continue to lead with purpose.

Rebecca S Farley
Leadership Chairman
leadership@wvvaux.org
304-674-9908

Public Relations

Winter brings some of the most meaningful opportunities for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of West Virginia to support our veterans and strengthen our communities. Holiday projects, care-package drives, seasonal fundraisers, and winter-weather outreach allow our Units to demonstrate compassion and uphold our mission of Service Not Self when it is needed most.

This season is also the perfect time to gain positive public exposure for our organization. Communities actively look for uplifting stories during the winter months, making it an ideal moment to highlight our events, share photos, and promote the impact of our mission. By showcasing our work, we honor our veterans while inspiring others across West Virginia to get involved.

Katie Simpkins
Public Relations Co-Chair

Legislative

Every Voice Matters! Tell Congress What You Think!

Congratulations! Thanks to the efforts of everyone participating in the Grassroots Action Plan and the Every Voice Matters! Tell Congress What You Think initiative West Virginia was 12 out of 55 Departments in the month of October. As one of the smaller Departments in the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary this is a huge accomplishment. Keep up the amazing work you have been doing and continue to spread the word throughout your Auxiliary Unit, your Legion Post, and your Sons Squadron. Together as a Legion Family we can make it to the top 10.

The Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act continues to be one of the current campaigns in the Grassroots Action Center. From the Grassroots Action Plan website: "Too many veterans are left without the critical support they need to recover from the visible and invisible wounds of war. For those living with physical disabilities, PTSD, or other service-connected conditions, the lack of access to trained service dogs represents a major gap in care. It's time to close that gap."

Capito - <https://www.capito.senate.gov/contact/contact-my-office>

Justice - <https://www.justice.senate.gov/contact/>

Miller - <https://millerforms.house.gov/contact/>

Moore - <https://rileymoore.house.gov/contact>

Elaine Sampson
Legislative Chair
legislative@wvvaux.org



National Security

Hello to all!

It's hard to believe that November is half gone already. Hope you had a wonderful Veterans Day Celebration.

Let's think about National Security. It's time to start looking for the enlisted servicemembers who excel in the military and their community. There is an award for each branch of the service. The Space Force has never had a winner. Maybe this is the year for that. It is such an honor for these men and women. I will provide you with the emails for Information about all things in National Security:

nationalsecurity@ALAforVeterans.org

Info for Salute to Servicemembers award - <https://member.legion-aux.org/Salute-to-Servicemembers-Award-Form>

Hope you all have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Love and hugs to all!

National Security Chairman

Debbie Michael

304-839-7721



Poppy

The Poppy is the most visible program of the American Legion Auxiliary. Work on getting the Poppy Poster Contest in schools. Units shall sponsor Poppy Poster contests in local schools, but when schools do not conduct this contest, other youth groups — including Junior members — may participate under direct supervision of the unit. Bring all poppy posters to the 2026 Mid-Winter Conference.

Use poppy math pages, coloring pages, and the poem "In Flanders Fields" in the schools. Distribute the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Coloring Book available at American Legion Emblem Sales.

The Flip Flop Poppy Club will hold its last membership activity at the Mid-Winter Conference. For a \$5 fee, those attending the conference may become a member of this Exclusive club. There will be some actual flip flops available and other flip flop prizes. All monies will benefit the Welfare Fund and West Virginia veterans.

Although the poppy is traditionally distributed and worn around National Poppy Day, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day, the poppy can be worn and distributed year-round. Have a plan in place of how you will promote the poppy. Always have poppies on hand — you never know when you can incorporate the poppy.

Shirley Davis
Chairman



VA&R

Wreaths Across America is on December 13 this year. If you want to volunteer and don't know where they participate just go to the website:

<https://www.wreathsassamerica.org/> and search by cemetery, city or zip code to find a location close to you. If there is a cemetery not listed and you want to get heavier involved, contact Wreaths Across America about setting up and being a coordinator for that location.

Gift shops are also right around the corner. Check the Spirit for dates and times for your local VA and go help. If you have never participated, this is an extremely rewarding experience.

Suicide rate in Veterans is high and over the last few years, **Be The One** has been a big focus point. The American Legion and Columbia University have joined forces. Columbia University offers a training course to help identify risk factors and warning signs. These courses are free and only about an hour and half. They only ask that you fill out a survey before and after the course, to help track the effectiveness of the course and plan for the future. At the bottom of this link it tells when the next course is, so check from time to time. The course is offered off and on during the year. <https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/be-the-one-training>

Lisa Cadwallader, Chair
Lisac.ala71@gmail.com





Chester WV Unit 121
PO BOX 121
Chester WV 26034

RE: Endorsement for Department President

November 13, 2025

A regular meeting of American Legion Auxiliary Chester Unit 121, Chester WV was held on November 6, 2025, at 7:00PM at the Post home. The Unit unanimously endorsed Stephanie Handley for the office of Department President for the administrative year of 2026/2027.

Stephanie joined our Unit in 1996 through the eligibility of her Grandfather Carl A. McCurdy who was a WWII veteran. She has been an active member of our Unit since joining and very proud to be part of a family that has three generations of veterans. Stephanie's Grandmother, Belva Morris, was a PDP and her Mother-in-law, Patricia Emmerling, is a past District President.

Stephanie has served as Secretary, Treasurer and President in our Unit and is currently serving our Unit as Membership Chair. She is currently Department 1st Vice President and has served as Department 2nd Vice President, Department Historian and Chaplain. She also has served as 1st District President and 1st District Vice President. She has served on various committees over the years. She has always been proactive with all our projects and very dedicated to serving our Veterans in our local community.

We are very proud to present Stephanie Handley as our candidate for Department President for the 2026/2027 administration.

Our Very Best Regards,

Holly Adams

President Chester Unit 121

Cindy Gadd

Treasurer, Chester Unit 121

December 2025

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

R.E.D Fridays Until They Come Home	1 <i>Huntington Gift Shop</i> 	2	3	4	5 <i>Clarksburg VA Gift Shop</i> <i>Martinsburg VA Gift Shop</i>	6
7 	8	9	10 <i>Cheer Party Checks Out</i>	11	12	13 <i>Wreaths Across America</i>
14	15 <i>Target Sheet</i>	16	17 <i>Articles Due</i>	18	19	20
21	22 <i>Spirit Out</i>	23	24 <i>Closed Christmas Eve and Day</i>	25 	26 <i>Office Open</i>	27
28	29	30	31 <i>Closed New Years Eve</i>		Program of Month VA &R FIELD SERVICES GIFT SHOPS	



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY WV RODODENDRON GIRLS STATE

Rhododendron Girls State

The 2026 Girls State program will be held June 7 -13, 2026 at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, WV.

Wow, it's almost 2026 and you know what that means? The Girls State Session will be approaching soon.

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.

Wishing everyone a bountiful Thanksgiving and a blessed Christmas.

Lynda Lancaster-Loyd
Girls State Chairman



District Representatives

1st Dist. — Christy Bland
217 Maple Ave.
New Martinsville WV 26155
304-771-2253

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

4th Dist. — Patsy Greiner
708-45th Street
Vienna WV 26105
304-483-8296

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

Congratulations to the October winners!

The 2026 Department Fundraiser Tickets are all given out. If you have any you can't sell, please send back to office as there are some units who either didn't get any, or need more.

I have some completed ones in office and will be deposited the funds this coming week, so if you sent a check and you haven't seen it in your bank statement, that is why.

Remember to have all **completed** tickets stubs with money in the office by December 15-20th. Don't want to wait until the last minute to get them ready for the new year.

Thanks!

Paulette Anderson
Christy Bland

2025 October Ways and Means Winners

Name	#'s	City	State	Date	\$\$\$
ALA Unit #3	647	Moundsville	WV	10/1/25	25.00
Brandy Korzun	323	Romney	WV	10/2/25	25.00
Keith Stewart	038	Triadelphia	WV	10/3/25	25.00
ALA Unit #14	856	Martinsburg	WV	10/4/25	25.00
Nichole Shepherd	077	Berkeley Springs	WV	10/6/25	25.00
Amie Carte	661	Wheeling	WV	10/7/25	25.00
	350			10/8/25	
Bill Chapman	780	Thorpe	WV	10/9/25	25.00
Kay Turner	848	Augusta	WV	10/10/25	25.00
Courtney Clark	925	Shadyside	OH	10/11/25	25.00
Nancy Clark	431	Rio	WV	10/13/25	25.00
PDP Club	280	New Martinsville	WV	10/14/25	25.00
Becky Gregory	079	Moundsville	WV	10/15/25	200.00
Char Fraysier	300	Charles Town	WV	10/16/25	25.00
Cormac Quinn	355	Charles Town	WV	10/17/25	25.00
Cindy Gillespie	682	Bluefield	VA	10/18/25	25.00
Crystal Hartwig	710	New Martinsville	WV	10/20/25	25.00
Peggy Vannoy	114	Bluefield	WV	10/21/25	25.00
Daniel Veach	299	Shanks	WV	10/22/25	25.00
Russell Dotson	160	Cameron	WV	10/23/25	25.00
Ralph Richardson	103	New Martinsville	WV	10/24/25	25.00
Amanda Ruckman	225	Rio	WV	10/25/25	25.00
Beth Rossana	307	Morgantown	WV	10/27/25	25.00
Heather Fauble	892	Ranson	WV	10/28/25	25.00
Mary Spence	518	Welch	WV	10/29/25	25.00
Terry Tharpe	721	Cameron	WV	10/30/25	25.00
	359			10/31/25	





OUR MISSION MATTERS to NAVIGATE LIFE's WATERS



ALA Birthday Target Date 11/10/2025 60.00%
Department Goal 4672— Membership to Date— 2720 58.22%
Department Unit 200 Goal 149— Membership to Date— 76
Updated 11/10/2025



Peggy



Stephanie

District 1			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Wheeling #1	28	19	67.86%
Moundsville #3	260	152	58.46%
McMechen #5	12	9	75.00%
Weirton #10	71	44	61.97%
Cameron #18	118	75	63.56%
New Martinsville #28	107	78	72.90%
Wellsburg #34	21	7	33.33%
Follansbee #45	59	7	11.86%
Pine Grove #81	60	32	53.33%
Paden City #86	67	76	113.43%
Wheeling #89	10	1	10.00%
Newell #114	19	2	10.53%
Chester #121	122	70	57.38%
TOTALS	954	572	59.96%



Starfish
Goal— 2460
To Date—1474
59.91%

Membership
Chairman
Maui



Sand Dollars

Goal 2063
To Date 1170
56.71%



District 3			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Buckhannon #7	45	45	100.00%
Clarksburg #13	41	28	68.29%
Elkins #29	98	62	63.27%
Shinnston #31	253	161	63.64%
Braxton County #33	30	12	40.00%
Bridgeport #68	93	61	65.59%
Belington #96	11	0	
Pickens #122	18	14	77.78%
Morgantown #174	132	118	89.39%
TOTALS	721	501	69.49%

District 5			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Huntington #16	127	81	63.78%
Logan #19	12	0	
Charleston #20	15	7	46.67%
St. Albans #73	31	21	67.74%
Ceredo-Kenova #93	199	82	41.21%
So. Charleston #94	10	1	10.00%
Hamlin #111	40	17	43.00%
Milton #139	67	23	34.33%
Barboursville #177	152	70	46.05%
TOTALS	653	302	46.25%

Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Martinsburg #14	67	25	37.31%
Piedmont #52	20	0	
Berkeley Springs #60	199	130	65.33%
Charles Town #63	34	26	76.47%
Moorefield #64	86	49	56.98%
Charles Town #71	127	81	63.78%
Petersburg #78	63	35	55.56%
Romney #91	137	83	60.58%
Paw Paw #128	33	16	48.48%
Kirby #134	28	23	82.14%
Ridgeley #136	66	36	54.55%
Capon Bridge #137	198	148	74.75%
Keyser #152	28	22	78.57%
Totals	1086	671	61.79%

District 4			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Parkersburg #15	380	219	57.63%
Spencer #21	22	7	31.82%
Pt. Pleasant #23	236	123	52.12%
Tyler County #48	37	1	02.70%
Sistersville #67	42	17	40.48%
New Haven #140	110	58	52.73%
Williamstown #159	78	53	67.95%
TOTALS	905	478	52.82%

District 6			
Unit	2026 Goal	2026	% of Goal
Welch #8	40	30	75.00%
Bluefield #9	18	17	94.44%
Beckley #32	12	6	50.00%
Gary #38	87	51	58.62%
Cowen #62	21	16	76.19%
Richwood #97	26	0	
TOTALS	204	120	58.82%

American Legion Auxiliary Department of West Virginia

POPPY HAT CONTEST

Hats may be made of any material; they may be any style, color, or size.

Rules:

1. One hat per Unit
2. Entries are judged by their Unit and the winner is brought to Mid-Winter
3. Name, District, Unit, address need to be printed on a piece of paper placed on the inside of the hat band.
4. No identifying information is to be placed outside of the hat.
5. Hats must use 50 American Legion Auxiliary Poppies; although a larger number may be used.
6. Labels must be removed from poppies.
7. Other flowers, small amounts of ribbons, and decorative items may be used.
8. Hats must be decorated by member(s) of the American Legion Auxiliary.
9. Judging at Mid-Winter is by monetary donations.

CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE CONTEST

This contest is for Unit members--one entry per member.

Fifty (50) poppies must be used, however, there is no limit on the number that can be used.

Any hat may be used along with ribbons, flowers, or items of your choice.

Entries are judged by Department Poppy Chairman.

The hat must have a label that is not visible, to identify the name of member, and Unit number submitting the hat

No identifying information is to be placed on the outside of the hat.

Poppy Themed prizes (first, second, third) will be awarded.

Be bold! Let your artistic work show!

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: _____